

A book review – A Life on Our Planet by David Attenborough

This is not a Christian publication, but I felt compelled to read this book whilst staying in Kent recently. The climate changes we have seen develop even in recent times cannot be ignored. Attenborough calls this book (and the TV documentary) his witness statement and a vision for the future.

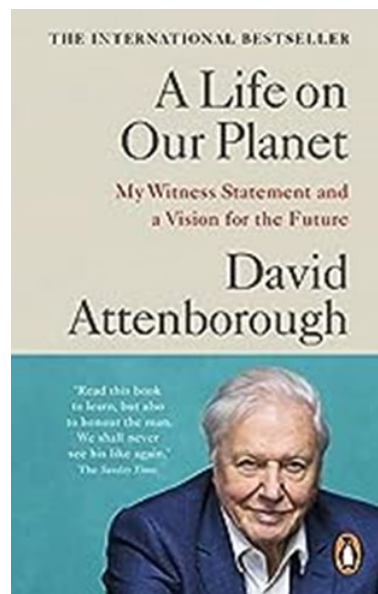
This statement begins in the Ukraine and the devastating effects of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The devastation of nuclear radiation to humans, animals and the landscape, and yet, with the absence of humans in that region, nature has started to reclaim the land. Attenborough then goes on to reflect on his long and distinguished career as a naturalist and his work through expeditions to be filmed and shown on television which brought the natural wonders of our planet into our homes. Who can forget that scene filmed with the baby gorillas all around him? Through this there is a synopsis of earth's history in his lifetime. The reducing wilderness, including deforestation, reduction in animal populations and the emptying of the oceans corresponds with the increasing population of human beings, and carbon emissions.

Part Two spells out the course for planet earth in this century if changes are not made. Populations will be forced to live more densely in cooler parts of the globe forcing excessive pressure on those

countries to accept human traffic, and conflicts become inevitable. Is this what the book of Revelation was talking about, I wondered? Maybe, but a way out is possible if we are prepared to do what is necessary to restore bio-diversity to our planet.

Part Three gives a brave, but not impossible, vision for the future where the balance in nature must be redressed. Humanity has moved from being 'a part of nature' to being 'apart from nature', and the challenge is how to discover a new kind of sustainable lifestyle. Much of what is proposed is sensible. This book is very accessible and admirably concise. Its central message, if we have a care for future generations, is that things cannot continue as they are.

Paul



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**Vicar: Revd Paul Deakin,
St Cross Vicarage, Mobberley Road, Knutsford
WA16 8EL**

Tel. No. 01565 640702

email: revdpauldeakin@gmail.com

Web address: www.stcrossknutsford.org.uk

Email address: stcross.knutsford@gmail.com



The Vicar writes...

What is our 'core business'? This question was asked at the recent Lambeth Conference. When I used to work in engineering that question came about during a time of my company undergoing restructuring. If carmakers make cars and Cadbury's make chocolate what does the Church produce? Ultimately, our aim is to make disciples, followers of Jesus. That was the command given by Jesus both at the Last Supper (John 13.34-35) and at the Ascension (Matthew 28.19) which was his commission.

But what does being a disciple offer? We may well seek to 'make' disciples but the product on offer to the world is the message of salvation in Christ. The message the disciples were sent out to communicate by Christ is the same message we must take. It is a message, especially in our secular society, that is a hard sell. Many of us have possibly experienced bringing up children who have not accepted the Christian faith. And if the Church as a whole has failed to succeed in passing the faith on to the younger generations it throws up the question to me: how do we begin to sow seeds of faith in

those who have never been exposed to Christian faith?
 Many people have spiritual questions and a sense that there is a divine being, something out there, but it often is the case that the Church is one of the last places where answers or help will be sought. Through our ministry of community support, and most notably, our growing relationship with Hope Central, people's needs are being met in practical ways. Meeting human need is the most critical aspect of 'loving our neighbour' (Romans 13.10), through practical service, but how are we serving their spiritual needs?
 The opportunity to share the good news with Hope Central clients is, I hope and pray, a way by which we can show people in word as well as action, the way of truth that leads to life: that is, the knowledge and love of God, expressed to us in Jesus Christ.

Yours, in Christ
Paul

Occasional Offices in July and August	
Funeral 4 July	Dorothy Nott
Baptism 6 August	Alfie William Brown & Lily Rose Brown
13 August	Jessica Raine Bennis
Wedding 18 August	Hannah Jones & Richard Hoskins



Readings for Eucharistic Services		
	Morning Services	Evening Service
Sunday 3 September Trinity 13	Jeremiah 15.15-21 Romans 12.9-end Matthew 16.21-end	2 Kings 6.24-25;7.3-end Acts 18.1-16 Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23
6 September Wednesday	Psalms 34.11-18 Colossians 1.1-8 Luke 4.38-end	
Sunday 10 September Trinity 14	Exodus 12.1-14 Romans 13.8-end Matthew 18.15-20	
13 September Wednesday John Chrysostom	Jeremiah 1.4-10 Ephesians 3.8-12 Matthew 5.13-19	
Sunday 17 September HOLY CROSS DAY	Numbers 21.4-9 Philippians 2.6-11 John 3.13-17	
20 September Wednesday John Coleridge Patterson	2 Chronicles 24.17-21 Acts 7.55-60 Mark 8.31-35	
Sunday 24 September Trinity 15	Jonah 3.10-4.end Philippians 1.21-end Matthew 20.1-16	
27 September Wednesday Vincent de Paul	Isaiah 58.6-11a 1 Corinthians 1.25-31 Matthew 25.34-40	

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