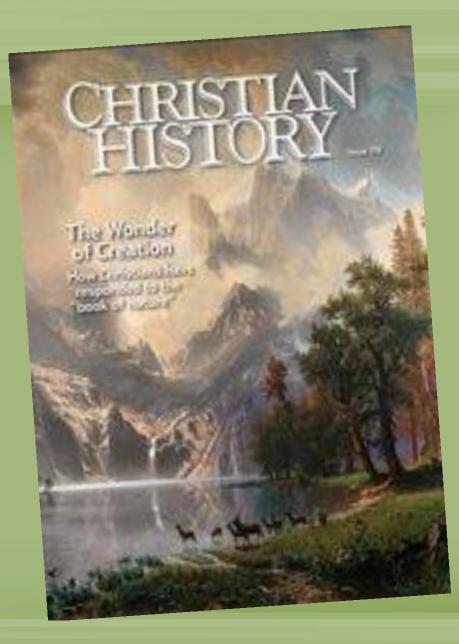
The Scripture of Nature San Diego Bible Students Convention November 23, 2018



Episode 1 – "The Scripture of Nature"

INHERIT THE HOLY MOUNTAIN RELIGION AND THE RISE OF AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALISM

MARK R. STOLL





Along the Brule Bog boardwalk, Douglas County, WI

Grand Teton National Park

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. **Psalm 19:1-4** Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Note it. Read it. God, whom you want to discover, never wrote that book with ink. Instead He set before your eyes the things that He had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that? Why, heaven and earth shout to you: "God made me!"

-- Saint Augustine (354 - 450 A.D.)



This whole visible world is a book written by the finger of God. --Hugh of St. Victor (1096-1141)



God writes the Gospel, not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars. –Martin Luther (1483-1546)



Grand Canyon National Park

Chimney Rock National Historic Site Nebraska







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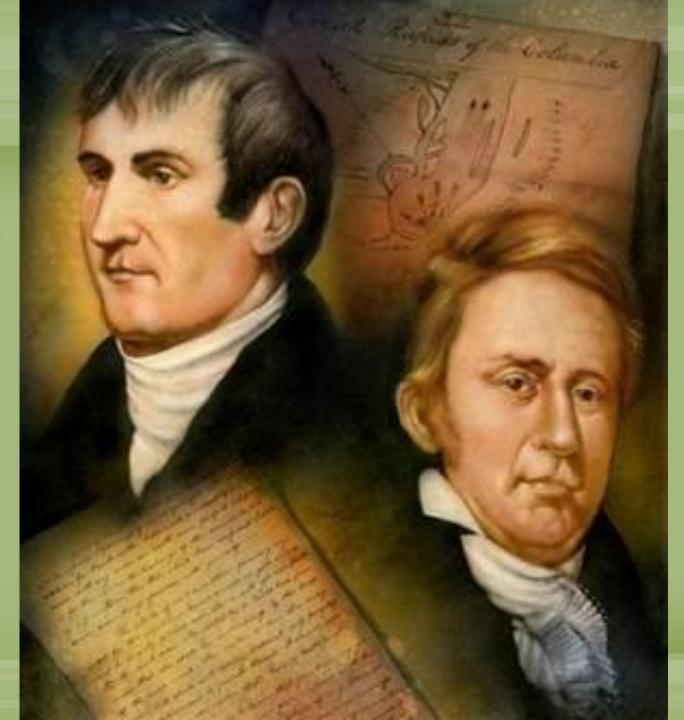
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Meriwether Lewis



William Clark











YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Riverside Geyser Yellowstone National Park

Fort Mackinac Mackinac Island, Michigan

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Yosemite Falls Yosemite National Park











NationalParkService



11 Scenic Trails



19 Historic Trails

Terrace Springs Yellowstone National Park

A FILM BY KEN BURNS THE NATIONAL PARKS America's Best Idea

Glacier National Park

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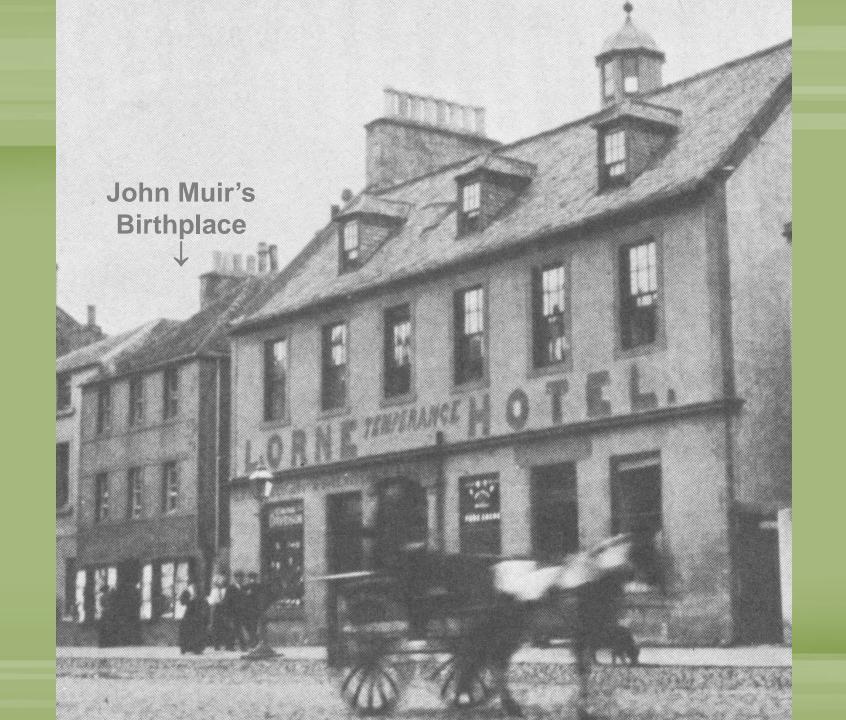
Colorado National Monument

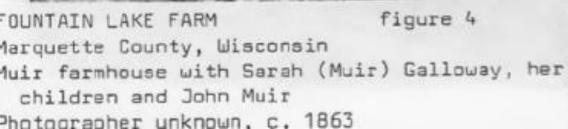


El Morro National Monument, NM

"... what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." (Romans 1:19-20)













Fountain Lake [Ennis Lake]



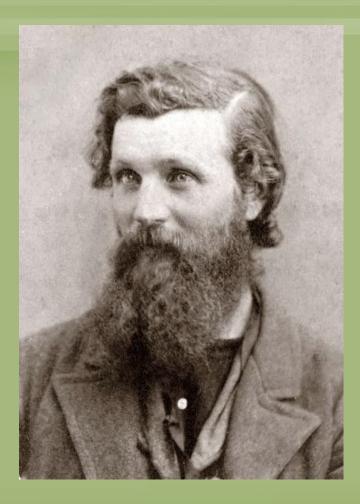
Among the Sierra Nevada, California Albert Bierstadt

Like everybody else I was always fond of flowers, attracted by their external beauty and purity. Now my eyes were opened to their inner beauty, all alike revealing the glorious traces of the thoughts of God, and leading on and on into the infinite cosmos. -- John Muir

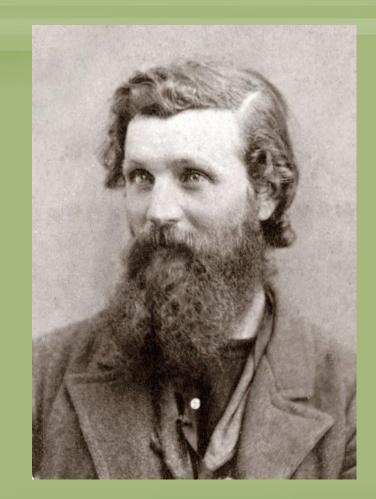






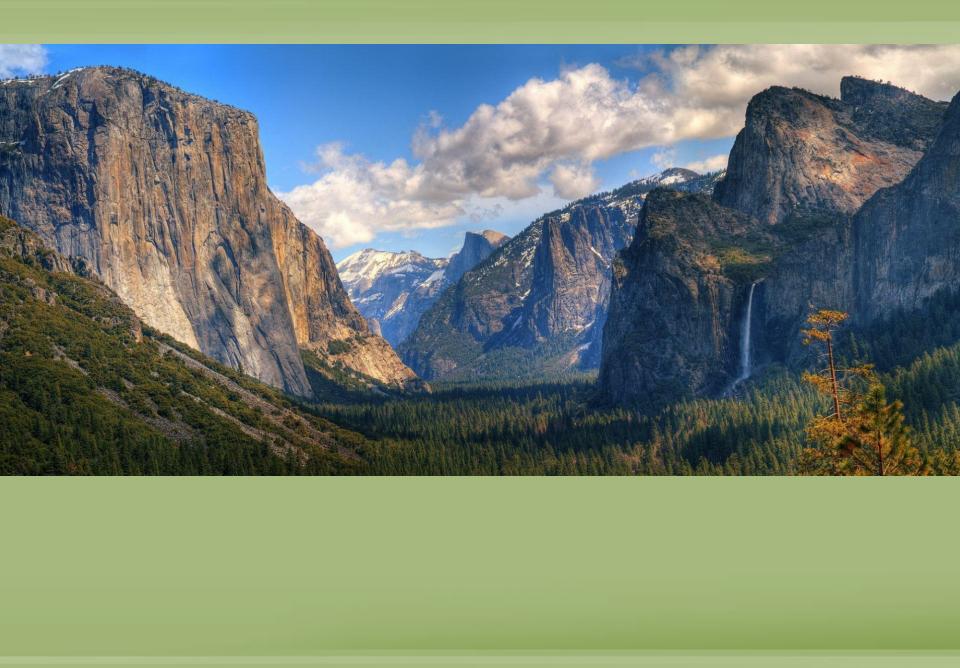


"This affliction has driven me to the sweet fields. God has to nearly kill us sometimes, to teach us lessons. I bade adieu to all my mechanical inventions, determined to devote the rest of my life to the study of the inventions of God."











It was "by far the grandest of all the special temples of Nature I was ever permitted to enter." --- John Muir



"I drifted from rock to rock, from grove to grove. ... When I discovered a new plant, I sat down beside it for a minute or a day, to make its acquaintance and hear what it had to tell. ... I asked the boulders I met, whence they came and whither they were going."



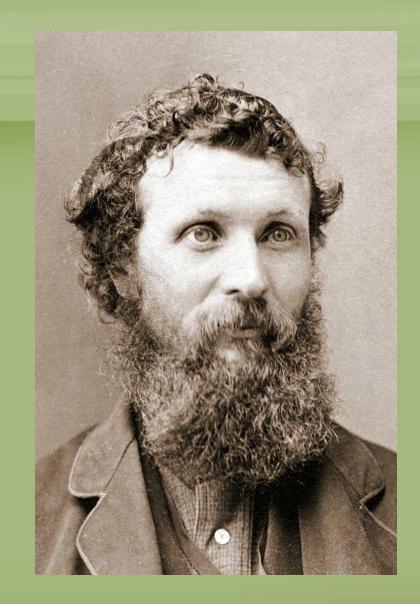
"Heaven knows that John [the] Baptist was not more eager to get all his fellow sinners into the Jordan than I to baptize all of mine in the beauty of God's mountains."

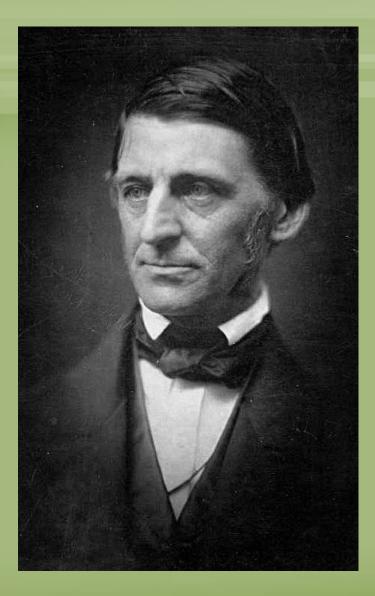






"the most spiritual and exhilarating of all the modes of motion I have ever experienced. Elijah's flight in a chariot of fire could hardly have been more gloriously exciting."



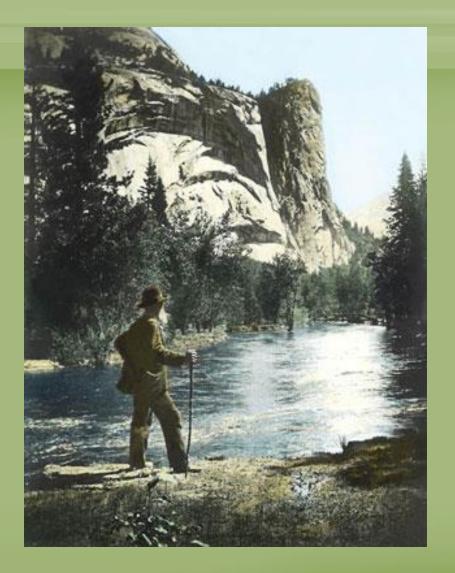


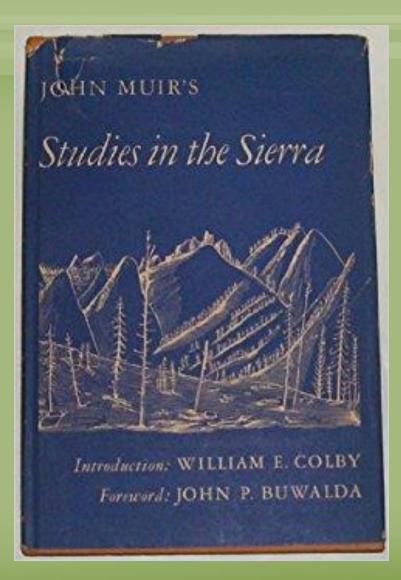
John Muir

Ralph Waldo Emerson

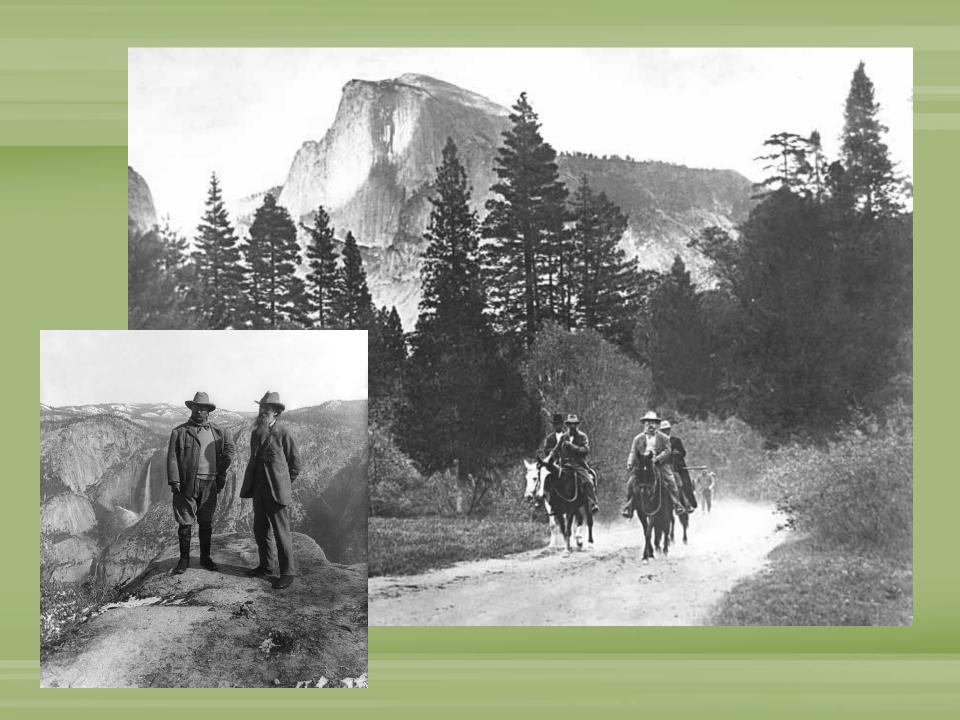


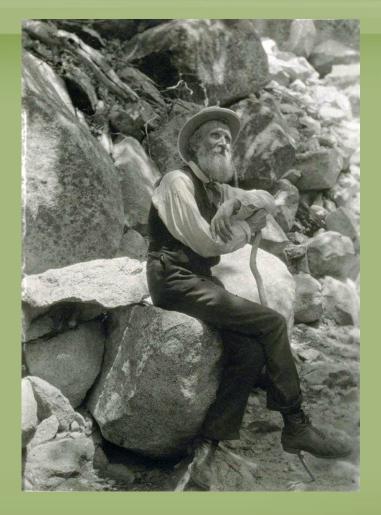
"O these vast, calm measureless mountain days, inciting at once to work and rest. Days in whose light everything seems equally divine, opening a thousand windows to show us God."

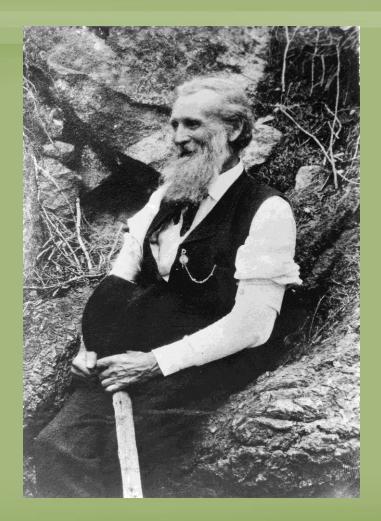




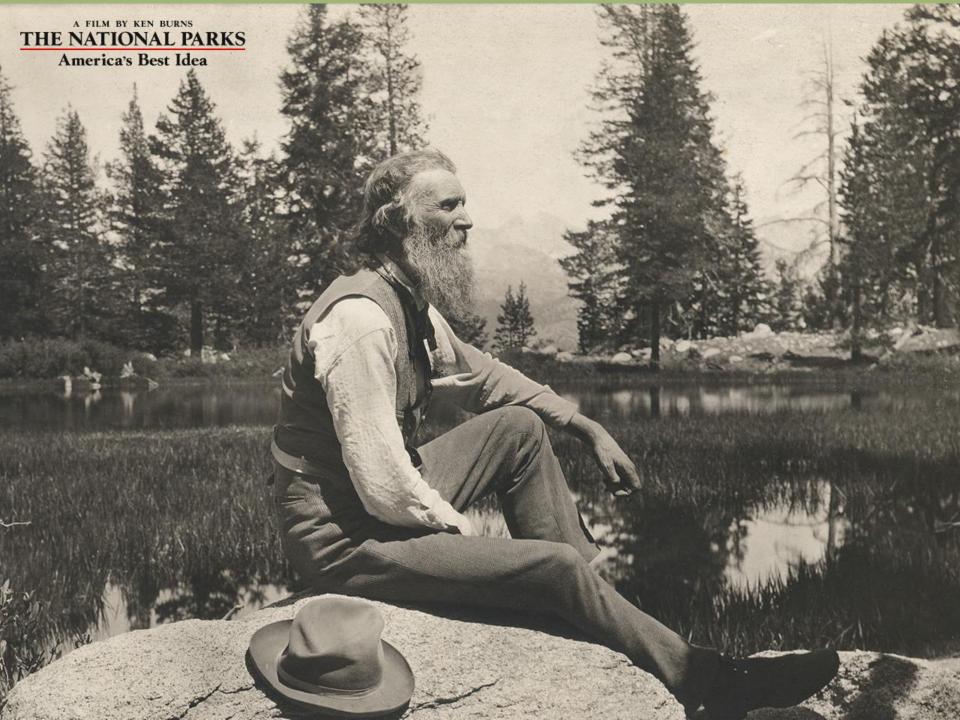








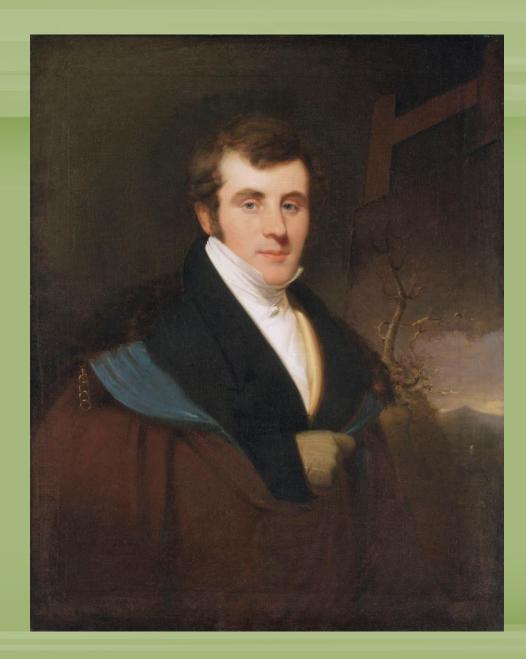




Old Faithful Geyser Yellowstone National Park

Devils Tower National Monument

Rainbow Bridge National Monument Arizona



Thomas Cole (1801-1848) American Artist



"The Garden of Eden" by Thomas Cole, 1828



"The Oxbow" by Thomas Cole, 1836



"Home in the Woods" by Thomas Cole

Zion National Park

"Essay on American Scenery" By Thomas Cole, 1836

It *has not* been in vain—the good, the enlightened of all ages and nations, have found pleasure and consolation in the beauty of the rural earth.

The Three Patriarchs Zion National Park

Prophets of old retired into the solitudes of nature to wait the inspiration from heaven. It was on Mount Horeb that Elijah witnessed the mighty wind, the earthquake, and the fire; and heard the "still small voice"—that voice is YET heard among the mountains!

Angels Landing Zion National Park

St. John preached in the desert;--the wilderness is YET a fitting place to speak to God. ...

He who looks on nature with a "loving eye," ... in gazing on the pure creations of the Almighty, ... feels a calm religious tone steal through his mind, and when he has turned to mingle with his fellow men, the chords of which have been struck in that sweet communion cease not to vibrate.

Those scenes of solitude from which the hand of nature has never been lifted affect the mind with a more deep toned emotion than aught which the hand of man has touched. Amid them the consequent associations are of God the creator—they are his undefiled works, and the mind is cast into the contemplation of eternal things.

Nature has spread for us a rich and delightful banquet. Shall we turn from it? We are still in Eden; the wall that shuts us out of the garden is our own ignorance and folly.

The East Temple Zion National Park

May we at times turn from the ordinary pursuits of life to the pure enjoyment of rural nature; which is in the soul like a fountain of cool waters to the way-worn traveler; and let us learn

The laws by which the Eternal doth sublime And sanctify his works, that we may see The hidden glory veiled from vulgar eyes.



Middlebury, Vermont On future extension of the North Country National Scenic Trail

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"we know the most perfect way of seeking God ... is ... for us to contemplate him in his works whereby he rendered himself near and familiar to us, and in some manner communicates himself."

John Calvin



"It is evident that all creatures, from those in the firmament to those which are in the center of the earth, are able to act as witnesses and messengers of his glory to all men; to draw them to seek God, and after having found him, to meditate upon him and to render him the homage befitting his dignity as so good, so mighty, so wise a Lord who is eternal;



... yea, they are even capable of aiding every man wherever he is in this quest. For the little birds that sing, sing of God; the beasts clamor for him; the elements dread him, the mountains echo him, the fountains and flowing waters cast their glances at him, and the grass and flowers laugh before him." We know [God] by two means: first, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before Our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many Characters leading us to contemplate the invisible things of God, namely, his eternal power and Godhead [divine nature], as the Apostle Paul saith [in Romans 1:20]. ... Secondly, ... by his holy and divine Word. -- John Calvin (Belgic Confession of 1561)



God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in everything; in the sun, moon and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon, for a long time; and so in daytime, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the meantime singing forth with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer.

-- Jonathan Edwards, American preacher (1703-1758)

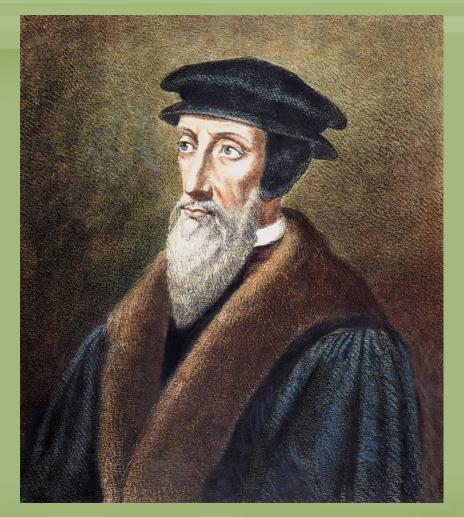
Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument Florissant, Colorado



Pasque [Passover] Flowers

Petrified Redwood Tree Stump

Let him who possesses a field so partake of its yearly fruits, that he may not suffer the ground to be injured by his negligence; but let him endeavor to hand it down to posterity as he received it, or even better cultivated. ... Let every one regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possesses.



John Calvin

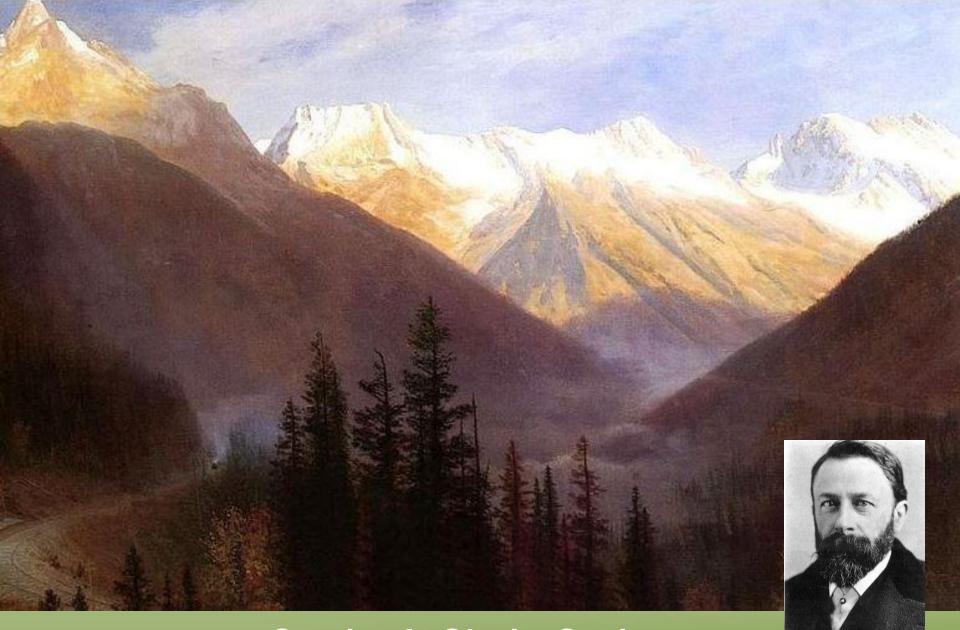


Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Your land must not be sold on a permanent basis, because you do not own it; it belongs to God, and you are like foreigners who are allowed to make use of it.

- Leviticus 25:23 (Today's English Version)

Acadia National Park

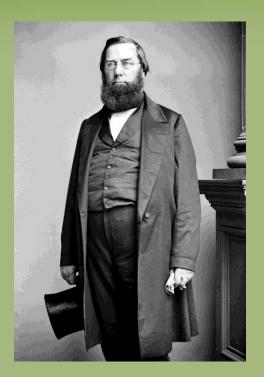


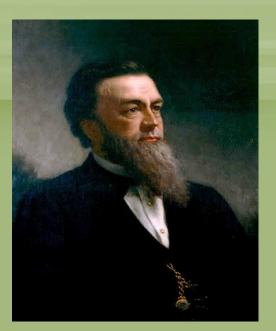
Sunrise At Glacier Station Albert Bierstadt (1830 – 1902)



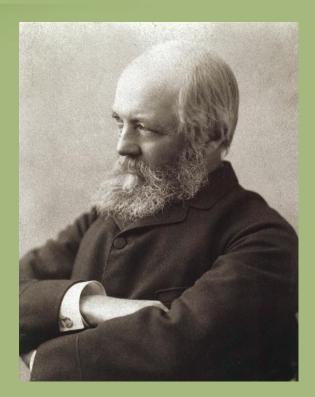
Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone Thomas Moran (1837 - 1926)



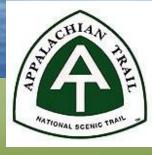




Frederick Billings (1823 – 1890) Woodstock, VT



George Perkins Marsh (1801 – 1882) Woodstock, VT Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. (1822 – 1903) Hartford, CT



Mt. Katahdin from Daicey Pond Baxter State Park, Maine



Birkenhead Park



Five minutes of admiration, and a few more spent in studying the manner in which art had been employed to obtain from nature so much beauty, and I was ready to admit that in democratic America there was nothing to be thought of as comparable with this People's Garden.

-- Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., 1850



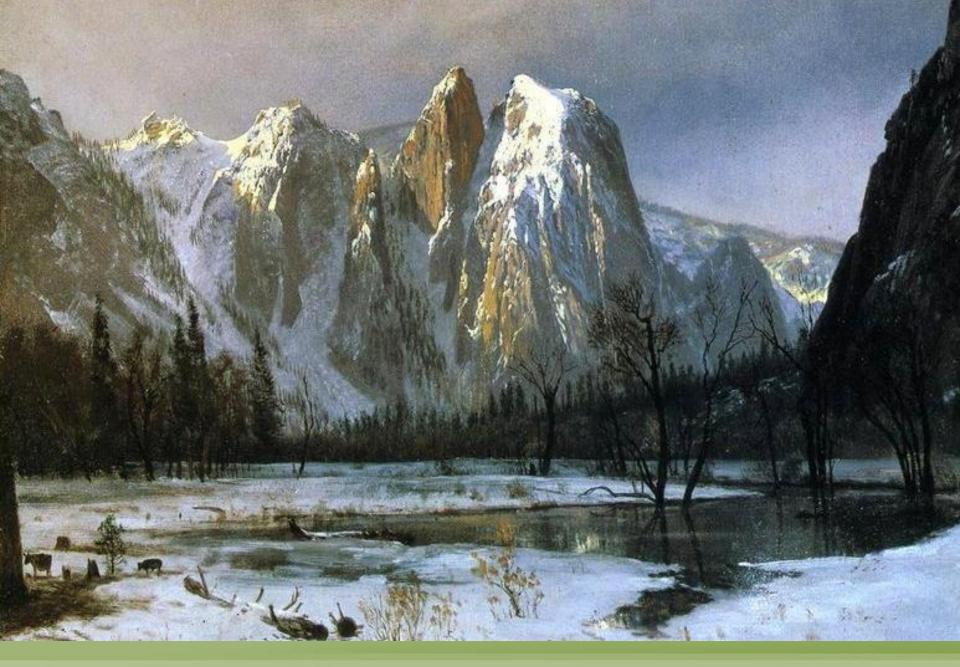
Central Park, New York City



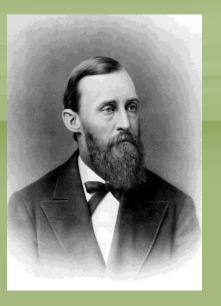
Vor. II.] PHILADELPHIA, JULY, 1855.

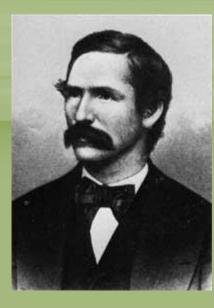
Published under her pseudonym, Grace Greenwood

Sara Jane Clarke Lippencott (1823 – 1904)



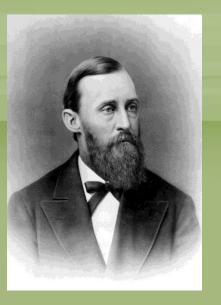
Cathedral Rocks, Yosemite Valley, by Albert Bierstadt

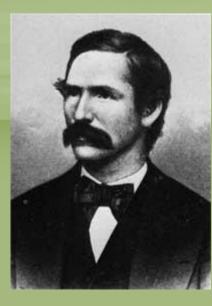




Ferdinand V. Hayden Cornelius Hedges Yellowstone National Park







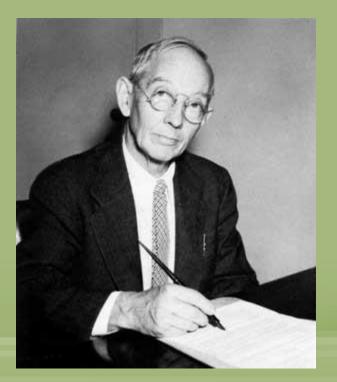


Ferdinand V. HaydenCornelius HedgesGeorge Bird GrinnellYellowstone National ParkGlacier National Park

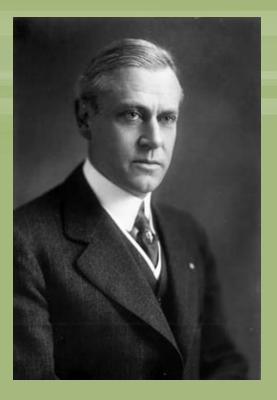




Stephen Tyng Mather Driving force behind the creation of the National Park Service

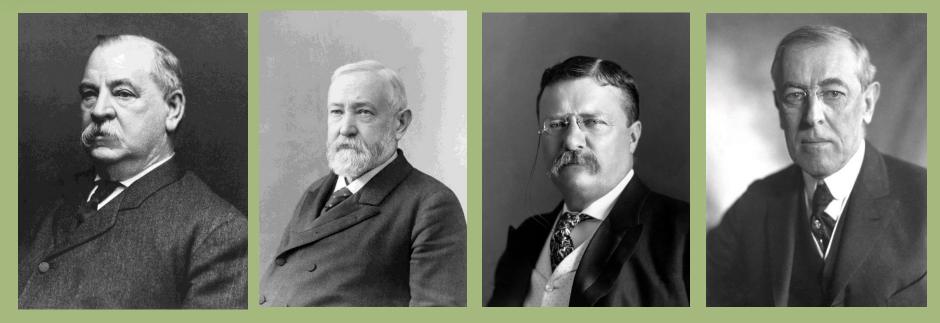






Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. Principle author of the legislation establishing the National Park Service

Presbyterian Presidents



Cleveland 1885-1889 1893-1897

Harrison 1889-1893

Roosevelt 1901-1909

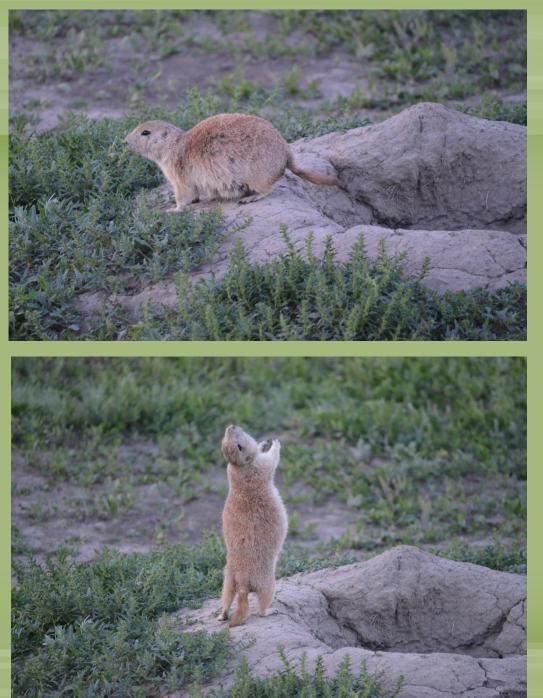
Wilson 1913-1921

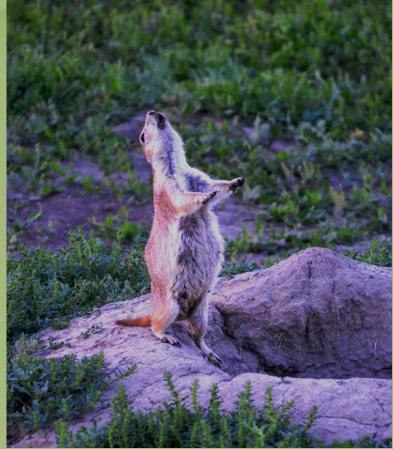
What Does the Natural World Reveal to Us About God?

Bryce Canyon National Park



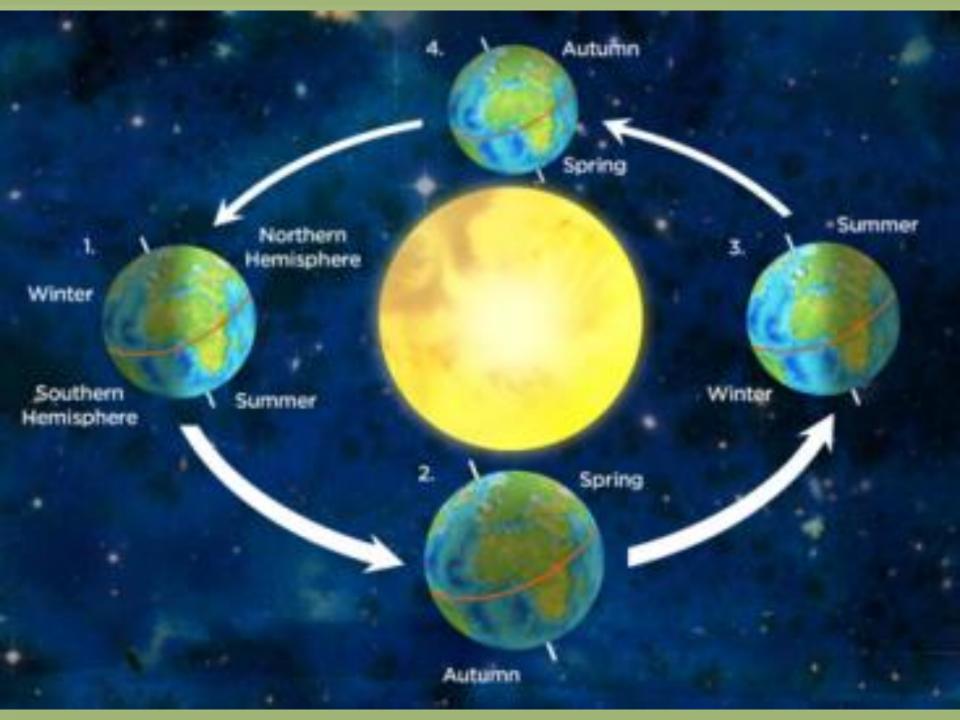
Yellowstone National Park





Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Olympic National Park





Big Bend National Park

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore Wisconsin



Apostle Islands National Lakeshore







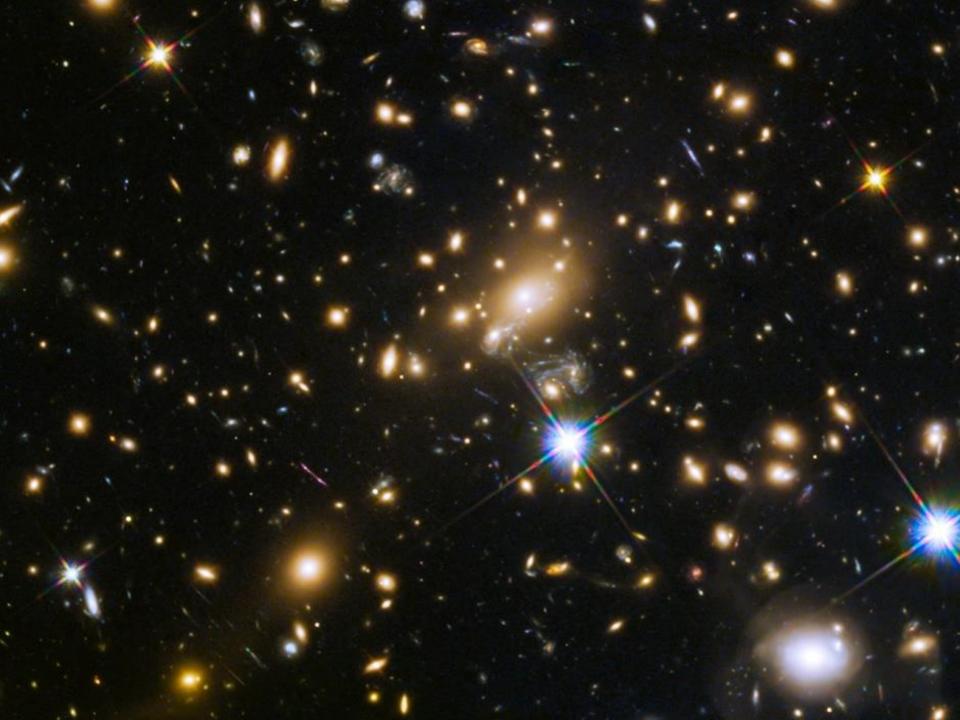










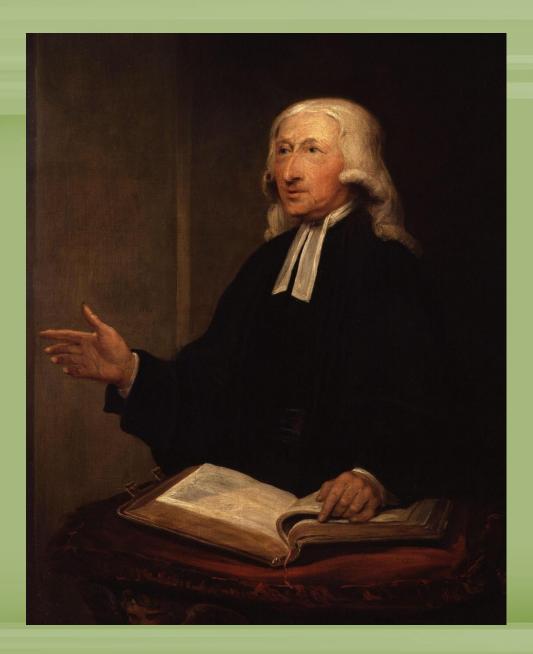






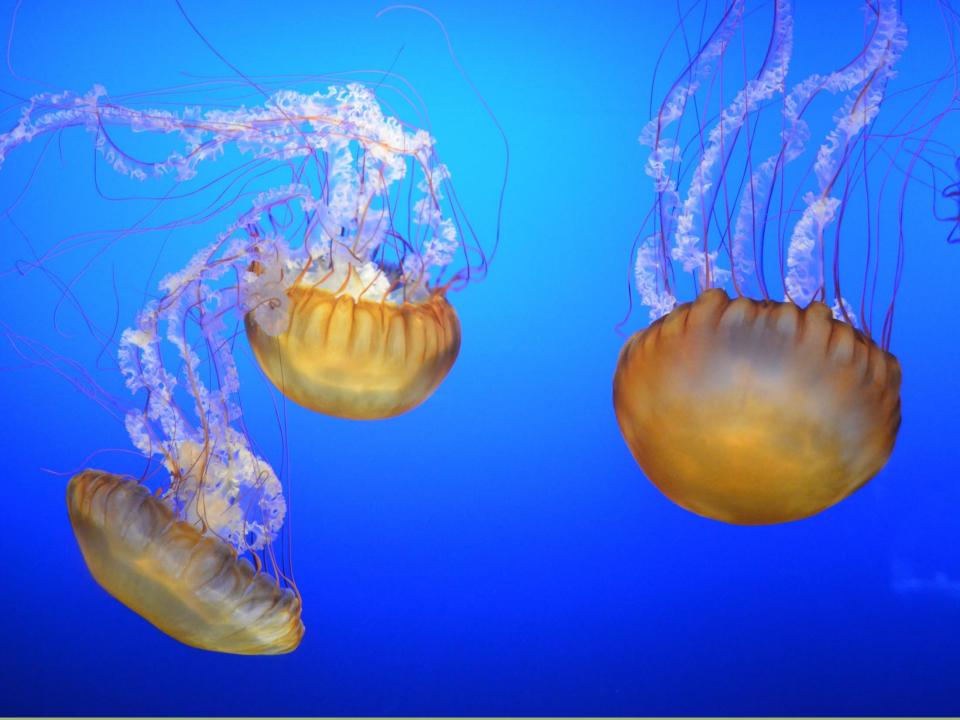


John Wesley (1703 – 1791)















Haleakala National Park Hawaii



Virgin Islands National Park

Ephesians 4:4-7, 11-13 (Phillips)

You all belong to one body, of which there is one Spirit, just as you all experienced one calling to one hope. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father of us all, who is the one over all, the one working through all and the one living in all. Naturally there are different gifts and functions; <u>individually grace is given to us in</u> <u>different ways out of the rich diversity of Christ's giving</u>.

His "gifts to men" were varied, ... His gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service, that the whole body might be built up until the time comes when, in the unity of the common faith and common knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity that measure of development which is meant by the "fullness of Christ".

Acadia National Park

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Samila Rosa



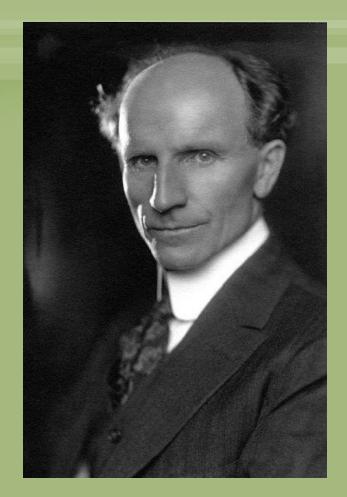




Long's Peak Rocky Mountain National Park

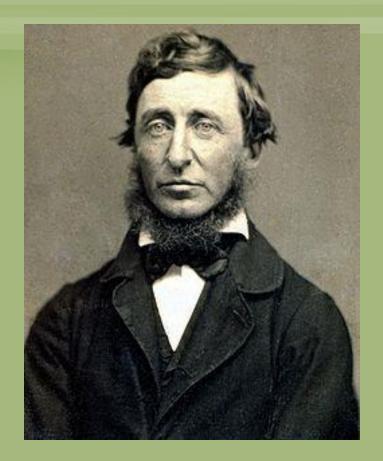


Without parks and outdoor life, all that is best in civilization will be smothered. To save ourselves, to prevent our perishing, to enable us to live at our best and happiest, parks are necessary. Within national parks is room glorious room—room in which to find ourselves, in which to think and hope, to dream and plan, to rest and resolve.



Enos Mills (1870 – 1922)

We need the tonic of wildness—to wade sometimes in the marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk ... to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground. ... We can never have enough of Nature. ... In wildness is the preservation of the world.



Henry David Thoreau (1817 – 1862)

Grand Teton National Park

NO PUBLIC RESTROOM



Olympic National Park

I used to envy the father of our race, dwelling as he did in contact with the new-made fields and plants of Eden; but I do so no more, because I have discovered that I also live in "creation's dawn." The morning stars still sing together, and the world, not yet half made, becomes more beautiful every day. -- John Muir



San Juan Islands Puget Sound, Washington