

An Analysis of U.S. Energy Policy Through a Christian Ecological Perspective

Rodney Y. Ford

Helms School of Government Public Policy Conference

Spring 2023

Since global temperatures began to be recorded at land-based weather stations in the 1880s, the data indicates global temperatures have been rising year-over-year.¹ Though the average American would have been warned in the 1970s of an opposite problem, it is a hardly disputed scientific fact that temperatures are indeed rising. It is also well-documented that wildlife ecosystems around the world have been affected and sometimes decimated by purported human activities. These facts are not propagated solely by evolutionary scientists or those who object to a biblical worldview. Many creationist scientists acknowledge quite resolutely that the earth is experiencing a change in her ecological makeup. The point of contention does not lie in the certainty of increasing temperatures or crumbling ecosystems but rather the hypothesis that such increase is abnormal in the course of historical climate variability. If the premise of irregular variation is assumed, the debate is further compounded by identifying and analyzing the causes of rising global temperatures, namely the measurable impact of human beings and particularly the widespread emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. For reasons of problematic inconsistencies with this theory including the legitimacy of carbon dating and the organic cycles of historical climate variability, the phenomenon of “global warming” has not been proven beyond a shadow of doubt to be directly correlated to human activity. There is no question that the degree to which rising global temperatures have been impacted by human activities is an important topic of scholarship, but it is not the focus of this study and is in fact rendered largely irrelevant within the context of the following discussion.

Within the last fifty years, concern for the ecological future of the world has become increasingly apparent within scholarly circles as well as the general public. Most Americans now favor climate transition.² Al Gore’s 2006 Oscar-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* is perhaps most memorable as the gold standard of climate alarmism. Gore glibly warns his audience that without immediate action, our children will inherit a doomed and dying world. Though consensus about this issue has been broad, an even more aggressive push to normalize climate alarmism has emerged in the past few years. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan has demonstrated this refined attitude that most scholars and professionals publicly profess towards the nature of climate change and the proposed solutions. In her dissenting opinion of *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency*, Kagan sounds the alarm: “If the current rate of emissions continues, children born this year could live to see parts of the Eastern seaboard swallowed by the ocean.... Rising waters, scorching heat, and other severe weather conditions could force mass migration events, political crises, civil unrest, and even state failure.”³ Whether Justice Kagan is misinformed or not, this is strong language coming from the highest level of the United States government concerning not only the preservation of sensitive ecosystems but of the viability of mankind itself. The pervasiveness of these ideas and their implications stretch not only to the highest levels of the American government but also to the intelligentsia of the international world order. Following the release of an emissions report, United Nations

¹ Tim Osborn, “Tim Osborn: Hadcrut5 global temperature graphs,” University of East Anglia, accessed December 17, 2022, <https://crudata.uea.ac.uk/~timo/diag/tempdiag.htm>.

² Alec Tyson, Cary Funk, and Brian Kennedy, “Americans Largely Favor U.S. Taking Steps to Become Carbon Neutral by 2050,” Pew Research Center, March 1, 2022, <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2022/03/01/americans-largely-favor-u-s-taking-steps-to-become-carbon-neutral-by-2050/>.

³ *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency*, 597 U.S. 57, 58 (2022) (Kagan E., dissenting).

Secretary-General António Guterres issued a warning to world leaders: “We must close the emissions gap before climate catastrophe closes in on us.”⁴

The current landscape of global energy geopolitics has been largely shaped by the preceding decades of climate science as well as more recent events in the past three years. Along with the widespread COVID-19 disruptions and the subsequently unmatched post-pandemic demand, the unprovoked and illicit Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February of 2022 has contributed to a global energy crisis. Strategic weaknesses of many countries in the world have been exposed, and the ongoing response to the energy war and a post-COVID global economy will continue to decide the direction of economic and political stability. In the case of Europe and contrary to today’s situation, leading European countries doubled-down on dependence of Russian gas shortly before the war in Ukraine broke out. Many policymakers in Europe did not see energy security as foundational to national security. A lack of investment in critical energy infrastructure in addition to strangling geological and regulatory incidents also contributed to European vulnerability.⁵ European leaders have now been forced to either bow down to the Russian petrostate or commit to sensible gas geoeconomics.⁶

The energy crisis in Europe has been compounded by a war that is perhaps the most multidimensional conflict the world has ever seen. While a bloody military conflict ensues, a tense economic and geopolitical battle has concurrently raged on. Most industrialized countries have been compelled to take a side. The threat of energy destabilization has been used as a weapon just as much as the tank or mortar. For example, the sabotage of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline has brought to light this new form of warfare.⁷ Aside from the impact on global trading markets, an increasingly dire refugee crisis, and a strenuous test of the integrity of the international political system itself, global energy markets have arguably been hit the hardest. Wide-ranging consequences from skyrocketing gas prices to fertilizer-induced food shortages have been felt across the world and particularly in regions like western Europe and Africa. Along with the US, the European Union and its allies have worked diligently to utilize other sources of oil and natural gas than to Russia’s comparatively cheap and easily transportable resources, an act that is believed to reduce Putin’s war chest. Countries like Qatar⁸ and Kuwait have stepped up in solidifying long-term agreements to supply the energy needs of Europe.⁹ Even though considerable progress have been made, the reality is that Europe is not ready to turn away

⁴ “World Headed for Climate Catastrophe without Urgent Action: UN Secretary-General,” UN Environment Programme, accessed December 17, 2022, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/world-headed-climate-catastrophe-without-urgent-action-un-secretary-general>.

⁵ Gabriel Collins, Anna Mikulska, and Steven Miles, “Winning the Long War in Ukraine Requires Gas Geoeconomics,” Baker Institute, August 2022, <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/sites/default/files/CES-pub-Ukraine%2BWar-082522.pdf>, 8.

⁶ Ibid., 10.

⁷ Seth Frantzman, “Nord Stream Sabotage Will Permanently Shift Global Trade - Analysis,” The Jerusalem Post, September 29, 2022, <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-718432>.

⁸ Simone Foxman, Paul Wallace, and Vanessa Dezem, “Qatar to Supply Germany with LNG Under Long-Term Gas Deal,” Bloomberg, November 29, 2022, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-11-29/qatar-to-supply-germany-with-lng-under-long-term-gas-deals?cmpid=BBBXT112922_ENERGY&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_term=221129&utm_campaign=energy.

⁹ Fiona MacDonald, “Kuwait to Send Europe Five Times More Diesel as Russia Ban Looms,” Bloomberg, January 9, 2023, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-01-09/kuwait-to-send-europe-five-times-more-diesel-as-russia-ban-looms#xj4y7vzkg>.

completely from Russian imports.¹⁰ As in the case of continuing LNG exports, a full-scale transition is not quite feasible yet, but Western allies are nonetheless investing heavily in the infrastructure and supply chain networks needed to secure a safer and more reliable energy future.

The United States and the EU have also gone on the offensive when it comes to alleviating the Russian disruption of global energy markets. The EU has implemented a range of “solidarity mechanism[s]” that have aimed at consolidating leverage by banding together to pool demand.¹¹ The plan has proven largely ineffective and complicated to arrange as regional energy markets and their current connection to other sectors of the economy are not easily redesigned overnight. There also seems to be differing views of the right policy response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Market interventions like price caps are not proving to encompass a multi-faceted approach.¹² Top-dogs in the European Union like Germany and France along with Washington have argued a need to set price caps in which they know will keep petrodollars flowing to Russia, a tradeoff they are willing to take. Smaller European countries favor tighter caps they believe will expedite an end to the war.¹³ Unfortunately, these market interventions have not done much to insulate European economies or put pressure on the Russians. Even price caps by a much more weighted coalition of nations such as the G-7 are embarrassingly ineffective in their effort to sink Russian revenues and impact the course of the war in Ukraine.¹⁴ Among other things, offensive measures taken by the EU and its western allies have strengthened Saudi-Russian collaboration and handicapped US influence in Riyadh.¹⁵ A good example of this failed provocation is that nearly 12 months after the outbreak of the war, Russia’s oil production decreased by nearly 122 million barrels.¹⁶ But the cheap price of Russian oil, particularly Urals crude, has attracted opportunists from around the world who have snatched it up and sometimes resold it to Western countries, including adversaries of the United States. Especially as post-COVID zero demand emerges, China has greatly benefitted from a

¹⁰ Mike Fulwood, “Europe’s Infrastructure and Supply Crisis,” The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, September 2022, <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Europes-Infrastructure-and-Supply-Crisis.pdf>, 7.

¹¹ Ben Cahill and Allegra Dawes, “European Union Considers New Gas Market Interventions,” Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), October 20, 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/european-union-considers-new-gas-market-interventions>.

¹² Emily Gosden, “Europe’s Price Cap on Russian Oil Is No One-Size-Fits-All Answer,” The Times, November 27, 2022, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/europes-price-cap-on-russian-oil-is-no-one-size-fits-all-answer-3z7q2z8g3>.

¹³ Javier Blas, “Oil and Gas Price Caps: The EU and US Negotiations Are Deeply Pointless,” Bloomberg, November 28, 2022, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-11-28/oil-and-gas-price-caps-the-eu-and-us-negotiations-are-deeply-pointless?cmpid=BBBXT112822_ENERGY&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_term=221128&utm_campaign=energy.

¹⁴ Richard L. Morningstar and Benjamin L. Schmitt, “Why the Oil Price Cap Won’t Hurt Putin,” Foreign Policy, December 15, 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/12/15/russia-ukraine-war-sanctions-oil-embargo-price-cap-putin-revenue-energy/>.

¹⁵ Kristan Coates Ulrichsen, Mark Finley, and Jim Krane, “The OPEC+ Phenomenon of Saudi-Russian Cooperation and Implications for US-Saudi Relations,” Baker Institute, October 18, 2022, <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/opec-phenomenon-saudi-russian-cooperation-and-implications-us-saudi-relations>.

¹⁶ IEA, “National Reliance on Russian Fossil Fuel Imports,” IEA, December 2022, <https://www.iea.org/reports/national-reliance-on-russian-fossil-fuel-imports>.

floundering Western response and will continue to do so.¹⁷ Indian refineries have been buying cheap Russian oil in unprecedented quantities.¹⁸

It's important to take a step back and seek to understand the currents of global politics from an informed perspective. We know that a person is shaped by their worldview. Their beliefs and actions are the outworking of their worldview. The practical characteristics of a certain worldview are manifested in every issue, small or large. As we have seen briefly in this study, a worldview will determine how much a country will sacrifice short-term energy security for burdensome investment into forms of energy that cannot sustain a burgeoning economy. On the smallest scale, the way in which a person views the world in an ecological sense will determine whether a person chooses to recycle or step over the ant on the sidewalk. I have no reservations that environmental negligence has irreparable consequences for both humans and the world at large. The global initiative to either act or remain obstinate will come to impact life on earth. My contention is that the lens in which we study the balance of life on earth or the study of “ecology” will disparately inform our suppositions about the policy choices we will inevitably make.

The person who subscribes to Darwinism in his study of ecology and its complexities will come to the table self-determined to radically change a pre-conceived outcome. After all, the world is the result of a completely accidental set of processes that have no meaning or trajectory. Despite futile efforts to convince otherwise, the secularist worldview rejects unalterable truth. Whether it be pantheism or the worship of subjectivity, the modern man is epistemologically incapable of a coherent and moral rationalization of his ecological woes. He does not possess irrefutable truth that can speak to the intricacies of life.¹⁹ To him, the tree is only what he can rationalize in a purely physical sense: a tree. The absence of a higher truth that is removed from him does not permit him to see any meaningful connection. There is no authoritative prescription from an infallible source that gives the tree an identity, value, and a role in the created universe. Eventually, the modern man is forced into an awkward fusion of moral and technologically pragmatic reasons for prudent ecological stewardship. The subtleties of pantheism suddenly become appealing. Whereas the Christian understands creation to be external from God, the modern man sees the physical world as a literal embodiment of a higher spiritual power. The deer of the forest and the hair on his head are simply an extension of the nature and being of “God.” The result is ugly and inherently narcissistic. Because nature has no value itself as a work that is good and fashioned by something far greater, the goal of responsible climate leadership is based on crude pragmatism. His relational presuppositions dictate that nature must only be handled in a careful manner so only as to sustain man and his posterity.²⁰ Soon thereafter, rationalism quickly departs. He then places value onto nature and ascribes to it human feelings in a way that totally misrepresents and overlooks the truth of what it objectively is. Francis

¹⁷ Ji Siqu, “China Snaps up US\$2 Billion of Russian LNG as Energy Bucks Economic Downturn,” South China Morning Post, July 21, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/economy/economic-indicators/article/3186083/china-snaps-over-us2-billion-russian-lng-energy-trade>.

¹⁸ “India Now Buying 33 Times More Russian Oil than a Year Earlier,” The Times of India, January 16, 2023, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/india-now-buying-33-times-more-russian-oil-than-a-year-earlier/articleshow/97035273.cms?from=mdr>.

¹⁹ Francis A. Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man: The Christian View of Ecology* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1970), 30.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

Schaeffer put it best: “When we see a chicken, we endow its love-life with human qualities. But that is to evade the reality of the chicken.”²¹

Stretching all the way to the White House, this ecological worldview is ubiquitous in public policy circles across the United States today. On paper, one might be able to trace the commitment of the federal government to consecrate the climate agenda to the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and the subsequent ratification of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992. The 1990s saw strong bipartisanship on the issue but soon became increasingly associated with the Democratic party brand of politics. Today, the cause of addressing climate change is almost exclusively a hallmark of the political left. Although a new eco-right has been slowly emerging, climate policy has been a feature most closely associated with the torchbearers of a post-Obama Administration legacy.²² What follows is to say that the climate alarmism of today, or the sincere belief that the world as we know it will degenerate into oblivion without action, did not garner its initial momentum within the policymaking sphere when Joe Biden was sworn in as president in January of 2021. Nevertheless, the early actions of the career politician turned commander-in-chief will come to set the course of U.S. ecological policy and domestic energy security for the foreseeable future.

The Biden Administration has reversed course on many of the objectives and achievements of the Trump era, namely energy independence and the title as a net exporter to the world. The administration has sought to conform US energy policy to the policies followed by the rest of the world in which a central feature includes a declared allegiance against oil and natural gas. For example, the US reentered into the Paris Agreement and pledged full support to UN climate goals. Even from the campaign trail, Biden promised voters he would “end fossil fuel.”²³ The litany of executive orders shortly after taking the oath proved that he was serious and that the official policy of the administration would be to “advance environmental justice.”²⁴ A few days later, Biden enshrined the fight against climate change as not only integral to their efforts to improve the daily lives of Americans but placing it “...at the forefront of this nation’s foreign policy and national security planning.”²⁵ Unlike FDR and his New Deal plan, Biden’s expansive objectives have been met with unwavering political opposition in Congress and not only from the other side of the aisle. Initially drafted to invest a record \$555 billion in clean energy and climate transition, the Build Back Better plan was eventually scaled down to the Inflation Reduction Act. The IRA still invests a breathtaking figure of \$369 billion.

The result of a national security policy centered around “environmental justice” in the first few months of the Biden era was high inflation and supply chain constraints. Seeking to begin the sharp transition of the American economy away from conventional energy, the oil and natural gas industry has been the number one victim of the antagonistic rhetoric and

²¹ Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man*, 31.

²² Alex Bozmoski and Nate Hochman, “The Future of Conservative Climate Leadership,” National Affairs, 2021, <https://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/the-future-of-conservative-climate-leadership>.

²³ Steve Peoples, “In Intimate Moment, Biden Vows to ‘End Fossil Fuel,’” AP News (Associated Press, September 6, 2019), <https://apnews.com/article/9dfb1e4c381043bab6fd0fa6dece3974>.

²⁴ “Executive Order 13990 of January 20, 2021, Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis,” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-protecting-public-health-and-environment-and-restoring-science-to-tackle-climate-crisis/>.

²⁵ “Executive Order 14008 of January 27, 2021, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/>.

confrontational action.²⁶ The Keystone Pipeline, a critical piece of American infrastructure, was indefinitely closed, compromising domestic production capabilities and killing tens of thousands of jobs with the stroke of a pen. A congressionally mandated report by the Department of Energy in December 2022 tacitly acknowledged the tangible harm of closing the pipeline.²⁷ In addition, early actions of the administration included discarding an effective and responsible offshore energy strategy and enacting a moratorium on all new oil and gas leasing on federal lands in 13 states. The latter would be declared illegal eighteen months later.²⁸ The consequences of a policy path like this have been steep for the average American taxpayer as well as to our bleeding allies across the world. Gasoline prices in the US have risen not only as a result of Putin's war in Ukraine but also and most notably due to reckless government spending and incompetencies with supply chain management. Any worthy economist understands that the deadly combination of massive influx of money into the economy, decreased domestic output of energy, and withholding capital from future investment will always lead to inflation and energy vulnerability.²⁹ The curtailing of Russian deliveries of oil to different parts of the world has undoubtedly played a role in the global energy crisis, but the domestic strategy of outlawing any long-term investment and production of US energy assets while seeking to increase short-term production for political purposes is in fact damaging to the national security interests of the nation. Strangling domestic production is not only raising prices at home but also aiding the Russian-OPEC alliance in keeping oil prices high and revenues flowing.³⁰ The hypocrisy of this line of thinking was evident in Biden's second State of the Union address when he declared that oil companies "invested too little of that profit to increase domestic production and keep gas prices down."³¹ This is almost a laughable statement given the fact that the administration has cancelled new federal leases and lacerated oil companies with "death by a thousand cuts."³²

The Biden administration also has questions to answer by enriching our foreign adversaries (and possibly himself), antagonizing our European allies with green energy subsidies, and contradicting global climate objectives. While the US is choosing not to take advantage of an abundance of natural resources and deliberately constraining domestic supply, the administration is easing sanctions on the Maduro regime by handing out offshore gas licenses

²⁶ Katie Tubb, "Biden's Radical, Anti-Fossil Fuel Energy Policy Costs Americans Dearly," The Heritage Foundation, June 28, 2022, <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/commentary/bidens-radical-anti-fossil-fuel-energy-policy-costs-americans-dearly>.

²⁷ U.S. Department of Energy, *Keystone XL Extension Permit Revocation: Energy Costs and Job Impacts* (Washington, DC, 2022), <https://www.daines.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/12.23.22-KXL-Pipeline-Job-Loss-and-Impacts-on-Consumer-Energy-Costs-001245.pdf>.

²⁸ "Federal Judge Rules Federal Oil and Gas Lease Moratorium Exceeded Biden's Power," Montana Department of Justice, August 19, 2022, <https://dojmt.gov/federal-judge-rules-federal-oil-and-gas-lease-moratorium-exceeded-bidens-power/>.

²⁹ EJ Antoni, "Slaying the Inflation Dragon," The Heritage Foundation, November 14, 2022, <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/commentary/slaying-the-inflation-dragon>.

³⁰ Tomas J. Phillipson, "Biden Turns the U.S. Into a Shadow Member of OPEC," The Wall Street Journal, December 13, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-turns-the-us-into-a-shadow-member-of-opec-supply-profit-taxes-domestic-production-cartel-energy-11670966873>.

³¹ Joe Biden, "Remarks of President Joe Biden – State of the Union Address as Prepared for Delivery (Washington, DC: The White House Briefing Room, 2023).

³² Ben Zeisloft, "Death By A Thousand Cuts: Oil Executive Details How Biden Is A Drag on The Industry," The Daily Wire, December 9, 2022, <https://www.dailywire.com/news/death-by-a-thousand-cuts-oil-executive-details-how-biden-is-a-drag-on-the-industry>.

and strengthening cooperation with the state-run oil company.³³ As the US sits on an abundance of naturally clean energy, the solution to our economic and energy woes has been to outsource to communist and authoritative countries who possess less clean burning oil and wish to see us fail.³⁴ Proven irresponsible and dangerous by other countries³⁵, this policy has contributed to the world's consumption of coal that has reached a new record³⁶ and exacerbated the regression of moving towards climate goals at home and abroad.³⁷ Simultaneously, green subsidies outlined in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) have agitated our EU allies and generated friction that could spill over into other areas of international cooperation.³⁸ Unless carefully resolved, this schism could cement into a disconnect with our friends in Europe that will cause us to diverge in our paths to a long-term goal of sustainable alternatives.³⁹

Within public policy circles in the United States, secularist and illogical solutions to the ecological crisis should be refuted, but we must also be quick to dismiss another set of answers in which gives no meaning to nature itself either: a stiff and platonic pre-Reformation Christianity. In 1967, Lynn White wrote his now famous piece, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis." White sought to explore the origins of the problem we face today and propose biblically oriented thoroughfares. He posited that a major reason for the deterioration of our environment has much to do with Christian dereliction. According to White, generations of Christian societies have abused the dominion man has over creation and have thereby caused the destruction we see today.⁴⁰ The solution, he says, must come from the source in which the issue is derived: "Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not. We must re-think and re-feel our nature and destiny."⁴¹ To a certain degree, White has insightfully surmised the problem of the Christian attitude. Falling into sins of presumption and apathy, Christians have not properly understood the dominion mandate. As a result, the proper interest and view of the world and its wonderful fruits has been neglected. The Byzantine-minded Christian no longer sees the beauty of creation itself

³³ Matt Spetalnick, Marianna Parraga, and Curtis Williams, "Exclusive: U.S. Issues License to Trinidad and Tobago to Develop Venezuela Offshore Gas Field," Reuters, January 24, 2023, https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/us-grants-license-trinidad-tobago-develop-venezuela-offshore-gas-field-2023-01-24/?utm_source=dailybrief&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DailyBrief2023Jan25&utm_term=DailyNewsBrief.

³⁴ "Natural Gas: America's Abundant, Clean Energy," American Petroleum Institute, accessed January 15, 2023, <https://www.api.org/oil-and-natural-gas/wells-to-consumer/exploration-and-production/natural-gas/natural-gas-americas-clean-energy>.

³⁵ Jack Spencer, "A Warning to Biden: Europe Is Headed for Energy Chaos This Winter," The Heritage Foundation, November 8, 2022, <https://www.heritage.org/coal-oil-natural-gas/commentary/warning-biden-europe-headed-energy-chaos-winter>.

³⁶ Olivia Fletcher, "World's Consumption Set to Breach New Record This Year," Bloomberg, December 16, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-16/world-s-coal-consumption-set-to-breach-new-record-this-year>.

³⁷ Gavin Maguire, "Column: Europe's Climate Credentials Sullied by Coal Import Binge," Reuters, September 12, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/europes-climate-credentials-sullied-by-coal-import-binge-2022-09-12/>.

³⁸ Claude Barfield, "Subsidies and America First Vex US Allies," American Enterprise Institute, December 13, 2022, <https://www.aei.org/technology-and-innovation/subsidies-and-america-first-vex-us-allies/>.

³⁹ Richard Bravo, "Why Us and EU Are Heading for a Fight over Green Subsidies: Q&A," Bloomberg, December 15, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-15/why-us-and-eu-are-heading-for-a-fight-over-green-subsidies-q-a#xj4y7vzkg>.

⁴⁰ Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1207.)

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

as something to be nurtured and treated accordingly but a cold and hard academic clue to the existence of God.⁴² He cuts down the tree because to him the tree has no soul and exists exclusively for his material benefit. Anything less would be to make an idol of the tree.

If we are to reject the low view of pantheism as well as the sub-Christian perspective, what are we to believe about the natural world around us? The answer is a creed of Christianity that is unified and stitched together by the Word of God. By means of divine revelation, Christians profess their faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ. In other words, it is God who has spoken and graciously given us the answers we so desperately need about the meaning and the purpose of the world around us and how we are to live in it. It is on the basis of His character and authority that we find our identity. The modern man does quite the opposite. He looks for answers within himself by gathering information about the world and consecrating the objectivity of truth from those observations.⁴³

The Word of God tells us that creation is valuable in itself because He made it external to Himself. This is what makes it valuable. It is not merely a component of His being but it is separate in existence.⁴⁴ We also see in that creation all things are equally created by God. In other words, humans and the rest of nature share in their identity as created beings. We have what Francis Schaeffer calls a “downward” integration. But man also has an “upward” integration. Man shares his creatureliness with the bird or the tree, but only the man is created in the image of God.⁴⁵ Even though man’s relationship is primarily upward, he should not neglect the obligation of his duty in the downward sense as a created being. It is the same truth with the difference between those who are in Christ and those who are not and unrecognized as children of the same Father. The Christian is obviously separate in status but united in essence. Everything has its place. We should never look down on the tree because God made it and to do otherwise would question the purposes of God.⁴⁶ This means that we can treat the oil field as it is – an oil field designed to produce energy to power our economies and heat our homes. God has created the world and every aspect is relegated to its own level and role. Recognizing this sublime verity and the inherent reverence each created thing deserves, we treat the oil field with respect and dignity but we cultivate an attitude towards these things as God does and for the purpose they were created. In contrast, the modern man is incapable of seeing these things. Schaeffer describes his dilemma:

But in the modern field of ecology he begins to scream, “I am dying in my city and my ocean is dying... Modern man has no real “value” for the ocean. All he has is the most crass form of egoist, pragmatic value for it. He treats it as a “thing” in the worst possible sense, to exploit it for the “good” of man. The man who believes things are there only by chance cannot give things a real value. But for the Christian the value of a thing is not in itself autonomously, but because God made it. It deserves this respect as something which was created by God, as man himself has been created by God.⁴⁷

⁴² Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man*, 40.

⁴³ Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man*, 39.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

So then, in another Schaeffer moment of brilliance, how then shall we live? As Christians, how do we step into the policy sphere and make crucial decisions that protect our families and affect our ecological livelihood? The answer is that in whatever path we choose forward, we must treat creation now as on the day it will be redeemed and place everything in its right place while doing everything we can to avoid causing destruction and decay.⁴⁸ If done correctly, a transition to green energy is certainly a viable policy goal. Harnessing the natural elements of this world that God has made in which He will always sustain is feasible. Contrary to popular opinion, it is not mutually exclusive to seize opportunities to move towards net-zero emissions⁴⁹ while utilizing and strengthening the abundance of natural gas capabilities providentially endowed to the United States.⁵⁰ Capitalizing on our domestic resources and committing to medium to long-term infrastructure allows us not only to work towards a smoother transition of green energy but will also do so for the rest of the world.⁵¹ Neither is it mutually exclusive to enact policies that will contribute to economic growth and also reinforce ambitious emission reduction goals.⁵² Lastly, the US should also seek to limit the emphasis on a social cost-benefit analysis within federal regulatory agencies like ESG will help to stop the choking of key sectors in our economy.⁵³

⁴⁸ Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man*, 72.

⁴⁹ “American Gas Association,” American Gas Association, 2021, <https://www.aga.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/aga-net-zero-emissions-opportunities-for-gas-utilities.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Abhiram Rajendran and Anne-Sophie Corbeau, “Opportunities and Risks in Expanding US Gas and LNG Capacity,” Center on Global Energy Policy (Columbia University, September 22, 2022), <https://www.energypolicy.columbia.edu/publications/opportunities-and-risks-expanding-us-gas-and-lng-capacity>.

⁵¹ Steven R. Miles, Gabriel Collins, and Anna Mikulska, “US Needs LNG to Fight a Two-Front Gas War,” Baker Institute, August 18, 2022, <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/us-needs-lng-fight-two-front-gas-war>.

⁵² Nicolas Loris, “Pursuing Policies to Drive Economic Growth and Reduce Emissions,” The Heritage Foundation, October 16, 2019, <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/report/pursuing-policies-drive-economic-growth-and-reduce-emissions>.

⁵³ Nathan Worcester, “In ESG Debate, Some See Threat to Livelihood, Traditional Values,” The Epoch Times, January 11, 2023, https://www.theepochtimes.com/in-esg-debate-some-see-threat-to-livelihood-traditional-values_4973557.html?utm_source=Morningbrief&src=Morningbrief&utm_campaign=mb-2023-01-12&src_cmp=mb-2023-01-12&utm_medium=email&est=1bUSc9f0L0IIza3JGjh0ME98rkv6jDd%2FPUZtbALUb1HIAUVaatkWLhvMyIznm0p.

Bibliography

- “Executive Order 13990 of January 20, 2021, Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis.” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-protecting-public-health-and-environment-and-restoring-science-to-tackle-climate-crisis/>.
- “Executive Order 14008 of January 27, 2021, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad.” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/>.
- “Federal Judge Rules Federal Oil and Gas Lease Moratorium Exceeded Biden's Power.” Montana Department of Justice, August 19, 2022. <https://dojmt.gov/federal-judge-rules-federal-oil-and-gas-lease-moratorium-exceeded-bidens-power/>.
- “India Now Buying 33 Times More Russian Oil than a Year Earlier.” The Times of India, January 16, 2023. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/india-now-buying-33-times-more-russian-oil-than-a-year-earlier/articleshow/97035273.cms?from=mdr>.
- “Natural Gas: America's Abundant, Clean Energy.” American Petroleum Institute. Accessed January 15, 2023. <https://www.api.org/oil-and-natural-gas/wells-to-consumer/exploration-and-production/natural-gas/natural-gas-americas-clean-energy>.
- “Net-Zero Emissions Opportunities for Gas Utilities.” American Gas Association, 2021. <https://www.aga.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/aga-net-zero-emissions-opportunities-for-gas-utilities.pdf>.
- “World Headed for Climate Catastrophe without Urgent Action: UN Secretary-General.” UN Environment Programme. Accessed December 17, 2022. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/world-headed-climate-catastrophe-without-urgent-action-un-secretary-general>.
- Antoni, EJ. “Slaying the Inflation Dragon.” The Heritage Foundation, November 14, 2022. <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/commentary/slaying-the-inflation-dragon>.
- Barfield, Claude. “Subsidies and America First VEX US Allies.” American Enterprise Institute, December 13, 2022. <https://www.aei.org/technology-and-innovation/subsidies-and-america-first-vex-us-allies/>.
- Barfield, Claude. “Subsidies and America First Vex US Allies.” American Enterprise Institute, December 13, 2022. <https://www.aei.org/technology-and-innovation/subsidies-and-america-first-vex-us-allies/>.
- Blas, Javier. “Oil and Gas Price Caps: The EU and US Negotiations Are Deeply Pointless.” Bloomberg, November 28, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-11->

28/oil-and-gas-price-caps-the-eu-and-us-negotiations-are-deeply-pointless?cmpid=BBBXT112822_ENERGY&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_term=221128&utm_campaign=energy.

Bozmoski, Alex, and Nate Hochman. "The Future of Conservative Climate Leadership." National Affairs, 2021. <https://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/the-future-of-conservative-climate-leadership>.

Bravo, Richard. "Why Us and EU Are Heading for a Fight over Green Subsidies: Q&A." Bloomberg, December 15, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-15/why-us-and-eu-are-heading-for-a-fight-over-green-subsidies-q-a#xj4y7vzkg>.

Cahill, Ben, and Allegra Dawes. "European Union Considers New Gas Market Interventions." Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), October 20, 2022. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/european-union-considers-new-gas-market-interventions>.

Collins, Gabriel, Anna Mikulska, and Steven Miles. "Winning the Long War in Ukraine Requires Gas Geoeconomics." Baker Institute, August 2022. <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/sites/default/files/CES-pub-Ukraine%2BWar-082522.pdf>.

Fletcher, Olivia. "World's Consumption Set to Breach New Record This Year." Bloomberg, December 16, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-16/world-s-coal-consumption-set-to-breach-new-record-this-year>.

Foxman, Simone, Paul Wallace, and Vanessa Dezem. "Qatar to Supply Germany with LNG Under Long-Term Gas Deal." Bloomberg, November 29, 2022. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-11-29/qatar-to-supply-germany-with-lng-under-long-term-gas-deals?cmpid=BBBXT112922_ENERGY&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_term=221129&utm_campaign=energy.

Frantzman, Seth. "Nord Stream Sabotage Will Permanently Shift Global Trade - Analysis." The Jerusalem Post, September 29, 2022. <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-718432>.

Fulwood, Mike. "Europe's Infrastructure and Supply Crisis." The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, September 2022. <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Europes-Infrastructure-and-Supply-Crisis.pdf>.

Gosden, Emily. "Europe's Price Cap on Russian Oil Is No One-Size-Fits-All Answer." The Times, November 27, 2022. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/europes-price-cap-on-russian-oil-is-no-one-size-fits-all-answer-3z7q2z8g3>.

IEA. "National Reliance on Russian Fossil Fuel Imports." IEA, December 2022. <https://www.iea.org/reports/national-reliance-on-russian-fossil-fuel-imports>.

- Joe Biden. *Remarks of President Joe Biden – State of the Union Address as Prepared for Delivery*. Washington, DC: The White House Briefing Room, 2023.
- Loris, Nicolas. “Pursuing Policies to Drive Economic Growth and Reduce Emissions.” The Heritage Foundation, October 16, 2019. <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/report/pursuing-policies-drive-economic-growth-and-reduce-emissions>.
- MacDonald, Fiona. “Kuwait to Send Europe Five Times More Diesel as Russia Ban Looms.” Bloomberg, January 9, 2023. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-01-09/kuwait-to-send-europe-five-times-more-diesel-as-russia-ban-looms#xj4y7vzkg>.
- Maguire, Gavin. “Column: Europe's Climate Credentials Sullied by Coal Import Binge.” Reuters, September 12, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/europes-climate-credentials-sullied-by-coal-import-binge-2022-09-12/>.
- Miles, Steven R., Gabriel Collins, and Anna Mikulska. “US Needs LNG to Fight a Two-Front Gas War.” Baker Institute, August 18, 2022. <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/us-needs-lng-fight-two-front-gas-war>.
- Morningstar, Richard L., and Benjamin L. Schmitt. “Why the Oil Price Cap Won't Hurt Putin.” Foreign Policy, December 15, 2022. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/12/15/russia-ukraine-war-sanctions-oil-embargo-price-cap-putin-revenue-energy/>.
- Osborn, Tim. “Tim Osborn: Hadcrut 5 global temperature graphs.” University of East Anglia. Accessed December 17, 2022. <https://crudata.uea.ac.uk/~timo/diag/tempdiag.htm>
- Peoples, Steve. “In Intimate Moment, Biden Vows to 'End Fossil Fuel'.” AP News. Associated Press, September 6, 2019. <https://apnews.com/article/9dfb1e4c381043bab6fd0fa6dece3974>.
- Phillipson, Tomas J. “Biden Turns the U.S. Into a Shadow Member of OPEC.” The Wall Street Journal, December 13, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-turns-the-us-into-a-shadow-member-of-opec-supply-profit-taxes-domestic-production-cartel-energy-11670966873>.
- Rajendran, Abhiram, and Anne-Sophie Corbeau. “Opportunities and Risks in Expanding US Gas and LNG Capacity.” Center on Global Energy Policy. Columbia University, September 22, 2022. <https://www.energypolicy.columbia.edu/publications/opportunities-and-risks-expanding-us-gas-and-lng-capacity>.
- Schaeffer, Francis A. *Pollution and the Death of Man: The Christian View of Ecology*. Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers, 1970.
- Siqi, Ji. “China Snaps up US\$2 Billion of Russian LNG as Energy Bucks Economic Downturn.” South China Morning Post, July 21, 2022. <https://www.scmp.com/economy/economic-indicators/article/3186083/china-snaps-over-us2-billion-russian-lng-energy-trade>.

- Spencer, Jack. “A Warning to Biden: Europe Is Headed for Energy Chaos This Winter.” The Heritage Foundation, November 8, 2022. <https://www.heritage.org/coal-oil-natural-gas/commentary/warning-biden-europe-headed-energy-chaos-winter>.
- Spetalnick, Matt, Marianna Parraga, and Curtis Williams. “Exclusive: U.S. Issues License to Trinidad and Tobago to Develop Venezuela Offshore Gas Field.” Reuters, January 24, 2023. https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/us-grants-license-trinidad-tobago-develop-venezuela-offshore-gas-field-2023-01-24/?utm_source=dailybrief&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DailyBrief2023Jan25&utm_term=DailyNewsBrief.
- Tubb, Katie. “Biden's Radical, Anti-Fossil Fuel Energy Policy Costs Americans Dearly.” The Heritage Foundation, June 28, 2022. <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/commentary/bidens-radical-anti-fossil-fuel-energy-policy-costs-americans-dearly>.
- Tyson, Alec, Cary Funk, and Brian Kennedy. “Americans Largely Favor U.S. Taking Steps to Become Carbon Neutral by 2050.” Pew Research Center, March 1, 2022. <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2022/03/01/americans-largely-favor-u-s-taking-steps-to-become-carbon-neutral-by-2050/>.
- U.S. Department of Energy. *Keystone XL Extension Permit Revocation: Energy Costs and Job Impacts*. Washington, DC, 2022. <https://www.daines.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/12.23.22-KXL-Pipeline-Job-Loss-and-Impacts-on-Consumer-Energy-Costs-001245.pdf>
- Ulrichsen, Kristan Coates, Mark Finley, and Jim Krane. “The OPEC+ Phenomenon of Saudi-Russian Cooperation and Implications for US-Saudi Relations.” Baker Institute, October 18, 2022. <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/opec-phenomenon-saudi-russian-cooperation-and-implications-us-saudi-relations>.
- West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency*, 597 U.S. 57, 58 (2022) (Kagan E., dissenting).
- White, Lynn. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis.” *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203–7. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1720120>.
- Worcester, Nathan. “In ESG Debate, Some See Threat to Livelihood, Traditional Values.” The Epoch Times, January 11, 2023. https://www.theepochtimes.com/in-esg-debate-some-see-threat-to-livelihood-traditional-values_4973557.html?utm_source=Morningbrief&src_src=Morningbrief&utm_campaign=mb-2023-01-12&src_cmp=mb-2023-01-12&utm_medium=email&est=1bUSc9f0L0iIZa3JGjh0ME98rkv6jDd%2FPUZtbALUb1HIAUVaatkWlhvMyIznm0p.

Zeisloft, Ben. "Death By A Thousand Cuts': Oil Executive Details How Biden Is A Drag on The Industry." The Daily Wire, December 9, 2022. <https://www.dailywire.com/news/death-by-a-thousand-cuts-oil-executive-details-how-biden-is-a-drag-on-the-industry>.