

Assemblies – Ethical Christmas – myfishbites.com

Ethical Christmas

Imagine that you're at home. There's a knock on the door. There's an official looking person standing there who tells you that your house is being knocked down in the next week. They need your house because someone on the other side of the world wants to buy a product that this person's company is selling. They need your land to sell that product.

'But this is my home?' you tell them. It doesn't matter. The official looking person doesn't care. 'We need your land.' You cry out, 'but isn't there another product the person could buy? Can't you make it in a different way.' The person is unmoved. 'It's about progress. It's about moving forward. It will bring more jobs. The house has to go. Stop trying to block progress.'

Isn't there another way? A way to see progress and jobs – and protect the world around us?

As a Christian, I believe that God has asked each one of us to look after the world and to look after each other. In the Bible, God told mankind to look after the earth - not to destroy it but to care for it and use it wisely. Then later on, Jesus told people that we should look after and love other people. The Bible says (Acts 10.38) that Jesus went around doing good and healing people because God was with him.

Iceland Christmas Advert 2018 (banned from TV)

Direct link – <https://youtu.be/JdpspllWl2o>



Consumer Society, Waste and Our World

OK admit it, we all like the latest video game, electronic device, pair of trainers, the latest clothing and the latest phones – or whatever else you're into. But let's just stop and think...

Americans throw away £165 billion of food (35 million tons) each year, equivalent to \$2000 per household. America wastes around 40% of its food. Food wasted in developed nations is around 220 tons annually. Malnutrition and lack of food affects 161 million children around the world. Most US homes have more TVs than people but only 29% of electronic devices in the US are recycled. Some of the materials used in phones are 'conflict materials' and come at the cost of human life.

SOURCES: [Relevant Magazine website](#) (accessed 13 November 2018), which itself quotes the facts direct from other reputable websites ([thebalance.com](#), [cnbc.com](#), [foodprint.org](#)). [World Economic Forum](#) website (accessed 14 November 2018)

Around 90% of the trash in our oceans is from plastic. 10% of plastic bottles are thrown away around the world each year, around 700 billion bottles. Around 91% of plastic isn't recycled. If we don't reduce plastic use, plastic will outweigh fish in our oceans by 2050. The impact on wildlife and on humans is destructive and long-lasting.

SOURCES: <http://www.theworldcounts.com/stories/Plastic-Waste-Facts> (accessed 13 November 2018) and <https://www.earthday.org/2018/03/07/fact-sheet-end-plastic-pollution/> (accessed 13 November 2018)

Much of the world's oxygen is produced by rainforests (the Amazon rainforest alone produces 20%). The rainforests are home to half the world's animal species. Rainforests are our best defence against climate change. Rainforests are critical to our drinking water. 25% of world medicine is derived from flora in rainforests. Rainforests the size of thirty-six football fields disappear each minute. Nearly 90 percent of people living in extreme poverty worldwide depend on forests for their livelihoods.

SOURCE: [Rainforest Alliance website](#) (accessed 13 November 2018)

Isn't this environment stuff only for people into that kind of thing?

No. It's essential for each one of us. The Iceland advert shows that what we do has a big impact.

A huge problem right now is plastic. But plastic is only part of a much bigger problem and that is you and me and a word people don't like to use. The word is 'selfishness'.

Selfishness means that you just think about you and don't think about other people or the impact of the things that you do on others and the world.

But how you live, what you buy, how you acts – always affects other people around you and across the world. It also affects animals, rainforests, our oceans and our planet.

You can choose to have a positive or negative affect on other people and our world. Choose to have a positive impact. Don't add to the problem but be part of the solution.

How Can I Help?

- Don't throw litter on the floor. Put it in a bin. This would make a massive difference if we all did this.
- Choose to buy clothes or food that is ethically sourced. What this means is that it's FairTrade and that people who produce it get a fair price, fair working conditions etc.
- Don't just throw away plastic, electronics, paper etc. Recycle it. If you have old electronics or clothes, can someone else use them like homeless people, charities, vulnerable people? Can things be repaired or upcycled?

- Choose to buy other products that are from sustainable sources.
- Think if you really need that latest device or thing? Life is about more than just having stuff.
- Can you raise money for charities who are helping the poor, the lonely, the vulnerable, helping animal welfare around the world? You'll find that in many ways, giving is more rewarding than getting!
- Can you campaign on a social issue, or environmental issue to help others and help the world?
- Buy local food (food grown locally) and don't use plastic to transport it. Don't waste the food you buy – get and eat what you need. Don't get coffee in cups that can't be recycled – use your own cup.
- What ideas have you got that could help? In your school, your home and your community?

Pause and Think

Let's just pause and think this Christmas and beyond... If you believe in God or want to pray, ask God for any ideas. Otherwise, just think about how you could do something positive, or stop doing something negative.

Just like the Iceland advert and just like the Bible speaks about Jesus, determine to do good.

Our world and all that is in it isn't just for Christmas...