



Your Living Environment

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MAN'S INTIMATE CONTACT WITH THE EARTH

"The meaning and future of human life on earth are debated with growing uncertainty. We need a deeper understanding of the living world and of the future of man himself, out of which we can develop a wiser, more harmonious partnership with the life of the planet."

"We need to find a new 'Ecological technology', which will call for *new* concepts, *new* methods, *new* relationships between human beings and the earth" ((Emmerson College brochure).

Until quite recently, statements like this were unusual, but now they have developed into a solid chorus of semi-official opinion. Food producers and mankind as a whole are moving in one of the most uncertain times in human history.

Commenting on this, Dr. Schumacher (Soil Association Chairman) has stated that many people are now calling for *new values* and *new concepts*, without telling us which of our current values to abandon, or where to find these "*new concepts*".

These comments are highly significant because they show that man has lost his way in this world and that even the experts are uncertain and divided on man's future. Thankfully, we do not have to be in this condition. We can have the assurance that the *right* answers are available and that we can apply them.

In this issue of *Your Living Environment* we want to achieve that purpose by showing you:

First — that man is totally weak, vulnerable and dependent as a species on this planet and therefore needs infallible ecological guidance.

And *secondly* — that such guidance exists, is unique, is available and should be used!

Getting Man In Perspective

The very concept of seeking "*new values*", implies running away from something *old* and that's what humanity has been doing for millennia. We will show that man is missing his mark and that as long as he goes on searching for these *NEW* values he will continue to miss it!

Man needs to give up this eternal searching for something *NEW* and go back to recapturing some really *OLD* values. However, before coming to the subject of *OLD VALUES* — let us first have a look at man himself to get us in right perspective.

May we begin by mentally taking you into outer space for a truly objective view of ourselves? This is perhaps the only way we can consider mankind as a whole, together with our earthly environment. After doing that, we will mentally re-enter through the atmosphere and zero-in until we finally come back down to earth and even to individual personalities like you and the writer.

Here we are, 3,600 million human beings, orbiting through space on a tiny ping-pong ball! Looking back from millions of miles out in the solar system, our planet is nothing more than a pinpoint of reflected light, spinning at 1,000 mph as it circles that giant ball of fire, the sun — at precisely one revolution per year! It is that sun that keeps us warm. It is our energy source and should we not be grateful that there is no energy crisis in its relationship with the earth?

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE, AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT, RESEARCH NEWS

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But there could be and it would be fatal to all life-forms on our planet. For example — have you ever thought how, inevitably, we would all freeze to death if this little sphere of ours wandered off course and away from its energy source — the sun? On the other hand, we would all be fried to a crisp if our little *golf-ball* was to suddenly swing into a tighter orbit around that white-hot inferno, with its flames leaping out in every direction up to a million miles into space!

This is delicate environmental balance in the extreme, yet it is something over which puny little man has absolutely NO control!

Do you often ponder the impossibility of all the orderliness and precision of these planets and galaxies happening just by accident? How impossible for these planets to stay in balance relative to each other and the rest of the universe! Such astronomical precision could not continue to function smoothly of its own accord for an instant — even if it had come into existence by “*accident*”.

Now let us come a little closer and enter the earth's atmosphere. There's an interesting phenomenon — *the atmosphere!* How often do you reflect on where it came from and the coincidence that it exists in a form that so perfectly matches and supplies the needs of every living thing on the earth below? It couldn't have just happened either. It was especially designed and created for its job.

Here is where man does *begin* to exercise some influence. For example — man has proved he can pollute the atmosphere with radioactive dust particles. He struggles to precipitate rain and disrupt hurricanes at their centre. But *man* did not *create* the atmosphere and neither does he *control* it.

These marvels of creation are almost beyond man's comprehension, yet millions never even raise their heads to wonder *how* it was all created and *how* it continues to function *without* man and now you might say — partly in spite of MAN!

The next stage of our mental descent from outer space is to touch down on the surface of this planet EARTH. Here we find the oddest phenomenon of all — it is called LIFE! We find multiple forms of *life* — some we can see with the naked eye and some we can't. Some are plant, some are animal and of some we are not sure.

But here are these myriad life-forms — all co-existing, living, growing, reproducing, dying and decomposing together — in one miraculously conceived and fantastically complex symbiotic relationship! Yet man created NONE of them!

Finally there is — MAN — cynically perhaps, yet on his record, accurately described as *the one misfit species* — more awesome, more wonderful

in his design and with more potential than all the other terrestrial life forms put together!

That potential springs from one simple fact and one fact only — MAN differs from all other life-forms — HE HAS A MIND, as something separate and quite apart from instinct. *Man has freedom of choice*, which no other physical life-form has. Man's brain and his freedom of choice give him potential for good and also for evil. *And according to his choice*, so goes his environment!

So here we are — 3,600 million human beings all with the power of intellect and a reasonably accurate self-produced record of our activities through recent millennia. Off in the vastness of space we see other celestial bodies. And at our feet is a complex living system — by which we will survive, *if* we learn to work with it!

Groping To Find Our Way

To believe that we and our environment brought ourselves spontaneously into existence is as irrational as believing that 20th century technology happened without the creative ability of MAN!

It is good to rehearse the proof of a Creator God and to remind ourselves of man's insignificance alongside the rest of creation.

Millions of our species are told they are educated — but who, for example, can answer such simple questions as: *Where we come from, why we are here and where we are going?*

What is even stranger still — this world is in grave danger of annihilating itself, before discovering the answers to those three questions!

It is not surprising that man has lost his way. This is exactly what we should expect — after all, God states quite emphatically:

“IT IS NOT IN MAN THAT WALKETH TO DIRECT HIS STEPS” (Jer. 10:23).

That means it is *impossible* for MAN to go the right WAY! But the fact that our steps *can be correctly directed*, should be *very* comforting.

There is, however, only one way by which this can be done — man must have an infallible basic reference point to avoid losing his way, down through successive generations.

Consider now, the directional guidance mechanism of modern agriculture. Is it not *EXPERIMENTATION*? Is the agro-chemical industry not completely dependent on the results of complex research projects and experimental programmes? Are these not backed by governments and multi-million pound industrial combines, encouraging man to devise ever more fearsome ways of conquering “*nature*”?

Superficially it looks good and though it captures the imagination of a lot of people, “*experimentation*” is really no guide at all! That

is why modern agriculture is adrift on a sea of confusion of its own making. It contains no genuine basis to which man can relate his experimentation.

The entire system is wrongly orientated. To take just one aspect — if MAN continues to strive for *maximum* rather than *optimum* yields he could be choosing between human survival and catastrophe!

The reference point, or guiding light of organic agriculture is OBSERVATION, rather than experimentation. "*Observation*" is fine because it embodies the ecological approach, but it too lacks something. Every organic farmer's way is right in his own eyes, so *organic* agriculture will always be weakened by division and diversity. It too, must accept the basic guidance of God's law.

Source of Environmental Guidance

Our work at Ambassador College is different. It is based not on "*experimentation*" or "*observation*", but on REVELATION!!

What "*revelation*"? It is the revelation of God, through his inspired Word, that Christ created man and every minute detail of our natural environment (Col. 1:16, John 1:3, Heb. 1:2). Often we limit God's Word to a colourfully illustrated package of doctrines, but it is time for us all to change that attitude. Remember, God the Father and Christ were far more than double PhDs in *Ecology* from the beginning. Only now, after almost 6,000 years is mankind discovering the existence of such a *science*!

Through his Word and by his Holy Spirit, God has given his begotten sons direct access to his divine guidance. But do we fully realize that that guidance includes *food production* and *environmental management*?

On the other hand — most agro-chemical farmers are different. They have a blind faith that what they call *science* is going to continue to work for them and they cling to this system like a shipwrecked sailor to a piece of driftwood.

Faith in that kind of "*science*" is faith in MAN. Most of us have exercised a wrong kind of faith in man and his *scientific* achievements. These are often distinctly *UN-scientific* — seeking merely to short-circuit the laws of God and protect man from self-induced penalties. We can all be sure that apart from God — MAN WILL NEVER SOLVE HIS PROBLEMS!

By contrast, if we closely observe our environment and learn to work with it, we can have absolute *faith* that all life on this planet can be blessed and supported by an orderly system based on LAW.

We shouldn't need reminding that man has been stumbling around in environmental blind-

ness for thousands of years, creating deserts, disease and destruction. You above all people, know what man has done and is doing to his environment.

This is where we come back to the subject of recapturing OLD values. It is not man's eternal striving after some elusive NEW concept that will solve his problems. What is needed is a return to *true* values, upon which man has in the past turned his back. He has in fact lost his way and is unable to pinpoint himself without the guidance of God's Word.

A nose and a mouthful of water in our first swimming lesson soon teaches us about asphyxiation. A couple of falls down a flight of stairs is sufficient to impress the law of gravity on us. Man likewise accepts the laws of thermo- and aerodynamics, and a huge package of laws poised ready to kill any one of us the instant we deliberately disobey, or even *forget* them. They do not leave man a fear-ridden quivering mental wreck. Neither do they cause us to become depressed and frustrated. On the contrary, they are a great comfort — reassuring us that we can be guaranteed protection every single time we obey them.

Why is it then that man does not feel the same way about the laws of environmental management? It is because we think we can get away with ecological law-breaking. That's why men keep talking about seeking a *NEW ecological technology*, *NEW concepts*, *NEW values* etc. Anything rather than obey God's LAW!! We need to pierce through all this glib talk about abandoning "OLD" values for "NEW".

This is not the first time in human history that man has brought this planet to the brink of environmental collapse and we know what happened last time! Man is now having his second chance and today we are back at the edge of the ecological abyss. We are so precariously close that many are expressing real fear of environmental catastrophe!

Man goes on breaking environmental laws (which includes agriculture) because the penalties are not speedily executed! Now, as more of these penalties ARE finally coming upon us, men are feverishly holding *conferences*, *seminars* and *symposia* in search of solutions. But as long as they reject the law of God as the foundation of man's environment, they will *never* solve our problems!

Man's eternal searching for something NEW, as the solution to his problems is a sterile, hybrid cross between Satanic and self-deception.

The first positive step for mankind is to prove God's existence. That is now unnecessary for this readership, but we still need a regular reminder

of the greatness of God's creation and of our own insignificance. Seeing ourselves in true perspective as part of the total environment is what TRUE Ecology is all about!

That's what makes the motto — RE-CAPTURE TRUE VALUES — so appropriate to this subject. "True Values" are not "NEW". They are OLD — as old as the laws of gravity, sound and electricity.

There is no other way for us to focus the grave dangers confronting man. We, above all people must never lose sight of this, because we know that mankind is deceived and that he will choose to remain ignorant of the ecological laws governing the quality of life and even survival! It is up to each one of us to study in detail and work at keeping ALL the laws affecting our human environment — but are we??

In a world filled with confusion, there is only ONE source to which we can turn!

The Bible — Man's Only Hope

In a recent interview for the October 1973 issue of *The Soil Association Journal*, Dr. Schumacher was asked:

"Where for our entire man-made world problem, is there one unravelling point?"

The "world problem" being "man-made" is good phrasing of the question. The world is not "man-made", but its problems certainly ARE! Dr. Schumacher replied by saying that SOIL is in his opinion the "unravelling point".

Perhaps we need not disagree with him, but we would go even deeper. The "world problem" is MAN himself! Physically, there is no better way than to work up through the soil as a means of correcting our environmental mistakes, but the basis of the "world problem" is NOT physical! It is SPIRITUAL!

The real "unravelling point" lies in the closest scrutiny of our Creator's instruction manual — the Bible. It is the one source that makes an effective claim to be the instruction book man must have. Ecologically, many of us have not thought of it in these terms before, but it is the foundational written source of ALL environmental management!

Perhaps the following questions and answers will more readily convince you of this. Ask yourself — would mankind as a whole, ever discover:

A. *That indiscriminate cross-breeding of plants, animals and men is wrong* (Lev. 19:19. Gen. 6: 1-9)? Answer — No! Proof — this practice is becoming more widespread than at any time since the days of Noah!

B. *That food production from pigs, horses, rabbits, snails and lobsters is wrong* (Lev. 11,

Deut. 14)? Answer — No! Proof — after thousands of years man is still producing these foods for human consumption, the Bible and the Jews notwithstanding!

C. *That continuous grain-monoculture is wrong* (Lev. 25)? Answer — No! Proof — it is the commonest form of grain production in an age when technology makes it easier than ever to diversify our agriculture.

D. *That man should not work on the seventh day, even in the middle of his harvest* (Ex. 34:21)? Answer — No! Proof — men everywhere still do it, in spite of the fact that mechanization enables them to do seasonal work faster than ever before.

E. *That we should give God the first tenth of all our increase every year* (Lev. 27:30)? Again, the answer is No! Proof — mankind couldn't even discover God himself, unless he is revealed to us (John 6:44).

F. *That scientific research establishments, experimental stations, institutes and university schools of agriculture will never solve this world's problems?* The answer is No! Proof — our Creator states that in the last days men would be ever learning and yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (II Tim. 3:1,7). Elsewhere a much stronger statement is made concerning man's relationship with his environment and with God (Rom. 1:18,22)!

Are you Living it — NOW?

It is too bad that we are all so limited in our knowledge of God's intricate and awesome creation. But what is worse is that we sometimes choose to remain in that condition!

So many city-born are almost completely cut off from any appreciation of what God's environment is all about. Even those of us born to the land often fail to understand that real effort is required of us in actively seeking God's way in ALL aspects of our lives. Some even imagine it is a facet of life not to be bothered with until after the *millennium* begins! God says:

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa 1:19).

That was written to ancient Judah and to us today, so perhaps we should all examine ourselves to see just how "willing" we have been to search God's Word for understanding and how "willing" we are to diligently apply it. How else can we really expect to "eat the good of the land"?

"Diligently" is the way God says we are to hearken to his law (Deut. 28:1). That in no way excludes the laws of ecology and *environmental management*. And by no stretch of the imagination can *willingness* and *diligence* be linked with an attitude of waiting it out until the millennium begins!

That natural human desire may have some appeal, if we lack understanding, because then the problems will all belong to someone else. They will be the humans — we will be spirit beings — won't we?

Let's not be too sure of that. Our millennium is NOW and if we don't strive to live it, who is going to qualify to guide the global re-establishment of God's way on this earth and WHEN?

Christ revealed to John:

"I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

Peter wrote of the Father:

"Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work" (I Pet. 1:17).

Read what the Apostle Paul says about our "work" in I Cor. 3:13-15! In the above references the Greek for "work" comes from *ergo* (to toil). Of course we are to "toil" at becoming perfect beings in our marriage, child-rearing, labour relationships etc., but if our "toil" involves agriculture and part of God's natural environment, we had better do it correctly too!

Do you believe that? Are you 100% convinced that Satan is the controlling influence over this world's system of food production and environmental management (Rev. 12:9) or do you have certain reservations? Are you so lightly grounded in God's law that you believe it will work only in theory and that in practice we must compromise and do something different?

We must strive to reach the point where regardless of any of our own short-comings, or those of any agricultural employees of Ambassador College — each of us knows that the system of this world is doomed to failure! We must recognize that it rubs off on us daily, that it is specifically designed to *attract* us, to *deceive* us and to cause us to *fall for it* and furthermore, to turn our back on God's way!

Agriculturally, most of us have not yet come to this realization and until we do, we are prime targets, in fact a *push-over* for any scientist, agricultural advisor, or salesman that gets his foot in the door!! (II Cor. 11:3). It seems that if each of us is not constantly *on guard* Satan can sweep away in minutes that which it has taken months to implant in the mind (Luke 8:12).

What does this mean as far as the individual farmer is concerned?

As Paul said:

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

Isaiah 28:9-13 and *II Peter* 3:16-18 remind us that we must not expect all the information to

leap out at us once we open some key page in the Bible. As the Bible states — it is a matter of *here a little, there a little!*

Paul could have been writing on God's laws of environmental management when he stated:

"That which may be known of God is manifest to them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom. 1:19, 20).

A thousand years earlier God inspired David to write that the whole universe declares his glory. He says that it is as if every day and every night is imparting knowledge to us, regardless of what language we understand (Psa. 19:1-3).

This can happen only if we are watching and studying our environment, in conjunction with God's Word and with the help of his Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:14-16).

Job, approximately one thousand years before King David, also referred to our need to study God's creation for knowledge:

"Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.

"Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

"Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" (Job 12:7-9).

It is easy to talk, or write about *studying* God's law and his creation, but DOING IT is often quite another matter! As a rule, farmers don't *go much* for this type of thing, often using the excuse that they are "*practical men*" and just "*too busy*". Such talk is absolute *rubbish* — and dangerously suicidal *rubbish* at that!!

Who will be the first farmer to step forward and claim that he is busier than King David was, ruling over the nation of Israel and fighting off its enemies?

Yet David wrote that he loved God's law and that it was his meditation all the day (Psa. 119:97). Do we have that attitude, or are we *too busy*?

David said:

"Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end: Give understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psa. 119:33, 34).

Do we have any reason for lack of personal effort that would be valid in God's sight, or is God going to have to prod us into action? He WILL! And when he does, let's hope our reaction is as good as David's. Apparently God had to prod him, because he tells us:

"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psa. 119:67, 71).

It is much less painful to move without God's prodding, but at least it brought the value of God's law sharply into focus for David, because he then said:

"The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver" (Psa. 119:72).

It will take "*study*" and perhaps a little "*affliction*" to produce in us a knowledge and an actual love of God's law.

Next, we need the wisdom to apply it. But, where shall "*wisdom*" be found? God asks this question and gives us the answer in Job 28:12-28 and James 1:5. Part of the wisdom any farmer will need to exercise concerns the rate at which he attempts to make any major changes in his agricultural methods.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the speed of these changes should be directly related to the individual's experience in working with the natural system of organic agriculture. Failure to adhere strictly to this principle will inevitably result in disappointment, perhaps frustration and even severe financial losses. This produces a "*turned-off*" reaction in the people concerned and they are very reluctant to *turn-on* again!

It should be emphasized however, that lack of experience should never be used as an excuse for lack of *zeal*. Any man can quickly and enthusiastically launch into his own experimental pilot project.

This should be big enough to provide the operator with the necessary practical experience and yet small enough to avoid financial distress, in the event of failure. How big is "*big enough*"? That will vary according to farm size and financial stability. It can mean setting aside a small garden-bed in your vegetable area, or a few trees in your orchard, one or two cows in your herd of 50 to 100 cattle, or an acre or two if you have a few hundred acres under grain, or pasture.

In addition to this, one should embark on a re-education programme from secular material. There is quite a lot available on organic agriculture and we can guide you in your selection.

You are already far advanced in your spiritual re-education. This may have taken years and it will continue throughout this life. There is absolutely no reason why we should imagine that the process of acquiring *knowledge, understanding* and *wisdom* relative to God's laws of environmental management and ecology is any different!

Go God's Way, Not Man's

Don't allow yourself the possibility of being lumped in with the present society by God. It is sick and far-gone!

In Psalms 65, God inspired his servant David to write the following on man's environment:

"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

"Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blestest the springing thereof.

"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

"They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

"The pastures are clothed with flocks: the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing" (Psa. 65:9-13).

Our society is so far gone today that one of its modern scribes would probably re-write the above verses along the following lines:

9. You need not visit the earth, we will water it from our concrete reservoirs and our rapidly falling water-table. We will greatly enrich it from our rivers, polluted with fertilizers, slurry and industrial waste.

We will prepare our own corn when our plant breeders, seed merchants fertilizer salesmen, machinery agents and bank managers provide for it!

10. We will water the ridges abundantly by seeding the clouds with silver iodide, or through our new non-clogging trickle irrigation. If this settlest not the furrows, our giant mechanical sod-busters and our 130 hp tractors will!

11. We crowneth the year with unparalleled disease epidemics and our paths are strewn with low-protein grain.

12. 450 units of nitrogen will we drop upon the pastures of our wilderness — in three strategic applications! And the little hills erode on every side into the bottom of our costly dams.

13. Our pastures we clothe with straight-ryegrass and artificially inseminated cross-bred stock. Our valleys also are covered over with hybrid corn. And they are far too depleted of natural fertility to either shout for joy or even sing!

Don't deceive yourself that it doesn't really matter how we manage our soil, plants and animals in this age. If we don't have an *intimate contact with the earth*, we are the poorer for it. If we do, then let's make the most of a wonderful opportunity and begin receiving more of the natural blessings God intended from the beginning!