



## Environmental Degradation in Nigeria: A Christian Ethical Approach

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**Abstract.** Environmental degradation is a serious issue confronting different societies the world over in contemporary times. It has continued to impact negatively on the quality of life in many parts of Nigeria. Previous studies on environmental degradation in Nigeria have laid more emphasis on the scientific and technological perspectives with little attention given to the Christian ethical dimension. Religion can play a vital role in influencing attitudes, behavior, perceptions, modes of coping and actions in response to environmental problems, but it has been largely ignored in Nigerian ecological discourses. This essay therefore, examines environmental degradation in Nigeria from Christian ethical perspective with a view to address environmentally harmful human actions in the Nigerian ecological space through the lens of Christian ethical norms. Data was obtained from existing scholarly literature, media reports, and careful observations of the contemporary environmental crisis in Nigeria. Content, critical, and constructive methods of analysis were utilized for data interpretation. This paper avows that there are both natural and human causes of environmental degradation. Howbeit, human causes are more than the natural. It was uncovered that humans have continued to exploit nature through the irresponsible use of natural resources. This essay submits that environmental degradation problems in Nigeria can be effectively address through Christian stewardship, eco-justice and creation spirituality, which are the emerging environmental ethical ideologies in contemporary Christianity and other Christian ecological values inherent in the bible. Nigerian Christians must become ambassadors of these environmental ethical principles for effective ecological healing in the country.

**Keywords:** Environmental Degradation, Christian Ethical Perspective, Humans, Natural Resources, Ecological Healing.

### 1. Introduction

There are myriad of environmental issues confronting different societies the world over that are urgently in need of scholarly attention from various academic disciplines in contemporary times. These include rising global temperature, ozone layer depletion, pollution, soil erosion, soil compaction, habitat fragmentation, desertification, deforestation, acidification, human population growth, and anthropogenic extinction, among others. Jiboye et al (2019) observe that environmental challenges are caused mainly by natural forces and human influences, or a combination of both. Natural causes of environmental challenges include climatic, geologic, atmospheric, disease, and biological factors. According to them, human activities like mining and exploration for petroleum, land reclamation, overfishing, overgrazing, deforestation, hunting, and the use of pesticides and herbicides are responsible for many environmental challenges.

In a related manner, Mwambazambi (2011) argues that humans generally use techniques and technologies to exploit nature in order to produce goods that satisfy their direct needs. The first of these techniques are based on the use of fire. Africans have been using fire since the most ancient times in the process of production, from small-scale production to heavy industries. The production of these necessary energy sources has entailed a host of pollutants resulting from combustion. Similarly, Danjuma et al (2014) observe that rivers are polluted, soil erodes and species are depleted, all courtesy of human activities. Humans have dramatically altered much of nature and its natural environment through different processes. They further contend that one major dilemma of human activities in the environment is that nature has been destroyed sharply over the last two centuries. Today, the natural environment is being destroyed with bulldozers and forests (species)

felled by machine or handheld saws and reduced to small remnants of its original extent.

It is imperative to note that environmental problems have continued to impact negatively on the quality of life in the universe. According to Mwambazambi (2011), Pollution of the soil, water and air, as well as soil erosion threatens the health and livelihood of the people. Household wastes are thrown into water points and rivers, and water-borne diseases have multiplied. Humans need salutary air to live a healthy life, however, the air is increasingly polluted with dust, smoke from bush fires, household wood fires, vehicles, and a few factories giving off fumes. Unsanitary odours and even weapons of war have all contributed to a certain level of air pollution with very negative consequences for the quality of life (857).

Also, Nwafor (2006) maintains that environmental damage has led to the loss of wildlife, pollution of air, loss of fertile soil, all of which has caused serious health problems in the lives of people affected. On his part, Inyang (2019) argues that environmental degradation constitutes a serious threat to man's survival and to a large extent humans have been responsible for it. Environmental degradation is an increasing problem in many parts of the world. Different people in various parts of Nigeria are suffering from different forms of natural and man-made environmental problems that have continued to affect the quality of life (Danjuma, et al 2014; Shehu, 2015).

It is pertinent to note that the aforementioned environmental problems have triggered renewed interest in the topic of morality and ethical response in many fields, including Christian circles. Religion no doubt has a recognized role in influencing attitudes, behavior, perceptions, value orientation, modes of coping and actions in response to environmental problems and other societal issues. Religious beliefs can be judged as an important trigger of environmental concern. There are numerous evidences to prove that biblical tradition plays key role in shaping people's attitudes toward the environment (De Wit, 2013; Shehu, 2015; Petrescu-Mag et al, 2020; Atoi et al, 2020). Petrescu-Mag et al (2020) assert that the reassessment of the position of religion regarding the moral dimension in the environmental crisis is referred to as a 'new genesis' by some scholars. The environmental crisis must not and cannot be viewed only from a single perspective, because everything, according to the principles of ecology is interrelated. This interrelatedness affects not only the natural

environment and its ecosystems but also human society and its structures.

This study therefore, examines environmental degradation issues in Nigeria from a Christian ethical perspective with a view to utilize Christian ethical norms in addressing environmentally harmful human actions in the Nigerian ecological space. Data for this research was obtained from existing scholarly literature, media reports, and careful observations of the contemporary environmental crisis in Nigeria. Content, critical, and constructive methods of analysis were adopted for data interpretation.

## **2. The Concept and Causes of Environmental Degradation**

The concept of environmental degradation implies that environmental resources such as, land, water, air and vegetation are reduced to a lower rank taking into account the fulfillment of given demands (Danjuma et al, 2014). OECD (2001) defines environmental degradation as the deterioration in environmental quality from ambient concentrations of pollutants and other activities and processes such as, improper land use and natural disasters (Jiboye et al, 2019). The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) delineates environmental degradation as the reduction of the capacity of the environment to meet social and ecological objectives and needs (Inyang, 2019). Jimoh (2006) asserts that environmental degradation refers to the downward trend in the environmental resources such that their level of use in the human societies equally decreases at an increasing rate. Reed et al (2007) maintains that environmental degradation is the reduction in value of the environment to meet its ecological and socioeconomic needs. It includes issues such as land degradation, deforestation, desertification, loss of biodiversity, land, water and air pollution, climate change, sea level rise and ozone depletion.

Furthermore, Asaju and Arome (2015) articulate that environmental degradation is a process by which the resource base (air, water, soil/land) become depleted, thereby reducing their originality and quality. This affects the general health of the biological environment. Air, water, and soil/land are the major resources which are vulnerable to depletion or being degraded through overuse and unfriendly human activities. For Kukreja (2015), environmental degradation is the disintegration of the earth or deterioration of the environment through consumption of assets, for example, air, water and soil; the destruction of environments and the eradication of wildlife. Inyang (2019) contends that

environmental degradation is the disintegration or the deterioration of the environment through the depletion of resources such as air, water and soil, the destruction of ecosystems, habitats destruction, the extinction of wildlife and pollution. According to Swati, et al (2014), environmental degradation is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of natural resources such as air, water and soil; the destruction of ecosystem and the extinction of wildlife.

Jiboye, et al (2019) posit that environmental degradation occurs when earth's natural resources are depleted and environment is compromised in the form of extinction of species, pollution in air, water and soil, and rapid growth in population. Environmental degradation is of two broad categories. The first category is when natural habitats are destroyed or rendered unusable through pollution or contamination. The second category is when natural resources are misused, over-used, and made scarce and eventually depleted. Either of the two categories can result in deprivation of the populace of such critical essentials like food, water, quality air and basic survival resources (Otong, 2011; Inyang, 2019). Citing Berry, Petrescu-Mag et al (2020) assert that the seven degradations of creation presented in 'an Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation' which portrays the present environmental crisis include human degradation, land degradation, species extinction, deforestation, water contamination, global toxification, and the alteration of air quality. According to Inyang (2019), forms of environmental degradation include, soil pollution, climate change, desertification, flooding and erosion. Jiboye et al (2019) are of the view that different ecosystems experience different types of degradation depending on the prevailing climatic conditions. The type of ecology prevalent in an area will be a major factor that determines the extent to which the area could be degraded.

According to Asaju and Arome (2015), there are numbers of ways in which environmental degradation occurs. The process can be entirely natural in origin, or it can be accelerated by human activities. There is no doubt that there are both natural and human causes of environmental degradation. However, some scholars have argued that the major causes of environmental degradation are human actions or activities on the environment. According to Jiboye, et al (2019), one of the major causes of environmental degradation is human disturbance. Similarly, Molato and Dube (2020) argue that human behavior is the main cause of environmental degradation. Technological developments, rapidly increasing human population, dramatic increases in resource and

energy consumption, the emergence and development of the capitalist world economy and, utilitarian attitudes towards the environment have been identified as the main causes or contributors to environmental degradation (Belal, et al, 2015; Molato and Dube, 2020). Mugambi and Mika (2001) maintain that the life of large populations is compromised by the degradation of the environment caused by microeconomic and total practices of corporations. Shehu (2015) contends that direct degradation of the environment through human activities such as excessive deforestation, land clearance for agriculture and urbanization, and pollution from domestic and industrial wastes are among leading causes of environmental decline.

Jiboye, et al (2019) observe that road construction, timber harvesting, ranching, uncontrolled poaching and other human activities have led to the fragmentation of habitats and the subsequent disappearance of many species of flora and fauna. Others are urbanization and urban sprawl, industrialization, indiscriminate use of inorganic fertilizer, as well as haphazard construction of buildings without regard to urban and regional planning laws and regulations. According to Molato and Dube (2020), at the heart of environmental degeneration is human being's contemporary attitude of using the natural resources for gains rather than coming up with strategies of preserving nature. This attitude develops a buyer and seller mentality which implies that human beings use natural resources without realizing that they will be depleted. Consequently, this mentality puts too much burden on the environment. The arguments of the aforementioned scholars are valid because the commercial and consumerism mentality of humans have indeed put too much pressure on the environment and environmental resources, thereby leading to serious degradation of the available natural resources on earth.

### **3. Environmental Degradation in Nigeria**

Environmental degradation is a serious problem in many parts of Nigeria. According to Shehu (2015), Nigeria is currently experiencing severe and wide-ranging environmental problems. These problems range from climate change to man-made environmental degradation to inefficient management of environmental resources. In 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change identified Nigeria as a "hotspot" of climate change in sub-Saharan Africa. Danjuma, et al (2014) contend that environmental degradation of varying types and degree are generally un-evenly distributed in Nigeria,

Ranging from the less devastating, such as, sheet erosion and mild gullies, to highly dangerous types such as, loss of biodiversity, drought and loss of soil bio-physical characteristics. A typical environment in Nigeria may be occupied with one or overlapping sets of degradation consequences.

It is imperative to note that each region of the country has its own major environmental degradation issues. The major environmental problems affecting the northern region of the country include land degradation, especially desertification, associated with climate change, population pressure and unsustainable resource use (Shehu, 2015). Dangyil (2009) points out that a journey from Mangu to Jos especially from Dorowa Babuje, shows an undoubted scars, mine ponds and mass land degradation due to tin mining both at the left and right sides of the road into the interior of Jos. Moreover, loss of biodiversity of plants and reduction in soil fertility are quite alarming in northern Nigeria because of deforestation and fuel wood consumption (Danjuma, et al, 2014). Shehu (2015) maintains that extensive deforestation is a leading cause of desertification and soil degradation in northern Nigeria. Danjuma et al (2014) assert that the north central states are suffering from salinization and acidification of soils and sediment discharge on lower Niger-Benue catchments. Also, they observe that large areas of gully erosion are clearly visible, and denuded areas can be identified in many agricultural zones of northern region. Generally, deforestation, salinization and loss of plant diversity are most widespread in all parts of northern Nigeria. The increasing intensity of agricultural activity due to population growth may be the most important factor influencing this process. Other influential factors may be climate change or the establishment of major water projects, such as, construction of dams.

In southern Nigeria, crude oil spillage, coastal erosion, marine biodiversity loss, and dredging of toxic waste into the river are major environmental degradation issues that are peculiar to the region. According to Danjuma, et al (2014), coastal erosion, water pollution and marine biodiversity loss are typical in the southern coastal areas of Nigeria. Inyang (2019) points out that environmental degradation caused by extensive oil extraction and the dredging of toxic waste into the river, which decrease the amount of fresh portable water, damage to the mangrove, and also damage to the natural habitat is prominent in Southern Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta region. A UN HDI report of 2011 estimated spillage of 3 million barrels of oil from 6,817 incidents, comprising 6% on land, 25% on the swamp and 69% on the offshore environment

between 1976 and 2000. In many communities of the south-south region, the environment is being battered with relentless pollution destroying arable lands, water resources and diverse plants species supporting an immediate population of 25.1million. Similarly, Francis et al (2011) observe that 546 million gallons of crude oil were spilled from 1958-2010, averaging about 300 spills or nearly 10.8 million barrels per annum and about 50,000 acres of mangrove forest disappeared between 1986 and 2003.

The frequency of oil spill in the Niger Delta resulted in contamination of water and consequent death to the aquatic and terrestrial lives (Asaju and Arome, 2015). Some scholars maintain that 50% of oil spillage in the Niger Delta is due to pipeline and equipment corrosion, 28% to vandalism from sabotage and 21% to oil production operations, and 1% is due to engineering drills, ineffective well control, machine failures, and supply chain logistics challenge from the network of 7,000km pipelines and 606 oil fields and installations (Nwilo and Badejo, 2005; Francis et al, 2011; Oka, 2017). Oka (2017) argues that reports of environmental degradation caused by oil exploration in Nigeria will be incomplete without mentioning the infamous Ogoni Oil spillage. According to him, multinational corporations' exteriorization of its hydrocarbon exploration, production and distribution transfers hazards from its activities to host communities. Since the discovery of crude oil in the late 1950s, the Ogoni people have lived most of their lives with diverse pollution destroying their natural habitat. Attempts through non-violent protests to get the multinational corporations and the Nigeria government to clean up oil, remediate the land and compensate the people stimulated Ken Saro-Wiwa, a writer and non-violent environmentalist to lead a movement of his people to clamour for social justice, which eventually led to his death.

Furthermore, Dangyil (2009) observes that in the process of coal mining, the hills of refuse dump occasionally catch fire and burn for a long time thereby releasing smoke and toxic fumes in the air. According to him, this occurs in Enugu areas where coal is usually processed for domestic and industrial uses to generate power or energy. Dangyil (2009) further points out that noise pollution and its associated effects can be experienced in Ilesha and Enugu areas where heavy machines are used for blasting coal and gold. Asaju and Arome (2015) note that, the mining of sand and dredging of rivers are aggravating coastal erosion and river siltation. This and many other environmental issues, according to

them, have turned the Niger Delta to one of the world most endangered ecosystem.

On a general note, pollution from industrial wastes is regarded as an enormous environmental problem in the Niger Delta region and in cities like Lagos, Kano and Kaduna. Municipal solid waste heaps constitute another serious environmental challenge in virtually all major cities in Nigeria. Also, population increase in urban centers, unsustainable consumption patterns of urban dwellers and inability of city officials to stop illegal dumping of commercial, industrial and household wastes is leading to a crisis of waste management in Nigerian cities (Momodu, et al, 2011). Much of these wastes are believed to contain non-biodegradable petrochemical productions like polythene bags and plastic containers. Added to these are oils discharged by mechanical workshops, industries and commercial houses which also contaminate the surface and ground waters (Shehu, 2015).

#### 4. Christian Environmental Ethics

Rolston (1993) asserts that ethics seeks to find a satisfactory fit for humans in their communities, and this has meant that ethics has often dwelt on justice, fairness, love, forgiveness, rights, peace, among others. But ethics too is now anxious about the troubled planet. Can we have duties concerning the earth, even duties to the earth? Earth is, after all, just earth. In this light, Schuurman (2006) contends that the responsibility of humans is to be keepers and minders of earth as a garden, not as lords and masters, recognizing an intrinsic value of God's creation. According to Rolston (1993), there is no doubt, we should notice at once that Christians can and ought to have ethics concerning the use of the environment and environmental resources. Humans are helped or hurt by the condition of their environment, and if there are duties to humans at all, there will be applications of these duties to environmental issues. He argues that no one can love neighbor, or do to others as one would be treated oneself in disregard of that neighbor's life-support system in the natural world. Is there a primary Christian environmental ethics, one with a direct concern for animals, plants, species, ecosystems, perhaps even for the planet? The answer is simply yes.

According to Grasse (2016), to develop an ecological theology, Nash supports the use of Christian principles that come from the Bible, such as love and justice. Nash (2009) contends that if love guides Christian action towards the environment, they will

treat it with care and respect. He turns to simple verses such as, Psalm 145:9 – “The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.” The love and compassion God has for his creation should be echoed by his followers. Nash claims that this is how most moral issues facing Christians today should be handled. Perhaps our Sunday morning sermons should sometimes remind us that humans are not the axis around which the world turns, but that we have a role to play in the grand scheme of the universe that requires more from us than apathy. De Wit (2013) posits that love is seen to appreciate all things as they are by nature in God's creation. Cultural activities are directed away from humans themselves in love of God and the neighbour. Love is to seek what is natural. Citing Stoker and Schuurman, De Wit points out that ethical conduct in Reformational philosophical thinking is based on what is perceived to be natural in created order, culminating in ethics of law, love and responsibility.

Moreover, Nash (2009) asserts that God values all life forms, and created the world to be a habitat for all species in interdependent relationships. Ethically, since fidelity to God implies respect for divine valuations, the faithful are called to value what God values—and that includes the good earth and all its inhabitants. The primacy of place in the canon enhances this moral mandate. Nash further contends that dominion in Genesis (1.26, 28) is not a license for despotic exploitation or managerial arrogance, contrary to common claims. The earthly ruler is always subject to God's justice in the Hebrew Scriptures (Ps. 72). As one dimension of the moral image of God, dominion can be legitimately interpreted as the responsible representation of God's benevolence and justice toward all creatures. This recombinant interpretation suggests that dominion demands a nurturing love in social and ecological settings. Thus, in a great reversal, ecological abuse becomes a violation of dominion. Ecological ethics rooted in the Christian tradition will be a logical extension of love to its horizons, embracing all life forms in accordance with Christian experiences of and testimonies to the unbounded love of God (Nash, 2009). Furthermore, Rolston (1993) argues that a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise. Those who wish to reside in a promised land must promise to preserve its integrity, stability, and beauty. “That land as a community is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics.” If so, we cannot inherit our promised lands until we extend Christian ethics into ecology.

Petrescu-Mag et al (2020) observe that Liberal and Protestant denominations teach divinely sanctioned stewardship (for example, Genesis 2:7–15) where humans are put in Eden to care for and till the earth. The disclosure of a new paradigm for Christian ethical and theological thought about nature, extending our understanding of the love of God to nature. Petrescu-Mag et al agree with Berry that Bible is not a book for environmental destruction but a work on the stewardship of creation. They also concur with Horrell et al that the biblical texts offer relevant sources for environmental ethics and that the various anti-environmental theories are based on a distorted interpretation, rather than the biblical texts. Petrescu-Mag et al also assert that from a practical perspective, a research focus on environmental attitudes within a religious community can reveal people's actions and perceptions when facing environmental disturbances and coping with its impacts. According to them, Christianity environmental task was clear, more precisely, to recover a worldview centered on nature's value rather than human transcendence. One example is environmental justice which is one of the most significant Christian contributions to public environmental deliberation in the United States, where the creation's integrity and human dignity are mutually constitutive.

According to Grasse (2016), the three schools of ecological Christian thought developed by the green movement include: Christian stewardship, eco-justice, and creation spirituality. Christian stewardship maintains that humans are the pinnacle beings in creation, and that they have been charged by God to care for nature and use it wisely. This view comes directly from the doctrine of dominion over nature; however, there is an added element of responsible use of natural resources. According to Simmons (2019), Christian environmental stewardship entails that human beings have moral duties to God for the environment. Stewardship conceives human beings as entrusted with the environment; the model affords human beings' special authority and responsibility. Stewardship model stipulates that human beings do not own the environment. Instead, Christian stewardship insists that human beings have moral duties at least to God for the environment and so limits human license with respect to it. Christian stewardship is focused on rethinking Western Christianity within its own tradition, focused on an evangelical interpretation of the biblical mandate for humans to take care of the earth (Kearns, 1996). Simmons (2019) further observes that the stewardship model focuses on interpreting fundamental facets of human beings'

proper relationship with God and God's creation, thus foregrounds cosmological considerations.

Eco-justice on the other hand, is associated with the idea of liberation linking environmental concerns with church perspectives on justice issues such as, the just sharing of limited resources and the real cost of environmental problems (Kearns, 1996). The eco-justice is focused on a sustainable use of natural resources that ensures fair distribution across all humankind. It prioritizes environmental welfare more than stewardship (Grasse, 2016). On its part, creation spirituality is the view that humans are not superior to the rest of creation and should work to sustain the whole of nature. Creation spirituality focuses on reorienting humans to see their place as one part of a larger panentheistic creation. The state of Christian ecological ethics or eco-theology today can be seen through these three beliefs. Christian stewardship, eco-justice, and creation spirituality are different Christian ethical strategies, but they do share a common concern on how to develop a practical environmental ethics or eco-theology to account for emerging ecological realities (Kearns, 1996; Jenkins, 2008; De Wit, 2013; Grasse, 2016). Each of the three aforementioned Christian ethical principles about the environment wants to somehow connect environmental issues with Christian identity.

##### **5. Utilizing Christian Ethical Approach to Address Environmental Degradation in Nigeria**

One of the major factors escalating environmental degradation in the modern world is the failure of humankind to recognize and respect the sanctity of the ecosystem and environmental resources as an act of obedience to God's command and love for his creations. Molato and Dube (2020) observe that at the core of environmental degradation, is the failure to recognize environmental values, resulting in the observable behavior of using nature primarily for human benefit, consumption and endless quest for accumulation of profits. It has been established earlier that human behavior is one of the main causes of environmental degradation. It is imperative to state that nature is not an object for human exploitation because it came from the same source with human beings, that is, both humankind and the natural environment originated from the same source (Molato and Dube, 2020).

Citing Coste, Mwambazambi (2011) observes that the will of God is that human beings commune with nature as intelligent and noble master and guardian, and not as exploiter and destructor denuded of any

management. Respecting God's will requires taking values into account, especially ecological values such as, environmental protection; the protection of soil, forests, flora and fauna. In the light of Christian understanding of nature values, human beings do not possess supreme power or rights over natural environment, since they come from the same source and are interconnected in many ways. The trio of Christian stewardship, eco-justice and creation spirituality which are the emerging environmental ethical ideologies in contemporary western Christianity and other Christian ecological values inherent in the bible need to be utilized as models for addressing environmental degradation problems in Nigeria. Christians should bring the church back down to earth because the church should be ecological.

Nigerian Christian leaders are expected to key into this ecological mission by admonishing and conscientizing the people on the need to protect the environment and avoid any act that will degrade environmental resources. The Christian church needs to awaken Nigerians from ethical slumber and point out to them their responsibility towards God and God-created nature. Mwambazambi (2011) argues that the protection of the environment in which humans live should be taken seriously as part of the struggle for the restoration of the creation of God. Whether one is a Christian or not, the earliest understanding of humanity and its relationship with nature had a religious foundation and a moral theological base. The dominion and protection of the creation of God imply all aspects of the human life including the environment. There is no gainsaying that all Nigerians are creatures of God, as such, they ought to love and care for his creations as an act of reverence for him. According to Bookless (2008), the creation is not our plaything or even our playground, but has intrinsic value to God. Our use of natural resources in our lifestyles and our travel should be with restraint and respect.

From Christian ethical point of view, it is crystal clear that caring for earth resources is a sign of fidelity to God. Nigerians, especially Christians are expected to show much respect for divine valuations. This simply means that they ought to value what God values with all seriousness, which include the earth and all its resources. This is a moral duty that all human beings own to God for environmental safety. Nigerians need to protect and care for their environment by refusing to be polluting agents of the environmental space. Rather, they should treat every part of God's creation as having its own intrinsic value and dignity since God Himself has declared all

creations good. According to Mwambazambi (2011), God imbues all his creatures with his presence. This is why it is necessary to protect nature, as God protects his people and works for the welfare of all. Therefore, we must not treat any of God's creature (any element, plant or animal) recklessly but deal with them in a sensitive manner, with empathy and reverence. Therefore, it is reasonable to state here that anyone who harms the natural environment is indirectly harming the creator Himself (God).

## 6. Conclusion

This essay has examined environmental degradation in Nigeria using the Christian ethical approach. It was established that environmental degradation in Nigeria has both natural and human causes. Howbeit, environmental degradation caused by human activities seems to be more than the ones caused by natural forces in the Nigerian ecological space. This is probably the reason why the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development warned that unless humans change their life style, the world will face unacceptable levels of environmental damage and human suffering (Asaju and Arome, 2015). It was uncovered that humanity's failure to recognize the sanctity of the ecosystem and the irresponsible use of environmental resources by most people are the principal factors facilitating environmental degradation and ecological injustice in Nigeria. This paper therefore, submits that every Christian should adhere to the principles of Christian environmental ethics and conscientise the Nigerian people on the need to protect the natural environment and use its resources responsibly as a matter of divine moral mandate. In Mark 4:30-32, Jesus Christ shows that God transferred the duty of protecting all creatures to humankind. As such, Nigerians Christians must carry out this religious moral responsibility with all seriousness in order to ensure effective ecological healing in partnership with the creator.

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