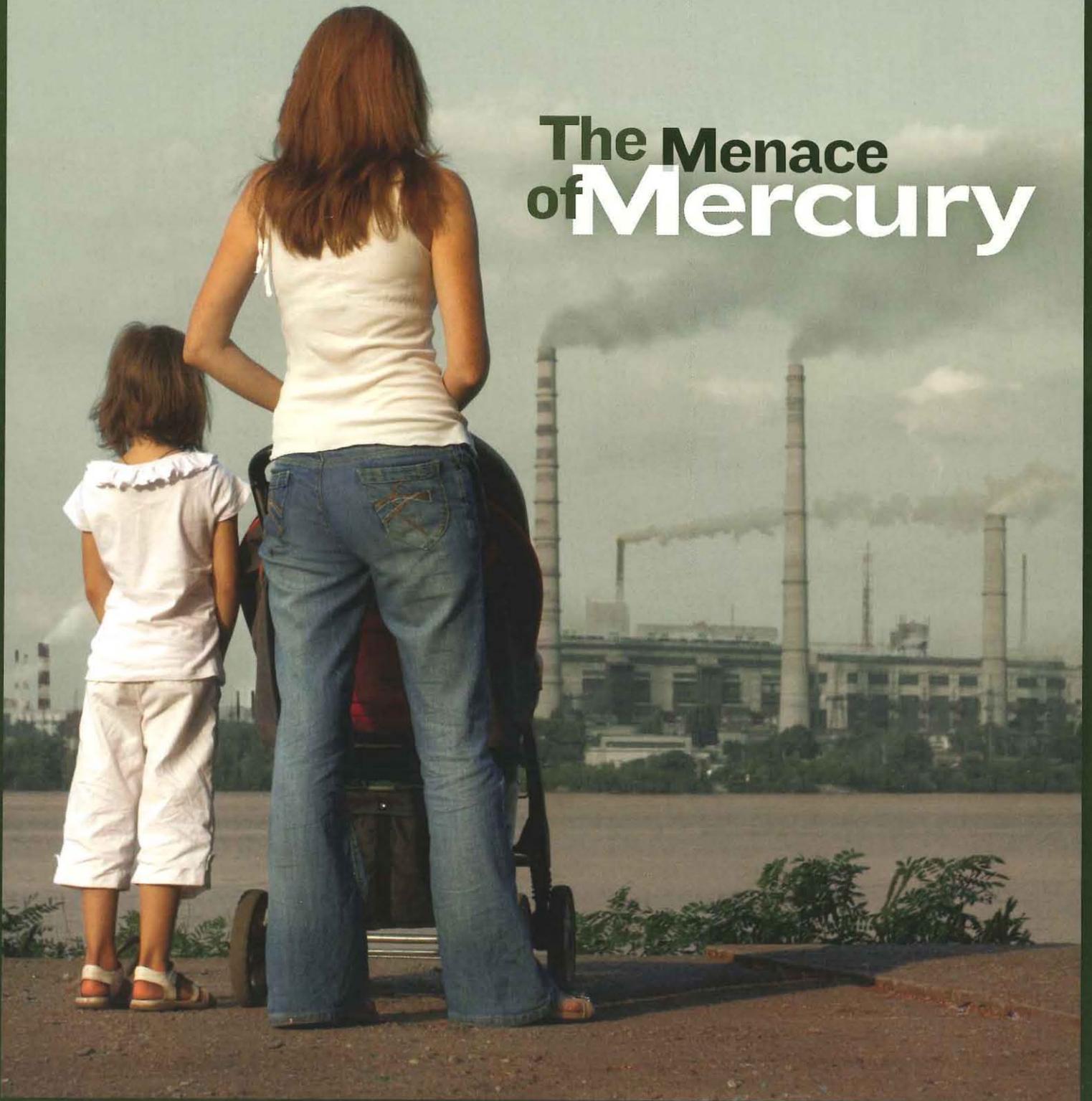
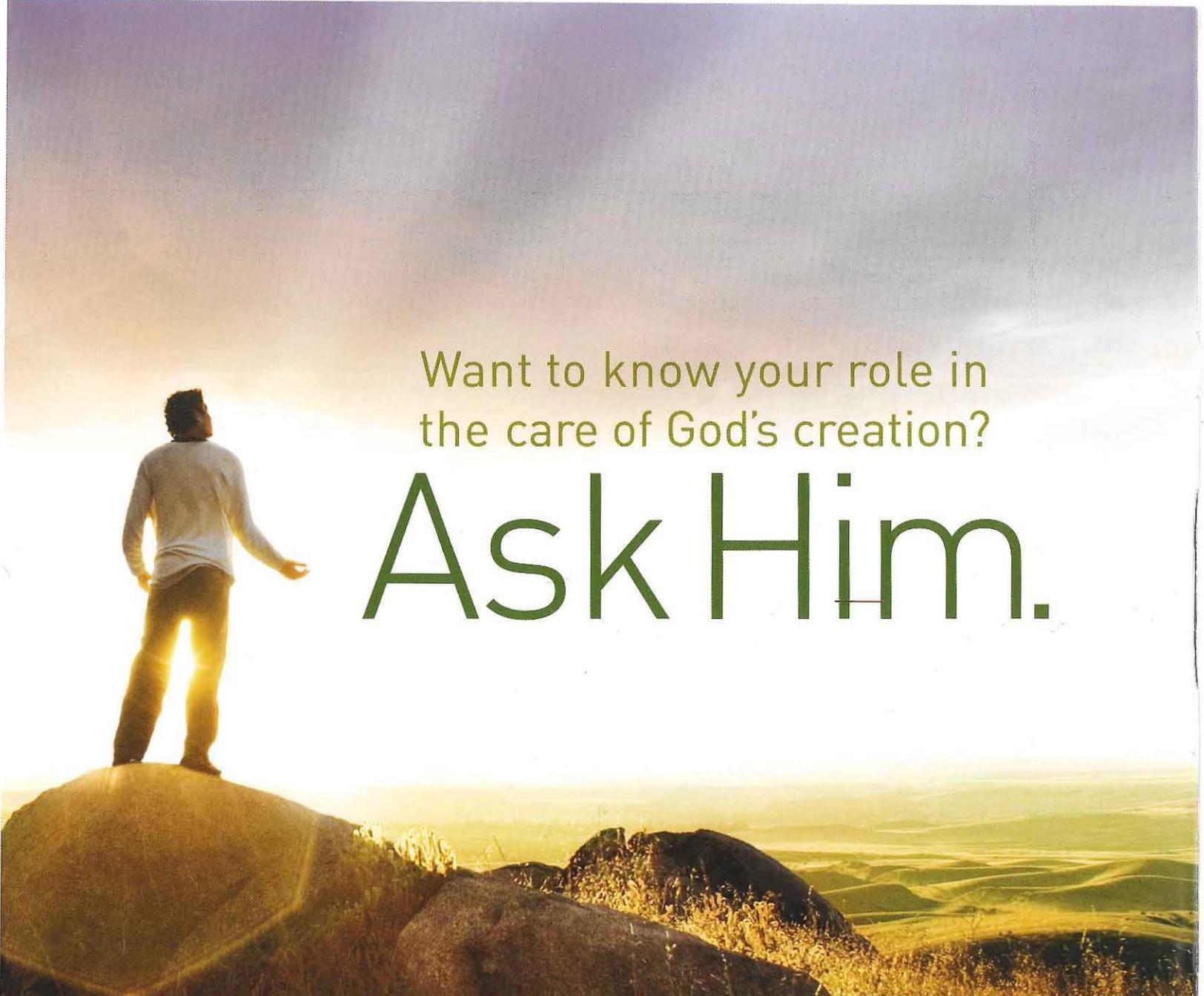


OCTOBER 2011

Creation n Care

The Menace of **Mercury**





Want to know your role in
the care of God's creation?

Ask Him.

Mark your calendars! April 26, 2012 will be our third Day of Prayer for Creation Care. The 2012 observance will be global in scope and a Prayer Breakfast in Washington, DC will feature The Rev. Dr. Christopher Wright, International Ministries Director of the Langham Partnership based in Great Britain (John Stott Ministries USA). A primary focus will be on the Lausanne Cape Town Commitment and its emphasis on creation care and the poor. www.dayofprayercreationcare.org.



**GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER
FOR CREATION CARE**

APRIL 26, 2012



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COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES, EDEN VIGIL, EVANGELICAL CLIMATE INITIATIVE,
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PLANT WITH PURPOSE, RENEWAL: STUDENTS CARING FOR CREATION, RESTORING EDEN,
WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE, WORLD RELIEF

Creation Care

OCTOBER 2011 • NUMBER 43

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Over 1.2 million children each year are lost to abortion. As Gary Bergel reminds us in his latest Genesis Life piece “Protecting the Unborn,” “every child conceived is a potential witness to God and to the power of His love, mercy and Redemption.” These are the future saints and kingdom oriented leaders who would be set apart for a world in desperate need of a Savior. What are we losing? Do we even really know?



To view the injustice of the issue, we must fully see with eyes wide open what is being lost. We ought to feel the weight of the unrealized potential and unrealized life.

Our society is at risk with the way we treat the unborn and the world around us. In this issue we are lifting up the impacts of mercury on the unborn. Be sure not to miss our “Speaking Out On Mercury,” which highlights the many evangelical pastors, lay leaders, Christian College Presidents, and ministry leaders who are weighing in on the harmful impact of mercury on the unborn. Be sure to not to miss their collective statement at <http://mercuryandtheunborn.org>.

Up to 1 in 6 children are born with dangerously high levels of mercury in their blood. A majority of the domestic mercury comes from coal-fired power plants. Mercury is a cumulative toxin, so the longer we wait to clean it up the worse of an impact it has.

“The Menace of Mercury” explores the life cycle of mercury—how it turns up in the food we eat, impacts forests and wildlife and, worst of all, enters the bodies and brains of those least able to defend themselves, unborn children. Every state in the nation has a mercury fish warning for pregnant women.

Be sure not to miss some excellent personal pieces by Tom Rowley and Keith Stoker. If you have a similar moving encounter with the Lord, be sure to be in touch with us at support@creationcare.org. Also, check out Ben Lowe’s upcoming work on Creation Care Discipleship and see what the good folks at Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center are up to.

In closing, let us ask ourselves what sort of heritage is it that we are leaving to the present and future generations? Will our grandchildren look back upon our lives and be able to say that, in a moment of great moral and personal challenge, the saints arose and went forth to be what God called them to, mainly a people set apart for His redemptive purposes in the world. Or will they declare, as Francis Schaffer warned in *Pollution and the Death of Man*, that we became a society that killed its very soul in pursuit of things that will never satisfy?

Blessings,
Alexei

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Creation Care is published regularly by the Evangelical Environmental Network. We strive to help readers care for creation in a way that is faithful to the scriptures. We believe in One God the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in one Lord Jesus Christ. For us creation care is a matter of life.

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Remembering a *Radical* Disciple

Preacher, Writer, Friend

JOHN R. W. STOTT CBE (1921-2011)

Time Magazine named him alongside Nelson Mandela and Bill Gates in its “most influential people” list of 2005. He was once described by Billy Graham as the “most respected clergyman in the world today.” And his leadership of the evangelical movement helped move it from a rather narrow-minded fundamentalism after the Second World War, to the fastest growing section of global Christianity it is today.

John Stott, the former Rector of All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, and one of the most significant Christian leaders of the 20th century, died on July 27, 2011 aged 90.

The work of Langham Partnership International (LPI, or John Stott Ministries in the USA) is perhaps his major legacy. This strategic threefold initiative, now under the direction of Christopher J H Wright, works to strengthen the Church in the Majority World by (i) training preachers, (ii) funding doctoral scholarships for the most able theological thinkers so they will be equipped to teach in their country’s seminaries, and (iii) providing basic libraries at low-cost for pastors. John Stott’s own considerable royalties were all ‘recycled’ into the production and distribution of theological books for the global south.

John Stott’s remarkable ministry spanned the whole second half of the twentieth century, and even in his 80s he was making an impact on the twenty-first. John Stott was well known as a man of considerable intelligence and humble integrity. In his time at All Souls Church and in the various causes he was involved with, he contributed a renewed confidence, graciousness and intellectual strength to evangelicalism. Alongside Billy Graham, John Stott was a significant player in the Lausanne Movement which promotes worldwide Christian evangelism. He largely crafted its two major documents, The Lausanne Covenant (1974) and the Manila Manifesto (1989). George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, commented, “John Stott’s contribution to developing a balanced evangelical faith

and to a biblically rooted Anglican communion is probably without parallel in our generation.”

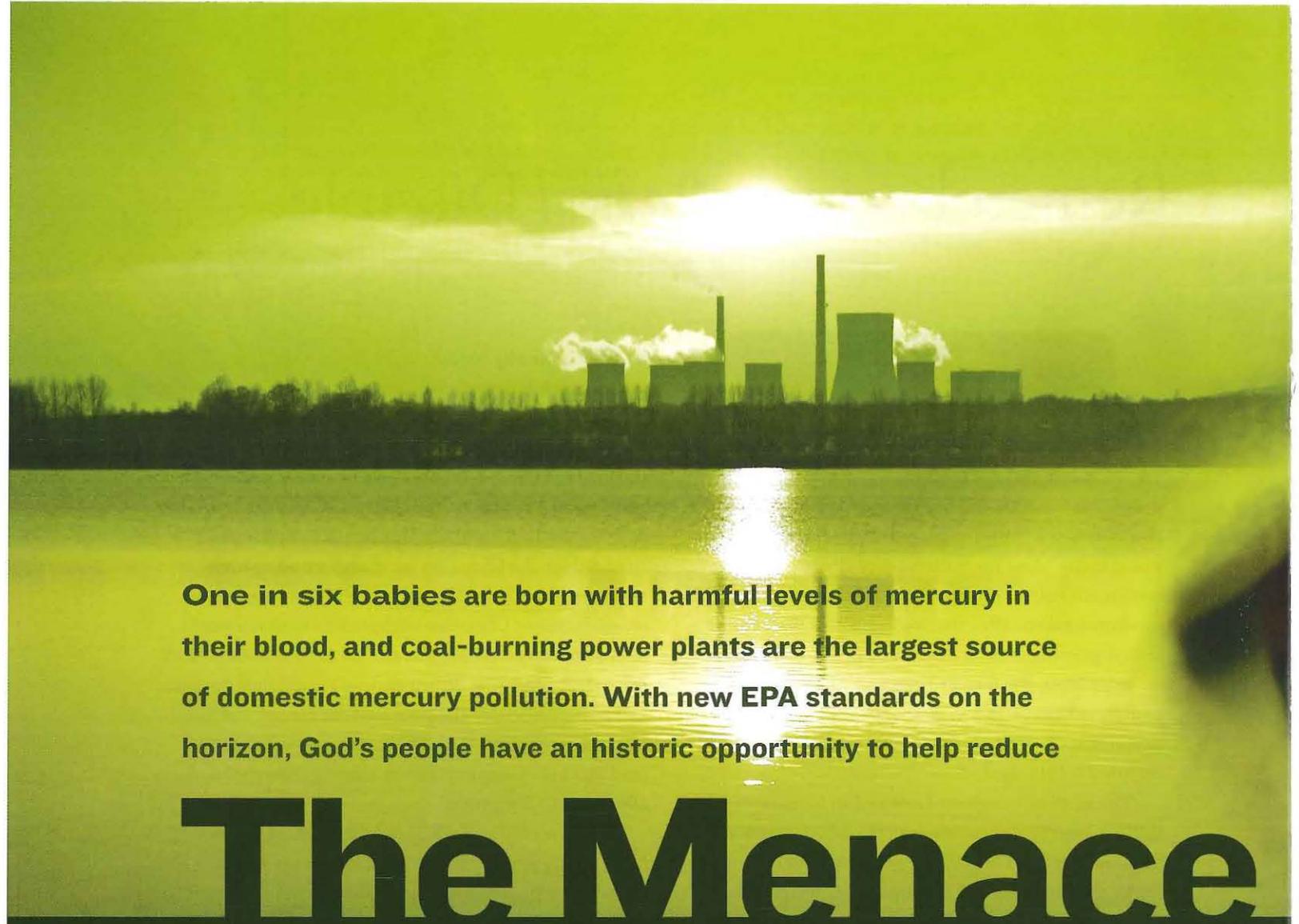
Classically evangelical, Stott emphasized the need for personal conversion, the authority of Scripture and the centrality of Jesus’ death for sinners. But he also emphasized the need for the Christian mind and stood against anti-intellectualism. Though a lifelong evangelist, he refused to limit Christian engagement with the world to evangelism alone. He was passionately committed to the moral and social dimensions of the biblical gospel, including justice for the poor and the care of creation. David Brooks, New York Times columnist, wrote “To read Stott is to see someone practicing thoughtful allegiance to Scripture.”

He pioneered and advanced the renaissance of biblical expository preaching—that is, a method of preaching which follows the sequence of the text as it is given in a particular book of the Bible. John Stott asked that donations following his death might be given to the Langham Partnership, which he founded and which seeks to raise the standards of biblical teaching and preaching around the world.

John Stott was the author of some 50 books, his farewell volume, *The Radical Disciple*, being published in 2010. His most significant books include *Basic Christianity*, *The Cross of Christ*, and *Issues Facing Christians Today*, along with many volumes in The Bible Speaks Today series. “His books have challenged and nourished millions of Christians into a balanced and thinking biblical faith,” said Chris Wright, Langham Partnership International Director. “His legacy through the global impact of the two organisations that he founded, Langham Partnership International and the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, is incalculable.”

John Stott, who never married, is the subject of two major biographies, one published in two volumes by Timothy Dudley-Smith in 1999 and 2001, and the other, a more popular narrative, by Roger Steer, in 2009. Both are published by IVP.

by **Ben Homan**



One in six babies are born with harmful levels of mercury in their blood, and coal-burning power plants are the largest source of domestic mercury pollution. With new EPA standards on the horizon, God's people have an historic opportunity to help reduce

The Menace

As a pro-life, creation-care community, protecting and enhancing life is at the heart of what we do, and that's why we want to stop the mercury poisoning of the unborn. For the first time in the history of our country, the unborn will be protected from the damaging impacts of mercury pollution from power plants.

For over 20 years the unborn have lacked the protection rightfully theirs under the law from this pollution. At long last, after being ordered by the courts, on March 16, 2011 the EPA finally issued the necessary regulations or standards, which will be finalized in November.

However, the protectors themselves (i.e., the EPA) need support and protection from those in Congress and industry who feel protecting the unborn from such mercury pollution simply costs too much. The EPA's ability to protect the unborn and young children from mercury calls for a concerted campaign to protect, maintain, and even strengthen these standards.



of Mercury

What Mercury Does to the Unborn

Consumption of fish contaminated by mercury is the main route of human exposure. The mercury drops from the air into the water system, where fish we eat eventually take it up. Mercury is extremely toxic to the brain and nervous system, especially to the rapidly developing brain of the unborn child during early pregnancy. When a pregnant woman eats mercury-contaminated fish, the mercury in the fish enters the mother's blood stream. Once in the mother's bloodstream, mercury can move directly across the placenta to enter the body of her unborn child. One of the body's protective shields against damage to the brain, called "the blood-brain barrier," is not fully developed until the first year of life. Thus, in the unborn child, mercury can cross this incomplete barrier and accumulate in the brain, causing

developmental disabilities and brain damage resulting in:

- Lowered intelligence
- Learning problems

This has lifetime implications. One study found that "The resulting loss of intelligence causes diminished economic productivity that persists over the entire lifetime of these children."

The unborn are also being harmed by air pollution (SO_2) that will be reduced as a co-benefit of the mercury standard. This pollution has been linked to birth defects, low birth weight, premature births, stillbirths and infant deaths.

Where the Mercury Comes From

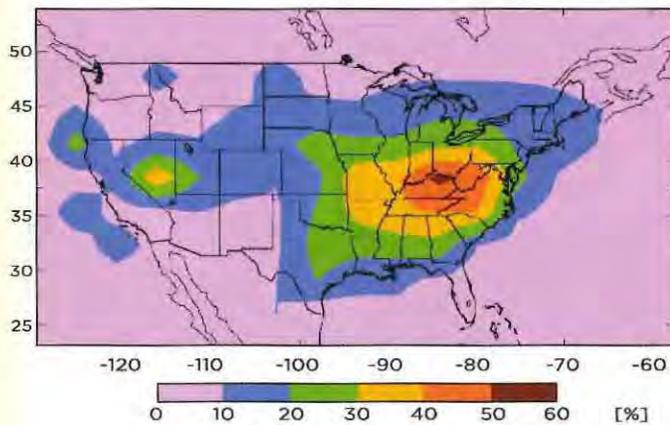
According to the National Academy of Sciences, "Mercury in the atmosphere comes as emissions resulting from human activities, from natural

emissions, and 'legacy' sources—previously emitted mercury that continues to be recycled between the air, water and land surfaces, and is therefore present in the environment for long periods of time. Once emitted from any source, mercury can be transformed to different chemical forms, transported through the atmosphere, and deposited long distances from the point of origin.”

Domestic Sources

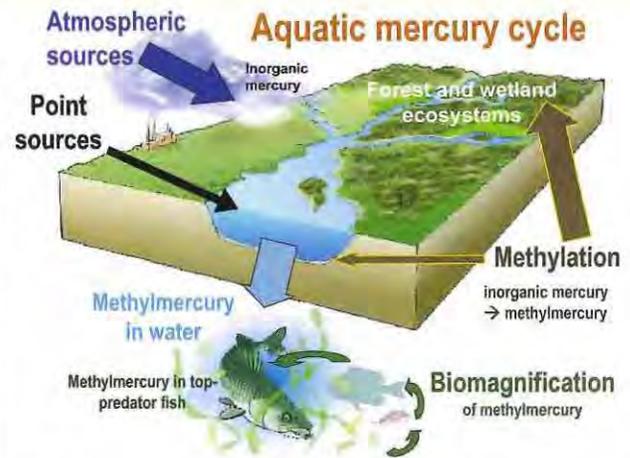
- Depending upon where you are, anywhere from 10 to 80% of mercury pollution is coming from domestic sources.
- Over 50% of domestic anthropogenic mercury emissions come from coal-burning power plants, making them the largest such source.

The map below of the U.S. shows how domestic emissions are affecting the country, with the light purple areas representing less than 10% domestic, red at least 60%, etc.



International Sources

- For the U.S. population as a whole, most seafood is commercially purchased (as opposed to self-caught), and most of what is purchased are salt-water species, with tuna the largest share at 39%. About 67% of commercial tuna comes from the Pacific Ocean and 10% from the Atlantic.
- 50% of global emissions are from Asia.



U.S. Geological Survey, National Survey of Mercury 2009

Conclusion: These facts mean that we cannot simply reduce domestic emissions. We must also work at the international level to get mercury emissions reduced. The first step, of course, is to practice what we preach and get our own house in order by implementing the EPA regulations without delay.

Pollution Reductions

According to the EPA, the proposed mercury standard for power plants would reduce:

- 91% of the mercury
- 55% of the sulfur dioxide (SO₂).

How Protecting Human Health from Mercury Will Be Achieved

Some power plants around the country have already installed the pollution reduction technologies to protect the unborn and vulnerable, and those that need to do so can install them in the 3-year timeframe set by the EPA (with a 4th year for those who need extra time).

Those opposed are arguing once again that more time is needed and it will cost too much (even though the law was passed in 1990 and in 2000 the EPA announced that mercury would be regulated). But as a representative for many of the cleaner utilities put it: “On the whole, the industry can comply with the proposed [standard] in a timely and cost-effective manner.” Another claim by the dirtier utilities is

“On the whole, industry can comply in a timely and cost-effective manner.”

—Michael Bradley, Executive Director, Clean Energy Group;
testifying before House Energy Subcommittee, April 15, 2011

“Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed.”

(Isaiah 1:16,17a NIV)

that compliance could disrupt reliability (i.e., possible blackouts). The cleaner utilities know that’s not true: “we do not believe compliance with the [standard] will compromise the reliability of the electric system. The U.S. bulk power system, at an aggregate level, has adequate spare capacity...”

Benefits of the Mercury Standard for Power Plants

1. Local Mercury Reductions

Reducing mercury pollution can have dramatic results in reducing mercury in fish that we eat. A study in Florida showed a 60% mercury decrease in fish after 10 years of strict regulations of local sources. A similar study in Massachusetts found a 70% reduction in mercury in the environment since the mid-1990s, and a 15-25% reduction in fish found in local streams and lakes.

2. Avoid Economic Losses from Brain Damage

Mercury pollution from power plants results in a yearly loss of around \$1.3 billion due to brain damage suffered in the womb.

3. Health Co-Benefits From Cleaner Air

According to the EPA, in 2016, these proposed rules would avoid:

- 6,800-17,000 premature deaths,
- 850,000 days when people miss work,
- 120,000 cases of aggravated asthma, and
- 5.1 million days when people must restrict their activities.

4. Clean Air Co-Benefits – In Dollars

The EPA’s modeling projects that:

- We will get \$59 billion to \$140 billion in health benefits each year.
- For every \$1 spent, we get \$5-13 in health benefits.

5. Jobs

The mercury standard and another clean air standard promulgated this year are projected to be major job creators. A recent report from the Political Economy Research Institute finds:

- Nearly 300,000 jobs will be created each year through 2015 due to implementation.
- There will be a net gain of over 4,000 permanent full-time jobs.

However, a few states will lose permanent jobs. For example: while Ohio gains 76,240 jobs from construction and its benefits, and adds 1,365 permanent jobs, it loses 1,772 permanent jobs for a total permanent job loss of 407 after 2015. Also, EPA’s modeling of the mercury rule found that there would be far fewer short-term jobs (31,000 as opposed to nearly 300,000) but more permanent full-time jobs (9,000 compared to 4,000).



Costs for Consumers to Protect the Unborn from Mercury

- EPA projects an electricity price increase of \$3-4 for the average consumer, and a 1.3% increase in residential gas prices.
- Some states who currently have lower rates, but also higher amounts of pollution and therefore will see higher utility price increases, are as follows:
- Oklahoma and Kansas (7.1%)
- Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky (5.5%)
- Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, & Nebraska (5.4%)
- Texas (5.3%).

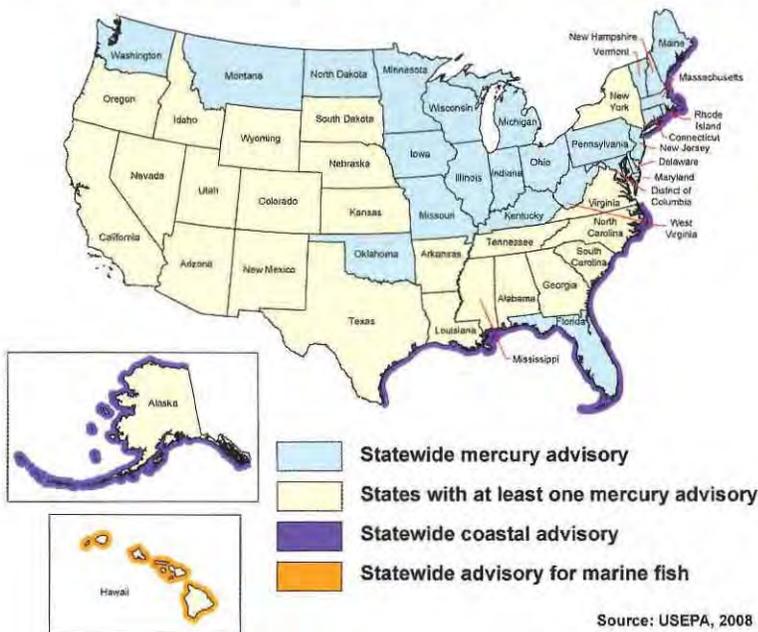
Benefits Exceed Costs Significantly When Cleaning Our Air

- CAA regulations have been some of the most cost-effective regulations in history. A comprehensive review in 2003 by the George W. Bush Administration found that benefits exceeded costs by 12 times.
- Benefits are projected to increase significantly in this decade. A Feb 2011 study from the EPA found that in 2020 benefits will exceed costs by 30 to 1.
- In addition, the economy has grown significantly while we have cleaned up our air. Since 1990, GDP has grown 64% while the country has reduced air pollution by 41%.

To protect all unborn children from mercury we must significantly reduce the amount of mercury pollution we create as a society. The largest contributor is coal-burning power plants.

Public hearings on the EPA Mercury Rule are being convened. Contact your Members of Congress and the Obama Administration with the following message: mercury from air pollution must be strictly regulated to protect the unborn. If you are a Christian, let them know that this is important to you as a Christian.

Warning: A Mercury Fish Advisory Exists in Your State



For More Information

For references, articles, and a chart with commonly eaten fish and their mercury levels, see the advisory from the US Department of Health and Human Services, posted at www.creationcare.org/mercury.



PROTECT LIFE

Christians are called to protect life, and for us that includes the unborn. Jesus taught us to love our neighbors and treat others as we would want to be treated. Protecting the unborn and children from mercury poisoning and air pollution, as the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Mercury Standard would do, is in keeping with Jesus' commands. Currently 1-out-of-6 babies are born with harmful levels of mercury in their blood. It is time to stop the mercury poisoning of the unborn.

LONG OVERDUE

The unborn were provided legal protection from toxic pollution like mercury in 1990. We've had two decades of bi-partisan foot-dragging, with the courts finally ordering the federal government to enforce the law and protect the unborn. Industry has known for over a decade that EPA was going to regulate them. It is well past time to stop gambling with the brains of unborn babies.

TREMENDOUS HEALTH BENEFITS AND JOB CREATION

Besides protecting the unborn from mercury poisoning, the air pollution reduced would help save up to 17,000 lives. Compliance with the Mercury Standard would also create over 30,000 jobs during construction and 9,000 permanent jobs related to operation and maintenance.



Why is creation care so urgent today?

What is the biblical mandate for creation care?

Who does our poor stewardship hurt the most?

How can disciples take action to make a difference?

Where can your church find biblically-based answers about stewardship of creation?



THE Creation Care RESOURCE CENTER

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BECOME INFORMED, EQUIPPED AND ENGAGED IN BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP

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Become a Creation Care Champion! You are invited to participate in our new Creation Care Teaching Institute monthly conference calls which cover the biblical basis of creation care, an introduction to urgent environmental issues, a continuing focus on mercury and the unborn, and much more. For information, for previous calls, and to learn about convening a Creation Care Teaching Institute seminar in your area, e-mail us at support@creationcare.org

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The moral case for protecting the unborn from mercury poisoning seems fairly clear. So if the laws to clean up our air, land, and water date back to as early as 1947, why has it taken so long for us to regulate the toxin of mercury and how likely is it that the actions needed to protect the unborn from mercury will be implemented?

The Battle Over

How bi-partisan foot-dragging conspired to endanger the unborn

When President Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970, the EPA was tasked with the protection of human health and the environment. The mandate was clear, the enforcement of Congressional law was less so. Anything new goes through a series of growing pains, EPA's was particularly accurate. Inside the agency its offices could not decide which office should take the lead on enforcement, outside the agency both the energy industry and the environmental community pushed for more and less generous enforcements for pollution clean-up.

Beyond the struggles of the office, the politics of the administration and each President soon took hold. The process for issuing a ruling on cleaning up any particular toxin (known as a rule) can take up to 10-12 years. If a particular administration wanted to delay any particular rule the process would often take much longer.

In essence, each President from 1970 to 1990 decided how forcefully they wanted to apply pollution laws. By 1990, the American People had had enough; it was time to reform the EPA and revamp the law. That year, President George H. W. Bush signed the Clean Air Act which among other things limited EPA's ability to change its approach to toxins on anything but the criterion of human health. So if the EPA wanted to take a known toxin off of its list to reduce, it had to do so based on a



finding that the toxin was no longer a danger to human health. That meant that a new administration could not automatically stop an EPA process unless the evidence was clear that the particular toxin was no longer harmful to human health. The 1990 act mandated and empowered the removal of toxins, like mercury, for the protection of the unborn.

When it comes to cleaning up mercury we need to go back to the late 1990s. In 1998 the EPA issued a study on the public health hazards of mercury. The study found “a plausible link between anthropogenic releases

of mercury from industrial and combustion sources in the United States and methylmercury in fish” and that “mercury emissions from coal utility combustion systems may add to the additional burden.” On December 20 2000 the EPA Administrator announced that it was “appropriate and necessary” to take actions to reduce mercury pollution. This put mercury on EPA’s list of toxins that by law it needed to reduce. The 2000 decision locked EPA into a rule based process for cleaning up mercury and its impacts on the unborn, a process which may finally find a clear EPA rule this

Mercury



November. After November, expect another 2-3 years of litigation before the rule is fully realized and finalized.

Throughout the 2000s, the EPA tried a voluntary approach to mercury reduction. Essentially the EPA took mercury from its most toxic list to a less toxic list, which allowed EPA to issue a rule that did very little to clean up existing plants. In essence mercury pollution stayed about level through most of the 2000s. Since mercury is one of those cumulative toxins that can’t be cleaned up once emitted, the cumulative impact on human health only became more severe. Several states sued the EPA for failing to follow the Clean Air Act in cleaning up mercury. In 2008 the courts decided that the EPA’s voluntary approach violated the intent of the 1990 Clean Air Act. Since 2008, EPA has been working on a rule to finally reduce mercury pollution.

So what does this all mean? Well opponents of the mercury rule argue that putting pollution control technology on older coal plants will make them more expensive to operate, ultimately forcing a company to take certain plants offline. However without those controls mercury pollution will only become more severe. That means the percentage of the unborn at risk for mercury will only rise and more streams and lakes will be closed to fishing.

Companies have the technology and ability to build cleaner and safer plants from coal and other sources. It’s time to move us in a direction where we don’t have to choose jobs over the well being of our children.

Speaking Out on

Throughout the summer EEN organized testimonies from evangelicals on the MACT mercury rule before the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EEN offered testimonies from Philadelphia, to Chicago, and Atlanta. Below is a sample of some of the many testimonies that were offered. For more information visit <http://creationcare.org/mercury>.

John Elwood

New Jersey's mercury problem is not ours alone: We share a 190-mile border with Pennsylvania. And while our coal-fired power plants emit only 284 lbs. of mercury per year, Pennsylvania's plants emit 15,550 lbs.—55 times more than our state. Not surprisingly, our neighbor's mercury emissions are not regulated. In 2009, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court upheld a ruling that overturned the state's attempt to reduce mercury emissions, presumably because the EPA was supposed to be carrying out this function itself. In New Jersey, we sit downwind of the country's worst mercury-polluting state, unable to do anything about it since the courts have found that only the EPA can come to our aid.

As you have heard from prior testimony, we seek to represent Christians in their efforts to protect the creation, and the creation's most vulnerable children. As you know, evangelical Christians often speak out in defense of the unborn, and we are all fully aware of the harm that mercury poisoning does to unborn children. The Bible often says that, in His justice, God has a special concern for the poor, for the widow, the orphan, the sojourner, the oppressed, and for little children. In other words, Christian justice demands that we give special attention to

those whom Jesus calls "the least of these brothers of mine"—those least able to care for themselves.

We have read of an estimated 700,000 defenseless children who are born every year in the United States with physical impairments resulting from exposure to mercury. On behalf of the gospel of Christ, we at EEN urge you to consider the requirements of justice as embodied in the Christian faith, and act to defend those least able to defend themselves.

Dr. Barb Timmermans

I teach nursing at Trinity Christian College. My specialties in nursing are Community Health and Maternity nursing. Given these 2 areas, I am concerned about mercury pollution both from a public health perspective, and from the perspective of a nurse interested in healthy newborns. As a Christian, I also believe I am called to protect unborn children and to protect the environment.

Currently, 1 in 6 babies are born with harmful levels of mercury in their blood. We know that in-utero exposure to mercury is especially devastating to a developing baby because the blood-brain barrier is not well developed until the first year of life. In the unborn child, mercury, which is a powerful

Mercury

neurotoxicant, crosses this barrier and may cause developmental disabilities, learning disabilities and lowered IQ. This loss of intelligence leads to lowered economic productivity. It is estimated that mercury pollution from power plants results in a yearly loss of around \$1.3 billion due to brain damage suffered in the womb. For these children, their disabilities will be life-long because the effects of mercury exposure in-utero are not reversible.

Since consumption of mercury-contaminated fish is the main route of human exposure, people sometimes suggest that pregnant women should just avoid eating fish. The problem with this argument is that women often do not know right away that they are pregnant, and so may consume fish for the first month or two of pregnancy. The most critical

neurological development takes place very early in pregnancy and mercury is especially toxic to the rapidly developing brain during this critical early period. Damage may have already occurred before the woman even knows she is pregnant. Also, mercury passes into breast milk, so breast feeding women who consume contaminated fish will pass this to their infants, and further brain damage may occur.

One of the marks of a moral society is the protection of its most vulnerable citizens. I believe it is time to protect the vulnerable

and stop the mercury poisoning of unborn children. We must do what we can to protect our next generations. As a country, it is our moral imperative. For me, as a person of faith, it is in keeping with God's command to love my neighbor and to protect the environment.

Mike Murray

I'm not a scientist and I'm not an expert witness on the mercury issue, but I am here to represent two very important people to me who couldn't be here today.

I'm here speaking for my grandchildren Lucy who is five and Murray who is three and 2 grandchildren who will be here in less than a month.

On the news and talk shows . . . a lot of people seem to be talking about the "national debt" . . . I guess they think that's

something that's important but when I get together with my old friends . . . that's far from the first thing on our minds . . . when we talk its usually about our families and health . . . money is pretty far down the list . . . even if it is a problem. We've lived long enough to know money isn't really real . . . it's made up . . . It is a social construct that can be changed at any time for the better or worse.

On the other hand, anything that jeopardizes our health or pollutes our earth is really important and something we need to think about carefully and talk about

"One of the marks of a moral society is the protection of its most vulnerable citizens. I believe it is time to protect the vulnerable and stop the mercury poisoning of unborn children."

-DR. BARB TIMMERMANS

frequently because it affects everyone Health and pollution are not social constructs...they are real

When the EPA stands up for what is right in this “mercury debate” . . . a lot of people will holler talking about jobs, lights dimming, too costly and too many regulations . . . lots of excuses to do nothing . . . just like Murray and Lucy and sometimes their grandpa does . . . but in the end jobs will be created, we’ll have a healthier world . . . things will unequivocally be better.

Of course, we won’t really know how much better until we decide to do the right thing That’s the irony...the only way to really know for sure how much better . . . is to stop doing the wrong things

Jason Duba

I am in full support of the newly proposed, national regulations of mercury, acid gases and other toxic air pollutants from power plants. For far too long, our air and waterways have been poisoned by tons of mercury, particulates, and acid gases due to fossil fuel energy.

I am in favor of these regulations primarily because they would reduce the negative health effects of pollution from power plants, most significantly among vulnerable, unborn children.

The health effects of mercury ingestion range from headaches and skin rashes to severe neurological damage. Our country’s most vulnerable populations—pregnant and nursing women, infants and the elderly—face the highest risks. Currently, one out of six babies are born with harmful levels of mercury in their blood and coal-burning power plants are the largest source of domestic mercury pollution.

The unborn are also being harmed by air pollution (SO₂) that will be reduced as a co-benefit of the mercury standard. This pollution has been linked to birth defects, low birth weight, premature births, stillbirths and infant deaths.

My wife and I are considering having a child in the future and the potential effects of mercury poisoning are a concern to us. We would be safer having a child if these regulations were enacted. As a Christian, I believe in protecting the precious life God gives, especially for those most vulnerable: unborn children.

Dr. Jerry B. Cain

President, Judson University

As a Christ follower, I am interested in life, not only the definitions of life which we frequently debate, but also the quality of life. As a life-long educator I am also concerned

about learning and all the accruements related thereto. I am grateful to the Environmental Protection Agency for providing this forum to hear concerns related to life and the quality of life.

Let me relate my first two appointments of today. I began this morning

“In the unborn child, mercury can accumulate in the brain, causing developmental disabilities and brain damage which result in lowered intelligence and learning problems.”

—DR. JERRY B. CAIN

attending a baby shower for the newborn daughter of our webmaster, Kevin Sherman. Very few university presidents will admit that a baby shower was their first priority of the day. In that snack room surrounded by adoring co-workers, I was reminded that 1-out-of-6 babies is born with harmful levels of mercury in its system. Is Anna Sherman that one? Though Illinois prides itself as the Saudi Arabia of the coal industry, coal burning power plants are the largest source of domestic mercury pollution in the US.

Research has identified the “blood-brain

barrier” as one of the body’s protective shields against damage to the brain. This important defense, however, is not fully developed until the first year of life. Thus, in the unborn child, mercury can cross this incomplete barrier and accumulate in the brain, causing developmental disabilities and brain damage which result in lowered intelligence and learning problems. We need to protect Anna Sherman from this modern curse.

I see the enforcement of the EPA regulations as conceived 21 years ago as an educational problem as much as an environmental problem. The enforcement of those goals will take 91% of the mercury out of the air as well as 55% of the sulfur dioxide. I suggest that nearly every American would gladly pay the \$4 in annual costs necessary to enforce these EPA guidelines. This would result in better brains, stronger bodies, sharper minds and be a major step forward in rebuilding our educational advantage over the rest of the world.

William P. Brown

I come as a person of faith, a Christian who is greatly concerned about our God-given responsibility to care for creation, including the health and well-being of future generations, and that begins with the health and well-being of our children, those already born and those yet to be born.

That’s why I firmly believe that the EPA’s proposed regulations to reduce emissions of toxic air pollutants from power plants is critical, vitally critical. Coal-fired power plants emit lead, dioxins, acid gases, mercury, and arsenic, to name a few. They are all known threats to public health. Mercury is particularly harmful. It doesn’t go away but instead builds up in the environment. In the form of methyl mercury in fish, it is especially dangerous to pregnant women and their unborn children—exposure,

it has been shown, can cause brain damage.

Jesus was and is known for many things, and among them he was known to love and genuinely enjoy children. He once asked, “Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake?” The answer is, of course, NO! That would be unthinkable. Would we give our children fish laced with methylmercury?

Jesus once placed a child in front of his disciples and said, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depths of the sea.”

I suspect that our children and our children’s children are going to condemn us for having jeopardized their health and their planet on which they will have to live, or try to live, if they are able. I highly doubt that future generations will look upon us with appreciation for what we are doing to this planet. Sometimes I feel that it would be better to be wearing that millstone.

To ensure creation’s beauty and its sufficiency as a habitat for generations to come—that’s a major part of our responsibility whether as Christians or simply as good citizens. And I believe that our ethical responsibility will ultimately be measured in terms of what kind of earth we are able to leave as a legacy to our children.

Bruce Alexander

*Environmental Regulatory Strategy
Director, Exelon Corporation*

Good afternoon. My name is Bruce Alexander, Environmental Regulatory



Strategy Director with Exelon Corporation, and I am pleased to be here today to provide you with Exelon's initial views on EPA's proposed "Air Toxics Rule."

By way of background, Exelon Corporation is comprised of three major operating companies. These include:

- Exelon Generation Company, LLC, which owns and operates over 25,000 Megawatts ("MW") of nuclear, coal, wind, hydro, solar, gas and oil-fired generation comprising the nation's fifth largest generation fleet;
- Commonwealth Edison Company, an electric utility serving over 3.8 million customers in northern Illinois; and
- PECO Energy Company, an electric and gas utility serving almost 1.6 million customers in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Exelon Corporation supports the policy objectives underlying EPA's proposed Air Toxics Rule and believes that the proposed rule is balanced, reasonable and long overdue.

Some claim that the power industry is monolithic and that we all think that EPA has run amok. That is simply not true. While some companies want to delay the rules hoping to squeeze a few more years of profit from plants that have no pollution controls, many companies have already made pollution control investments and are prepared to work with EPA. The deadlines are no surprise to any of us. When President Bush signed the Clean Air Act amendments in 1990, the entire industry knew that EPA was moving towards establishing federal standards for toxic pollutants like mercury, selenium, arsenic, and hydrochloric and sulfuric acid from power plants. In fact, in December 2000, EPA shared health studies with the industry which confirmed the need to move quickly to establish limits on these emissions.

Now, let me specifically address three issues that often come up in this debate:

electric system reliability, timing and electricity costs. First, nothing about this rule will jeopardize the reliability of the electric system. PJM, the nation's largest integrated power operator, just confirmed last week that its system will have more than enough electricity supply even after the Toxics Rule takes effect.

The experts think that there is enough time to comply between now and January 2015 when the rule is expected to take effect. I commend to your reading a detailed study prepared by URS Corporation, a well-respected engineering and design company, entitled "Assessment of Technology Options Available to Achieve Reductions of Hazardous Air Pollutants" which was released last month.¹ URS concluded that pollution control technologies to satisfy EPA's proposed standards are available and can typically be installed in less than three years. But the real proof is in the pudding. We know we can install controls in three years because many plants have already done it in that time frame. And, if there are unique circumstances where a plant requires more time to install controls, then EPA already has said it will give that time.

Lastly, let me talk about electricity costs. Adjusted for inflation, we expect that the price for electric generation charged to customers in 2015 will be less than, or equal to, the price charged in 2010 in both Chicago and Philadelphia. The reason is simple. While environmental costs may increase costs for certain operators, fuel costs to the run the gas-fired plants on the system have tumbled, driving down electricity prices. Our

Nation's discovery of new natural gas deposits from shale is the most significant event in the electric generation business in the last 25 years. It has ushered in a new era of low prices that more than offset any increases for environmental compliance in many parts of the country.

DISPATCHES *from the* Rising Generation



In order for future generations to thrive on God's good earth, we will have to transform the largely unjust and unsustainable ways we currently relate to our neighbors and the rest of creation. This is neither an option nor a trend. Rather, it is our reality and a timeless issue of Christian discipleship and witness.

In this newest section of *Creation Care*, we will begin highlighting reports and testimonies of how young adults—and the campuses and communities they belong to—are increasingly stepping up to care for all creation. This first profile focuses on the ground-breaking educational initiatives at Goshen's Merry Lea Campus in Indiana. Under the leadership of Dr. Luke Gascho, Executive Director of the Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center, Goshen College has become a champion of creation care and a sustainability leader among campuses nationwide.

We hope that you will find these stories of faith in action both instructive and inspiring! Feel free to contact our Director of Young Adult Ministries, Ben Lowe, at ben@creationcare.org with any questions, feedback, or ideas.

MERRY LEA'S Liv

by Luke Gascho

MERRY LEA'S 1,189 acres of land—filled with the diverse ecosystems of northern Indiana—make it an exceptional place to learn about the many facets of creation care.

Studying the intersections between ecology, faith, social dynamics, and earth systems with the intent to find better ways to live sustainably has been the focus of Merry Lea since its founding in 1967. The “classrooms” for this engagement include hiking on the seven miles of trails, wading in wetlands, standing in prairie restoration projects, canoeing on lakes, planting in gardens, and living in Rieth Village, a platinum-rated LEED® facility.

There are two exciting undergraduate programs offered at Merry Lea, which are open to students from colleges and universities across the country. The first is the Agroecology Summer Intensive. From early June to early August, students earn 12 credit hours by studying and practicing many principles of sustainable agriculture. The intensive is designed for science majors who envision involvement in aspects of sustainable agriculture, as well as for students of any discipline who wish to better understand the diversity, balance, sustainability and regeneration inherent to a healthy food system. Students live in the cottages of Rieth Village, which is situated in the midst of agroecology plots and the ecosystems at Merry Lea. The setting provides an outstanding living classroom for interactive learning. Weekly outings to sustainable farms and organizations in the region augment the breadth of learning experiences. The summer experience is also designed to foster environmental awareness and leadership in participants.

The second undergraduate program, the Sustain-

ability Semester in Residence, is offered each fall. Students from many different majors earn 15 credit hours in classes about environmental policy and politics, faith and ethics in relation to the environment, the ecology of water sources and more. While the regional watershed serves as the context, students work with broader themes like regeneration, sustainable living and eco-justice for the entire semester. This semester-long program is designed around problem-based learning, which means that instead of being passive consumers of lectures, students solve problems by asking questions, researching answers, integrating theory with practice and communicating what they learn with others. Participants grow by applying their faith commitments to practices of sustainability, learning the value of lived community, and embodying messages of hope.

Merry Lea offers a Master of Arts in Environmental Education degree—an 11-month graduate program that is designed for people who plan to work as environmental educators with students of all ages in diverse settings. The program is a challenging intensive experience in all aspects of environmental education. The program includes extensive time in the outdoor classroom, indoor discussions, teaching, field trips, projects, and several weekend conferences

Rieth Village, which houses the Center for Undergraduate studies at Merry Lea, includes two cottages for student housing and one building for offices, kitchens, and a computer lab. These buildings are examples of best practices in Green and Sustainable Design.

ing Classrooms



Agroecology students planting eggplants.

or workshops. During the practicum portions of the program, students work with K-Adult groups who are visiting a natural area or environmental learning center for one or two days. At the same time, the curriculum develops participants' skills to work with parks, schools, businesses, churches, and/or communities with a long-term commitment in caring for creation. This is a wonderful opportunity to become a leader in education and to contribute to the care, restoration and preservation of creation.

Recently Merry Lea established the Institute for Ecological Regeneration, one of three institutes at Goshen College. The Institute for Ecological Regeneration is committed to bringing renewal and vitality to ecosystems through research and education. Regenerative activities are informed through observations in life systems. The ways organisms interact with each other and with their environment

form the basis for theories, concepts, and practice. Principles of faith and shalom guide the choice of actions to bring regeneration to ecological issues. The commitment is to apply these understandings to real life issues in ways that are renewing and life giving is transformational. The institute provides a context for studying, integrating and applying the interdisciplinary constructs of resilience of the land, responsibilities of people in community, and commitments to peace and justice. Conducting research, maintaining field collections and data, delivering formal academic courses, hosting symposia and disseminating learnings through various media to an array of publics achieve the goals of the institute. The mission of the Institute for Ecological Regeneration is enhanced by the interaction with professors, students, and organizations from many places that are committed to the goals of the institute.

Licentious Consump



by Tom Rowley

tion

SOMEWHERE between hearing Tony Campolo chastise Christians for driving fancy cars, piling clutter in our driveway to peddle to yard-sale shoppers, and eyeing with ever-increasing angst my ever-increasing middle, I began to think about consumption as sin.

On the off chance that you're still reading, let me admit my own uneasiness with the topic. Here be dragons. And there is, of course, that darn log in my eye. Nonetheless, with mounting damage to ourselves, our neighbors and the planet, the notion that consumption at some level becomes an offense to God is worth pondering. After all scriptures seem to ask and question how much man idolizes his wealth and pursuits on this earth to the substitute of worshiping the one true God. The idolization of wealth has always been a sobering reminder of the fruitless and destructive ways of those who live apart from God. At times we may be much closer to echoing those fruitless lifestyles than we care to admit.

Consider the Psalms on this point:

Psalm 49:5b-12 (ESV)

...the iniquity of those who cheat me surrounds me,
those who trust in their wealth
and boast of the abundance of their riches?
Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,
for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice,
that he should live on forever
and never see the pit.
For he sees that even the wise die;
the fool and the stupid alike must perish
and leave their wealth to others.
Their graves are their homes forever,
their dwelling places to all generations,
though they called lands by their own names.
Man in his pomp will not remain;
he is like the beasts that perish.

Beyond the Psalms and the scriptures we need look no further than Good Friday's horrific reminder of and payment for our offenses all of them. The recently released Lausanne Cape Town Commitment sets the

stage for such pondering when it asserts that “love for God’s creation demands that we repent of our part in the destruction, waste and pollution of the earth’s resources and our collusion in the toxic idolatry of consumerism.” The word “sin” may be absent, but the message is not.

The big problem, of course, comes in determining

When Does consumption, necessary as it is for sustaining and even enjoying life, move from good to *bad*?

that level. When does consumption, necessary as it is for sustaining and even enjoying life, move from good to bad? Does the threshold vary from person to person? Culture to culture? Is it different for the billionaire than for the pauper? For the American versus the Ugandan?

To be perfectly honest, I don’t know. Or maybe, to be perfectly honest, I don’t want to know. Imperfect knowledge, however, is no excuse for inaction. Not on this front. Nor, for that matter, is imperfect motivation. I am heartened here by words of The Merton Prayer:

“MY LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.” Not withstanding uncertainty about the level of consumption (or wealth being a blessing from the Lord, or the connection between consumption and jobs, or the claim that free markets and technology will solve the problems if only we let them), I believe my desire to consume less is pleasing to the Lord. After all, the Earth is the Lord’s and all the fullness thereof, and he did assign it to our loving care.

And that belief is only strengthened by the frightening accuracy of this 1955 quote from retail analyst Victor Lebow:

“Our enormously productive economy demands

that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions, our ego satisfactions, in consumption. The measure of social status, of social acceptance, of prestige, is now to be found in our consumptive patterns. The very meaning and significance of our lives is today expressed in consumptive terms” we need things consumed, burned up, replaced and discarded at an ever-accelerating rate.”

Dubbed “conspicuous” consumption by economist Thorstein Veblen and later referred to as “consumerism”; the behavior might best be described as “licentious”—lacking moral restraint.

So what is one to do? Of the many possible responses, the worst choice is the one most often chosen: to punt. To claim that it’s too complicated to sort

out, too inconvenient to act upon, or too big for my meager efforts to matter. And then go on consuming as licentiously as before.

Instead, a good place to start with any sin is, of course, confession. Even if I only admit that I don’t know how much is too much, but want to honor God and care for his creation by consuming rightly. And then to start trying. In our house, we’ve begun to ask of any potential acquisition: “Is it useful or is it beautiful?” If not, then consume not. Deliberate instead of licentious.

All of which may sound like a turn toward asceticism. I don’t think it is. Rather, as with all acts of faithful obedience, deliberate consumption brings a blessing. A savoring of the fewer things I do consume. A savoring that gets lost when I consume with little thought like a child deep in Christmas toys grabbing for the next one then the next. There comes also a deeper savoring of God, free from the clutter that so easily distracts, numbs and insulates us. A savoring that surpasses all else. One that leads us to join the psalmist in proclaiming, “Taste and see that Lord is good.”

Tom Rowley is the Executive Director of A Rocha, a Christian stewardship and conservation group. To read more of Rowley’s work and his colleagues work visit <http://arocha-usa.org/>

What Lightning Taught Me

The sky grew dark as storm clouds billowed overhead. On the sand volleyball court, we looked up in apprehension and dismay, praying that the storm would hold back long enough to let us continue our game. Thunder boomed every minute and flashes across the sky warned of the rain to come, but we kept on playing, dedicated to the game until the rain came down. For an hour, in between points, I would look up and watch the magnificent display all around me, orange and purple streaked across the sky at random intervals as lightning leaped from cloud to cloud. As we played, the lightning flashed and every time the sky would light up with color. Throughout this hour of thunder claps, flashes of lightning, sand beneath my feet, and sweat on my back, that verse from Psalms 19 kept passing through my mind. “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of his hands.” (Psalms 19:1, NIV)

I started my adventure in Creation Care earlier this Summer, as I was without work and a little bored. I was talking to Alexei Laushkin about my predicament, and he offered that I help him out with social media work for Creation Care. Although I had no experience with communications, and have never really considered myself an “environmentalist,” I figured it couldn’t hurt to help out a friend, use up some of my spare time, and get some experience; three days later, I was posting a book review about a book on animal stewardship. Now a month later, I can honestly say I care about the stewardship and care for this world. Of course I still have a lot to learn about what work has already been done to protect God’s creation and I definitely have a lot to learn about what I personally can do to care for this world.

So why do I bring up the lightning storm and the volleyball game? A month ago, I probably would have been annoyed at the distraction to the volleyball game,

or I might have looked at it once or twice but not really spent the time to enjoy this display of God’s glory. However, as I looked up at that lightning cloud, all I could think about is that we serve a God that is so beautiful. Creation testifies to the existence of God as Romans 1:20 tell us “for since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities his eternal power and divine



nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse” (NIV). I clearly saw the existence of God in the beauty of that lightning storm, and all around the world, breathtaking views of creation show the same God and the same beauty. Creation care truly is a matter of life, not only physical life but spiritual. God used a big lightning storm to remind me of this; maybe it will be a stunning sunset or a majestic mountain for you. When you see the creativity and handiwork of the Creator, remember, stewardship of His creation is a command and the protection of this world truly is a matter of life.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart...” —JEREMIAH 1:5

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” —EPHESIANS 2:10

ANDREA BOCELLI, one of the best-known operatic singers in the world today, sat down at the piano during a charity performance for Haiti on June 1, 2010 and started telling a “little story.” He shared how a young pregnant woman went into the hospital with appendicitis. Doctors put ice on her stomach, and later suggested she have an abortion, since they believed the baby would be born with some disability. “But the young brave wife decided not to abort, and the child was born,” Bocelli recounted, sitting at the piano. “That woman was my mother, and I was that child.”

Bocelli then publically thanked his mother for not ending his life. “Maybe I’m partisan, but I can say it was the right choice,” the singer said. “I hope this could encourage any mothers who sometimes find themselves in difficult situations, in those moments when life is complicated, but want to save the life of their baby.”

Bocelli was born partially blind with congenital glaucoma. When he was still a boy he lost his sight completely. Yet, at 53, he has sold more than 70 million records.

GENESIS LIFE:
PROTECTING
THE
UNBOR

BY GARY BERGEL

Attorney Rebecca Kiessling travels internationally and tells her story of how, though adopted as an infant, at 18 she learned that she was conceived out of a brutal assault at knife-point by a serial rapist. After meeting her birth mother she discovered that she had barely escaped death at the hands of illegal back-alley abortionists. Many people tell Kiessling that she was lucky. "I wasn't lucky; I was protected," she replies.

Rebecca reports encountering sincere individuals who believe that abortion is the only appropriate solution in every case of rape. At times she is accused of being "pro-rape." Some have even looked her in the eye and said they believe she should have been aborted. "I remember feeling like garbage because of people who would say my life was like garbage—that I was disposable," Kiessling states.



THE MATTER OF PROTECTING MUST BE OF PRIORITY



ANDREA BOCELLI

Rebecca Kiessling expresses deep gratitude for her life and walks in her calling encouraging society to value and protect human life and to help women avoid debilitating and destructive lifestyles and choices. Who can

deny that she was protected for purpose?

Matthew Law, 17, lives near Baton Rouge, Louisiana. During a bus trip to Washington, D.C. to participate in a second March for Life, he found out for the first time that he was nearly aborted. Sitting next to his adoptive mother who went with him on the trip, Christine Law sensed it was time for her to share how she had reached out to his biological mother, a woman who had lived on the streets and was sexually active. Christine had counseled her and tried to persuade her to carry Matthew to term and to let her adopt him.

But, at six months in her pregnancy, Matthew's biological mother went to an abortion clinic that, unbeknownst to her, did not perform late-term abortions. A nurse telephoned Christine who Matthew's biological mother had listed as an emergency contact. It was during that phone conversation that Matthew's birth mother decided to forgo the abortion.

"When I found out that I was a baby saved from abortion, I was amazed by the power of God," Matthew states. "My life has come full circle in a way, because now, here I am fighting to save lives the way my mother fought to save mine." As a result of being born prematurely with resultant medical issues, Matthew's birth mother also came near death while delivering him. Mathew's birth mother recounts that her own mother was told that she would be brain damaged and that she should be left at the hospital to die. The anguished mother instead took her struggling

premature baby home.

Matthew Law, 17, has founded a Teens4Life chapter in Baton Rouge and was recently presented with a youth award "for his Christian leadership and witnessing of gospel values." "I want people to know that we are survivors and that our lives mean something—something powerful in the sight of God," Matthew declares.

In combing through Internet trails of comments posted with accounts of abortion and rape survivors, one finds angry notes claiming that "pro-lifers" only like talking about "famous" people, like Bocelli. A fan of another popular singer, Josh Groban, was quick to respond, "Not so!" He shared that Groban's gifted but little-known vocal trainer, David Romano, has adopted a son who is a rape survivor. "Almost famous, huh?" Groban's fan quipped. He went on to say that he knows the baby's birth mother and that another friend's fiancé is a rape-conceived survivor, a man now defending our nation as a U.S. Marine. God's prevenient grace truly works in marvelous and mysterious ways.

These snapshots are only a few out of multitudes that could be presented as living evidence that unborn human beings are precious in the eyes of God. All are of innate worth and carry profound potential. While called and set apart to differing callings and stations of life, all are of equal value as "image-bearers." (Genesis 1:26)

Ultimately, every child conceived is a potential "witness" to God and to the power of His love,



REBECCA KEISSLING

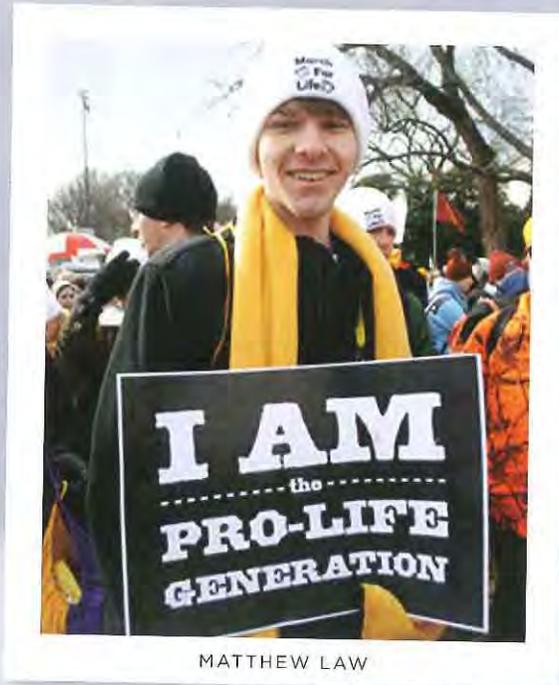
THE UNBORN, IN ALL WAYS POSSIBLE, CONCERN TO ALL PROFESSING CHRISTIANS.

mercy and Redemption.

In 1772, four years before the Declaration was formulated and signed, Samuel Adams penned a short piece entitled "Rights of the Colonists as Men." It included: "Among the natural rights of the Colonists are these: First, a right to life; Secondly to liberty; Thirdly, to property... As neither reason requires nor religion permits the contrary, every man... has a right peaceably and quietly to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience."

The "dictates of conscience" held by a person, hopefully informed by scripture and the gospel of Christ, were deemed to be a citizen's most sacred "property." It was widely assumed that under the protection of the state, and in an atmosphere of liberty, an individual's dictates of conscience would work to draw them into revelation, redemption and relationship with God. The Pilgrims, Puritans and most colonial Christians understood that it was in knowing and serving God that they would experience true "happiness." All are to be afforded the freedom to seek their destiny and callings in Christ—the "good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10 NKJV) Walking out God-appointed destiny is the greatest happiness possible this side of eternity.

Unlike the custom in Europe, no one sect of Christianity, no one form of worship, was to be instituted as a state church in the Colonies. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution put additional restraints on the state from establishing any one expression of religion or sect and from impeding the "free exercise of religion." Every individual, church and community is free to passionately pursue God.



MATTHEW LAW

The earliest drafts of the Declaration of Independence show that Thomas Jefferson, a slaveholder, authored in the abolishment of slavery. Others in the Continental Congress, after intense debate and arguments that abolition needed to be "delayed," unfortunately edited out Jefferson's intent.

In 1968 Shirley Chisholm became the first black woman to serve in the U.S. Congress. She has astutely observed that, "When morality

comes up against profit, it is seldom profit that loses." This corrupt dichotomy was at work in our founding and is at the core of our battle with today's dirty coal utilities over the emission of mercury and other toxins harming the unborn, polluting our air and water, and undermining the health of families and communities.

My wife and I recently moved near Charles Town, West Virginia. Besides grossly polluted waterways, including the beautiful Shenandoah River, our coal-mining state is rife with legal battles concerning mine deaths and safety, wanton mountain top coal removal, and the toxic effect of coal sludge which has contaminated water supplies and is causing serious illness in multitudes of children and adults.

With the recent push toward releasing pockets of natural gas from shale through a complex process called "fracking," the drinking water of entire counties and communities are now threatened from "the toxic brew of chemicals" used under high pressure (compounds which the natural gas fracking officials are reluctant to fully identify). Why?

Each day the news corroborates that corrupt

MY TURN by Susan Bergel

God loves babies! His word tells us a lot about how He thinks about them.

He calls them His gifts. —Genesis 33:5

He calls them His reward. —Psalm 128:4

He decides who gets them. —1 Samuel 2:21

He prevents or allows their conception. —Genesis 29:31, 38:11-30

He has a plan for every life conceived. —Jeremiah 1:5; Judges 13:5; Luke 1:15

He wants them to be born and come to Him. —Matthew 19:14

He wants them to make us happy. —Psalm 127:5

Some days, while raising ten, it was helpful to reflect and see children from God's perspective instead of my own.

government, agencies, institutions, companies and yes, a corrupted Christianity, are preventing the protection of the unborn from prevailing. The matter of protecting the unborn, in all ways possible, must be of priority concern to all professing Christians. Why?

Because the unborn not only represent the continuance of the human race, they represent, and in actuality are, God's future in the earth—they are His "offspring." There is "one God and Father of all." (Ephesians 4:6; Job 31:15) "Has the Lord not made [husband and wife] one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring." (Malachi 2:15) God is ever seeking His own heirloom "holy seed."

Over 40 million intentional abortions have been recorded since 1973. In truth, we have extinguished one-fourth of an emerging generation. We have grossly depleted their full potential, their generation's "pool of genius," as some of our Founders and various historians have termed it. How could the future of the church and of the nation *not* be affected?

Should we really wonder why so many of the next generation are anxious, confused and full of angst? Or why so many of all ages are now deeply troubled and depressed? We have willfully destroyed one-fourth of God's potential godly offspring. We are ripping God off, practicing injustice, and still naively expecting to feel good and "be blessed."

The unborn "echo" the reality of the pre-existence of Christ, God the Son, in the triune Godhead.

For the sake of Christ, the Eternal One, it is time "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly"

with our God and with one another. (Micah 6:8)

Glen H. Stassen and David P. Gushee point out in their study, "Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context" (InterVarsity Press, 2003), that "Jesus had a prophetic rather than a legalistic understanding of the content of righteousness. For the prophets, true righteousness consisted of deeds of love, mercy and justice, especially to the most vulnerable."

The authors note that Jesus said our righteousness is to go beyond the rabbinic ritualistic righteousness prescribed by the Scribes and Pharisees. In his "inaugural address" (Luke 4:18-19), Jesus quotes Isaiah and embraces the poor, the captives, the blind and the oppressed. In subsequent teachings, Jesus emphasizes that we must expand our circles of love by including strangers and even enemies. Christ repeatedly called his followers to turn from empty, outward forms of self-righteous religiosity "toward an awareness of the inner wellsprings of real moral purity or defilement as they are expressed in behavior to others."

Please join us in following Jesus of Nazareth and in protecting the unborn, the most vulnerable in our midst today.

An expanded essay by Gary Bergel, YouTube clips of Andrea Bocelli's "little story" and songs, and links to the full stories of the others outlined at the start of this article are posted at CreationCare.org/GenesisLife.



Gary and Susan Bergel reside near Charles Town, West Virginia and are directors of Community Peace International, a department of the Two Rivers Native American Training Center. Gary serves as a Senior Contracted Editor for Creation Care magazine. Susan, after raising ten children including two adopted bi-racial daughters spared from abortion, has turned toward breeding canaries and organic gardening, ways of extending the love of Jesus to people from many cultures as they visit her home and markets.

Ungratefulness

Lord, with what bounty and rare clemency
 Have you redeemed us from the grave!
 If you had let us run,
 Gladly had man adored the sun,
 And thought his god most brave;
 Where now we shall be better gods than he.

You have but two rare cabinets full of treasure,
 The Trinity, and Incarnation:
 You have unlocked them both,
 And made them jewels to betroth
 The work of your creation
 Unto your self in everlasting pleasure.

The statelier cabinet is the Trinity,
 Whose sparkling light access denies:
 Therefore you do not show
 This fully to us, till death blow
 The dust into our eyes:
 For by that powder you will make us see.

But all your sweets are packed up in the other;
 Your mercies thither flock and flow:
 That as the first affrights,
 This may allure us with delights;
 Because this box we know;
 For we have all of us just such another.

But man is close, reserved, and dark to thee:
 When you demandest but a heart,
 He cavils instantly.
 In his poor cabinet of bone
 Sins have their box apart,
 Defrauding you, who gave us two for one.

—George Herbert





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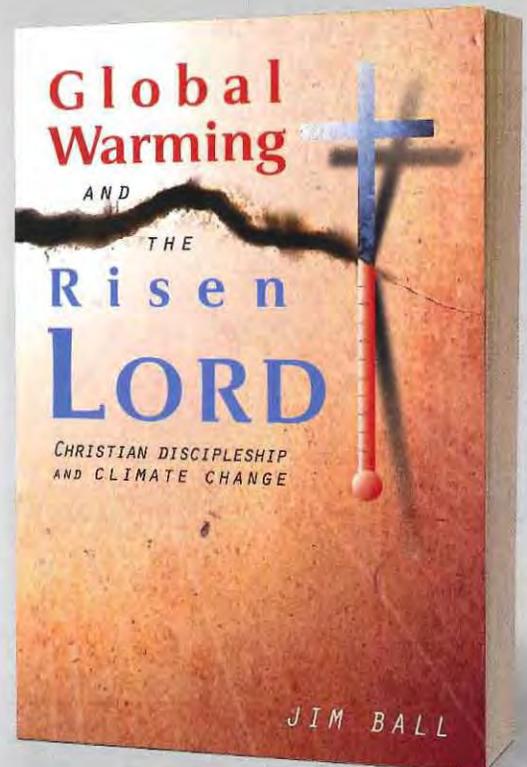


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