

ENVIRONMENTALISM & THE WORSHIP OF “MOTHER EARTH”

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With the feminization of our culture (including the church) and with the rising paganism of our society, we see that an unbiblical view of environmentalism is prevalent in our nation. As to the feminization issue and the environmental movement, we see this in terms “mother earth” and “Gaia” (the Greek goddess of the earth) which have become a part of the actual foundation of the movement, thus demonstrating also the paganism rampant throughout environmentalism. Rather than “the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1), we read, “God is going to change, We women...will change the world so much that He won’t fit anymore.” Naomi Goldenberg in *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religions*¹ writes, “At some time not more than a few thousand years ago, the concept of a remote master God (the Judeo-Christian God), an overseer of Gaia, took root... [as these people moved west], they brought a sky god, a warrior cult, and a patriarchal social order...the evolution of these [people] to the modern men who ride their infinitely more powerful machines of destruction over the habitats of our partners in Gaia, seems only a small step.”²

Lovelock said that he could not relate to a “remote, all-powerful, all-seeing male Yahweh, but he can relate to the femininity in Mary: ‘Mary is close and can be talked to. She is believable and manageable. It could be that the importance of the Virgin Mary in faith is something of this kind, but there may be more to it. What if Mary is another name for Gaia? Then her capacity for Virgin Birth is no miracle...it is a role of Gaia since life began.... She is of this Universe and, conceivably, a part of God. On Earth she is the source of life everlasting and is alive now; she gave birth to humankind and we are a part of her.’”³

Taking the terms “mother earth” and “Gaia,” this feminism/paganism has invaded the public schools. In a newsletter distributed in an Indianapolis high school, students were told, “It will take time, it will challenge the boundaries of your soul, to work with diligence and persistence to save our environment, our lives, our future, our mother earth.... We are the only one who can control our rate of self-destruction. We are our only saviours.”⁴

Evidence of this paganism within much of the environmental movement is also noted in former Vice-President Al Gore’s book, *Earth in the Balance*, where he points favorably to the pantheism of pagan religions. “The richness and diversity of our religious traditions throughout history is a spiritual resource long ignored by people of faith, who are often afraid to open their minds to teachings first offered outside their own system of belief. But the emergence of a civilization in which knowledge moves freely and almost instantaneously throughout the world has...spurred a renewed investigation of the wisdom distilled by all faiths. This panreligious perspective may prove especially important where our global civilization’s responsibility for earth is concerned.”⁵

To the extent that the environmental movement looks at mankind as the only “savior” of the earth, this is idolatry. To the extent that the environmental movement advocates preserving

the earth from humanity and not for humanity, it violates the Scriptures.⁶ To the extent that it promotes mother earth and Gaia worship and pantheism, it violates the first commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

The influences of our compromising culture often creep into the evangelical churches. This is true with the environmental influence. E. Calvin Beisner has especially addressed this in response to the declarations on Christian concern for the environment written by the Evangelical Environmental Network in association with Evangelicals for Social Action. In *World* magazine (November 1993), Beisner wrote an editorial entitled “Are God’s Resources Finite?” It was critical of the declaration in its claims concerning environmental degradation. Beisner “then charges that the document is weak theologically and reflects a faulty view of resources and human relationship with the natural world.”⁷ Richard Cartwright Austin, a former Presbyterian Church (USA) pastor at Earth Care ‘96, the Christian Environmental Stewardship Conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee, said, “Christ is fully God and fully Earth. He came to save the world.” And saving the Earth is our job, too, he added. Said Mr. Austin, “I hear the Bible calling us to redeem from destruction the Creation.”⁸

Mother Earth, Gaia, new age mysticism, pantheism are all elements that have come into the environmental movement. Christians must guard against being “conformed to the world” (Romans 12:2).

¹ Quoted in Berit Kjos, “From Father God to Mother Earth” in *A Twist of Faith*.

² James Lovelock, *The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Earth*, p. 208, quoted in *Saviors of the Earth?*, p. 147, by Michael S. Coffman.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁴ William Norman Grigg, “Advance of the Gaia Gestapo”, *The New American*, August 8, 1994, p. 17.

⁵ Al Gore, *Earth in the Balance*, pp. 258-259, quoted in “Al Gore’s Vision of Global Salvation” by Berit Kjos.

⁶ Lisa Tanner, “A Look at the New Green Religion”, *Chalcedon Report*, September 1997.

⁷ Richard T. Wright, “Tearing Down the Green Environmental Backlash in the Evangelical Subculture,” p. 2.

⁸ Roy Maynard, “It Isn’t Easy Being Green,” *World*, May 11/18, 1996.