

What on Earth is God Doing?

Why it's an important subject:

- What we understand **God's** priority to be
- What we understand **God's** sphere of activity to be
- ➔ Affects what we understand to be our priority and activity

What God could be doing in the world...

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Oldest material on Earth discovered

Scientists analysing a meteorite discover material that is older than the Solar System itself.

14h | Science & Environment



Bushfire smoke likely to make Earth 'full circuit'

Smoke from huge fires is expected to travel back to Australia after circling the globe, Nasa says.

10h | Australia



Warren: 'Sanders said no woman could win US vote'

The progressive rivals offer sharply differing versions of what was said during a private meeting.

9h | US & Canada



Giant sinkhole swallows bus in China, killing six

CCTV shows an explosion after the bus and bystanders fell into a hole that opened up at a bus stop.

6h | China



Influential YouTuber reveals she is transgender

Make-up guru NikkieTutorials releases an emotional video explaining she transitioned as a teenager.

10m | Europe



'Miracle baby' born after womb transplant

Benjamin is only the second child in the US to be born through the procedure.

14h | US & Canada



Iran detains people over downing of Ukraine plane

The detentions came as part of an investigation into the incident which killed all 176 people on board.

11m | Middle East

- ▶ UK PM on US-Iran tensions: 'Let's dial this down'
- Iran faces watershed moment
- ▶ Students refuse to walk on flags

The prophet Isaiah... 66:18-24

¹⁸ "And I, because of what they have planned and done, am about to come and gather the people of all nations and languages, and they will come and see my glory.

¹⁹ "I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations—to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations. ²⁰ And they will bring all your people, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD—on horses, in chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels," says the LORD. "They will bring them, as the Israelites bring their grain offerings, to the temple of the LORD in ceremonially clean vessels. ²¹ And I will select some of them also to be priests and Levites," says the LORD.

²² "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. ²³ From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me," says the LORD. ²⁴ "And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."

A vision that covers the rest of world history

ISAIAH 66 TIMELINE

THE GOAL:

But how? Two stages:

Stage 1: sending a sign, v19

But who?

Isaiah 7:13-14

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Isaiah 49:1-3

Isaiah 53:4-12



Stage 2: sending out a people throughout the world to declare God's glory, v19

But what does it mean to "declare God's glory"?

Luke 24:44-48:

⁴⁴ [Jesus] said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

An area of confusion today – "love your neighbour" versus "go and make disciples"



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life
John 3:16

Remember how the whole book of Isaiah, ends , v24

“And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

Would you press the STOP button?.....



The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. *2 Peter 3:9*

So what shall we “do”?

How can we use the particular gifts and circumstances God has given us?

Worked example: Money

How do money-driven people use their gifts and circumstances to maximise how much money they can get?

My friend “Jacob”

Jeff Bezos

How can we be just as driven and just as creative, but motivated by helping people get to God’s perfect new creation rather than motivated by money?

Four case studies for people with different gifts and circumstances to our own:

Edward and Joy are getting married this summer, and are keen to use their wedding as as good a gospel opportunity as possible. They both have Christian parents (so don't need to worry about upsetting them by having a very Christian wedding). How would you advise Edward and Joy to make the most of their gifts and circumstances?

Gavin is a 45 year old construction worker (builder) who works for a scaffolding company in the countryside in Suffolk. He is very confident speaking, but he has never learnt properly to read or write (beyond a few things necessary for his job). He has been a Christian for 20 years and is single. What could Gavin do to maximise his ministry?

Robert (82) and Beryl (78) have both been Christians for over 60 years and have been married for over 50. Sadly Robert had a stroke last year and is now in a wheelchair, unable to leave his house. Beryl is his carer so can also rarely leave home for long. Their pastor comes to visit once or twice per month. How can they declare God's glory?

Francesca is a 28 year-old worker who goes to CCK. She works for an insurance company in the city, generally she works 8:30am-6:30pm Monday to Friday. She went to university in London and still has quite a few friends from her course and societies. She is single and lives with two other women from CCK. What could she do?

Three case studies for people with quite similar gifts and circumstances to our own:

Natascha is a first year Biology student at Imperial, living in halls. She is very good at hockey and at drama. She's quite friendly, confident and not shy about being a bit loud sometimes. She's from a Christian family and is very confident reading and talking about the Bible. How can Natascha use her gifts and circumstances well?

Philip is a third year Viola student at the Royal College of Music, who is living with three other RCM guys (one of whom is also a Christian who's at CCK). Philip is quite shy, and struggles in large groups of people. He only became a Christian at the beginning of second year, and isn't yet that confident reading the Bible. What could Philip do?

Some “gifts” that we all have:

Christianity Explored

Starting next Tuesday (21 January) Adam and Krista Grimes will be leading a Christianity Explored Course at CCK on Tuesdays, at the same time as student small groups. This could be a good opportunity to invite a friend to hear the gospel. You can bring them along and eat with them, then let them go off to chat to Adam and Krista while you study the Bible.

Imperial College and London-Wide University Mission week 27-31 January

From Monday 27 to Friday 31 January, every lunchtime from 12-1pm at Imperial College there will be an event put on by the Imperial College Christian Union, where a part of the gospel will be explained. If you are at Imperial or RCM, this is a very local and low-effort way to invite someone to hear the gospel. Lunch is provided as well. These events will be publicised on facebook.com/imperialcu

The same week (27-31 January¹) there is also a week of events at All Souls, Langham Place (near Oxford Street). This is run by the combined Christian Unions of many London universities. Each evening there will be dinner provided and a talk from the Bible.

“Uncover” and “Word one-to-one”

These resources provide questions and notes to help you to read a gospel with your non-Christian friend. Since God’s Word is powerful to change people’s hearts, meeting up with a friend to read the Bible together could be a really good way of encouraging them to become a Christian. They are available to take away at the back of Church. Uncover is free (if you promise to use it with a friend) and Word one-to-one costs £1.

¹ Note: We **will** be running small groups and Christianity Explored on Tuesday 28 January, but if your friends are, for whatever reason, keener to go to the event at All Souls in the evening, then please take them! (Maybe ask your small group leader if they’d be able to catch up the study with you another time)