

IT TOOK SPRING A WHILE TO ARRIVE, BUT THINGS HAVE BEEN HEATING UP A BIT HAVEN'T THEY? On hot and humid days my late dear grandmother used to say "If hell is any hotter than this, we'd better change our ways!" Humorous; yet wise words. We live in a time when our world is changing, and our so called progress has affected the quality of air, and is playing havoc with our weather patterns; hence "Global Warming. All of us need to take better care of Mother Earth and the resources God has gifted her with for the survival and health of us, Her children. We who call ourselves Christians should have a lot more reverence for the earth from which life springs forth.

Again the Old Testament experience is negated by the New. In the Old Testament the language used to describe our obligation to our world is that we have "dominion" over the earth and all living creatures. As New Testament people we are "stewards" of what God has created. We have selfishly ravaged the earth, we have raped her, we have abused her for the sake of our material gain and now we are reaping the consequences of those actions. Global Warming is real. It is not imagined. At the North and South Poles our icebergs and glaciers are melting. Water levels are dropping in our oceans and in the great lakes, forests are stripped and will take years to renew; we're running out of oil and using far too much of it because it is cheap - but the results of the pollution it produces are far too great for us to grasp or be able to believe.

I still see people who refuse to participate in the recycling programs put in place by their cities or municipalities; and yes... I still see people who throw garbage out of their car window or along any street or sidewalk as they walk. If we cannot reverence the earth from which we came, how can we possibly hope to have reverence for each other? One of the most important elements of love is respect and nurturing. As our populations grow and as our resources deplete we are on a course of self-destruction. In the future our children and grandchildren will face shortages in water, food and fuel, and over time this could erupt into violence; people fighting over the basic things needed for survival.

When I think of our environmental responsibility, not just as citizens of the earth, but more importantly as Christians I call to mind often the prayer that is used for internment at the cemetery "To the Lord belongs the earth and all it holds, the world and all who live in it." This is a powerful statement that reminds us that we are but the caretakers of the earth and one day will have to give account for our actions and attitudes towards her. We live in a country that once was rich in natural resources, lush forests, fruit orchards, grain fields, farms of all kinds - we were a country that was self-sustaining. Sadly we no longer are. We have opted for cheaper food from elsewhere so that our material gains would be better, but unfortunately we have created a situation that if global supplies were cut off; we could not produce enough food anymore to sustain ourselves. God provides, but it is we whom He asks to till the earth and bring forth fruit. I don't think we're doing such a great job anymore. The earth is our home while we are here; it is our duty to cherish her as a most precious gift from God. She is our mother who brings forth life and we are killing her slowly. She is suffering and on life support, only you and I can decide to treat and heal, or to pull the plug. Something to think about isn't it?

Let us pray: Loving God, forgive us for the ways in which we have so selfishly ravaged the earth from which we came. Help me to show gratitude for this great country of Canada my earthly home. Remind me that I have a role to play in helping to heal the land in which I live and rely on for life. Give me the courage and the strength to be an active Christian by teaching others through word and example of the importance of recognizing that all belongs to You and we are just the caretakers. Thank you for the earth from which life springs forth. I will love her, cherish her, nurture her and help to her to heal. Amen