

Environmental Sustainability is Deeply Rooted in the Concept of Stewardship

From a biblical perspective, environmental sustainability is deeply rooted in the concept of **stewardship**—the idea that humans are caretakers of God's creation, not owners. Here's how Scripture frames this responsibility:

Biblical Foundations of Environmental Sustainability

1. Creation as Divine Gift

- *Genesis 1:1* begins with “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,” establishing that all of nature is God's handiwork.
- Because creation belongs to God (*Psalms 24:1*), humans are entrusted to care for it, not exploit it.

2. The Cultural Mandate

- *Genesis 1:28* commands humanity to “fill the earth and subdue it,” and to “have dominion” over all living things.
- This dominion is not license for destruction, but a call to **responsible governance**—to cultivate, protect, and preserve.

3. Stewardship and Accountability

- *Genesis 2:15* says God placed man in the Garden of Eden “to work it and keep it.” This implies active care and maintenance.
- Like the Parable of the Talents (*Matthew 25:14–30*), humans are expected to use resources wisely and will be held accountable for waste or neglect.

4. Respect for All Living Things

- Biblical laws protect animals from cruelty (*Deuteronomy 25:4, Proverbs 12:10*), reflecting the intrinsic value of all life.
- *Psalms 104* celebrates the interconnectedness of creation, showing how every creature depends on God's provision.

5. Jesus' Example

- Jesus often used nature in His teachings—the lilies of the field (*Matthew 6:28–30*), the mustard seed (*Matthew 13:31–32*)—highlighting its beauty and spiritual significance.
- His command to gather leftovers after feeding the 5,000 (*John 6:12*) shows a concern for avoiding waste.

Sustainability in Practice

From this biblical lens, sustainability means:

- **Conserving resources** as an act of worship and gratitude.
- **Reducing harm** to ecosystems as a reflection of God's love for all creation.
- **Promoting justice**, since environmental degradation often harms the poor most severely.

A Call to Action

Christians are called to live in harmony with creation, not just for ecological reasons, but as a spiritual discipline. Advocating for sustainable practices, ethical consumption, and environmental policies aligns with the biblical mandate to “love your neighbour” (*Mark 12:31*)—including future generations.