

Caring for Our Earthly Home

Then God said, "Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth." God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. (Genesis 1:26-27, CEB)

The first Earth Day celebrations took place in 1970, primarily at colleges, universities, primary and secondary schools, and in various communities. The goal of this day is to motivate people to take action by changing human behavior and making policy changes. This Sunday just happens to fall on April 22, the annual Earth Day celebration. It also happens to line up with a worship series I'm sharing on the text of Revelation 21 which speaks about God making all things new, including the new heaven and the new earth.

Even though Earth Day is still a relatively new phenomenon, I don't think the idea of us caring for the Earth is all that new. In fact, it's something we are really re-discovering. Our concern for the Earth was ingrained in us from the beginning of human history when we were created in God's image. If we go back to Genesis, we see that God's intention in creating human beings is, in part, for us to care for all that God has created on the Earth. After all, this is our one and only home. We don't get to start over if we mess it up. We are created to be good stewards (or caretakers) of what God has created, including the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the crawling things on earth.

We would be wise to pause and ask ourselves: How are we doing with that responsibility? We should ask ourselves, not just because it's Earth Day, but because that's an important question to consider each and every day. If you're like me, it's often too easy to ignore the question all together and let 'someone else' worry about it. We don't often see the effects of our pollution, consumerism, and so forth on a day-to-day basis, but they are real and alarming. For example, my household trash is being hauled away even as I write this devotion this morning. I don't see where it ultimately ends up and what effect that is having on the earth or how it will end up impacting future generations.

Let's rediscover a piece of the heart of who God has designed us to be as fully human people, which is to care for our earthly home and all that God has created and declared to be "good" in His sight. I look forward to engaging this topic with you further on Sunday morning in worship.

Easter Joy,

Pastor David Rittgers