

Dear Friends,

In our book study of “Inhabiting Eden: Christians, the Bible and the Ecological Crisis,” we were discussing food production, especially meat production in our society. In the first place, meat is a much larger part of our consumption than ever before as a civilization. Secondly, 70% of corn and soybeans grown in the world go towards feeding the cattle/pigs/poultry industry. Thirdly, 90% of our meat comes from CAFOs (concentrated animal farm organizations) where the animal is pretty much kept in the same stall/caged environment until they are slaughtered for their meat. This is not a pretty picture, or pretty much a gruesome picture of the state of our diets in America today.

I, and most of you, wholeheartedly would support cattle on the prairie, hogs in a barn, and chickens out in the yard as part of a healthy meal. I wish it was enough to make me want to go vegan, though meat is not a big part of our consumption for Kileen and I.

The other half is that most of our food, whether vegetable, grain, or meat is produced and controlled by about 3 or 4 multinational corporations that are not in it to ensure health and good food, but to make as much money as they can. This has led to family farms being run out of business by the corporations and our nation’s Farm bill which is lobbied heavily to support corporate farming and monopolies, not rural America or healthy food for urban, suburbs, or rural America.

In our study, we found that the Hebrew Bible, especially in the 5 Books of Moses (Pentateuch) had a lot to say about raising crops and livestock and keeping the land and the animals healthy and content. Our biggest voice is to spend our money on local food and those cooperatives who try to produce food that is ethical, sustainable, and enriches the community. Our next biggest voice is that the Farm Bill is coming up for discussion and reauthorization. Contacting our Senators and Congressman to share our concerns about the industrialization and monopolization of our food economy and to begin to dismantle them both.

The push back we often hear here is that this is necessary to feed the world. We produce enough food each year to feed 12 billion people and there are still people dying of starvation, so more production is not the answer. Let’s keep digging into this.

Peace

Pastor Enno