

SUBJECT: Religious Education

UNIT: Year 7 – Should Christians be greener?



Creation and Stewardship

The **Bible** teaches Christians that God created humans in his image: So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Many Christians see **Genesis** as evidence that humans have **dominion**, or power, over God's creation. However, this does not mean that humanity should exploit the Earth's resources. Most Christians believe that humanity's purpose is to look after the world that God has created like caretakers (or **stewards**), because creation belongs to God, not people. This is known as **stewardship**.

Stewardship in today's world – example: Eco-church

Churches complete an online Eco Survey about how they are caring for God's earth in different areas of their life and work. The answers a church provides will collect points towards an Eco Church Award.

- The survey looks at five key areas of church life:
- -Worship and teaching
- -Management of church buildings
- -Management of church land
- -Community and global engagement
- -Lifestyle
- Churches can receive a Bronze, Silver or Gold award if they meet the required standard

Christian responses to the environment

The Roman Catholic Church has responded to the challenges raised by environmental issues by stressing the need for every individual and every nation to play their part.

The Church of England has made many statements about environmental issues. For example; *Christianity is first and foremost a concern for the whole of the created order — biodiversity and business; politics and pollution; rivers, religion and rainforests...If Christians believe in Jesus they must recognise that concern for climate change is not an optional extra but a core matter of faith.*

The Evangelical churches are very aware of how much environmental issues are linked to human poverty: *We recognise that poverty forces people to degrade creation in order to survive; therefore, we support the development of just, free economies, which empower the poor and create abundance without diminishing creation's bounty.*

Should Christians be greener or is it everyone's responsibility?

- ✓ Christians believe in Stewardship – which is caring for and maintaining the world.
- ✓ Christians should respect the Earth as they have to hand it back to God.
- ✓ In the Bible there is many elements that express Christians responsibility for maintaining all things living, which was given to them by God.
- ❖ All humans have added to the pressure of climate change on Earth.
- ❖ Christian's are not the only ones who are responsible, everyone has a responsibility.
- ❖ Even the Pope said that people should not misuse and dispose of things however they like.
- ❖ Although some people believe Christians are responsible, it can be argued they are just setting an example and modelling how all people should treat the Earth, regardless of their beliefs.