

Q&A

AUTHOR INTERVIEW



In *Green Revolution*, Ben Lowe shares stories of campuses and churches working together toward a more sustainable future, showing along the way that environmental stewardship is not a fad but a fulfillment of our calling as the people of God.

Green Revolution: Coming Together to Care for Creation

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What is your experience in promoting creation care awareness and mobilizing students to take action?

Ben: Right now I serve as the coordinator of Renewal, a grassroots student creation care movement growing on campuses across the U.S. and Canada. In this role, I work to mobilize and mentor Christians in my generation to become active agents of change in their communities. I have the opportunity to speak to diverse audiences on the biblical importance and contemporary urgency of creation care, sharing from my life experiences as a missionary kid, student activist, community organizer . . . and avid fisherman. As an evangelical Christian and budding scientist, I believe that God calls all of us to be good stewards of the earth and good neighbors to those we share it with.

Previously, I did similar work as the director of outreach for A Rocha USA, an organization of Christians in conservation that is actively working in over twenty countries on five continents.

How has the church become like the prodigal son in relation to the environment?

Ben: Faced by environmental crises on every side and all around the globe, we are awakening to a desperate reality: we have wandered far from God's good intentions for us and for the world. We are hurting and have nowhere else to turn. It is time to remember our Father God. It is time to go back home.

The church today, like the prodigal son, is returning for imperfect reasons. The prodigal did not want to head home because he had wronged his father, but because he was hoping for a better life again. Likewise, the trigger for our recovery of a vision of environmental stewardship today is not foremost because we have been drifting from God, but because we can no longer ignore our ailing environment and are worried for our well-being. It starts out as a selfish reason, but, as with the son, we learn to take on a position of true humility and repentance.

How can churches get more involved in the movement to care for creation?

Ben: Churches are particularly important in the movement, because this is where we regularly come together to study the Bible and learn what it means to live and grow in community. They consume a lot of resources, which makes them easy targets for conservation. Also, churches are usually planted in the same neighborhood for many years, where they can develop lasting relationships and initiate long-term projects to impact the local community.

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Ben Lowe is the coordinator of Renewal, a grassroots student creation care movement growing on campuses across the U.S. and Canada. He has a degree in environmental studies from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. Lowe has worked with many senior leaders in the creation care scene and is based out of Chicago, Illinois.

Ideas for projects include developing the church grounds into a natural area that welcomes both the neighbors and native wildlife, participating in community-supported agriculture or community gardens, training volunteer “green teams” to help lower-income residents retrofit their homes with energy-efficient appliances that will save money and pollution, organizing community-wide tree-planting celebrations every Earth Day, or just providing bike racks and lockers to encourage churchgoers to bike, blade or walk to church.

Why is it important for us to take our role in caring for creation seriously?

Ben: Individuals can care deeply about the planet and take an active role in caring for it while not making it their primary focus. At a very basic level, we all consume resources—food, water, energy and raw materials for iPods—and otherwise impact the environment. In turn, the environment has an impact on each of us. This is an unavoidable fact of being alive. Therefore, we are all called to be stewards of creation as we live out our lives on this earth. We are all called to love God and love our neighbor, and to continue moving from being part of the problem to being more of the solution. And, wherever we have wandered, we are called to remember God and return home. Our common calling to creation care applies on both an individual and a corporate level. This is where our theology and worldview are translated into action, where our faith and what we have learned are integrated into how we live.

For additional information on Ben’s work with Renewal, please see:

<http://www.renewingcreation.org>



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