

Save the Whales!

The history of whaling in the twentieth century is the depletion of one species after another. Beginning in 1928, for example, the whaling industry killed about 330,000 blue whales until only an estimated 600 were left in 1963. In its heyday whaling often resulted in the illegal killing of nursing mothers leaving the orphaned young to wander and often die alone.

In response to this wanton slaughter Save the Whales was founded in 1977 with a mission is to preserve and protect the ocean and its living creatures. They believe education is the key to saving the whales and the future of our planet.

Although there has been a worldwide ban on commercial whaling since 1986, whales still aren't safe. They face many threats such as being hunted illegally, water pollution, noise pollution, bombings, overfishing and being struck by ships.

In addition to these threats, some nations – particularly Japan, Norway and Iceland – want to resume commercial whaling. As part of the international outcry against whaling there are those, like Greenpeace, who are even prepared to risk their own lives to save the whales.

Whales Give Glory and Pleasure to God

The Bible says that God created all things for His pleasure and he delights in the world He has made. The opening chapter of the Bible records how God, on the fifth day of creation, called into being a bewildering variety of aquatic creatures with a special mention given to whales. We read, **“And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, ... and God saw that it was good”** (Genesis 1:21 KJV)

Whales are indeed magnificent creatures. Well known for their intelligence and social nature, they are iconic representatives of marine biodiversity.

Whales, dolphins and porpoises are classified as Cetaceans. Whales belong to two main sub-groups – the Odontoceti or ‘toothed whales’ which hunt for food and the Mysticeti or ‘baleen whales’ which filter microscopic plankton and krill.

The blue whales are the largest living creatures ever, even bigger than the dinosaurs. And whales, not people, have the biggest brain of any creature. Adult sperm whales have the largest brain of about 8,000 cubic centimetres whereas an adult human being is about 1,300 cubic centimetres.



Whales communicate through a variety of underwater sounds and can communicate over vast distances. Much of what they communicate is still a mystery and an area of a considerable research. Apparently, some species make powerful pulses for navigation and migration, some make high-frequency clicks while foraging for food, others identify themselves using signature whistles, still others pass air through their nasal cavity to produce sound beams for echolocation. Humpback whales are especially well-known for their ‘songs’ possibly to aid mate selection. With whales we may yet discover

whole different categories of communication and language.

Paul writes in his letter to the Romans about God’s revelation through nature. He describes how God’s glory is seen so clearly through all created things that anyone who is not led to believe in a Creator is **“without excuse”** (Romans 1:20). God gains satisfaction and pleasure from His creation. He wants us to take pleasure in it too as we live in His world and look after it. This includes whales.

Mankind is the Pinnacle of God’s Creation

Not long after we first read about whales in the Bible we read the amazing truth of how God created mankind **“in His own image”** (Genesis 1:27). God has seen fit to endow mankind with certain qualities and characteristics which, in some way known fully only to Him, reflect His image and distinguish us from any other created thing. Mankind is the pinnacle of God’s creation. Whales, too, were created for specific and lofty purposes, but they are not in God's image.

CS Lewis wrote, *“God created us to be the objects of His love! Sometimes our actions make us unlovely, but we are never unloved. And because God loves us – we have value. And nobody can take that value away. God’s love revealed at Calvary fastens itself onto flawed creatures like us and for reasons none of us can quite figure out, makes us precious and valued beyond calculation.”*

Humanity has been set over the earthly creation and given **“dominion”** (Genesis 1: 28) over it. We are called to this responsibility of being stewards of God’s good world. This is true because we ourselves are creatures and share the same world as other created beings.

Worshipping the Creation

In our day the distinction between God, humanity and nature is often blurred resulting in the

glorification of nature as if it were divine. We sometimes speak of nature doing something as if it were a god. This is called 'Pantheism'.

Bolivia, for example, adopted in 2010 a United Nations treaty giving 'Mother Earth' the same rights as humans. It followed the enactment of Bolivia's own domestic Law of the Rights of Mother Earth, which gives "bugs, trees and all other natural things" the same rights as people.

This is a striking reminder of what can happen when more and more people do not believe the Genesis account of our origins, which says that, unlike other creatures, humans were created in the image of God.

Dr John Morris, President of the Institute for Creation Research writes, "To New Agers, God is identified as the Creation itself, specifically Mother Earth or Gaia, and we become one with God by gaining cosmic consciousness. They have "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped . . . the creature more than the Creator" ([Romans 1:25](#)).

Many of today's social ills can be directly traced to this aggressive war against God and His image. Hug a tree or save a whale, as long as it is not the image of God."

Father God, thank You for this good world that You created for us, as those who bear Your image, to enjoy and to care for. As we consider the work of Your hands we thank You for creating whales in all their magnificence. We are greatly saddened by the insatiable greed of human beings that almost wiped them out. Help us to be good stewards of the ocean and all its living creatures sharing. Help us to share in Your delight of the creation as we delight in You. In the Name of Jesus. Amen

About 'Image of God' Leaflets

In the Bible we read that God "*created man in His own image*" ([Genesis 1:27](#)). Many maintain that all human history revolves around this truth. The Judeo-Christian belief in the unique dignity of human beings is at the very foundation of Western civilisation.

The 2010 Canberra Declaration therefore states:

"We believe that all human life, being made in the image of God, has intrinsic and equal value from conception to life's natural end."

'Image of God' leaflets relate the doctrine of man as created in the image of God to various issues we face in Australia today.

The 21 leaflets in SERIES ONE are dedicated to Sophie Scholl who was martyred at the age of 21 in World War II for writing and distributing leaflets.

You can download other 'Image of God' leaflets at the Canberra Declaration website.

Please:

READ & SIGN

**The Canberra Declaration
to Protect**

- **Religious Freedom**
- **Marriage and Family and**
- **Human Life
in Australia**

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SERIES ONE

Leaflet 21

WHALES



and the
**Image of
God**