



# Stewardship



**Stewardship:** caring for the planet and managing its resources. A steward is a caretaker and is responsible for looking after the world

## Christians

- Life is a gift from God and God has given humans the role of stewardship.
- Genesis 1:26 teaches that *God made humans in his own image*, meaning that humans have a soul which is unique
- Genesis 2:7 says that *God formed Adam from dust and breathed divine life into him*. Therefore humans were created with a special status, above nature.

This can lead to disagreement among Christians about how we should treat the environment:

- **Dominion:** To rule over the environment. We can exploit the world's resources as we are in charge.
  - When Jesus taught his followers to '*love your neighbour*' (Matthew 5:43) he did not include animals in this command. Christians have respect for other animal species but they are not seen as equals and most Christians find it acceptable to eat meat.
- **Stewardship:** To live in harmony with nature. We cultivate the earth, not exploit it.
  - Humans have **responsibility** towards the environment, looking after the earth's precious resources
  - We should be responsible global citizens, using the earth's resources in a sustainable manner
  - 'Green Christians' are environmental activists who promote awareness and action at church, community and national levels.

## Humanists



- Try to base their reasoning on evidence
- Most humanists agree with the idea of stewardship
- We have a responsibility to work for a more sustainable world, causing as little harm to the environment as possible
- Looking after the environment is a sensible thing to do – human life depends wholly on the environment. If we misuse or abuse the environment, then in the end it is us, our children and our children's children who will suffer

