

Daily Bible Reading

"Wasted" January 9/10

There are two sides to Allen Johnson. On the one hand, he is a conservative, evangelical Christian living in the mountains of West Virginia. On the other hand, he is an environmental activist and cofounder of Christians for the Mountains, a group of like-minded stewards that have demonstrated against coal companies and participated in Rainbow Family gatherings.

Does Allen see a contradiction between these two halves of his personality? No. In fact, he hopes that environmental stewardship will quickly become a unifying, not a dividing, issue for Christians across the nation. "God has called all of us seriously," he says, "and we should agree on one thing: to take care of his Earth."

Allen's passion for environmentalism began in 1993 while visiting Haiti with a Christian Peacemaker team. It was there that he saw desperate farmers cutting down grapefruit trees in order to make a cash crop of charcoal. "I just started sobbing," he recalls. "It really hit me that impoverishment is so closely tied to environmental destruction."

Since that day, Johnson has been a pioneer in a growing movement called "Eco-Christianity," yet his biggest challenge has been convincing other Christians to join him in the fight instead of labeling him a "New Age wing nut" or a liberal. "My identity is not as an environmentalist," says Johnson. "It's as a Christian. Because I am Christian, I should be involved with social justice—the poor, the needy. Environmentalism is one thing in my circle, but it's not my center." (*Vanessa Juarez and David Gates, "A Shepherd Protects His Own Backyard," Newsweek (9-5-05), p. 51*)

Our Daily Reading this week will be scripture that deals with God's perspective on the environment.

- DAY ONE – Genesis 1
- DAY TWO – Genesis 2
- DAY THREE – Psalm 8
- DAY FOUR – Psalm 19:1-6
- DAY FIVE - Matthew 6:26-30

Memory Verse:

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." (Genesis 2:15)