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Towards a biblical mind

Reducing disaster risk:

Creation care and neighbour love

By Amy Donovan

'Floods are "acts of God" but flood losses are largely acts of man.'[1]

Summary
This paper uses current research in disaster studies to argue that for Christians, caring for the environment – whether in seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prevent pollution or preserve biodiversity – is a form of neighbour love. Environmental disasters are widely accepted in the scientific community as being the result not so much of natural processes as of human ills – the populations that suffer most in disasters tend to be the poorest people in the poorest parts of the world. Furthermore, environmental degradation and climate change are enhancing the intensity and impacts of disasters – particularly on livelihoods and access to water – and the suffering that results from this disproportionately affects the poorest and most marginal groups in society. Christians have a responsibility to help in practical ways to reduce suffering in the world, because the God of grace who saved us cares for this world.

Introduction: the context

Environmental disasters are the result of complex, dynamic interactions between the physical environment and human activity. For example, Darjeeling (Figure 1) in West Bengal, India is politically sensitive because of a separatist movement (Gorkhaland), which wants a separate state for the hill towns of West Bengal. The state capital, Kolkata, is on the plains, which have different social and economic needs and cultural histories to the hills. Many of these issues originated in colonial times, and are exacerbated by the continued existence of policies and institutions derived from that period – but are further entrenched as a result of poor development practices. The construction lobby is very powerful, and so development on unstable hillslopes is common, with sometimes catastrophic consequences. At the same time, the monsoon is intensifying because of climate change, and produces heavier rainfall over shorter periods, saturating the slopes and further enhancing landslide risk. Political turmoil has led to a very complicated policy environment, making it difficult to know who is responsible for which aspects of disaster preparation and mitigation. Furthermore, the cost of land has increased and so many of the poorest people live underneath Darjeeling on unstable slopes – and so are disproportionately affected by landslides. Politics, economics, historical problems and the physical environment interact in a way that exacerbates existing inequalities and exposes the poorest people to the highest hazard.

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This example demonstrates the complex links between environmental degradation, hazards and social vulnerability. It is now accepted that the main drivers of disasters are not natural forces but human decisions (politics) and poor development practice.[2] Disasters – 'serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society at

1 Gilbert White, *Human adjustment to floods* (doctoral thesis, University of Chicago 1945).
2 Key early works: I. Burton, R. W. Kates and G. F. White, 'The human ecology of extreme geophysical events', Working paper, (University of South Florida, 1968); *Interpretations of calamity: From the viewpoint of human ecology*, ed. by K. Hewitt, (Routledge, 1983).

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Figure 1. Darjeeling in the Eastern Himalaya

any scale due to hazardous events'[3] – are manifestations of social, political and economic problems, catalysed by environmental hazards. This distinction is central to disaster studies: hazards are physical processes in the environment; disaster risk is the combination of these processes with vulnerability (of humans, infrastructure, ecosystems). Vulnerability is predominantly about development and relates to income, demographics (including how women, elderly, children and marginalised groups – those who have little or no voice in society – are treated), corruption, infrastructure and numerous other factors that affect how significant the impact of a hazard event will be.

Disasters in high-income countries (HICs) can be economically costly in absolute terms; relative to GDP, however, disasters cost low-income countries 270 times more.[4] Furthermore, deaths are very unevenly distributed: more than 60 times as many people die in disasters in low-income countries compared to high-income countries. This is due to a combination of factors: HICs have better technologies, more stable societies, and greater capacity to cope. While exposure to hazards is highly variable spatially, it is not a governing factor here. The same geophysical hazard event occurring in different contexts can have widely different impacts: for example, the magnitude 9 Sumatra-Andaman earthquake and tsunami in 2004 killed almost 250,000 people across the Indian Ocean – many of them killed by the earthquake in Indonesia, where there was little seismic design in buildings. Many more were killed by the tsunami. An almost identical M9 earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011 killed around 20,000 in total. Because richer countries line the Pacific, it had a tsunami warning system; the Indian Ocean in 2004 did not. Similarly, the Haiti earthquake in 2010 killed more than 220,000 people (and was two orders of magnitude smaller than the Sumatra and Japan earthquakes). Effective seismic engineering, warning policies and population capacity to cope (through economic, social and political capital) can save thousands of lives.

Globally, climate-related disasters (including heatwaves, flooding, droughts, tropical cyclones and intensified rainstorms)[5] are increasing both in number and, particularly, in intensity. Many occur in the developing world, where the capacity to adapt, forecast or mitigate these events is lowest. For example, Kibera is an informal settlement in Nairobi, alongside the Ngong River. Nairobi has been experiencing increasingly intense rainfall, which leads to regular flooding – exacerbated in Kibera by poor drainage and waste management. The flooding contaminates the water supplies, causing sickness. Local-level projects have enhanced community adaptation measures, but insecure housing exacerbates the problem.[6] At a global scale, *deaths* in disasters per million people are decreasing (something to be thankful for), but disasters disproportionately impact those least able to cope. Climate change is also having increasingly devastating impacts on other species, from coral to polar bears.[7]

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Post-Enlightenment ideology separated out 'nature' as an object of study, and 'culture'. This puts humanity outside of nature, as an entity sitting in assessment of it rather than a part of it. While such modernist scientific approaches to hazards and disasters dominated in the twentieth century – with hazard characterised by physical science and vulnerability by social science – scholars are increasingly critical of the nature–culture binary, arguing that nature and culture are intertwined. This perspective is both critical to understanding the spatial dynamics and social justice[8] issues of disasters, and a familiar concept for Christians. Humans are a part of creation and have a responsibility to it. How we treat creation has widespread implications: policies of rich governments and the lifestyles of people in the Global North have impacts in the Global South. Poor development practices, exporting of waste, pollution from plastic and other 'novel entities' released into the water, ground and air,

3 The full UNDRR definition is at <www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster> [accessed 6 September 2021].
4 From the UNDRR Global Assessment Report 2019 ch 8 <https://gar.undrr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-06/full_report.pdf> [accessed 6 September 2021].
5 The Sixth Assessment Report, Working Group I (Physical Science Basis), available at <www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/> [accessed 12 August 2021]. Extremes are covered in Chapter 11: <www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_Chapter_11.pdf>.
6 S. Mitra et al., *Environment and Urbanization*, 29(1) (2017), 103–122.
7 See the 2020 Intergovernmental Panel for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment report p.501 and others for polar bears; 206–207 and others for reefs: <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment accessed 08/09/21>.
8 In this paper, social justice refers to a concern for the common good: protecting the vulnerable, providing equal access to opportunities, wealth and responsibilities across the whole of society, because all people are created in God's image and should be treated with dignity. It has a rich history in Christian theology; key texts are Isa. 1:17; Deut. 10:18, 24:17, 27:19; Ps. 82:3; Mic. 6:8; Matt. 25:40.

deforestation and gas emissions have all contributed to a greater intensity and in some cases increased occurrence of environmental hazard. There are two interwoven necessities here: the reduction of hazards – such as via reduction in pollution and greenhouse emissions – and the reduction of vulnerability through risk-sensitive development, sharing of resources, equitable trade relations and political will.

Some biblical principles on creation and our neighbour

1 There is no human–nature binary

Historically, there have been wide-ranging debates on the role of God in disasters.[9] While in earlier centuries, the view that God uses disasters to punish people dominated, the biblical text offers a more nuanced view (see for example Luke 13:1–5). The Bible emphasises that God is in control, but also that in a fallen world, disasters will continue to happen and perhaps intensify (Matthew 24:8). While hazard events are part of the order of creation – volcanic eruptions create new land and sustain life on the planet, for example[10] – they become disasters because of sin. Humans are given agency within creation through God's grace, and sin has interfered with that, and that interference has an impact on creation's wellbeing. While secular ideology has tended to impose a nature–culture binary, the Bible does not (see 3 below on the role of humans within creation).

The Bible nowhere mentions 'nature': both humanity and its environment are part of *creation*. What society has referred to as 'nature' is more properly viewed – like humanity – as God's artefact: something he made and that shows his hand at work (Romans 1:18–23). Scriptural imagery frequently entangles the state of humanity and that of nature (e.g. Hosea 2:21–23). Romans 8:21 states that the creation is in 'bondage to decay' because of human sin and will be redeemed. This does not mean that Christians take a fatalistic view of the environment, though: Christians are commanded to emulate Christ and to care for creation – to be stewards – as is established in Genesis, while awaiting redemption. The biblical vision of the restored relationship between God, his people and the land is common to both Old and New Testaments. Ezekiel and the New Testament imagery intertwines the city with the garden as symbols of renewal and harmony between God and creation – and within creation itself.[11]

2 The beauty of creation reflects the ingenuity of God

In the Psalms and Prophets, creation is often described in beautiful detail as indicative of the works and majesty of God, created by him and to be treated with respect. In Job 38–39, for example, the Lord responds to Job with an account of the creation that he has made, controls, and sustains – whose being he has thought through and brought to pass. He draws the most fundamental distinction between humanity and himself – the scale and majesty of creation. The Psalms similarly celebrate God's power in creation, perhaps most famously in Psalm 19: 1–4:

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

The tension here between having no speech but also having a voice, because of the kind of knowledge about God that is imparted through creation, emphasises the self-evident nature of the proclamation. God made creation and it teaches us about him. It also belongs to him and is loved by him.[12]

3 Humans have a special responsibility to the rest of creation, and this is not exploitative

In Genesis, Adam and Eve are given responsibility for the earth, including all the life upon it. The word 'dominion', used in some translations of Genesis 1, refers to the responsibility of Old Testament kingship – having power but also responsibility for the welfare of the subjects. It is not, therefore, a licence to *dominate*, but rather emphasises

9 Rev Prof David Chester has written extensively on this topic with Angus Duncan. For example: D. K. Chester and A. M. Duncan, *Religion* 40(2), (2010), 85–95; D. K. Chester and A. M. Duncan, *Environmental Hazards* 8(4) (2009), 304–332.

10 E.g. Y. Moussallam et al., *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* 520, (2019), 260–267.

11 See for example Ezek. 47–48; Rev. 21–22.

12 E.g. Deut. 10:14; Ps. 24:1, 50:11, 104:31, 145:9.

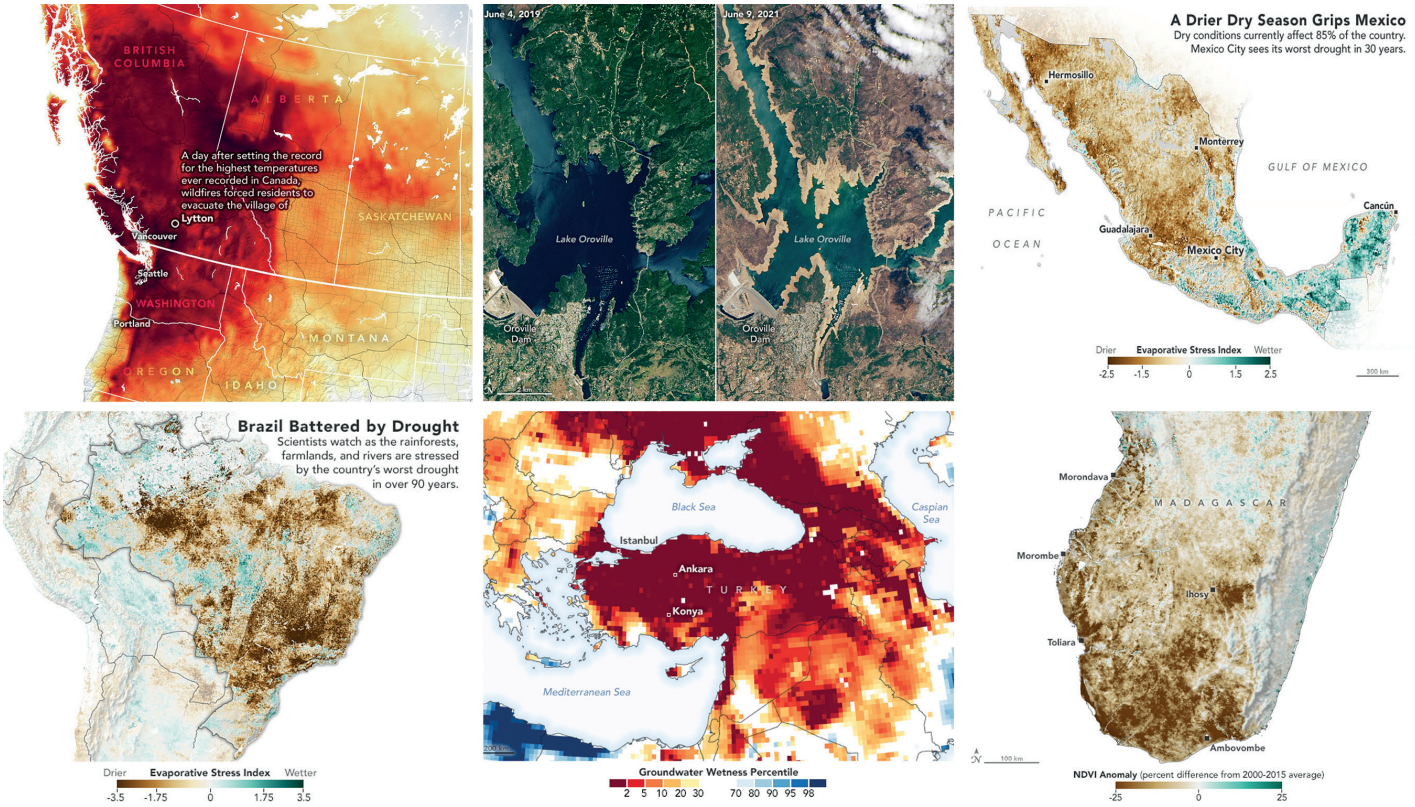


Figure 2. NASA Earth Observatory images showing extensive drought around the world – USA/Canada; Mexico; Brazil; Central Asia; Madagascar.

responsibility – reflecting that by their nature, humans have power over the rest of creation, but also that that power comes with an accountability to God for its wellbeing. There are numerous passages that point to God's concern for non-human creation – such as a concern for wild animals to eat, for the animals in the ark, for animals to rest on the Sabbath, and for not overworking the land.[13] These passages imply an attitude of care for non-human life, for its sustenance and its experience. The biblical notion of stewardship is important here: Christians have a responsibility as bearers of God's image to care for the creation that he loves, as a part of pointing forwards to the fulfilment of Christ's Lordship over it.

Christianity is often critiqued for 'human exceptionalism' in secular literature, because it explicitly places humans 'above' the rest of creation (e.g. Psalm 8). Yet the root of the problem here occurs when Christians use exceptionalism to *exploit* creation. This is not what the Bible says – it gives us a special *responsibility* to creation. The argument sometimes made in secular circles that humans are *merely* another species among many actually erodes this responsibility.

4 This responsibility includes our neighbours

Exodus 23:10–11 and other Bible passages show that overworking the land and exploiting it for maximum gain is not biblical. Rather, care for the poor and for animals should shape our use of the land. Such an attitude to the poor is common in Scripture: Christians are commanded repeatedly to care for the poor and those who lack power – in fact, to care indiscriminately for others.[14]

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30–37) Jesus illustrates the response to the question, 'who is my neighbour?' One purpose of the parable is to show that it is often the most unexpected people – and those across conflict-ridden cultural divides – who turn out to be our neighbour (see also the command to love foreigners in Deuteronomy 10:19). This points to inclusivity: we behave with love towards others because they are all equally valuable before God, regardless of origins, ethnicity, status or any other human label. In the modern world, we can see examples of need much further away than was possible in Jesus' time, and we should act accordingly. The implication is that our neighbour is anyone of whom we are aware – not just those in closest proximity. God shows indiscriminate love and Christ himself is the Good Samaritan, whom we are to emulate.

Human relationships with creation in the Bible are closely tied to relationships with each other and with God (Hosea 4:3). In the Old Testament, for example, the land is an active participant in human relationships with each other and with God (Leviticus 18:25–28). The suffering of the land is a symbol of Israel's disobedience and broken relationship with God.[15] In the New Testament, the relationship between God and creation is mended through the blood of

13 Exod. 23:11; Gen. 6; Deut. 5:14; Exod. 23:10; Lev. 25. See also Prov. 12:10; Exod. 23:5; Deut. 20:20; Deut. 22:4–6; Luke 14:5.
14 Matt. 22:37–40; Luke 10:26–28; Deut. 10:19.
15 Lev. 26:27–35; Isa. 24:4–6; Jer. 9:7–12.

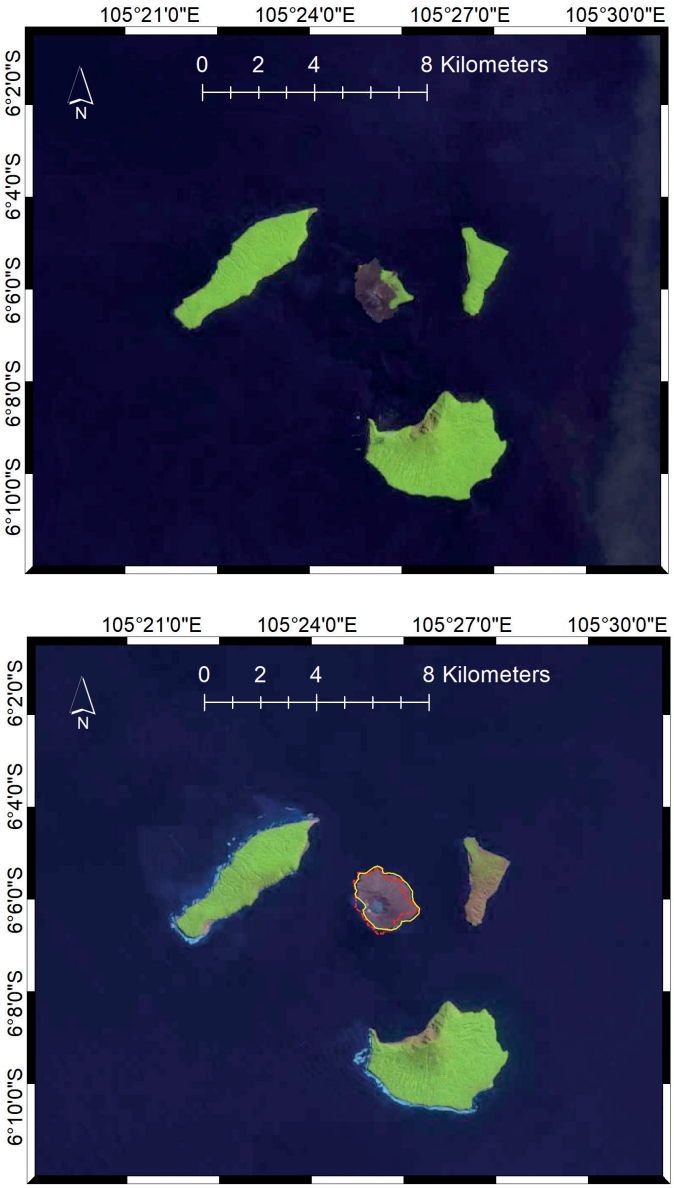


Figure 3. Landsat 8 images of Anak Krakatau (brown, centre – the green islands are the edges of the old pre-1883 edifice of Krakatau) before and after the collapse. (a) was acquired in August 2017; (b) was acquired in July 2019. The red outline in (b) shows the pre-collapse island coastline, while the yellow shows post-collapse. Note the lake in (b) where the summit was in (a) – the pre-collapse summit reached 338m above sea level. Images from USGS, annotated by author.

Christ, and Christians are called to mirror Christ and point forward to the fulness of that redemption.[16] Christ's love for creation is clear – it was created through him and for him (Colossians 1:15–16). If Christians are to be Christlike, then we are to seek to sustain and take care of the rest of creation, including other humans.

5 Stewardship applies both to creation and to knowledge

While God has a providential control over creation – including humanity – that will not see it destroyed ahead of time, Christians are to care for creation and one another as a part of becoming Christlike. Eventually, creation will be renewed but we are not to live apathetically because of that. Stewardship includes responsibilities around knowledge: we have a responsibility to be aware of the distant impacts of our decisions, because those decisions impact upon God's creation, including other people. We should also steward knowledge and expertise effectively because our neighbour is in need (Isaiah 1:17), and accountability for knowledge is a principle in Scripture (Romans 1:18–23). Drought, for example, (Figure 2) is likely to increase in severity and geographical distribution[17] because of changing climate. It already has disproportionate impacts between countries even without this increase, and has significant impacts on livelihoods and health in the Global South. We are ethically bound to use what we know to reduce that risk – through science, policy and individual choices.

How does this relate to disasters?

Inequalities of knowledge and capacity

In December 2018, a tsunami wave killed 437 people and injured 31,942 in Indonesia. Initially, the Indonesian disaster management agency insisted that this was due to tidal activity. As day broke, it became clear that it was a much bigger event: a tsunami generated by the collapse of a large part of the flank of Anak Krakatau volcano in the Sunda Strait (Figure 3). Like many disasters in the modern world, this was preventable – not because we can stop volcanoes from collapsing, but because we have warning technology. Following the 2004 Sumatra-Andaman earthquake and tsunami, a tsunami warning system had been set up in the Indian Ocean. Tsunami warning systems involve buoys that record wave height and deep ocean pressure changes (critical to distinguishing tsunami from large waves), and also use seismic data because many tsunami are triggered by earthquakes. A seismic signal can trigger an automated alert that can then be retracted if the earthquake is regarded as too small to generate a tsunami. The Indonesian system, however, was funded externally through short-term projects. By 2018, the buoys were broken due to lack of upkeep and in some cases vandalism. Short-term funding did not cover local capacity to maintain the system, and so the Indonesian authorities were dependent on alerts from earthquakes alone. The collapse of Anak Krakatau did not cause an earthquake so no warning was given.

Sadly, a similar event had occurred in Palu, Indonesia in September 2018: in this case, there had been an earthquake, but it was too small and had the wrong kind of mechanism to produce a tsunami – yet it did, perhaps because it triggered an underwater landslide. Again, buoys would have detected the tsunami, which killed more than 2,000 people.[18] These two events, occurring within months of each other, demonstrate a much bigger problem: while

16 Phil. 2:1–11; Col. 1:27–28, 3:12–17.

17 See Sixth Assessment Report, Working Group I (Physical Science Basis), ch. 11, available at <www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/> [accessed 12 August 2021]; and UNDRR Global Assessment Report 2019 ch. 8 <https://gar.undrr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-06/full_report.pdf> [accessed 6 September 2021].

18 R. Omira, et al., *Pure Appl. Geophys.* 176 (2019), 1379–1395. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00024-019-02145-z>.

Figure 4. Kilauea

we have technology and knowledge that can help us to mitigate the impacts of environmental hazards on people, we do not steward that knowledge well or justly, and inequalities in wealth distribution and trade policies dictated by the Global North ensure that the poorest people suffer disproportionately, as they cannot access information or act on it. The 1883 tsunami generated by a much larger eruption of Krakatau killed 36,000 people around the Indian Ocean – risk from the volcano was known (Anak Krakatau means 'child of Krakatau' and is fed by the same volcano). Knowledge failed to translate into action because of global inequalities of resource. Indeed, in 2012, a paper had been published forecasting a flank collapse at Anak Krakatau.[19]

Early warning systems (EWS) for natural hazards are improving, albeit often with substantial uncertainties. Many of these uncertainties come from the interference of human activities including, for example, the role of climate change in intensifying tropical cyclones and monsoons, and the effects of deforestation on hillslope stability. Others derive from the inherent uncertainties of the natural system and our incomplete understanding of it. Another and more substantial problem, however, is that the availability and use of EWS is highly variable and concentrated in richer, developed countries where there is sufficient capital to invest in them. Weather forecasting is easier to justify as it affects whole populations daily, but the funding for the supercomputers that are needed to run the most advanced models is challenging to obtain even in developed contexts. There is a significant inequality of expertise and infrastructure for warnings on a global scale.

Marginalised groups such as immigrants, indigenous peoples, or the poorest may be forced to live on the cheapest land – which may be in areas at high risk.

Social injustice

On top of the challenges of using knowledge equitably, research has demonstrated unequivocally that disasters affect the poorest people in any community the worst. Such groups tend to be ignored by those in positions of power, frequently do not trust the powerful, and have few resources for managing and mitigating the effects of a disaster. Marginalised groups such as immigrants, indigenous peoples, or the poorest may be forced to live on the cheapest land – which may be in areas at high risk. Even in developed contexts like Hawai'i, there is substantial relative poverty–risk correlation. The 2018 eruptions at Kilauea, for example, affected Puna district, where 30 per cent of people are below the poverty line and live there because the risky land is cheap. Many cities in the developing world have slum areas on floodplains or on unstable hillslopes – again, the land is cheap, and people settle on land that no one else wants. To add insult to injury, city policy may not recognise such informal settlements and therefore they may not have adequate infrastructure (such as roads, electricity, and water supplies). This is a convenient way to preserve resources, but one that creates risk for the poorest people. Preservation of such areas via national parks is one potential solution but requires relocation of the settlers, along with provision of housing and services, and this is not a priority in developing contexts much of the time.

Transnational risk transfer

Increasingly, the West is outsourcing the industries that serve it to poorer nations – ranging from waste management (such as the UK exporting plastic that was allegedly going to be recycled[20]) that blocks rivers in Indonesia to clearing forests for grazing and palm oil in Brazil. This contributes to the degradation of the environment and increases the risks to poorer populations. Patterns of consumption in the Global North have a significant impact on risk in the Global South, through pollution, greenhouse emissions, mining, and the clearing of land to grow luxury products. For example, obliteration of large areas of vegetation in the Amazon and the rainforests of Borneo to serve the needs of the Global North shows how the expectations of richer countries have a huge impact in poorer countries a long way away:[21] deforestation can increase the risk of droughts, landslides, and floods.

Christian values around the environment are not purely about stewardship, though stewardship is important. They should also be informed by compassion for the weakest and most vulnerable people who lack resources to mitigate threats that derive from distant choices, and awareness of

19 T. Giachetti et al., *Geological Society, London, Special Publications* 361(1) (2012), pp.79–90.

20 For example: <www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jan/12/loophole-will-let-uk-continue-to-ship-plastic-waste-to-poorer-countries accessed 08/09/21>. See also J. Galaiduk et al., *Front. Env. Sci.* 8:115 (2020).

21 N. T. Hoang and K. Kanemoto, *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 5(6) (2021), pp.845–853. <www.nature.com/articles/s41559-021-01417-z> [accessed 8 September 2021].

issues of injustice, so that we can take action to reduce it. Disaster risk emerges from interactions between earth system processes and human decisions – both about creation care and about social justice. Environmental degradation is problematic for Christians in itself because it destroys what God has created and entrusted to us; it is also problematic because it destroys the lives of others.

Combatting human ills in the Anthropocene?

The science of disaster risk reduction identifies poor development practices as fundamental drivers of disaster risk. This is in line with the biblical view of human sin as having spoiled God's creation. Christianity also sees creation and humanity as intertwined: they are part of each other, and humans are commanded to care for creation. The incidence of environmental disasters shows that we are doing a poor job – not only in exacerbating hazard events through failure to care for the environment (emissions, pollution, biodiversity loss), but also in failing to stand up for our neighbour.An economic system that is built around excessive consumption is ultimately destructive, and we cannot be faithful to the character of God if we do not acknowledge the impacts of decisions that are made in the richer, more powerful countries at the expense of poorer ones.

Disaster risk emerges from interactions between earth system processes and human decisions – both about creation care and about social justice.

Personal actions

There are some things individual Christians and churches can do. We can reduce environmental degradation through choosing environmentally friendly products, eating less meat and a more varied, locally sourced diet, being careful to recycle plastics and other recyclables. We can also support organisations that engage in disaster relief and development work. Tearfund, for example, is well regarded among development NGOs and is part of the Disasters Emergency Committee, which coordinates relief efforts when disasters occur. Relief must be accompanied by development work because empowering people to live with risk is critically important – and aid may be mishandled. Frequently, too, international aid comes with political caveats and requirements set by the giving government, which may not reflect the needs on the ground.

While many of the actions we can take are the same as those taken by concerned non-Christian people, the Christian concept of neighbour love has a distinctive ethos. Loving our neighbour is not purely about a general love for humanity, or about loving those whom we know personally. It includes understanding what others are going through: it is about bearing their burdens, in prayer. In the information age, many of us allow information to reach us as passive recipients. We look at our social media pages, but what we

read is curated by our preferred news agency. However, we can be informed about the affairs in other countries if we actively seek to be. Following some UN agencies or key NGOs on social media is a good place to start and can give some important insights into how other people are living. All of this can inform our prayers and is an expression of love.

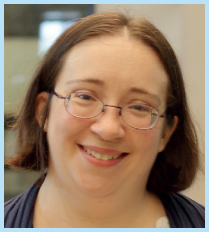
Political engagement

Ultimately, individual choices about consumption have a small effect unless they are very widespread. They need to be accompanied by systemic changes in regulation at national and international levels to reduce environmental risk and economic inequality. Christians have a responsibility to be politically engaged and to lobby for regulatory and policy shifts away from excessive consumption, punitive trade relations, environmental degradation and greenhouse emissions. In the case of greenhouse emissions, for example, the biggest issues are not ones of individual choices so much as the behaviour of multinational companies and governments, and the use of 'secret' courts and legislation to protect the worst offenders.[22] Similarly, tax havens protected by the UK government are a major driver of poverty: multinational companies mining natural resources in Africa pay almost no tax on those acquisitions. A 2017 report estimated that $1.05 trillion in African resources is controlled by 101 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange, 25 of which are based in tax havens.[23] The West (and Britain has a disproportionate role here) is effectively limiting African development. This kind of injustice should hurt us deeply and we should lobby against it, join political parties where appropriate, and use our votes accordingly.

Christians have a responsibility to lobby for regulatory and policy shifts away from excessive consumption, punitive trade relations, environmental degradation and greenhouse emissions.

Conclusion

Reducing disaster risk means a whole-creation perspective: people as a part of creation, with a particular responsibility to God for it. Environmental hazards as physical processes are part of how the earth is created and sustained (e.g. through the production of new land at volcanoes), but they are exacerbated by human actions. Disaster losses – of lives, livelihoods, property and environment – are primarily the result of human decisions. Loving each other involves caring for creation and for our neighbour, whether that is by limiting the impacts of climate change, protecting biodiversity, or reducing poverty. Christians have responsibilities towards the rest of creation and our failure to enact those responsibilities is also a failure to love those who suffer as a result: they may be spatially distant, but they are not relationally distant. We are called to reflect Christ by loving each other and his creation in this world, even as we anticipate its renewal in the next. We care for creation because it is the Lord's (Psalm 24:1, 50:10–11), and in so doing, we are also demonstrating love for our neighbour.



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22 Typically via Investor–State Dispute Settlements, which avoid public scrutiny. E.g. Tienhaara, *Transnat Env Law* 7:2 (2018). See also <https://newint.org/features/2021/06/08/long-read-shadow-courts> [accessed 13 September 2021].

23 <www.globaljustice.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/resources/honest_accounts_2017_web_final.pdf?utm_source=Global%20Justice%20Now%20press%20release%20list&utm_campaign=17a92094cc-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_05_17&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_166972fef5-17a92094cc-288067141&mc_cid=17a92094cc&mc_eid=6149d72169> [accessed 6 September 2021]. See also V. Galaz et al, *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 2(9) (2018), pp.1352–1357.

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