



PUBLIC POLICY: THEOLOGY & THE ENVIRONMENT

Reformed Church of America Perspective on the Environment

RCA PERSPECTIVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

In 1982 the Christian Action Commission sent a major report to General Synod on “Care for the Earth: Theology and Practice” (MGS 1982, pp. 63-70). In response, General Synod passed several resolutions urging “the vigilant protection of the earth’s resources.” The Christian Action Commission report examined Old Testament teachings about the relationship of the people to the land. “God’s gift of land to the people of Israel was conditional. It depended upon their living in a way that acknowledged the land to be the Lord’s land and themselves to be the Lord’s people. Because they chose instead to grasp and possess the land as if it were their own, they lost it....We, too, are called to treat the land as God’s gift rather than as our possession.” The report concluded that “humanity was created by God to live in ‘shalom’ (the Hebrew word for harmony/peace/wholeness/justice) with each other and all creation. While this relationship was broken by the Fall, it is being restored in Christ, who reigns over and is reconciling all creation....The restoration of God’s shalom...requires changes in our attitudes, in our values, and in our lives.”

The report drew attention to the loss of farmland, the degradation of soil and air quality, the problem of nuclear waste disposal and the need for the conservation of water and other precious resources. The resolutions passed by General Synod in 1982 included the following:

- To affirm the vocation of farming, commend farming as a career choice and as a way of life for our young men and women, and encourage those within our denomination who are already farming to be steadfast in their calling and aware of its great potential as a way of Christian

service in a hungry world;

- To call on Reformed Church members to support the adoption and implementation of measures designed to preserve agricultural land;
- To encourage Reformed Church farmers to use agricultural methods which care for and preserve the earth entrusted to them, and to support both private and governmental programs of research into soil-conserving agricultural techniques;
- To oppose any weakening of the Clean Air Act, and to urge that provisions of that act be expanded to control the human causes of acid rain and to place limits on fine particulates and toxic chemicals in our atmosphere;
- To urge the Environmental Protection Agency to be active, in cooperation with the states, to prevent further contamination of groundwater resources;
- To urge our government officials and agencies to treat nuclear waste disposal as an urgent and critical concern, and to curtail the production of nuclear waste until satisfactory disposal methods are adopted;
- To urge the Reagan administration and Congress to develop a national policy which will insure the wise conservation of natural resources and the vigilant protection of the earth's resources.

In 1994 the Office of Social Witness reported to General Synod on continuing environmental problems like the extinction of hundreds of animal species, deforestation, and the greenhouse effect, and urged that “responsible Christian witness in the light of the environmental crisis is becoming increasingly important.” General Synod passed a resolution to “encourage RCA pastors, consistories, and Christian educators to place renewed emphasis on the stewardship of creation in the preaching, teaching and witness ministries of RCA congregations, and further, to encourage RCA congregations to utilize available RCA resources from Reformed Church World Service, the RCA hunger education program, the Office of Social Witness, and the Institute for Development Training” (MGS 1994, pp. 95-96).

(There were major reports to General Synod in 1982 and 1994; the subject was also mentioned in 1995.)

Sign up for our free newsletter

Stay in the know and receive our weekly email newsletter full of the latest news, blog posts, and event updates.

Email *

Send me the latest news, blog posts, and event updates *

ABOUT

- Our Mission & Core Principles
- Acton Grants and Awards
- Acton Research
- Our Team
- Careers
- Internships
- News

EVENTS

- Events Calendar
- Lecture Series
- Conference Series
- Acton University





PUBLICATIONS

- PowerBlog
- Acton Commentary
- Acton Notes
- Religion & Liberty
- Religion & Liberty Transatlantic
- Acton Longform
- Acton Books
- Journal of Markets & Morality
- International

MULTIMEDIA

- Videos
- Audio
- Podcast
- Films
- Mobile Apps

SHOP

- DONATE
- CONTACT US
-    





★★★★

CHARITY NAVIGATOR

Four Star Charity

Italiano

Español

Deutsch

Français

Português

□□□□

العربية

© 2020 Acton Institute

Privacy Policy