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# Serve God, Save The Planet: A Christian Call To Action



## Synopsis

Not long ago, J. Matthew Sleeth had a fantastic life and a great job as chief of the medical staff at a large hospital. He was living the American dream—until he saw an increasing number of his patients suffering from cancer, asthma, and other chronic diseases. He began to suspect that the Earth and its inhabitants were in deep trouble. Turning to Jesus for guidance, Sleeth discovered how the scriptural lessons of personal responsibility, simplicity, and stewardship could be applied to modern life. The Sleeths have since sold their big home and given away more than half of what they once owned. In *Serve God, Save the Planet*, Sleeth shares the joy of adopting a less materialistic, healthier lifestyle, stronger relationships, and richer spiritual lives. With the storytelling ease of James Herriot and the logical clarity of C. S. Lewis, Sleeth lays out the rationale for environmentally responsible life changes and a how-to guide for making those changes. *“Creation is groaning. And Matthew Sleeth has responded. *Serve God, Save the Planet* is not an alarmist call of despair, but a hopeful invitation to re-imagine the way we live. Sleeth’s words have the urgency of an ER crisis coupled with the deep faith that the Church is ready to join God in healing the wounded world.”*—Shane Claiborne, activist and author of *The Irresistible Revolution*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

‘...a great read on how individual Christians and their families can respond to God’s call for environmental stewardship.’ (Acton Institute) ‘...remarkable: elegantly written, theologically and

scientifically acute, and not least, beautifully typeset and bound.... Serve God, Save the Planet is about much more than environmental activism.... [W]hat I took away from Sleeth's book had less to do with the specifics of energy use and recycling than the hope that there is a better way to live as families: that it is possible to detoxify our technologized and hypermediated homes, and that our children will thank us for it.... Sleeth...is the perfect missionary for the environmental cause;....he recognizes, in time-honored evangelical style, that the most important battleground for any social change is the human heart....' (Books & Culture)

Not long ago, J. Matthew Sleeth had a fantastic life and a great job as chief of the medical staff at a large hospital. He was living the American dream---until he saw an increasing number of his patients suffering from cancer, asthma, and other chronic diseases. He began to suspect that the Earth and its inhabitants were in deep trouble. Turning to Jesus for guidance, Sleeth discovered how the scriptural lessons of personal responsibility, simplicity, and stewardship could be applied to modern life. The Sleeths have since sold their big home and given away more than half of what they once owned. In *Serve God, Save the Planet*, Sleeth shares the joy of adopting a less materialistic, healthier lifestyle, stronger relationships, and richer spiritual lives. With the storytelling ease of James Herriot and the logical clarity of C. S. Lewis, Sleeth lays out the rationale for environmentally responsible life changes and a how-to guide for making those changes. 'Creation is groaning. And Matthew Sleeth has responded. *Serve God, Save the Planet* is not an alarmist call of despair, but a hopeful invitation to re-imagine the way we live. Sleeth's words have the urgency of an ER crisis coupled with the deep faith that the Church is ready to join God in healing the wounded world.'

--Shane Claiborne, activist and author of *The Irresistible Revolution*.

How often do you think about the sheer amount of things we consume? Compared to past generations. Compared to others living in 3rd world countries. Even compared to other industrialized nations! It's not something I had given a single thought until this last year. This book is amazing because it's not just about the environmental impact or some liberal granola take on things. Any Christian can relate to what the author wants to bring to our awareness. Yes, the environment is taking a heavy hit, but other people around the world and in our own country are suffering and struggling to survive and get enough to eat and I'm shopping online for a baby tooth scrapbook and struggling to find room in our 3 car garage for all our kids toys, our cars, boats, etc. It's ridiculous! This book will change your perspective on how you live your life and hopefully spur you to make changes for the good of our planet, the good of others, and, yes, even your own good! It feels much

better to focus on God and things that are really important instead of spending a couple hours shopping online for that baby tooth scrapbook!

My fifteen year old daughter attends an online Christian highschool and she regularly is the "odd student out" on their online forum, disagreeing with the majority of her fellow high schoolers on everything from politics to capital punishment. We are proud that she is so passionate about her beliefs and we regularly have deep conversations with her about the world and our place in it as Christians. One topic that comes up regularly is environmentalism. We are pretty passionate about being "green" and have always taught her that caring for the environment was a Biblical mandate and should be an integral part of every Christian's life. So, she started a forum topic about stopping global warming and got pounced upon by other Christian high schoolers stating things like, "global warming is a myth", "God wants us to take dominion of the earth", "Jesus is coming back again soon, so what is the difference - the earth will be destroyed." She was in shock that they held these beliefs and after talking through it and the reasons they said these things, as misguided and wrong as they were, I decided to go looking for some books for her that spoke about environmentalism from a Christian perspective. I ended up buying a few from and "Serve God Save the Planet" was the first one we read. It is not what I was expecting. I was expected an indepth review of "saving the planet" and why it is critical for Christians. Instead, it gives an introductory, high level view of a number of subjects. The author's passion comes through and it is a window into his journey of faith and this includes saving the planet. The book is subtitled, "A Christian Call to Action" and that is exactly what the book is and what it did for me. While he does include a great chapter making a case for Christian's to care for the earth, most of the book is his sharing his own story and calling us to action. It is easy to read and very impactful. Each chapter resonated with me and I felt myself nodding and getting pumped up, as it is exactly what I have always felt, but in many areas have lost touch. Besides caring for the earth, he writes about taking action and doing things, he writes about having too much stuff, taking a true day of rest each week, getting rid of television and replacing it with books, serving the poor and making a difference in the lives of others around the word and raising our kids to be help the poor and care for the world. Since reading this, I've purchased a copy for my sister and my parents and my wife is now reading it and my daughter is almost finished. I'd recommend it to everyone. It is light reading and he doesn't go into depth on each subject, instead, he shares his story and get's you pumped up to take action. I highly recommend it!

J. Matthew Sleeth's book - "Serve God, Save the Planet - A Christian Call to Action" is exactly that -

a Christian understanding of service to God through recognition of our relationships with one another and all creation manifesting in concrete actions. In other words it is an immensely practical book, and I think one of the most important books we have regarding what it means to be a Christian in context of the times we live in, and how to respond to the present historical moment in an authentically Christian way. Dr. Sleeth has an amazing ability to relate real life stories simply and with a touch of humor, allowing the reader to see the deeper insights contained in the story. But the primary reason I think this book is crucial to Christians, and others, living in this time is because it is biblically relevant to our current life situation. Dr. Sleeth has what I call a holistic Christian vision - in that he clearly and concisely draws the connections between our motives and actions, and the consequences they have for our physical/spiritual/emotional health as well as how they affect our relationship to other people and creation as a whole. He demonstrates that the ecological crisis involves and affects every aspect of our lives - family relations, the value of work, leisure time, even our relationship with food. He also guides us in discerning God's will as expressed in the biblical witness. Much of his practical advice on how to be good steward's of God's creation, including our bodies and interpersonal relationships, are not something new to the Christian tradition, rather a call to return to prudence, thrift, and God-centered living that is rooted in the ways of our spiritual ancestors. It is a call for us to reject our current cultural idols of selfishness, excess, and thoughtless consumption. It is a call for us to embrace, in very practical ways, what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ - the author of Life, for "where there is life, there is God, and where there is God, there is life. From the beginning to the end of the bible, God demands a reverence for life." (pg.136) The time is now, to respond to the call to act in Christ. Dr. Sleeth's book is a trustworthy and practical guide in how to respond to that call with "all one's heart, and all one's strength, and all one's being". *Serve God, Save the Planet: A Christian Call to Action*

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