

SIM's Statement on Our Concern for the Environment

January 2011

As a mission organization founded upon the authority of the Word of God and the supremacy of Christ in all things, SIM desires to be forthright in its declaration that "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it..." (Psalm 24:1) "...All things have been created by him (Christ) and for him." (Colossians 1:16) Because this is so, and because all "...dominion belongs to the Lord" (Psalm 22:28), SIM seeks to be good stewards of God's earth in all it does. The fact that God has chosen to share his dominion over creation with those made in his image (Genesis 1:26-27 and Psalm 8:3-8) underscores the honor delegated in the task and the importance of our performing it well.

By the same token, SIM seeks the physical as well as the spiritual welfare of all with whom it engages in ministry, and their welfare is almost always dependent on the care given to their environment. We do this because they too are the Lord's, and because Christ has commanded us to "...love our neighbors as ourselves." (Matthew 22:39)

In the day in which we now live, there is a great deal of both heat and light shed abroad in societies all over the world on the subject of the environment, climate change, and the role of human beings in either fostering degradation or maintaining the health of both. We applaud the attention being paid to these important matters, and affirm our commitment to creation care and the stewardship that it implies as the appropriate response of Christians to these matters. While all human beings are greatly blessed by all that the earth is, it is important to humbly remember that the earth does not exist solely, or even primarily, for our sake, but for the One who guides and sustains it, and to whom it belongs. (Job 38:22 – 39:12)

While recognizing that a wide variety of views exist over many particulars in current discussions of the environment and climate change, we believe that the following commitments are quite basic and altogether appropriate reflections of our commitment to creation care:

1. To follow generally accepted best practices to avoid becoming a source of environmental degradation as a result of our own work and ministry.
2. To model and teach best practices both formally and informally as opportunity exists as a way to assist "our neighbors" to do likewise.
3. To teach the whole counsel of God regarding his ownership of all that is, and our responsibility to care for it.
4. To use our gifts, resources, and network connections to assist those suffering the ravages caused by environmental degradation or unfriendly climate change, whatever its source or cause.
5. To labor with others in the various contexts in which we work to restore the health of environments where this has been damaged.
6. To stay informed regarding genuine threats to the global environment.
7. To show deference to the views of one another and others where the science is uncertain.
8. To speak up in international contexts for those suffering the ill effects of environmental degradation through no fault of their own.

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