

Message

of the Open Bible

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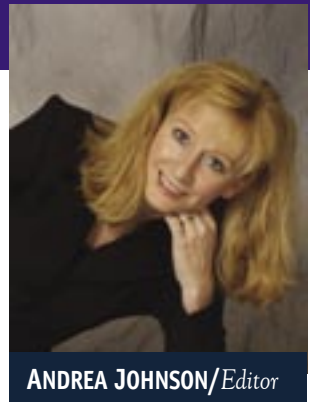
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Caring for God's Creation



ANDREA JOHNSON/Editor

When Jed Clampett of *The Beverly Hillbillies* television series discovered oil on his property, he instantly became a millionaire and moved to a luxurious mansion in the city. When my friend

Kpoo, from Nigeria, and his family found oil on their property, he was not so lucky. He said large oil corporations run pipelines through people's yards in Nigeria, contaminating the land and forcing people from their homes. He ended up in a refugee camp and eventually relocated to the United States – home of the large oil corporations that paid his government amply for the oil, payment Kpoo never saw. You can imagine how he feels when he sees a huge gas guzzler pulling into our church parking lot.

The Niger Delta in Nigeria has caught the attention of environmentalists, human rights activists, and fair trade advocates around the world. Oil, which could have allowed Nigeria to be one of the wealthiest countries in Africa, has led it to become one of the poorest. Besides the loss of property, oil-generated environmental pollution throughout the region has made farming and fishing extremely difficult, if not impossible. Regular organized protests are met with military repression – sometimes loss of life. Health problems have escalated.

Whatever a person chooses to believe about global warming, effects of pollution and our incessant thirst for gasoline have

already wreaked havoc in some nations who have the fewest resources to cope. In the States we hear valid arguments against tapping the oil supply in northeast Alaska; yet an oil pipeline doesn't look any better in Nigeria.

Other forms of pollution are just as hazardous. According to a study appearing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2002, researchers from Brigham Young University and New York University found that long-term exposure to air pollution in some of America's metropolitan areas is nearly as dangerous as living with a smoker. Pollution collects in our bodies, as well as the air. Children accumulate toxins from the time they are in the womb – toxins that can interfere with the development of the brain function and hormone systems. Is it any wonder developmental disabilities affect one in six children?

When God designed the earth He certainly created enough resources for everyone. It is up to us, as stewards of His amazing handiwork, to use our God-given technology to protect this precious gift. We can all do something. If every home in America replaced five regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent energy saving bulbs, we could save energy equivalent to 21 coal burning power plants.

Jesus may be coming back soon. What will He think of the way we tended this wonderful world He entrusted to us?

Andrea

Andrea Johnson,
Managing Editor

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