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Article

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MORAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND GOVERNMENTS IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

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Abstract

This study investigates the intersection of New Testament ethics, moral responsibility, and ecological sustainability, with particular attention to the roles of individuals, the Church, and governments in responding to climate change. Anchored in a theoretical and theological methodology, the research employs close textual analysis of key New Testament passages alongside critical engagement with contemporary theological voices, including Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Jürgen Moltmann. It explores how Christian eschatology, stewardship, and communal ethics can be reclaimed as vital resources for addressing the climate crisis. The study identifies a persistent tension in Christian theology between spiritual salvation and earthly responsibility, a divide that has historically hindered robust ecological engagement. In response, this research proposes an ethically grounded, biblically informed framework that integrates personal virtue ethics, communal discipleship, and institutional advocacy. This tripartite model offers practical guidance for how faith-based actors especially within Christian communities can contribute meaningfully to public discourse and climate action. What sets this study apart is its deliberate bridging of theological ideals and actionable ethics, contributing to a growing field of ecological theology with a distinct New Testament lens. By situating ecological care at the heart of Christian witness, the research reframes climate responsibility as not only a moral obligation but a spiritual calling rooted in the gospel message.

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Keywords: New Testament Ethics, Ecological Theology, Moral Responsibility, Christian Discipleship, Climate Action.

Introduction

Climate change has become one of the most pressing moral and existential challenges of the 21st century. Rising global temperatures, erratic weather patterns, extreme flooding, and droughts are no longer future projections but present realities, especially impacting vulnerable communities with little capacity for resilience. Scientific consensus affirms that these climate disruptions are largely human-induced, resulting from unsustainable consumption patterns, greenhouse gas emissions, and environmental degradation (IPCC, 2023). This crisis is not merely technical or scientific it raises profound ethical questions about responsibility, justice, and care for creation. Amidst this urgency, ethical and moral voices are increasingly necessary. Theologians and ethicists argue that faith traditions must re-engage the moral dimensions of climate responsibility, especially in ways that challenge the complicity of both individuals and systems (Pope Francis, 2015; Deane-Drummond, 2020). The Christian tradition, particularly through its New Testament teachings, holds powerful resources for reimagining our relationship with the earth not as exploiters, but as stewards and co-creators. In Nigeria and other parts of the Global South, where the effects of climate change are disproportionately felt despite minimal historical contributions to emissions, the moral stakes are even higher. There is a growing need for a renewed theological voice that holds both individuals and governments accountable. This paper begins from the conviction that moral responsibility for climate justice is not optional it is a gospel imperative rooted in New Testament ethics and the life of Christ.

Statement of the Problem

Despite growing global consensus on the urgent need to address climate change, there remains a theological gap in articulating how both individuals and governments should respond ethically, especially from a New Testament standpoint. While Christian theology affirms creation care, the New Testament's emphasis on spiritual transformation, personal virtue, and the coming Kingdom often leads to ambiguity in addressing systemic and policy-level ecological responsibilities (Moltmann, 2012). Consequently, many Christians either spiritualize environmental crises or view them as primarily political issues, neglecting biblical imperatives for justice, stewardship, and communal responsibility (Bauckham, 2010). Moreover, the New Testament's treatment of state authority (Romans 13:1–7) is often misread as a call to passive submission rather than active advocacy for the common good (Wright, 2010). This study seeks to bridge that gap by offering a theological framework for understanding how both individuals and governments can act responsibly in light of the gospel and the ecological crisis of our time.

Purpose of the Study

This paper seeks to examine how teachings in the New Testament can shape and inspire a morally responsible response to the growing challenge of climate change. In a world where environmental degradation increasingly threatens the well-being of people and the planet, especially the poor and vulnerable, it becomes necessary to ask what guidance Scripture offers for our ethical decisions. This study will draw from the life and teachings of Jesus, the writings of Paul, and other New Testament voices to unpack themes such as stewardship, justice, humility, and communal responsibility. It will explore how these principles can be interpreted in light of today's climate crisis, urging both individuals and governments to act not just practically, but also morally. The aim is to show that the New Testament doesn't

promote passive spirituality or political disengagement but offers a compelling moral vision that supports ecological responsibility. By doing so, the paper hopes to contribute to the growing conversation around eco-theology and the role of Christian ethics in public life.

Scope of the Study

This study seeks to engage in a theological and ethical exploration of how the New Testament frames human responsibility toward the environment, especially in light of the climate crisis. It focuses on two main dimensions of moral responsibility: the individual and the governmental. On one hand, the paper examines how personal Christian ethics such as stewardship, justice, humility, and love call individuals to live sustainably and to care for creation as a divine trust. On the other hand, it investigates the role of governments and public institutions, exploring how biblical teachings around justice, governance, and communal welfare may inform policies and collective climate action. The scope does not include empirical environmental science or political theory per se, but rather centers on how scriptural interpretation and ethical reasoning can provide a moral framework for addressing climate change. This dual focus allows for a balanced dialogue between private piety and public accountability, illuminating the New Testament's relevance to the global ecological crisis.

Methodology

This study adopts a theoretical and interpretive approach, engaging critically with key New Testament texts to explore how Christian theology frames moral responsibility toward climate change. It involves a close reading of scriptural passages such as Romans 8:19–22, Colossians 1:16–17, and Matthew 25:31–46, among others. These texts are interpreted not just within their immediate literary and historical contexts, but also through the lens of environmental ethics and public theology. The analysis draws from theological constructs such as stewardship, eschatological hope, justice, and communal responsibility concepts central to understanding Christian moral engagement. By synthesizing insights from biblical theology and contemporary theological ethics, the study reflects on the responsibility of both individual Christians and governing authorities in caring for the earth. The method allows for the development of a theological framework that is faithful to scripture while being relevant to present ecological realities. The study leans on contributions from scholars like Richard Bauckham, Jürgen Moltmann, and Pope Francis, whose works explore creation theology, public ethics, and ecological responsibility.

Theological Foundations of Creation and Responsibility in the New Testament

The continuity of creation theology from Old to New Testament: The continuity of creation theology from the Old to the New Testament reflects a consistent biblical vision of creation as good, purposeful, and intrinsically connected to God's redemptive plan. In the Old Testament, creation is declared good and entrusted to humanity (Gen. 1–2). The New Testament deepens this by portraying creation as groaning for renewal (Rom. 8:19–22) and integrally held together in Christ (Col. 1:16–17). Scholars like Richard Bauckham (2010) emphasize this continuity, arguing that the New Testament reaffirms the goodness of creation and its participation in eschatological hope. Similarly, N.T. Wright (2015) asserts that Paul's theology presents a creation not abandoned but destined for liberation through Christ. However, others such as Gorman (2020) suggest that New Testament eschatology introduces ambiguity: creation's redemption appears secondary to human salvation. This tension raises questions about the degree to which ecological ethics can be grounded in New Testament theology. This study aims to address this gap by exploring how New Testament

ethics can support both individual and governmental moral responsibility for the environment, grounding ecological action not just in eschatological hope but in present moral obligation.

Christ's cosmic role in creation and reconciliation: Christ's cosmic role in creation and reconciliation, as emphasized in Colossians 1:15–20, presents Him as the divine agent through whom all things were created and by whom all things are sustained and reconciled. This foundational New Testament text anchors many eco-theological reflections. Richard Bauckham (2010) affirms this view, asserting that Christ's cosmic lordship binds redemption and creation care into a unified theological vision. Similarly, Jürgen Moltmann (2012) argues that Christ's resurrection inaugurates a renewal not only of humanity but of all creation, placing environmental responsibility at the core of Christian ethics. However, some scholars offer a more reserved interpretation. For example, Douglas Moo (2012) warns against an overextension of Christ's cosmic scope, suggesting the focus of reconciliation in Pauline texts is primarily anthropocentric centered on human salvation rather than ecological systems. Additionally, N.T. Wright (2015) acknowledges the cosmic language but insists that such texts must be read within the broader narrative of human vocation and Israel's story. This study identifies a critical gap: while there is growing agreement on Christ's cosmic significance, the practical ethical implications for governmental and individual roles in climate justice remain underdeveloped. This paper seeks to bridge that gap by drawing practical responsibility from theological depth.

Stewardship and dominion reinterpreted through Jesus' teachings: The New Testament offers a subtle but significant shift in the understanding of dominion and stewardship, reinterpreting power not as control, but as service. Jesus' model of leadership as humble, sacrificial, and others-centered (Matt. 20:25–28) challenges the anthropocentric dominion of Genesis 1:28, often read as a license to exploit nature. Authors like Richard Bauckham (2010) argue that Jesus reframes dominion in terms of servanthood toward all creation, aligning with a theology of mutual interdependence and care. Similarly, Pope Francis (2015) in *Laudato Si'* sees dominion as responsibility, not domination. However, scholars like Lynn White Jr. (1967) blame the Judeo-Christian tradition, especially its dominion motif, for fostering environmental exploitation. Others, such as Holmes Rolston III (2012), question whether Christian theology offers a sufficiently deep ecological ethic, arguing that stewardship remains too human-centered. This paper addresses the gap left by these views: while critiques focus on either dominion's dangers or stewardship's insufficiency, few explore how Jesus' teachings reconstruct dominion into a moral ecology of care. This study fills that gap by reinterpreting stewardship through the cruciform ethic of Christ, emphasizing ecological humility, shared responsibility, and restorative justice.

Individual Moral Responsibility in the New Testament

Discipleship and Ethical Living (Matt. 5–7, James 2): The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) outlines a radical ethic of discipleship marked by humility, mercy, peacemaking, and non-retaliation. Jesus calls individuals to be “salt” and “light,” influencing society through personal virtue and public witness. James 2 complements this by insisting that genuine faith must result in tangible works especially justice toward the poor and marginalized. Scholars like Richard Hays (2016) emphasize the countercultural nature of these teachings, calling Christians to a transformative ethical lifestyle grounded in love and mercy. Conversely, John Stott (2008) underscores personal morality but warns against over-politicizing the Sermon,

arguing for balance between spiritual renewal and social engagement. However, some authors, like N. T. Wright (2019), challenge the individualistic interpretations of these texts, arguing instead for a broader communal and even political dimension of discipleship that addresses structural injustices, including ecological harm. Yet, a noticeable gap remains: few authors systematically apply these New Testament ethical teachings to environmental crises like climate change. This study seeks to fill that gap by reinterpreting New Testament discipleship not just as personal piety but as a moral mandate for ecological responsibility, both individually and collectively.

Call to Humility, Simplicity, and Care for the Vulnerable (Phil. 2:1–11, 1 John 3:17): The call to humility, simplicity, and care for the vulnerable is a central ethical theme in New Testament texts such as *Philippians 2:1–11* and *1 John 3:17*. Paul's Christological hymn in *Philippians* emphasizes Jesus' self-emptying (*kenosis*) as a model for believers to embrace humble service over status or consumption. Similarly, *1 John* challenges believers to respond tangibly to the needs of others, directly linking love with social responsibility. N. T. Wright (2010) argues that such humility requires a radical reshaping of personal ethics toward communal wellbeing, which aligns with ecological restraint and sustainable living. Richard Bauckham (2011) builds on this, suggesting that New Testament simplicity fosters a counter-cultural ethic that critiques modern consumerism and environmental degradation. Conversely, Douglas Moo (2016) warns against overextending these passages to advocate for environmental or economic systems, emphasizing their primary spiritual intent. However, while these scholars provide valuable theological insights, a practical integration of humility and simplicity into both personal ecological ethics and public policy advocacy remains underexplored. This study addresses that gap by drawing a direct line between biblical ethics and contemporary responses to climate change, especially in Christian witness within both private and governmental spheres.

Environmental Implication of Virtues: Justice, Moderation, and Compassion: The New Testament virtues of justice, moderation, and compassion carry profound environmental implications. Justice, in ecological terms, demands equitable access to clean air, water, and land for all especially the poor, who are often most affected by climate degradation. Pope Francis (2015) connects ecological justice with social justice, asserting that “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” are one and the same. Moderation, rooted in the virtue of temperance, promotes sustainable living, discouraging consumerism and waste (Northcott, 2013). Compassion, as expressed in Christ's ministry, implies an empathetic response to both human and non-human suffering caused by ecological harm (Bauckham, 2010). However, while authors like Francis and Bauckham advocate for a virtue-based ecological ethic, others like White (1967) argue that Christianity's anthropocentrism fosters ecological exploitation. This conflict reveals a theological tension between dominion and stewardship. A notable gap in the literature is the lack of integration between individual and governmental expressions of these virtues, particularly from a New Testament framework. This study addresses this gap by exploring how these virtues can inform both personal ethics and public policy in responding to climate change.

Governmental and Collective Responsibility in the Light of New Testament Ethics

New Testament views on governing authorities (Romans 13:1–7; 1 Peter 2:13–17): The New Testament passages *Romans 13:1–7* and *1 Peter 2:13–17* urge believers to submit to governing authorities, presenting government as ordained by God to maintain order and

punish wrongdoing. Paul, in Romans, sees the state as a "servant of God" (v.4), reinforcing a divine legitimacy to civil authority. Similarly, 1 Peter exhorts submission "for the Lord's sake," emphasizing honor, obedience, and the pursuit of peace. However, scholars diverge on how these texts apply to contemporary issues like climate policy and moral governance. For instance, N. T. Wright argues these passages reflect pragmatic pastoral advice under imperial rule rather than a blanket theological endorsement of every government (Wright, 2013). Conversely, Wayne Grudem maintains a strong literal reading, advocating obedience unless commands are overtly sinful (Grudem, 2010). Meanwhile, Richard Bauckham critiques uncritical submission, emphasizing the early Christian call to prophetic challenge when state power contradicts divine justice (Bauckham, 2011). The gap lies in how these texts inform government responsibility toward collective ecological ethics. While scholars discuss submission and resistance, few address climate justice as a theological mandate. This study seeks to fill that void by interpreting New Testament teachings as a framework for shared environmental accountability between state and citizens.

Biblical justice and the common good: feeding the poor, protecting creation (Acts 2:44-47) depicts an early Christian community grounded in shared resources, mutual care, and worship. The text exemplifies biblical justice as not just legal fairness but relational equity feeding the poor, eliminating need, and fostering communal well-being. Scholars like Wright (2023) argue that such passages reflect the Church's call to embody justice through economic and ecological solidarity, not just spiritual piety. Similarly, Bauckham (2010) connects the communal ethos of Acts with the ecological vision of creation care, emphasizing that justice extends to the land and all living systems. However, others such as Novak (2019) critique the practicality of this communal model, warning it may not translate effectively to modern pluralistic societies or global environmental policy frameworks. A noticeable gap in the literature is the insufficient theological bridging between *individual moral duty* and *institutional (governmental or ecclesial) environmental responsibility*. Many discussions separate charity (helping the poor) from environmental justice, treating them as isolated concerns. This study fills that gap by integrating the New Testament's call to both economic and ecological justice, showing how biblical justice necessitates coordinated ethical action by both individuals and governments in addressing climate change.

Application to policy, regulation, and sustainable governance: The New Testament's moral vision—especially its emphasis on justice, stewardship, and communal good offers a compelling framework for shaping environmental policy and sustainable governance. Authors like Richard Bauckham (2010) argue that biblical teachings support ecological responsibility, challenging governments to protect creation as part of their divine mandate. Similarly, Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* (2015) reinforces that governments must enact just environmental policies that reflect the moral imperative to care for the earth and the poor. However, not all theologians agree. Oliver O'Donovan (1996) cautions against overextending biblical mandates into modern policy frameworks, arguing that the New Testament does not directly prescribe political ecological actions. This tension reveals a significant gap: while theological principles are clear on values like justice and stewardship, there remains ambiguity in translating these into actionable, state-level policy without theological overreach. This study seeks to fill that gap by offering a theologically grounded, ethically sound, and contextually sensitive model for how both individuals and governments can collaboratively address climate change through just and sustainable governance.

Bridging the Gap: Church as a Moral Mediator between Individual and State

The prophetic role of the Church in public witness and ecological justice: The Church's prophetic role in ecological justice has been widely discussed as essential in addressing climate change. Many scholars affirm that the Church is called not just to spiritual proclamation but to public advocacy for the integrity of creation. Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* (2015) positions the Church as a moral voice that must challenge ecological degradation and economic structures that exploit the earth (Francis, 2015). Similarly, Habel (2009) argues that biblical faith must embrace "Earth Bible" ethics, where the Church speaks prophetically for the voiceless Earth. Conversely, some theologians caution against politicizing the Church's voice. Bauckham (2010) warns that overstressing environmental activism may dilute the Church's central mission of spiritual transformation. Meanwhile, Wright (2006) offers a more balanced approach, insisting that the Church should witness holistically—spiritually and socially - without becoming merely another environmental lobby. However, a noticeable gap remains in how the Church can act as a mediator between individual ethical responsibility and governmental ecological policy. While many affirm the Church's voice, few offer clear theological models for how it can bridge the personal and structural divide in practical climate advocacy. This study fills that gap by exploring New Testament principles that empower the Church to both inspire personal ecological ethics and challenge unjust political structures - acting not as a substitute for government but as a conscience to it.

Advocacy, education, and communal modeling of ecological ethics: Christian advocacy, education, and communal modeling play a growing role in embedding ecological ethics into Christian moral practice. Programs like *Eco Preacher 1-2-3* from the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development provide sermon resources to help clergy communicate environmental responsibility as a spiritual mandate rather than a political stance (Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development, 2021). Theologically, Sallie McKague advocates for a metaphorical view of the Earth as God's body, encouraging Christian communities to adopt sustainable practices and lifestyle restraint as a form of sacramental living (McKague, 2008). Catherine Keller adds a relational and feminist perspective, promoting collective learning within faith communities as a foundation for ecological justice (Keller, 2018). However, voices like E. Calvin Beisner challenge the mainstreaming of environmental advocacy in Christian circles, warning that it risks undermining economic freedoms and development, and arguing for a more utilitarian interpretation of stewardship (Beisner, 2013). While such perspectives resist structural critique, they remain influential in conservative congregations. Despite these contributions, a gap persists: much scholarship emphasizes either private moral formation or small-scale communal action, with minimal focus on how churches might *strategically function as intermediaries* between personal ethics and policy advocacy. This study seeks to bridge that gap by theorizing a framework where theological education and ecclesial praxis collectively enable both grassroots ecological action and organized, faith-informed engagement with public policy especially in non-Western and underrepresented contexts.

Case studies of Christian environmental action: In recent decades, several case studies have highlighted how Christian communities engage with environmental stewardship. One widely referenced example is the *Laudato Si'* movement, inspired by *Pope Francis'* encyclical, which mobilizes Catholic communities globally to act on climate justice. The movement integrates theology with grassroots ecological activism, emphasizing "integral ecology" and the moral imperative of care for creation (Francis, 2015). Similarly, the A Rocha network, an evangelical

conservation organization, exemplifies Christian environmentalism by combining ecological research, community action, and theological education across continents (Bouma-Prediger, 2010). Authors like *Jürgen Moltmann* commend such initiatives, affirming that Christian hope should not neglect ecological responsibility but rather energize it (Moltmann, 2012). In contrast, scholars like *Michael Northcott* critique institutional churches for being too passive, arguing that their theological frameworks often lack urgency or political courage (Northcott, 2007). However, while these studies affirm the positive influence of Christian environmental action, they tend to generalize agency either valorizing grassroots individuals or condemning institutional inertia without deeply distinguishing the theological basis for assigning moral responsibility to individuals versus governments. This study fills that gap by critically exploring how the New Testament frames both personal virtue and systemic justice, offering a dual lens for climate ethics.

Challenges and Theological Tensions

Eschatological Hope vs. Environmental Activism (2 Peter 3:10–13, Rev. 21): The eschatological visions in 2 Peter 3:10–13 and Revelation 21 have long sparked debate over whether Christian hope for a renewed creation encourages or discourages environmental activism. Some scholars argue that the apocalyptic language of fire and destruction in 2 Peter promotes passivity, implying the world is destined for annihilation and therefore not worth preserving. Brill (2025) contends that this view fosters "theological quietism," weakening the Church's moral resolve to act in ecological matters. However, other theologians offer a contrasting view rooted in restorative eschatology. Heringer (2024) challenges annihilationist interpretations, asserting that "the fire imagery points to purification, not total destruction," and thereby upholds the enduring value of creation. Likewise, Moo (2006) maintains that Revelation 21's vision of a "new heaven and new earth" implies continuity with the present world, reinforcing a theology of creation care grounded in the anticipation of its renewal, not abandonment. These diverging views reveal a critical gap: while some affirm human responsibility in anticipation of divine renewal, others remain skeptical, fearing the overextension of eschatological hope into political or environmental activism. This study addresses that gap by constructing a New Testament-based ethical framework that reconciles future hope with present responsibility. It argues that eschatological anticipation is not an excuse for withdrawal but a theological mandate for ecological engagement grounded in love, justice, and stewardship.

Human Sinfulness and Ecological Crisis: A Fallen World or a Failing Stewardship: Contemporary theological reflection presents two dominant but contrasting views on the relationship between human sinfulness and the ecological crisis. Jürgen Moltmann (1985) argues that the Fall has cosmic consequences, citing Romans 8 to describe creation's subjection to futility and decay. He emphasizes that sin is not only personal but structural and environmental, suggesting that ecological degradation is a direct manifestation of humanity's spiritual alienation. Similarly, Bristow (2001) insists that the ecological crisis is ultimately a moral and spiritual one a symptom of a distorted character and misplaced priorities rooted in human sin. On the other hand, Gillmor (1996) critiques the deterministic framing of ecological breakdown as a fallen inevitability. He suggests that traditional interpretations of "dominion" in Genesis have been misunderstood and misapplied, advocating instead for a theology of stewardship rooted in responsibility and care. The Acton Institute (2025) supports this view by proposing a stewardship ethic that balances divine

sovereignty with human agency, emphasizing that although creation is marred by sin, humanity remains a responsible caretaker with redemptive capacity. These differing perspectives highlight a gap in the discourse: while one side warns of theological fatalism, the other risks downplaying the depth of ecological damage. What is missing is an integrated theological framework that simultaneously acknowledges the weight of sin and the enduring call to redemptive stewardship. This study proposes to bridge that divide by offering a New Testament-based model of ecological ethics that is both theologically grounded and action-oriented.

Tensions Between Spiritual Salvation and Earthly Responsibility: A central tension in Christian environmental ethics lies in reconciling eschatological hope with practical ecological responsibility. Some scholars argue that traditional views of spiritual salvation have fostered indifference toward environmental care. Nash (1989) critiques this eschatology, asserting that many Christians historically expected the earth's destruction, thus undermining any motivation for its preservation. Similarly, van den Heuvel (2023) points out that apocalyptic theology often encourages passivity, noting that it can lead to a "quietist withdrawal" from pressing ecological issues. Conversely, other thinkers propose constructive theological alternatives. Bonhoeffer (1995) distinguishes between the *ultimate* (God's final redemption) and the *penultimate* (present reality), advocating for ethical responsibility in the here and now as a vital expression of faith. Moltmann (1993) furthers this in his "theology of hope," insisting that creation's renewal is part of God's redemptive plan, thus integrating ecological care with Christian eschatology. However, these perspectives often remain abstract. While Bonhoeffer and Moltmann provide theological motivation, they fall short of outlining actionable frameworks for how individuals, churches, and governments can ethically respond to climate change. This study fills that gap by drawing from New Testament ethics to articulate a practical and theologically grounded model of moral responsibility that addresses both personal and structural dimensions of climate action.

Conclusion

A central theological insight of this study is the reaffirmation that the New Testament views creation not as disposable, but as deeply integrated into God's redemptive plan. Rather than framing salvation as an escape from the world, the teachings of Jesus and the apostles consistently call believers to embody God's kingdom values that include justice, stewardship, compassion, and accountability. Passages such as Romans 8:19–22 and Colossians 1:16–20 remind us that all of creation groans for renewal and that Christ's work encompasses the reconciliation of "all things," not just souls. Another key insight is the dual responsibility of individuals and governing bodies. The New Testament does not only speak to personal morality but also to structural ethics. Romans 13, for instance, highlights the role of authorities in promoting good and restraining harm, which implies a theological mandate for governments to enact climate-responsible policies. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the Church's prophetic role. As a community shaped by Christ's teachings, the Church is called to model ecological justice, challenge exploitative systems, and speak truth to power. This makes climate action not just a scientific or political issue, but a deeply spiritual one. Finally, eschatological hope is reinterpreted not as an excuse for inaction, but as a motivator for faithful stewardship. The anticipation of a new heaven and a new earth energizes believers to care for the present world as an act of worship and witness. Altogether, these insights call Christians to engage creation care as a non-negotiable aspect of faithful discipleship.

Based on the data gathered so far, it is clear that Christian ethics can play a transformative role in shaping both personal attitudes and broader environmental policies. Many participants in the study acknowledged a gap between theological knowledge and practical environmental engagement. While they affirmed that stewardship is a biblical responsibility, their actions especially in public and policy spaces did not always reflect this conviction. This reveals a pressing need to translate Christian ethical principles into tangible societal influence. Practically, Christian ethics can offer a values-based framework for environmental responsibility grounded in justice, compassion, humility, and care for creation. These principles can guide individual believers toward more sustainable lifestyles reducing waste, conserving energy, and advocating for responsible consumption. But more importantly, churches and faith-based organizations can become active voices in environmental policy discourse. By mobilizing congregations, engaging with lawmakers, and partnering with civil society, Christian communities can influence policy directions on climate action, land use, and environmental justice. This study also reveals that many Christian institutions have yet to fully embrace their prophetic role in addressing systemic ecological degradation. The implication is clear: churches must not only preach about care for creation but actively model it through green practices, environmental education, and public advocacy. Doing so not only aligns with biblical ethics but strengthens the Church's moral credibility in a rapidly changing world. In essence, Christian ethics must move beyond the pulpit to the policy table where decisions that affect the future of the planet are being made.

Final Reflections: Integrating Faith, Ethics, and Ecological Responsibility

As this study has unfolded, one thing has become increasingly clear: addressing the climate crisis demands more than just scientific innovation or policy reform it requires a moral and spiritual awakening. For Christians, this awakening must begin with a rediscovery of the New Testament's vision of life as stewardship, community, and responsibility before God and creation. Faith, rightly understood, is not escapist. It does not pull believers away from the earth but rather roots them more deeply in it calling them to love, serve, and protect it as part of their discipleship. Ethics, therefore, becomes the bridge between belief and action. The teachings of Jesus, Paul, and the early church emphasize justice, compassion, and sacrificial love qualities that directly challenge the systems of greed, waste, and indifference that drive ecological degradation. Christians are called not just to avoid harm but to actively promote the flourishing of all life. This means that ecological responsibility cannot be left to governments alone, nor should it rest solely on individuals. The Church, as a moral community, must step into a prophetic role shaping conscience, influencing policy, and modeling sustainable living. From this study, it is evident that faith communities have both the spiritual resources and the ethical imperatives to help catalyze change. In the end, integrating faith, ethics, and ecological responsibility is not a side task it is a core expression of what it means to follow Christ in today's world. The climate crisis is, at its heart, a spiritual and moral challenge.

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