

The Biblical Mandate for CARING for CREATION

DICK TRIPP



"... a detailed Biblical approach to the growing crisis in our environment, its causes, the role of the Christian Church and the challenge that lies before us all"
ARCHBISHOP DAVID MOXON

The Biblical Mandate for Caring for Creation by Dick Tripp. Exploring faith today; title no. 23. Wellington: Avery Bartlett Books, 2011. 158 pp. ISBN 978-0-473-19374-4.

Bible in the light of the present fact of Creation'. The environmental and ethical sources that he brings to the issues are largely contemporary and his scriptural references show that he is no flippant 'proof-texter'; rather the weight of the biblical references seems to cry: 'We should know this. How could we have set aside such persuasive evidence from Genesis, the Psalms, and the prophets?' Tripp comments particularly: 'So many of the detailed instructions of the law refer to the use and care of the land, directly or indirectly, that this is easily the most comprehensive of the ethical and theological categories of the law'.²

Two themes remained with me from this impassioned plea for Christians to become 'staunch creationists'.³

The one is Tripp's call to a eucharistic life rather than a consumeristic one: 'Perhaps the greatest reason for caring for the earth is, simply, gratitude'.⁴ The recent film *Interstellar* offers a dystopic prediction of how ungrateful humans are becoming for the beauty and fruitfulness of our world.

The other concerns salvation and redemption: '...if we are to treat our bodies with reverence now because they belong to the Lord and will one day share his glory, surely we must care for creation now for exactly the same reasons'.⁵ Christian environmentalists believe that they are called to care for this world precisely because it will be redeemed along with its inhabitants.

Notes

¹ p. 31

² p. 102

³ p. 144

⁴ p. 144

⁵ p. 132

By Philip Baldwin

Dick Tripp has left his readers in no doubt of the need for urgent attention to the state of our world and its inhabitants. In the first five chapters of *The Biblical Mandate for Caring for Creation* he cogently outlines the growing crisis in climate change, waste and pollution, water contamination, de-forestation, plant and animal extinctions, and desertification. From a NZ perspective, it is particularly chilling to read that American agencies' estimate that 13% of waste comes from agriculture, and 75% comes from mining, oil, and gas production—sectors of the economy where the NZ population continues

to have serious environmental concerns.

One of the most basic causes of our blindness to caring for creation, Tripp argues, is that 'Modern humans, leaving God out of the picture, see themselves as autonomous, accountable to none but themselves....'¹ A brief overview of the modern environmental movement, the positive and negative influences of Christianity on environmentalism, and the growing emphasis on caring for creation in modern Christianity conclude the first part of the book.

Then the author begins a closely reasoned exposition of scripture that leads us 'to read and understand the