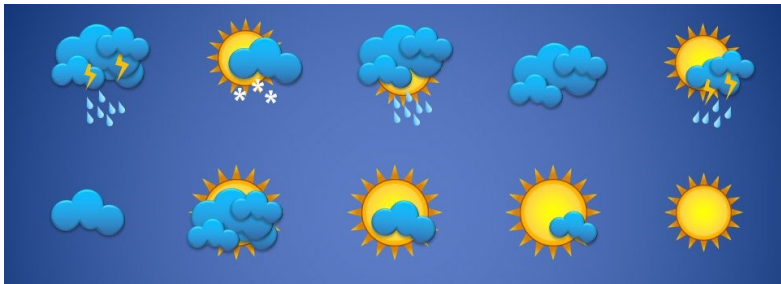


FROM OUR MINISTER

Dear Friends,

What a strange summer it has been, perhaps typified by the holiday we had as a family in Norfolk: five days of rain and two of sun. We have been spared (so far at least) the 40C tortures of late. And yes, the science shows that the prime culprit is climate change. A news report showed that heatwave days were up 9% and rainfall 20% in recent years.



In the face of this, some protests have become increasingly radical: witness the disruptive stunts of the Just Stop Oil group. And governments need to take strong action to tilt us towards 'clean energy' and away from being such a wasteful society (the latter being the more difficult, in my opinion). But at our grass roots level, what should be our attitude as Christians? I suggest there are two approaches we should reject.

One is that held by some Christians who say, we don't need to care about this at all. At the end of all things, God is going to destroy this planet, so why try to preserve it? And besides, isn't all that matters our souls?

This will not do. The God who created all things and who raised his Son *bodily* from the dead cares about the material world. Ultimately, he promises to make all things new, including heaven and earth. We therefore should care for the earth, and that will include taking steps to guard the climate. Furthermore, it's not just about us. Climate change is impacting us now, but the first countries to be adversely affected were those in the developing world. It has already caused catastrophic problems in the poorest parts of the world.

The second wrong approach is the fear and desperation shown by some campaigners. This is not an attitude that Christians should share, because our vision for the future is ultimately one suffused with hope. It is that vision I just mentioned about God making all things new, with a new heaven and a new earth. His ultimate plan is renewal. We are in harmony with his plans for creation when we care for the earth.

Let's be more than just the typical Brits who moan about the weather. Let's move from moaning to action, because God cares for his world and has good purposes for it. And let's do this not just for our own children and grandchildren, but for those around the world who already suffering.

Your minister and friend,

Dave Faulkner

