

In every child's life there comes a time when childhood fantasies are shattered and he or she is forced to accept reality - there is no Santa Claus or tooth fairy; parents don't always mean it when they promise to stay married until parted by death. Grown-up scientists, theologians, historians, archaeologists and others who pursue facts and objective truths are rooted in reality and constantly adjusting their conclusions, theories and hypotheses when new information comes to light. Those who ignore facts and cling to outdated information, or outright falsehoods, can quickly embrace fanaticism. So it is with "global warming," the secular religion of our day that even has a good number of adherents among people of faith. Having decided to focus less on the eternal and whether anyone dwells there, global warming fundamentalists are pushing planet worship on us in a manner that would make a jihadist proud. There are at least two characteristics all fundamentalists share. One is the exclusion and sometimes suppression of any and all information that challenges or contradicts the belief one wishes to impose on all. The other is the use of the state in pursuit of their objectives, overriding the majority's will. With global warming, some members of the scientific community - not all of whom are climatologists, who disagree among themselves - have circled the wagons, denying access and labeling illegitimate any scientist who disagrees with the "doctrines" of a recently warming planet. The big media have been complicit in this censorship or ridicule of alternative views, mostly refusing to interview anyone who does not push the global warming faith. CBS News this week broadcast a four-part series on "climate change." Newsweek magazine recently slammed global warming "deniers." That brought a counterattack in the Aug. 20 issue from Newsweek contributor Robert Samuelson, who termed the article "highly contrived" and "fundamentally misleading." In 1975, Newsweek was just as convinced - using "scientific evidence" - that a new Ice Age was upon us. Many global warming fanatics have pointed to NASA as proof that their concerns about a warming planet are justified. They have repeatedly cited the Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), whose director, James Hansen, has asserted that nine of the 10 warmest years in history have occurred since 1995, with 1998 the warmest. When NASA was confronted with evidence provided by Climate Audit, a blog run by Stephen McIntyre devoted to auditing the statistical methods and data used in historical reconstructions of past climate data, it reversed itself. Without the fanfare used to hype the global warming fanaticism it had earlier supported, NASA now says four of the top 10 years of high temperatures are from the 1930s. Several previously selected "warm" years - 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2004 - fell behind 1900. GISS now says its previous claim that 1998 was the warmest year in American history is no longer valid. The warmest year was 1934. Has any of this new information changed the minds of the global warming fundamentalists? Nope. Neither has much of it seen the light of day in the mainstream media, which continue to carry stories where seldom is heard an alternative word and the skies are polluted all day. The New York Times ran a story in its Sunday Business section last week that said it would cost a lot of money to fight global warming. The implication being that this money should come from government (and taxpayers), along with more government regulations and control over our lives by the very people who seem to have difficulty winning wars and controlling spending. The Earth has warmed and cooled over many centuries. One can get a sense of who is telling the truth about global warming by the company the concept keeps. Most of the disciples of global warming are liberal Democrats who never have enough of our money and believe there are never enough regulations concerning the way we lead our lives. That ought to be enough to give everyone pause, along with emerging evidence that the global warming jihadists may be more full of hot air than the climate they claim is about to burn us up. (Direct all MAIL for Cal Thomas to: Tribune Media Services, 2225 Kenmore Ave., Suite 114, Buffalo, N.Y. 14207. Readers may also e-mail Cal Thomas at tmseditors@tribune.com.) (c) 2007 Tribune Media Services, Inc.