

The Christian Answer  
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Upbeat  
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Everybody is really “up-tight” about the Ecology problem and nobody can blame them. The newspapers and T.V. are full of the most pessimistic information. And it’s not only limited to the United States; it’s a world problem. The latest is that in Japan they’ve developed photographs from the water of an ordinary river. This happened because there were so many raw chemicals in the water. And everybody is concerned – its’ not only a problem for the politician. Young people having been asking with real concern: Why? This is so because the ecological situation will affect all the population. It knows no political boundaries. It is a kind of a situation which is DIRECT! Many evils in the world are more localized and indirect. For example, the war in Vietnam or the Middle East may indirectly affect the whole world, but how much more direct can we be than with the food we eat, or the water we drink or, indeed, the air that we breathe.

Will knowledge solve the problem? Isn’t it strange that man’s “knowledge explosion” began the whole thing – and now we have to use the very same “knowledge” to solve it. What a lesson for man! It is not “knowledge” that is important; it is WHAT WE DO WITH KNOWLEDGE! It was man’s knowledge that improved the agricultural methods, improved medicine, improved the water supply, improved waste disposal, improved transportation. Our successes at manipulating and re-shaping nature to fit our desires and wishes have been great. But suddenly we are caught with no “outside” where we can dump our rubbish and discard our wastes. Suddenly all that we have improved in nature will also “improve” the possibility of the “slow death.” And mere passage of time can only make it worse.

Are we trapped? Can we escape to the clean air and water of the “country?” What is the real Christian approach? Shall we just sit and die? Or escape the dirty air? (if that is possible) The Christian answer is not only to develop better muffles or fuels, or different chemicals, or different soap suds. It is time for man to re-evaluate his very attitude toward the world, toward nature, toward his responsibility to life. Nothing less will do! Another technical device can only lead to the same cycle that caused the problem to begin with. We have used up the “capital” of nature which was freely provided by God and forgot about “re-paying” it.

And now we find ourselves in a different world – one which must be concerned more about the “quality of life” than about the “quality of production”; one which tells man that he must be “concerned” about other life and that he must be ready to co-operate with instead of ignore other men. When one thinks about it, the whole situation may just force us to be better Christians. After all, what can be a greater Christian challenge than to measure this quality of life? In the middle of it all, we wonder, will man NOW respect the co-operation and mutual dependence that he shares with other men in order to solve this problem? Or greater, we wonder, will man respect life and his God who created it?