

Mother Earth... SHOULD WE ??? two views...

Why Christians Should Embrace the Term “Mother Earth”

In much of mainstream Christian culture, the term “Mother Earth” is often despised. It is seen as language reserved for New Age or secular world-views. Forgetting for the moment the problems with labeling and segmenting people at all (us vs. them), the reality is that “Mother Earth” is a very Scriptural concept. More than that, the label of “Mother Earth” is a great way to communicate the purpose and role of this planet is Our Father’s design for us.

The Scriptural View of Earth

The reason the term “mother” gets such a strong reaction is that it can appear to be placing Earth on the same level as God, who calls himself Our Father. This is, of course, absurd as the creation can never be on par with the Creator. However, that is not the purpose of using the term “mother” in describing Earth. The Scriptural view of Earth is that it is the incubator which both nourishes us, and struggles against us that we may grow and develop.

“Painfully will you get your food from it as long as you live. It will yield you brambles and thistles, as you eat the produce of the land. By the sweat of your face will you earn your food...” - Genesis 3:17b-19a (NJB)

“We are well aware that the whole creation, until this time, has been groaning in labour pains. And not only that: we too, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we are groaning inside ourselves...” - Romans 8:22-23a (NJB)

The Earth is Not “A Person” It is A Womb

Can you imagine the cruelty of man without the challenges of nature? Nature forces us to work together, it blesses us when we can work in unison, and it punishes us when we are separate. One farmer can barely feed his family from the harvest of his own toil, but a whole family working together can feed a town. A town working in unison can feed a region. So on and so forth. Such is way of all history. For each step of humanity healing from hate, fear, and fragmentation, so we all reap the benefits.

I am not saying we should embrace the idea that Earth is a deity, certainly not. But I am saying that using the term “Mother Earth” to paint a picture of our place here as a womb serves several purposes. First, it asserts the reality that the way things are is not the way they will always be. Second, it asserts the purpose God has for humanity to eventually grow up and become something greater than we are now.

You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people’s feet. ‘You are light for the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden.’ - Matthew 5:13-14 (NJB)

The problem... (article online)

I wanted to be part of God’s team of earth stewards who helped take care of His creation. I still do. But finding like-minded team members in our fast-changing culture has become complicated. The beliefs and practices associated with ecology stray far beyond biblical bounds—even in the church.

My first exposure to **unbiblical environmentalism under the banner of Christianity** came in 1990. I had driven to a mainline Presbyterian church some distance from my home to see how God’s people would celebrate Earth Day. Watching the worship, I wondered if the Creator Himself would have been welcome. At one point, the members of the youth group stepped forward to present *their* offerings:

“I bring to our Mother, the Earth, the gift of a new beginning...”

“I bring to our Mother, the Earth, the birth of a new consciousness.”

“I bring to our Mother, the Earth, the gift of immortality that you may live forever cherished by your beloved children.”

The congregation responded to this strange ritual with a standing ovation. Did these people know whom they worshiped? Had environmental concern swung church doors wide open to paganism? Could this really be happening in a supposedly conservative church?

Earlier in the program, a young woman minister had danced her interpretation of the Creation story. Throughout the graceful performance, a voice narrated the creative acts of a female deity referred to as “she” or “her.” At one point, “she” gave birth to earthly life—here the dancer crouched on stage and birthed an inflated globe.

Our response to Know and discuss...

1. Key truths about God, the Creator
2. Basic facts and warnings about the environmental movement.
3. Blending Christian and pagan beliefs.
4. Separating helpful information from spiritual deception.

KEY TRUTHS ABOUT GOD, THE CREATOR. He is the sovereign Lord of the universe, Fountain of life and Provider for all His creatures. He is the only true source of wisdom and strength. He is our loving Father who embodies all the wise, nurturing characteristics which His opponents link to a mythical spiritual Mother Earth. To those who are willing to follow Him, the earth will reveal not *its own* GREATNESS, BU THE GREATNESS OF THE Maker.

· Discuss Genesis 1-3; Colossians 1:9-20; Psalms 8, 19, 24.

Deep Ecology (Biocentric)	Humanist Green Activism (Anthropocentric)	Christian Stewardship (Theocentric)
Earth-centered	Human-centered	God-centered
Mother Earth evolved, and nurtures and organizes her parts	Earth and man evolved by chance	God created the earth and its inhabitants
Humans and animals are expressions of Mother Earth	Human animals are responsible for Earth	God told His people to use and care for Earth
Wisdom from Nature	Wisdom from self	Wisdom from God (through the Bible)
Connect with Gaia through ritual, celebration, drugs, meditation, sex	Connect with nature through human mind, emotions, experience	Trust God and walk with Him, praying always and following His guidelines.
Help Earth save herself by hearing her spirit and heeding her wisdom (spiritism)	Save Earth by trusting human nature	Care for Earth by trusting God's Word, receiving his strength and guidance

SEPARATING HELPFUL INFORMATION FROM SPIRITUAL DECEPTION.

Sometimes it seems that nature worshipers – Buddhist monks, Native American shamans, witchdoctors – put Christians to shame by their devotion. Practicing the discipline of stillness and the art of listening, they model a commitment God longs to see in His own people. Yet, by rejecting their Maker, they oppose the very purpose for which He created the earth they love – to manifest *His* glory.

God's path to healing of the earth is written in the Bible, not in the well-meaning but distorted philosophies of earth-centered reformers. To test an environmental philosophy, ask yourself these questions: Does it agree with Scripture and honor and

God? Or does it focus on the creation and deny its Maker? Or does it blend truth and error?

If we keep thanking God for the wonders of His creation, we will also share His concern for the land and its life – and He cares about the smallest detail. Remember, even the death of a sparrow touches His gentle heart, and the wasteful destruction of a single fruit tree belittles His wonderful gift and hinders His plan (*Deuteronomy 19-20*). This kind of stewardship demands a wisdom and love that far exceeds our meager supply. But God wants our inadequacy to drive us to Him, so that He can demonstrate His sufficiency in and through us. “My grace is sufficient for you,” He says, “for My power is made perfect in weakness” (*2 Corinthians 12:9*).

God can use the environmental movement to teach us to respect and enjoy nature. But since most environmentalists reject the biblical Creator, *we need to filter everything they tell us through biblical truth.*