

# SUNDAY ARTICLE

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*The following article is the “Executive Summary” (synopsis) of a much larger document entitled:  
“A Renewed Call to Truth, Prudence, and Protection of the Poor:  
An Evangelical Examination of the Theology, Science, and Economics of Global Warming”  
Details about how to access the entire paper are given at the end.*

## A Christian Response to Global Warming Alarmism

*The Cornwall Alliance*

The world is in the grip of an idea: that burning fossil fuels to provide affordable, abundant energy is causing global warming that will be so dangerous that we must stop it by reducing our use of fossil fuels, no matter the cost.

Is that idea true?

We believe not.

We believe that idea – we’ll call it “global warming alarmism” – fails the tests of theology, science, and economics. It rests on poor theology, with a worldview of the Earth and its climate system contrary to that taught in the Bible. It rests on poor science that confuses theory with observation, computer models with reality, and model results with evidence, all while ignoring the lessons of climate history. It rests on poor economics, failing to do reasonable cost/benefit analysis, ignoring or underestimating the costs of reducing

fossil fuel use while exaggerating the benefits. And it bears fruit in unethical policy that would

- destroy millions of jobs.
- cost trillions of dollars in lost economic production.
- slow, stop, or reverse economic growth.
- reduce the standard of living for all but the elite few who are well positioned to benefit from laws that unfairly advantage them at the expense of most businesses and all consumers.
- endanger liberty by putting vast new powers over private, social, and market life in the hands of national and international governments.
- condemn the world’s poor to generations of continued misery characterised by rampant disease and premature death.

In return for all these sacrifices, what will the world get? At most a negligible, undetectable reduction in global average temperature a hundred years from now.

**Our examination of theology, worldview, and ethics** (Chapter One) finds that global warming alarmism wrongly views the Earth and its ecosystems as the fragile product of chance, not the robust, resilient, self-regulating, and self-correcting product of God’s wise

design and powerful sustaining. It rests on and promotes a view of human beings as threats to Earth's flourishing rather than the bearers of God's image, crowned with glory and honour, and given a mandate to act as stewards over the Earth – filling, subduing, and ruling it for God's glory and mankind's benefit. It either wrongly assumes that the environment can flourish only if humanity forfeits economic advance and prosperity or ignores economic impacts altogether. And in its rush to impose draconian reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, it ignores the destructive impact of that policy on the world's poor.

**Our examination of the science of global warming** (Chapter Two) finds that global warming alarmism wrongly claims that recent temperature changes have been greater and more rapid than those of the past and therefore must be manmade, not natural. It exaggerates the influence of manmade greenhouse gases on global temperature and ignores or underestimates the influence of natural cycles. It mistakenly takes the output of computer climate models as evidence when it is only predictions based on hypotheses that must be tested by observation. It falsely claims overwhelming scientific consensus in favour of the hypothesis of dangerous manmade warming (ignoring tens of thousands of scientists who disagree) and then falsely claims that such consensus proves the hypothesis and justifies policies to fight it. It seeks to intimidate or demonize scientific sceptics rather than welcoming their work as of the very essence of scientific inquiry: putting hypotheses to the test rather than blindly embracing them.

**Our examination of the economics of global warming alarmism** (Chapter Three) finds that it exaggerates the harms from global warming and ignores or underestimates the benefits not only from warming but also from increased atmospheric carbon dioxide. It grossly underestimates the costs and overestimates the

benefits of policies meant to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. It exaggerates the technical feasibility and underestimates the costs of alternative fuels to replace fossil fuels in providing the abundant, affordable energy necessary for wealth creation and poverty reduction. It ignores the urgent need to provide cleaner energy to the roughly two billion poor in the world whose use of wood and dung as primary cooking and heating fuels causes millions of premature deaths and hundreds of millions of debilitating respiratory diseases every year. It fails to recognize that the slowed economic development resulting from its own policies will cost many times more human lives than would the warming it is meant to avert.

In light of all these findings, we conclude that

- human activity has negligible influence on global temperature,
- the influence is not dangerous,
- there is no need to mandate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and
- environmental and energy policy should remove, not build, obstacles to the abundant, affordable energy necessary to lift the world's poor out of poverty and sustain prosperity for all.

*It fails to recognize that the slowed economic development resulting from its own policies will cost many times more human lives than would the warming it is meant to avert.*



*One of the authors of this report, Dr E Calvin Beisner has served as an elder in both the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He taught as a professor at Covenant College from 1992 to 2000 and Knox Theological Seminary from 2000 to 2008. He was a co-founder of the Cornwall Alliance.*

Dr Beisner describes the Cornwall Alliance as a “network of theologians, pastors, other ministry leaders, scientists, economists, other scholars, and policy experts dedicated to applying Biblical worldview, theology, and ethics together with excellent science and economics to the twin tasks of environmental stewardship and economic development for the poor through writing, speaking, social media, and our websites

**[www.CornwallAlliance.org](http://www.CornwallAlliance.org) and [www.EarthRisingBlog.com](http://www.EarthRisingBlog.com).**

(<https://reformedperspective.ca/the-making-of-the-cornwall-alliance/>)

The above article is the introduction to a complete paper that is to be found at:

[https://www.cornwallalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/a-renewed-call-to-truth-prudence-and-protection-of-the-poor.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0kBGs\\_43GFWjh5lbvbGMx\\_b-MORgv-3tvdxWaENVRuAUmO7Tlg8fAqdV0](https://www.cornwallalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/a-renewed-call-to-truth-prudence-and-protection-of-the-poor.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0kBGs_43GFWjh5lbvbGMx_b-MORgv-3tvdxWaENVRuAUmO7Tlg8fAqdV0)

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