

Climactic change

2 Peter 3¹⁻¹³

Climate change: a Christian response



(Seven hours in a car with Rob Clements)

Have you ever spent 7hrs in car w **Rob Clements**?

- if you know Rob - you can probably imagine what it would be like;
- that was my privilege last week
 - as we travelled up/back to Sydney for Bible-based literacy training;
- providential that he not here today – now in Myanmar;
 - not here to excuse himself from taking credit;
 - but credit must be given where credit is due;
 - credit is due to Rob Clements for my sermon title: **Climactic change**;
- his idea - I told him : ∃s a sermon in that – this is it;
 - topic: **Climate change**
 - title: **Climactic change**
 - text: 2 Peter 3(1-13) – begins ...

(1) This is now the 2nd letter that I am writing to you, beloved.

In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

- (2) that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,
- (3) knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

Paul's topic in our text is v much related to climate change – IS climate change;

- better described as **climactic change**.

(Stirring everyone up)

Climate change / climactic change ... **calculated** to **stir** everyone up;

- provocative topic;
- I know ∃ polarised opinions in this room – w good reasons;
- out there: sadly ∃ scoffers on both sides of issue – each scoffing at each other;
- let's launch in where angels fear to tread.

(Good questions)

What are some good Qs in Climate change debate?

Is climate change real?

Is climate change human-induced?

Are we responsible to do something about it?

How concerned should we be about climate change?

Should we be as concerned as Greta Thunberg (Toon-Berry)?

Come back to Qs later – to do justice to them we need ...

Good considerations

In our text Paul says:

- (1) I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,
- (2) that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets
- but before he gets to remembering predictions – ∃ remember what God done.

6 things he tells us we need to remember – in 6 verses:

(1) Remember God's creation by His word

- (5) For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago,
and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God.
- foundational truth largely forgotten / ignored / denied in present debate;
- God's creation is absolutely fundamental / foundational.

Gen 1(1) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

- (2) The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.
And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
- (3) And God said, "*Let there be light*," and there was light.
- (6) And God said, "*Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters,
and let it separate the waters from the waters."* And it was so.
- (9) And God said, "*Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into 1 place,
and let the dry land appear."* And it was so.

But as Peter says: **many deliberately overlook** this fact, that ...

the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God.

- then we know from NT that **word of God** is a person- 2nd person of Trinity – Son - JC

Col 1(16) For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,
whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities

- all things were created through Him and for Him.

(17) And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

- absolutely crucial to current debate:

- world is created by Christ / thru Christ / for Christ;
- when we make a mess of this world;
- when we use it / abuse it - not to serve God / fellow-man
- but to plunder for greedy gain
⇒ direct affront to God / JC;
- when we deify the world & its sustainer – calling it *Mother Nature*
- when we attribute to the creation what belongs to the Creator
⇒ another direct affront to God
- when we think we are the ones in control – determiners of our own destiny
⇒ another direct affront to God;
⇒ invite / provoke necessary judgement of God.

This is where Paul says: we need to ...

(2) Remember God's deluge of judgement

(6) that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.

- When mankind **distanced** himself from God / ignored God / set themselves up as God;
- had too high an opinion of themselves / rebelled against authority of God;
 - determined their own morality – their way;
- ⇒ God opened **door of destruction** – deluged whole world w global flood;
- demonstrated : ∃ none who are good – none who are godly;
 - all universally deserve destruction;
 - but He delight to manifest mercy – give grace;
 - save a people / great multitude to trust / honour / enjoy Him.

(3) Remember God's declaration of judgement

History is key to future:- learn from our past:

- God written in His word what happened in beginning / in rebellion;
- (7) [now] **by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.**
- this is not just a possibility / probability / prediction;
 - this is what IS going to happen;
 - notice word stored up for fire;
 - not just a warning to us declaring everything we store up will be burnt up;
 - but God is storing up this world for unleashing of His fire;
 - He getting this world ready – ready to burn;
 - His people will be refined;
 - everyone / everything else utterly consumed.

(4) Remember God's bigger perspective on time

- (8) **But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord 1 day is as a 1000 years, and a 1000 years as 1 day.**
- not a mathematical equation / equivalence;
 - but an expression of God being outside constraints of time;
 - v appropriate for He who created world / time
- ⇒ announce His ushering in of **end of time**.

(5) Remember God's heart of grace

- (9) **The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.**

This is how **God reveals His heart**;

- heart's desire is to see people realise reality of situation;
- come to senses;
- accept rescue offered to them;
- God sent His **Son** as **SES** emergency team:
 - to rescue anyone / everyone who would be saved;
 - not just a rescue attempt;
 - rescue is sure/ certain/ guaranteed for anyone/ everyone who'll have it;
- God is patient / longsufferingly patient / extraordinarily patient;
- almost patient to a fault;
- certainly so patient that He accused of giving people too much time;
- so patient that some people think ∃ nothing to fear / flee;
- nothing to repent of – even tho told them over/over/over again.

- this is God's **grace** – extending opportunity to repent / turn / come till v end.

(6) Remember God's day of fire

(10) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief,

and then the heavens will pass away with a roar,

and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved,

and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

- this is **climate change** like the world has never ever seen before;

- ∃'s been an ice age : where global temperature was possibly 10 or 20 degrees lower;

- ∃'s evidence in ice cores : global temperature been higher than present as well;

- but what Peter is telling us about here is:

- not climate change that causes polar ice caps to shrink / disappear altogether;

- not talking abouts sea levels rising cms or metres;

- this is **climate catastrophe**;

- O/S media reports: Australia is on fire;

- Everything is burning;

- this image was used in some of the O/S fundraising;

- not a satellite photo – schematic made to look like one;

- fires were certainly bad – but not that bad;

[X]

- Peter talking about Australia on fire / **world-wide fire**:

- that is not just a fire in every forest / area of bush;

- not even whole countries on fire everywhere – even every country;

- but whole world at once - **global fire!**

Up until 10 years ago: these were our **fire danger level signs**;

- 5 levels: low / moderate / high / v high / extreme;

- after Black Saturday fires in VIC:

- signs were changed to these – 6 levels:

- combined low / moderate into 1;

- 2 extra levels : severe / catastrophic;

- this is what we've seen the past few weeks – catastrophic rating:

- means leave – houses are not defensible;

[X]

But what have people been calling it? – more than catastrophic – not strong enough;

- Mogo zoo director Chad Staples described it as “**apocalyptic**” / “**Armageddon**”

- New York Times ran this headline on NYE:

“**Apocalyptic scenes in Australia**”

- then 2 days later:

“**Apocalypse becomes the new normal**”

[X]

- word straight out of God's book of **Revelation** – name of book;

- people don't understand how apocalyptic the ultimate apocalypse really will be.

So we've had some **good Qs** put to us;

- now informed by some **good considerations** from God:

⇒ how about some ...

Good answers

Is climate change real?

Sure is!

- we should be telling people about the **climate catastrophe** that we know is coming; the climate apocalypse which will make everything we just seen this summer look like a picnic in comparison;
- only just warming up;
- real climatic change is coming - **Climactic Catastrophic Apocalypse**.

Is this **climate change human-induced**?Sure is!

- it was **rebellion of humanity** against its Creator that caused all this;
- we have brought all this upon ourselves;
- the Climactic Climate Catastrophe God been warning us about in every generation;
 - is not some natural temperature fluctuations;
 - not some natural birth / life / death cycle of stars in cosmos;
 - this is God's explicit judgement upon us as a human race
 - for resisting / rebelling/ resenting His Lordship;
 - for forsaking a life-giving relationship w Him
 - in preference for a deadly destructive deceitful existence w devil;
 - for actually choosing torments of hell over intimacy of heaven;
 - many might say ***I never chose it like that***;
 - *no one ever put it to me like that before*;
 - well that is way God puts it to everyone in Bible;
 - if people not read it – we'd better tell them;
 - ignorance is no excuse;
 - why Jesus commanded us in His parting words to go into all world preach good news of gospel to everyone.

Are we responsible to do something about this climate change?

We sure are!

- we are **stewards** of this earth (whole other topic – for tonight – 6:30pm)
 - but reality re this climactic change is: can't fight it / foolish to try to avert it;
 - not thru our cleverness / science think we can find a way around this / put it off
 - found fighting against God;
- **So what are we to do?**
 - **flee**;
 - like even the RFS definition of catastrophic says – time has come to flee;
 - houses are not defensible - get out of there – go to place of safety;
 - Where's that when whole world / globe is on fire?
 - ∃ only 1 place – it is accessible to every single person on planet;
 - safe place is in **Jesus Christ** – specifically in/under blood of Christ;
 - only place of protection – His blood in place of our blood;
 - His death in place of our death.

How concerned should we be about this climate change?

Very concerned!

- the current climate change debate gives us an opportunity to put things in perspective;
- I'm not saying don't be concerned about **current climate change**;
- but if we are **not more concerned** / more convicted / more passionate

about Climactic / Catastrophic Climate Change

⇒ ∃ something way out of whack in our priorities.

Now you might be thinking: *What can I possibly do? – my influence is so **small** / miniscule;*

- you children might be thinking: *I'm too young – too **small** to make a difference;*

This is where we can learn a lot from **Greta Thunberg** (Toon-berry)

“Many people say that Sweden is just a small country, and it doesn't matter what we do, but I have learned you are never too small to make a difference.”

Listen to Greta speak on global stage to whole world:

“**People are dying.** Entire ecosystems are collapsing.

We are in the beginning of a mass extinction.

And all you can talk about is money and fairytales of eternal economic growth.

How dare you!”

“We are facing an **existential crisis** ...

it will have a massive impact on our lives in the future, but also now, especially in vulnerable communities.”

[X]

Greta's stark **black & white** language is the sort of thing this world needs in relation to the true Climactic Catastrophe;

- this one is a **B&W issue** – everyone is either in / out of Christ – no ½way / nuances;

- people are dying / going to hell – world is all about money – existential crisis.

Our society – the people of our society – the majority consensus is saying

- *Don't worry about that God stuff;*

- ***believe in yourself** – be true to yourself – life your life your way – hope is in you!*

Greta's words to world would be appropriate:

“**You lied to us.** You gave us false hope.

You told us that the future was something to look forward to.

And the saddest thing is that most children are not even aware of the fate that awaits us.

We will not understand it until it's too late.”

How dare you!

You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words.”

“**I don't want your hope.** I don't want you to be hopeful.

I want you to panic.

I want you to feel the fear I feel everyday.

I want you to act.

I want you act like you would in a crisis.

I want you to act like your house is on fire, because it is.”

[X]

Let Greta's words be a **wake-up call** to us – if we become comfortable Christians;

- our concern for Christless colleagues / friends / relatives lost cutting edge.

Greta's words can also give us **encouragement**:

"It is still not too late to act.

It will take a far-reaching vision, it will take courage,

it will take fierce, fierce determination to act now, to lay the foundations
where we may not know all the details about how to shape the ceiling.

In other words, it will take cathedral thinking.

I ask you to please wake up and make the changes required possible."

"You must take action.

You must do the impossible.

Because giving up can never be an option."

"The climate change crisis has already been solved.

We already have the facts and solutions. ...

- true! - **Jesus Christ** – He IS the solution – He's done it!

- we just need to wake up to it.

[X]

Greta has a **way of putting things**: (reapplied) puts ultimate Catastrophe in proper perspective;

How can we respond? – What does our text say?

(11) **Since all these things are thus to be dissolved,**

what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

(12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God.

God gives us ...

Good responses

Can remember them as **HELP**: H – E – L – P

Hasten – you are **hastening** the coming of the Day of God

- your response is part of God's big picture plan;

- what you do - prepares for / contributes to / hastens the coming of the day of God!

How?

Engage w people in our community – climate change is the topic of the day / decade;

- not going away – no matter which way you turn – everyone has an opinion.

Listen to what people are saying – engage w where they at;

- use their words – use Greta's words (they're on back of your sermon outline)

- show : they're truer than they realise in far more serious way than ever contemplated.

Proclaim the gospel of hope in **Jesus** – one/only place of refuge from Cataclysmic fires.

- not matter of just presenting bare facts ...

Persuade - **knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others** – 2Cor 5(11)

- more reason than Geta to be passionate / persuasive / persistent in proclaiming gospel.

Pray - **God is at work** – God is on the move;

- His Spirit is confronting / challenging / awakening / opening / bringing to life;

- He uses your words - but He's the one doing it;

- all the more reason : when we pray give Him the glory that is His.

Pray

Sing Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord ...

Benediction 2 Peter 3(12-13)

Wait for and hasten the coming of the day of God.

According to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth
in which ∃ a totally new climate – a climate of righteousness.