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Christianity



Environmental Ethics

Prayer



Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessing.
Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures.
You formed all creation clear and precious and beautiful.
You give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praise and bless my Lord,
and give him thanks
and serve him with great humility.
Amen

Syllabus



- ❧ **Describe and explain Christian ethical teachings on environmental ethics**
- ❧ *Describes and analyses how aspects of religious traditions are expressed by their adherents (H4)*
- ❧ *Evaluates the influence of religious traditions in the life of adherents (H5)*

Preliminary Course - Ethics



- ❧ Guidelines for correct behaviour (according to God)
- ❧ “the practical application of beliefs”
- ❧ Right relationship with God and others
- ❧ The 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17)
- ❧ The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-11)
- ❧ Jesus’ commandment of love (Luke 10:25-27)

Christian Sources of Ethics



- ✧ Bible
- ✧ Tradition
- ✧ Natural Law
- ✧ Conscience
- ✧ Situation Ethics

Defining Environmental Ethics



- ❧ Christian environmental ethics are the moral guidelines that determine how adherents interact with the modern world.
- ❧ As outlined in the Bible, Christianity provides a moral code for adherents to follow when making decisions about their treatment of the natural world.

Environmental Ethics: Teachings



❧ Teachings are based on:

❧ Loving God

❧ Stewardship

❧ Loving others

❧ The saving action of Jesus Christ

Teachings



- ❧ Life is sacred
- ❧ Love your neighbour as yourself
- ❧ Stewardship
- ❧ Building the Kingdom of God

Life is Sacred



- ✧ God created the world out of love
- ✧ God is revealed in nature – beneficent, omnipotent, loving
- ✧ Creation provides a connection to God – caring for creation strengthens our connection to the divine
- ✧ Our Father “hallowed be they name” – honour; show gratitude
- ✧ Reverencing nature = reverencing God

Life is Sacred



- ❧ “Through him all things were made” (Jn 1:3)
- ❧ “And God saw that it was good.” (Genesis)
- ❧ “... his eternal power and divinity has
been made known through his works since the
creation of the world.” (Rm 1:20)
- ❧ “Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!
Let your glory be all over the earth!” (Ps 108:5)

Stewardship



- ❧ Caretakers – a role given to humanity by God
- ❧ Responsibility to maintain and repair the earth
- ❧ Cultivate and care for the earth means to protect, preserve, conserve, heal

Stewardship



- ❧ “..guard and till the earth.” (Gn 2:15)
- ❧ “Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God.” (Micah 6:8)

Love Your Neighbour as Yourself



- ❧ Based on the example of Jesus
- ❧ Love, compassion and mercy needs to be extended to creation
- ❧ Live a life of simplicity – promote sustainability
- ❧ Share resources - equity
- ❧ Eco-justice – a voice for the poor



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Building God's Kingdom



- ✧ Creation is the Good News
- ✧ Christ is the the healer, the renewer
- ✧ We share Christ's mission to celebrate the Good News, to heal the earth
- ✧ Resurrection = re-creation
- ✧ Hope for the future – the new creation
- ✧ Our responsibility to make God's Kingdom a reality
- ✧ A healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of our Christian commitment

Building God's Kingdom



- ❧ “For God so loved the WORLD that he sent his only Son.” (Jn 3:16)
- ❧ “complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”
Philippians 2:2
- ❧ Revelation speaks of a new heaven and a new earth.

Living Religious Tradition



- ❧ LRT – helps adherents to understand and interact meaningfully with their world
- ❧ Environmental ethics assists Christians to understand and respond to issues of concern – deforestation, climate change, waste management
- ❧ Expressed in private lives and as a community

Christian Organisations



- ❧ Be sure to use examples across a range of denominations
- ❧ Include phrases from their mission statements - these usually provide a connection to the teaching
- ❧ Give an explicit example of an initiative, linked to environmental concern

Interfaith Power and Light - Mission



- ❧ 1998 – Episcopal Power and Light
- ❧ “... be faithful stewards of Creation by responding to global warming through the promotion of energy conservation...”
- ❧ “...ensure sufficient, sustainable energy for all.”
- ❧ “advocates for vulnerable people and communities...”
- ❧ Many faiths, one Earth. We stand with Pope Francis on climate change.

IPL - Programs



- ❧ Cool Congregations – encourages individuals and congregations to care for Creation by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions
- ❧ Carbon Covenant – limiting the greenhouse effect by encouraging the protection of forests from logging. Episcopal congregations become sister communities with Buddhist communities in Cambodia

National Council Of Churches in Australia - Mission



- ✠ Share a common faith and confession in the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.
- ✠ Share a common future – one that lies together not in separation
- ✠ Expression of God's power, love and mercy to Australia
- ✠ "Mission of common witness, proclamation and service, to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

National Council Of Churches in Australia - Programs



- ❧ Eco Mission Project – ecumenical network enabling churches to work together on ecological concerns
- ❧ Educates and animates congregations in the eco-mission project grounded in common biblical, theological and ethical traditions
- ❧ Explore best practice models for sustainability of God's creation

Laudato Si – Praised Be

on the care of our common home.



- ❧ Papal encyclical on the environment
- ❧ Rejects traditional conservative justifications for exploiting the planet
- ❧ Acknowledges humanity's role in climate change
- ❧ Science and religion can work together to heal the earth
- ❧ A Catholic, an Orthodox, an atheist and an economist presented the encyclical
- ❧ Widely endorsed by the global community

Laudato Si – Praised Be

on the care of our common home



- ✧ Makes reference to the work of previous popes, Patriarch Bartholomew, St Francis of Assisi
- ✧ “It is our humble conviction that the divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of God’s creation, in the last speck of dust of our planet.” (18)
- ✧ Calls for a lifestyle change from developed society’s “throw away, consumer culture”
- ✧ Integral ecology – humanity and creation are interrelated; the common good & preferential option for the poor.

Lambeth Conference



- ❧ 2008 – Caring for the environment is
 - ❧ Integral to the Christian mission
 - ❧ What begins with a personal encounter with Christ “spills out into the redemption of all creation.”
 - ❧ Transform and serve the world as Jesus would
 - ❧ A matter of justice
 - ❧ a moral imperative

- ❧ Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, issued a green declaration signed by British faith leaders, acknowledging that climate change hurts the poor

Past Papers



2010 – Section II

(a) (i) Outline ONE Christian ethical teaching in ONE of the following:

*Bioethics * Environmental Ethics * Sexual Ethics

(ii) Describe TWO examples of the ethical teaching identified in part (a) (i)

Past Papers



❧ 2011 – Section III

❧ Some religions emphasise justice, while others emphasise compassion.

How does the statement reflect the diversity of expression within the Christian tradition?

Past Papers



❧ 2012 – Section II

❧ (a) (i) Briefly outline TWO Christian ethical teachings in ONE of the following:

*Bioethics * Environmental Ethics * Sexual Ethics

(ii) How does ONE ethical teaching outlined in (a) (i) influence the lives of adherents?

Past Papers



❧ 2013 – Section II

❧ (b) Explain ethical teachings in Christianity in ONE of the following areas:

*Bioethics

* Environmental Ethics

* Sexual Ethics

Past Papers



2014 – Section III

“Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. ” (John 1:11)

How do ethical teachings in Christianity guide adherents to do “what is good”?

In your response, refer to ONE of the following:

*Bioethics

*Environmental ethics

* Sexual ethics