

Article 50 – “Grateful Participation in God’s Creation”

Kitchener CRC – November 2, 2025

Opening

- Article 50:
“We are grateful for the advances in science and technology; we participate in their development, fostering care for creation and respect for the gift of life.”
 - These are not descriptive words—they are **vocational**:
→ Call to gratitude **and** participation in shaping the world wisely.
 - Key questions:
 - Where does this calling come from?
 - By what authority do we shape creation?
 - How can we ensure our participation is **wise** and **life-giving**?
-

The Challenge of “Fostering Care for Creation”

- Some Christians are uneasy with “stewardship” or “care for creation.”
 - View of the world as temporary vs. eternal heaven.
 - Yet Article 50—and Scripture—calls us to **cultivate shalom** and **nurture flourishing**.
 - Not just Eden, but every garden, lab, classroom, and community.
-

Framing the Question through Worldview

- My field is **worldviews**—we see best by contrast.
- Lynn White Jr.’s essay *The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis*:
 - Environmental crisis = **worldview problem**, not just technological.
 - “Human ecology is deeply conditioned by beliefs about our nature and destiny—by religion.”

- Real change requires a **rethinking of religion/worldview**.
-

White's Critique of the Christian Worldview

- White blames the **Judeo-Christian worldview** for environmental harm.
 - Rooted in Genesis: humans in the **image of God** and given **dominion**.
 - Claims this created a **dualism**: humans over nature → license to exploit.
 - Quotes Genesis 1:26–28 – the **Creation Mandate**.
 - Concludes: “No item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man’s purposes.”
 - The question: *Is White right?*
 - Christians have often misused creation.
 - But this **distorts** the true meaning of Genesis, not defines it.
-

Rethinking the Mandate – Returning to Scripture

- “In the beginning God...”
→ God is Creator, Triune, relational, loving.
 - We are made **in God’s image** → for **relationship and love**, not domination.
-

Four Foundational Relationships

1. **With God** – created for intimacy and purpose.
 - Work and worship connected; Creation Mandate only works when rooted in relationship with God.
2. **With Ourselves** – we have dignity and worth as God’s children.
 - “I am kind, I am smart, I am important.”
 - Love your neighbor **as yourself** – self-worth matters.
3. **With Others** – we need community.
 - Without it, we wither emotionally, spiritually.

4. **With Creation** – stewardship, not domination.

- Hebrew *radah* (rule) = guardianship.
 - *Shamar* (keep) = protection and nurture.
-

Interdependence

- Genesis 2:7, 2:19 → humanity and creatures both from the soil.
 - *Adam* from *Adamah* → kinship with the earth.
 - **We belong to creation**; we depend on it and it on us.
 - One key word: **Interdependence**.
-

The Fall and the Fracture

- Genesis 3:17–19 – broken relationships.
 - Ground cursed, work becomes toil.
 - Yet God doesn't abandon creation.
 - Romans 8:19–21 – creation **groans**, awaiting redemption.
 - Through Christ, reconciliation begins—creation longs for renewal.
-

Our Ongoing Role – Co-Creators with God

- Theology of **creatio prima** (first creation) and **creatio secunda** (ongoing creation).
 - God creates; we **develop** creation.
 - When we build, invent, explore—done rightly—we **mirror God's creativity**.
 - Work, technology, and science are **good gifts**—when guided by **wisdom** and **love**.
 - Wisdom = knowing how to make creation **flourish**, not merely function.
-

Faithful Participation in Modern Times

- Our “garden tools” now: laptops, lab coats, satellites, software.

- Calling remains: **to foster care for creation and respect for life.**
 - Technology itself is **not evil**—it reflects God’s image in us.
 - But every tool amplifies our choices:
 - The same tech can **heal or harm, serve or destroy.**
 - Faithful use requires **humility, discernment, and gratitude.**
-

Conclusion

- Article 50 calls us to:
 - **Gratitude** and **participation.**
 - To be grateful is to be attentive.
 - To participate is to serve.
 - Caring for creation is **not a modern environmental fad**—
 - it’s an **ancient calling** from Genesis itself.
 - To bear God’s image is to join the Creator in **renewing all things.**
 - “Behold, I am making all things new.” – Revelation
-

Closing Prayer (summary points)

- Lord of creation and Redeemer of all—
 - You’ve placed soil and circuit boards in our hands.
 - Grant us wisdom, humility, and joy in your ongoing creation.
 - May our work bring life, truth, and your glory.
 - In Jesus Christ, through whom all things were made. Amen.