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We must change attitudes

Who are today's prophets? Satirists? Environmental campaigners? People of faith?

John the Baptists called the people to a baptism of repentance, that is to turn away from their sinful ways and return to God and God's ways. There is currently much discussion of climate change and its impact, often from an economic viewpoint, but what happens if it is moved into a wider discussion of God's plan for the whole of creation?

The causes and remedies may be disputed but the effects are evident: melting icecaps and glaciers, flooding, raised sea levels and unpredictable weather patterns, failed harvests.

What has this to do with repentance? I believe it calls us to recognise the need for a real change in attitude. There is a price to be paid, both financial - "green" alternatives are often more expensive - and sacrificial in that we need to recognise that perhaps we cannot carry on as before, driving, flying, buying, thinking only of the cost in money.

Christians believe that to God everyone is equally valuable, each entitled to live a life to the full and if what we do in one place harms other people elsewhere, isn't it right that we should turn away from, repent of, these things?

Regularly we pray for peace, for an end to exploitation, oppression, greed, injustice and violence.

Many of these arise from, or are aggravated by, a scarcity of resources. The prophet Isaiah declared that every valley would be filled, every mountain and hill made low, the crooked made straight and the rough ways made smooth. Is this a sign of the the extent of the changes needed in our global society? Are we ready to accept this challenge to our current ideas of what is normal, right and just?