

# **A Sustainable Environment: Our Obligation to Protect God's Gift**

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## Why Are Both the Global Society and Environment Deteriorating?

As I am from the "quiet" generation, I have seen many changes in this world over time but I am not prepared to accept the direction we are going. Just stop to think about all the detrimental activities that we are experiencing and the impact they are having on society. For example, it seems that the number one objective on the agenda of our politicians is not to work for the benefit of their constituents, but rather to be sure to get reelected. On top of that we have many politicians that are compulsive liars.

Other issues that are of big concern include the growing racism in this country as well as sexual harassment in all sectors of business and politics. And then there is the problem with illegal immigration which is compounded when a mayor of a sanctuary city states that there is nothing illegal about illegal immigrants. And this seems to fit in with the ongoing corruption in all levels of government. But all of this is not as bad when related to terrorism and ISIS around the world.

Then we need to look at the impact that technology has had on our lives. The Internet and mobile phones have been great. But with the repeal of net neutrality, we'll be going in the wrong direction. Mobile phones are great for talking to other people but texting has some major disadvantages. Do you really know what is meant all the time? Take this sentence as an example. "I never said she stole my money." This is a sentence with seven words. Recite it seven times while emphasizing each of the seven words. You will get seven different meanings. If you write this sentence in a text, what do you really mean?

Despite all the problems cited above, none is anywhere near a problem like that of the environment. While the problems already mentioned have an impact on many different people, the environmental issues affect every human being and living species on earth. We read mostly about climate change which is the cause of major storms and droughts, and they will become greater and more prevalent. Even if we were able to achieve a net zero carbon dioxide emission level, the current concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will be with us for the next 75 years.

Another environmental problem that is getting worse with time is the consumption of our natural resources which are needed for food, shelter, energy, clothing, and other human requirements. Every year we consume more than the earth can regenerate, and this year we consumed 70% more. In other words, we are using 1.7 earths for our needs. In 2017, earth overshoot day, the day that we consumed the equivalent of what the earth would produce in the entire year, was August 2, 2017. In 2018, earth overshoot day will most likely be sometime in late July.

The lack of water quantity and quality is another major problem. Of all the water on earth, only 0.01% is available fresh water of which 60% is consumed by agriculture, 30% by industry and only 10% is available for human consumption. One technology that can help generate additional fresh water is desalinization; however, it is very expensive and energy intensive.

What is contributing to each of these environmental issues is population growth. Although humans have been on this earth for thousands of years, just in my lifetime the world population has gone from a little over two billion to over seven billion, and it is growing at a rate of about 10 million people every six weeks. The earth cannot sustain this population growth.

The combination of a deteriorating society as well as a deteriorating environment brings a thought to my mind. Is God disappointed with what is happening to His earth? Is He using the deteriorating environment to punish the people? In the Bible Revelation 11:18, it talks about destroying those who destroy the earth. I don't think this is the case, but it is something worth thinking about and discussing.