

Burning Today, Drowning Tomorrow: The Human Face of Greenhouse Gases

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Have you ever thought what our simple day to day needs or wants could affect our environment? Needs like electricity and transportation, and wants like air conditioning. Did you ever stop to think that those could hugely impact our planet Earth? Cars, factories, and electricity produce greenhouse gases that have made our planet increase in temperature every single year. Due to the mass use of these vehicles, machines and appliances our planet has become unstable, making weather nearly unpredictable, storms getting stronger, and the rise of sea levels. We are losing land, agriculture, and animals in this process. The balance of life is slowly being tilted. The question is, will we have a tomorrow in this burning world or are we going to drown before we do see tomorrow?

The philosophical concept of **responsibility** is one of the major factors that play into this issue. Through philosophizing we are reminded we humans have freedom, but under the condition that we are responsible for the consequences of our actions. Everyday and everything we do no matter how small it is, it eventually adds up to something big. Carelessly using electricity, wasting energy or supporting industries that tend to pollute our environment heavily all contribute to pollution and eventually climate change. What truly defines freedom comes from using it for the better of our people by helping sustain the Earth, not by abusing our freedom and in the process destroying our environment. By ignoring this issue, our freedom in turn becomes meaningless seeing that we are taking away the precious freedom we so have from the future generation and not passing it down.

Justice is another key concept that we need to understand for this issue to be resolved. The issue of climate change also comes from our morality, being unable to call out or fight the problem because of our inability to distinguish what is right or wrong.



The luxury of a few becomes the disaster of many.

Often facing the brunt of these effects are the poorest communities, who are often contributing to the least amount of pollution. These people lose their homes, livelihoods, and lives due to heavy flooding, long droughts, and typhoons. This tip in the balance demonstrates how our systems have fallen. True justice needs those who cause harm to take responsibility in their action and fix it. While the citizens vigilantly remain aware and hold the government and the people accountable, they must act fairly and compassionately.

In recognizing the bigger picture we must also understand **interconnectedness**. Everything on Earth is summed up into a system. Similar to our bodies, each system is essential to the functions of others, some more than others. But in treating our bodies poorly, by living a sedentary lifestyle, we destroy our bodies in turn we are treating our beloved planet the same way we do to ourselves. Factories fuming, waters polluting, and forests dying all intertwine to form a global crisis. By harming nature, we harm ourselves.

Philosophizing shows us that we must seek the **common good**, not just for today but also to those who will be walking on this planet tomorrow. For the future of humanity we must take care of the plants, the animals, and the trees for a stronger and more guaranteed future.

Being a member of the younger generation, we have huge responsibility. Starting somewhere from turning off the light before you go out, joining cleanup and plating drives, and spreading awareness and encouraging action about climate issues. It's not just us but society as a whole must change trajectory, by prioritizing sustainability, conservation and moral responsibility over convenience.

Recklessly burning fuels today means drowning from our own wrong doings tomorrow. However, if we transform our ways now to be more responsible, just, and aware, we can still save our planet and ourselves. There is more to just science in climate change, it is about our morals and values as people. The future is counting on the choices we make today, so we better make it good.



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