

From Nature to Creation: A Christian Vision for Understanding and Loving Our World

Norman Wirzba

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Convincingly utilizing modern Christianity to reveal how humans must show compassion to the environment—Pope Francis would approve.

Norman Wirzba's *From Nature to Creation* is an eloquent theological exercise that contributes astutely to ongoing conversations around ecology and religion. This brief treatise draws from sources both devotional and secular to formulate timely arguments for interresponsibility.

Wirzba begins by lamenting the growing distance between religious intention and religion's actual expressions. Particularly within modern Christianity, he argues, religious adherents have been all too ready to forgo notions of interdependence in order to further individual goals. The work suggests that politics of dominion should be rejected, though, in favor of more theologically credible, environmentally attuned models of Christian living.

From Nature to Creation articulates a path forward from the exploitation and ruination of the natural world, beginning with a renewed understanding of humanity's place within it. Via exegesis, Wirzba appeals to the inherent nature of human beings: as creatures formed to exist in harmony with the rest of creation, and as a continual, embodied expression of God's love. The resultant concept of "creatureliness" becomes the center of the work's proposals.

Christians should appreciate the work as much for the diversity of its references—from Cormac McCarthy to Athanasius, from Wendell Berry to Jacques Derrida—as for its thoughtful contemporary recommendations. The work rejects exploitations of nature, from fracking to hard farming, in favor of more conscientious, less consumer-driven living. Even seemingly benign approaches to the land, such as nature tourism, are rejected for the ways in which they make the world an Other, rather than a part of humanity's continued story.

With a publication date on the heels of the pope's controversial new ecological encyclical, *From Nature to Creation* stands to expand and enrich ongoing conversations around the place of religious people in the natural world. Beautiful writing, frequent dashes of good humor, and practical proposals all make this book a piquing, thought-provoking addition to burgeoning theological exchanges.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (Fall 2015)

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