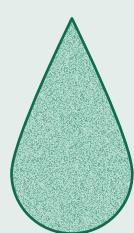


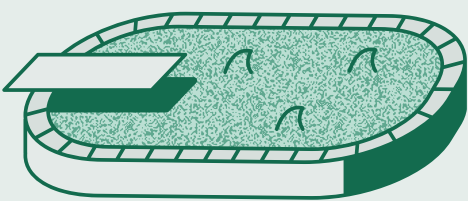
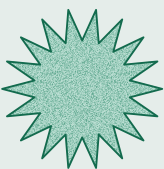
WHY WE MIGHT STRUGGLE TO CARE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND WHAT CAN HELP US

Over the last decades we have become increasingly aware of the climate crisis – an overwhelming series of challenges including the warming of the earth and rising sea levels, loss of biodiversity, increasing waste/pollution, and increasing shortage of food, energy, land, or water.



A BIG STRUGGLE

might not be that we don't *know* what to do about making lifestyle changes or joining in with campaigns, but that, despite the warnings we know about, we still lack the motivation to *want* to make real changes.



So it may be a combination

of these factors (some from his book called “Don’t Even Think About It” by George Marshall)

- **Facts have become “post-truth” as every claim is disputed through social media.**

WHY

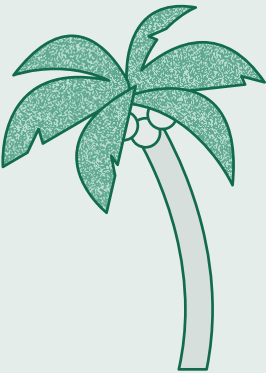
should there still be such an internal battle within so many of us to care for the earth, and actively seek change? One writer recently explored why it is that it seems that our brains are almost hard-wired not to accept climate change – virtually every one of climate change’s attributes goes against our psychology.



- **We live in a state of permanent crisis, constantly facing emergencies, making in-depth responses difficult.**

- **We only become truly aware of a threat posed to us when there is an external enemy involved.**

Marshall says, “because there is no outsider to blame...vast swathes of the public seem to find it less interesting than watching paint dry, and so the politicians don’t have to worry too much about being held to account.”



- **Issues that grab our attention involve pain, and in the present moment.**

Climate change is both gradual and we always talk about it as a future thing.

- **Climate change requires immediate personal sacrifices now to avoid uncertain collective losses far in the future.**
- **Real changes need us to agree with different countries on a distribution of losses and how to allocate the earth’s resources.**
We don't like to jump first.
- **We have a finite pool of worry,**
and so will focus on what is immediately in front of us.

- **We have what he calls an “optimism bias”, meaning we tend to think it’s going to happen to other people first**
-we face lower risks than others.
- **We have a tendency to cherrypick evidence**
that confirm our beliefs that others are more threatened, and as a species we don’t want to rock the boat and be outsiders.



HOW MIGHT WE START TO THINK AS DISCIPLES IN A WAY THAT WILL MOTIVATE US TO ACT?

Some of these principles may help.



REMEMBERING OUR FIRST CALL.

God made the creation as good, and the purpose we were given as human beings is to protect and develop it.

GOD THINKS THE WORLD IS WORTH SAVING.

Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach good news to all creation.” (Mark 16:15). By becoming human in Christ, God shows how the material world is valued and holy.

JUSTICE AND RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS.

God’s call is not only to treat the land, sea and sky with justice, but to ensure that those who cause the least environmental damage do not suffer most from its consequences. Living simply is about letting others “simply live”.



LIVING IN ANTICIPATION OF GOD’S FUTURE.

In a short-term sense it is about being mindful of our future generations, 100 years from now, who will be living with the consequences of our decisions today.

In the longer-term, our future destiny involves a “renewed earth”.

How we care for God’s world now is an expression of our anticipating that future.



WE KNOW GOD THROUGH HIS CREATION



and caring for it is an expression of love and worship.

A sacramental approach reminds us of how God sustains His creation, reveals Himself to us through it, and calls us to celebrate its goodness, beauty and diversity.

To care for creation is worship.

Focussing on these truths is a way to move from paralysing fear to action, from apathy to worship.

We can care for the creation in small ways – every act of recycling can be an expression of worship and a sign of God’s future, every prayer is part of the battle.

We can campaign, lobby, write, or protest to give momentum to the decisions that must be made by governments.

