



# Climate Change and the Purposes of God

## Session one. Does climate change matter? If so, why does it matter?

What does it mean to live for Jesus Christ today? What are our priorities as human beings and as disciples of Jesus? What difference does our faith make to the way we live in God's world? In our present economic climate, and with changes to our environment happening rapidly, it is right to pause to ask who we are, and what God is asking of us. A primary focus for this course will be on the questions posed for Christians by climate change.

### 1. There are different views around about climate change:

Where are you on this spectrum of views?

Climate change doesn't affect me at all.	-----	I don't believe humans are causing climate change.	-----	It is all very scary and we cannot do anything.	-----	We must act now, or it will be too late.
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Perhaps your view is different from any of these? Why?

### 2. For reflection

Spend some time thinking about:

Psalm 24:1 'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.'

Psalm 145:9 'The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.'

Colossians 1:20 'God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of [Christ's] cross.'

The Swiss theologian Hans Kung once wrote: 'The kingdom of God is creation healed.'

? What is it that needs healing?

### 3. Climate Change and the Purposes of God

Climate Change and the Purposes of God says this: do you agree?

'The likelihood of runaway global warming, which will diminish food security, accelerate the extinction of huge numbers of species, and make human life impossible in some parts of the world, raises questions that go to the heart of our Christian faith.'

? Spend some time thinking through what some of the 'questions that go to the heart of the Christian faith' might include.

? In what ways does your Christian faith impinge on questions like these?

What should our relationship be with God as both the origin and end of all things? How do we balance our energy and material consumption with the needs of the poorest communities, and of future generations and other species? How do we sustain hope in the midst of fear and denial? How can we encourage global cooperation, challenge unsustainable economic systems and change our lifestyles? These fundamental questions prompt this urgent call to the Church.

### 4. For further reflection:

If you have time read carefully Job 38:4 – 7, and then scan through the rest of chapters 38, 39, 40 and 41.

? What does this section say to you? What does it say about humanity's place in God's creation?

? Why do you think the writer reminds us about:

the lion (38:39), the raven (38:41), the mountain goats (39:1), the ass (39:5), the ox (39:6), the stupid ostrich (39:13-15), the strong horse (39:19), the hawk and eagle (39:26-27), the hippopotamus (Behemoth) (40:15), the crocodile (Leviathan) (41:1), as well as the trees and plants and other vegetation?

? What was Job's response to God? (see Job 42:1-3).

*A Prayer from Percy Dearmer:*

*O God, who set before us the great hope that your Kingdom shall come on earth and taught us to pray for its coming; give us grace to discern the signs of its dawning and to work for the perfect day when the whole world shall reflect your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.*