



THE BTS CENTER

Climate Changed Podcast Discussion Guide **Season 3, Episode 3**

Guests: Kyle Meyaard-Schaap, Beverly G. Ward, Ben Yosua-Davis, Derrick Weston, and Peterson Toscano

Title: The Bible and Climate Change

Welcoming Activity

To begin, think about your earliest memory of nature. Beverly G. Ward suggests that these memories connect us deeply to the earth and may shape our sense of responsibility toward it. Take a few moments to write down what you remember — the smells, sounds, and sights — and consider how this connection might guide your thoughts on environmental care. Share this with the group, discussing how these experiences can influence collective climate action.

Introduction to Episode

This episode gathers multiple voices from the faith and climate spheres, each sharing unique perspectives on how Christianity can inform and inspire environmental action. Kyle Meyaard-Schaap connects Biblical teachings to ecological responsibility. Beverly G. Ward invites a personal reflection on our relationship with nature, Ben Yosua-Davis speaks about community resilience, and Derrick Weston emphasizes the importance of integrating faith, racial justice, and environmental care. Together, they explore how these themes can energize church communities to respond to climate challenges.

Section 1: Reflecting on Nature (Beverly G. Ward)

Summary: Beverly G. Ward encourages listeners to reflect on their first or most joyful memories of the natural world. She highlights how these personal connections to nature can deepen our commitment to environmental care, offering a way to ground ourselves in the work of creation care.

Discussion Questions:

1. Beverly invites us to recall our earliest or happiest memories in nature. What memory came to mind for you? How does it shape your connection to the earth?

2. How might reflecting on such experiences help us build a stronger sense of environmental responsibility within our communities?
3. In what ways could faith communities use similar reflections to deepen their collective commitment to climate action?
4. How does this grounding exercise help us carry our sense of place and purpose into our climate justice work?

Section 2: A Call to Responsibility and Hope (Kyle Meyaard-Schaap)

Start and End Time: 15:20 – 17:59

Summary: Kyle discusses the call for Christians to steward creation, seeing care for the environment as integral to the faith. He reflects on Biblical passages that connect the care for creation with love for God and neighbor, urging listeners to consider environmental justice as part of their spiritual practice.

Discussion Questions:

1. Kyle emphasizes stewardship as a Biblical calling. How does this idea shape your view of climate action?
2. How might the values of faith communities inspire collective, rather than individual, responses to climate change?
3. Kyle connects environmental harm to impacts on neighbors. How might your community respond to local environmental issues that affect vulnerable populations?
4. In what ways can faith help sustain hope and resilience in the face of ecological challenges?

Section 3: Building Community Resilience (Ben Yosua-Davis)

Summary: Ben Yosua-Davis speaks to the importance of resilience within communities. He reflects on the need for local support networks, encouraging faith communities to become sources of mutual support and resilience in times of environmental crisis.

Discussion Questions:

1. Ben sees resilience as essential to community health. How can churches become centers of support and resilience for both members and neighbors?
2. What resources or practices within your community could contribute to climate resilience?

3. How does your faith community encourage relationship-building, helping people support each other during times of climate stress?
4. Reflect on how your personal faith or values guide your view of resilience in the context of climate change.

Section 4: Faith, Race, and Environmental Justice (Derrick Weston)

Summary: Derrick Weston explores the intersection of faith, race, and environmental justice, urging faith communities to see environmental responsibility as a central part of their spiritual mission. He emphasizes that environmental degradation often disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, highlighting the need for a holistic response that integrates care for both creation and vulnerable populations.

Discussion Questions:

1. Derrick underscores the foundational role of faith in environmental justice, saying, “Our task... is to protect and serve creation. And if we imagine that as both the beginning and the goal, then the idea is, how do we get back to those beginning vocations that God gave to us? How do we get back to those relationships that were very good at the beginning?” How might this understanding of faith as a call to protect and serve creation influence your community’s approach to environmental issues?
2. Reflecting on the interconnected nature of racial and environmental justice, Derrick asks, “How often have we brought creation into the mechanizations of empire?... The horse had to suffer the consequences of what the people of Egypt did.” How does this perspective shape your understanding of the impacts of environmental harm on marginalized communities, and what actions might this inspire in your faith community?
3. Derrick emphasizes that “the health of people and the health of land are deeply interwoven.” How can faith communities address both racial and environmental justice as part of a unified mission?
4. Viewing scripture as an ecological text, Derrick suggests, “all of Scripture is sort of an ecological text, and not just a few verses.” How can faith communities draw on the Bible as a source of ecological awareness and justice?

Additional Discussion Questions

Faith and Creation: Each guest relates environmental care to faith. Which Biblical stories or teachings resonate most with you regarding creation care? How do these stories inspire action in your faith community?

Collective Action: Faith communities are uniquely positioned for collective climate action. How can your church or community strengthen its role in addressing climate change? What partnerships or initiatives could help amplify your impact?

Personal Reflection: Think about how your relationship with nature and faith shapes your commitment to environmental justice. What collective action could you propose in your community based on this commitment?

Next Steps for Collective Action:

1. **Organize a Reflection Event:** Inspired by Beverly's exercise, host a community event where members share their early memories with nature. Discuss how these memories can ground and inspire climate action.
2. **Engage in Food Justice:** Derrick suggests shortening the distance between food sources and consumers. Organize a community visit to a local farm, support urban agriculture projects, or start a church garden to connect with local food sources.
3. **Host a Climate Sunday:** Consider organizing a climate-centered service to discuss and commit to collective climate action as a faith community.
4. **Engage with Nature-Based Spiritual Practices:** Try practices like Lectio Terra, where members spend time outdoors engaging with scripture and nature, to strengthen connections between faith and environmental responsibility.