

## TRANSPORTATION



*As he rode along, the crowds spread out their garments on the road ahead of him. When he reached the place where the road started down the Mount of Olives, all of his followers began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen.*

*LUKE 19:36-37, NLT*

- Use your bike for short trips.
- Be safe. If you have never seen a cyclist on your normal route to work, look for a bike route with bike lanes and wide shoulders.
- Use a map. Check to see if your city or local bike club offers maps of safe biking routes in your area.
- Get a second opinion. After choosing a potential route, ask other cyclists if they consider your route safe.
- Take action. Visit the League of American Bicyclists' Web site at <http://www.bikeleague.org> to find out how to bring better bicycling to your community.
- Use public transportation. The average annual cost of driving a single-occupant car is between \$4,826 and \$9,685. Compare that to the average cost of a year's worth of public transportation: \$200 to \$2,000.
- The manufacture and use of automobiles makes up 20 to 25 percent of carbon dioxide emissions.
- Automobile traffic contributes significantly to noise pollution.
- Increased road building negatively affects wildlife by breaking up their habitats and altering surface runoff. New roads built through sensitive habitats can damage ecosystems.
- The materials required for roads come from large-scale rock quarrying and gravel extraction, which can harm sensitive ecological areas.
- Road construction also alters the water table, increases surface runoff, and raises the risk of flooding.
- Combine trips. Think you're not driving a gas guzzler? The average U.S. family car travels about 15,000 miles each year. This adds up to 5.8 tons of greenhouse gas pollution and \$2,222 in gasoline. If you have two family cars, that's \$4,444 in gasoline alone.
- Check out long-distance bus routes. Buses are often the least expensive and most energy-efficient form of transportation. A motor coach bus gets an average of 184.4 passenger miles per gallon—compared to 101.1 mpg for a van pool, 85.8 for a commuter rail, and 27.7 for the average car. Pack a lunch, enjoy the scenery, and let someone else drive.
- Consider a hybrid for your next car purchase. Check out the savings you can reap in fuel costs: A conventional car will cost you about \$43 in fuel per week, or \$11,180 over five years' time. A hybrid is less than half that: \$22 per week, or \$5,720 over five years.
- Look for the silver lining! Nine great things about the high cost of gas:
  - Less traffic—People start combining trips and using public transportation when driving to the mall costs \$15 or more!



- More demand for public transportation—Increased demand will result in better service and more convenient public transportation.
  - Four-day workweeks and telecommuting—More employers see the wisdom of flexible schedules and allowing employees to work from home.
  - More frugality—With gasoline taking a bigger bite out of our budgets, people are turning to old-fashioned frugality. The result? Fewer impulsive purchases, less eating out, and more time for family, neighbors, and God.
  - Cheaper insurance—Insurance premiums are determined, in part, by how much people drive. If you telecommute or work a shorter workweek, call your car insurance provider. It could save you 10 to 15 percent on your insurance bill.
  - Fewer traffic deaths—Most people know that driving slower consumes less gasoline. Statistically, driving slower also results in fewer traffic deaths and less accidents—another way to love our neighbors.
  - Less air pollution—related deaths—Driving slower, and less driving in general, results in less air pollution. J. Paul Leigh, a health economics professor at the University of California in Davis, estimates that at least two thousand lives per year have been saved due to reduced air pollution since gas prices went up.
  - Less suburban sprawl—Cities are being revitalized as 30-plus-mile commutes become impractical. Living closer to work means less stress and more time with family.
  - Less obesity—The less people drive, the more they will walk or ride their bikes, which results in better overall health. The last time I was in New York City, I was struck by how few people are overweight. One of the biggest reasons is that people walk—a lot! Instead of the rubber hitting the road, let your sneakers hit the sidewalk.
- Ask your local car-wash manager if they recycle the water; if they do, it's more efficient to use a commercial car wash—provided you don't make a special trip to get there. If you wash your car at home:
  - Park the car on your lawn instead of the driveway. It will act as a natural filter for the soap, dirt, and oil that would otherwise flow into storm drains, eventually causing damage to rivers, streams, and other wetlands.
  - Use less water. Buy a nozzle for your hose that controls the water flow or use a bucket.
  - Use a biodegradable soap like Simple Green Car Wash or Gliptone Wash 'n Glow. Or make your own eco-friendly car wash by using a few squirts of biodegradable liquid dishwashing detergent or laundry detergent mixed with a bucket of water.



## OUR MISSION

*Blessed Earth is an educational nonprofit that inspires and equips faith communities to become better stewards of the earth. Through outreach to churches, campuses and media we build bridges that promote measurable environmental change and meaningful spiritual growth.*

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