

Session 13: The Bible and biodiversity



A Rocha gives practical expression to the conviction that the Christian life involves care for creation. How have you been impacted by A Rocha?



The earth is the Lord's and everything in it

Psalm 24:1

What gives nature its value, and what is our response to be?

Dave Bookless situates the value of nature within the context of who God is. The world and all its creatures belong to God, bring him glory, and are a part of God's plans in 'creation, covenant, redemption and reconciliation'.

This means the value of nature centres on God. Nature's value is theocentric, not anthropocentric: species have value independently of their usefulness to us.

We often act as though the value of nature centres on us rather than on God, evaluating the importance of creation from the perspective of its benefits and usefulness to us. When we choose to re-centre our lives on God, we are making a choice with profound implications for the way we regard the rest of creation – our own purposes can no longer be of primary concern.

Our response to the theocentric value of nature is an acceptance of our 'job description', the 'divine vocation' of reflecting God's character in how we care for creation. This care is an integral part of the wider calling we have as Jesus' disciples, and it is rooted in the redeeming hope of Christ for all creation.

A Rocha's work is a response to the biblical call to creation care and the theocentric value of nature. The character of this work is summarized by A Rocha's 5 core

commitments: Christian / Conservation / Community / Cross-cultural / Cooperation.

Discuss

What do you think the value of nature centres on? Is this reflected in the way you act?

Dave Bookless says in this video that our vocation is 'to glorify God in assisting in the flourishing of the whole of creation'. How does that fit with your understanding of mission?

How would you respond to someone saying that conservation work is not part of, or not a priority within, mission?

Can you explain the inclusion of each of A Rocha's 5 core commitments from a biblical perspective?

How well do the commitments sum up a biblical response to creation care? Do they leave out anything important?

How would you explain to someone why A Rocha works in the way it does?

Pray, thanking God for the way A Rocha has impacted you, and asking that A Rocha would be a faithful outworking of our Christian belief and calling.

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