

17th July 2021

Stewards

**“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others,
as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”**

Bible, 1 Peter 4:10

In a new book of songs, *This is God’s World* – with an accompanying CD – by the Iona Community’s Wild Goose Resource Group, there’s a song from which the book takes its title. The words and music are by the hymn writer, John L Bell, and in his footnotes to the song, he writes:

*We have many songs which admire the earth, but far fewer which recall the mandate of God to care for, indeed, to be servants of, the earth. The Bible bears witness to a direct correlation between the wellbeing of humanity and the way humanity befriends or abuses the natural order. ***

This is what St Peter is pointing to in the quote above. Whatever gifts we have or responsibilities we exercise, we are to be “faithful stewards of God’s grace”, and God’s gift of grace is most profoundly seen in how precious our world is to us. I like John Bell’s word “mandate”. This is no optional extra, a task we can leave to activists, environmentalists, or ecologists. This is the responsibility of all of us, each of in our own way.

Sir David Attenborough, the renowned broadcaster and natural historian, has said: “What humans do over the next 50 years will determine the fate of all life on the planet ...” and “The future of life on earth depends on our ability to take action. ... Real success can only come if there’s a change in our societies ... We have a responsibility to leave for future generations a planet that is healthy, inhabitable by all species.”

This is our mandate, to be the stewards God made us to be, and make sure we look after and preserve the precious gift in our hands.

The refrain of *This is God’s World* says it all:

*This is God’s world given on loan;
No other earth shall be our home.
So let us bless, honour and tend
What God in love created. ***

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A prayer for today

*Creator God, thank you for trusting me with the gift of your world.
I promise I won’t let you down. Amen.*

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>