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How do you know if you are in an emergency?

The Oxford Dictionary defines an emergency as 'A serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action'.

But how do you *know* you are in an emergency?

Do you observe what is happening and decide for yourself? You might do this if you can clearly see that your life – or the life of someone you love – is in danger.

Or do you wait to be told you are in an emergency situation? What happened with the 2003 Canberra bushfires springs to mind here.

What do you *feel* in an emergency?

Do you feel panic, because you aren't sure what you should do or are afraid of the outcome? Or do you feel a rush of adrenalin and mental clarity, because you are very clear what needs doing or what outcome you are seeking? Maybe you're even looking forward to the 'buzz' of teamwork, because tackling a big emergency requires working as a team.

And what do you *do* in an emergency?

Does what you do depend on the size of the emergency? Does it depend on the severity? Does it depend on what you know and your skills? Does it depend on community norms or what the government or other authority tells you to do?

The 2003 Canberra bushfires, the Global Financial Crisis and World War II all spring to mind as examples of different responses to emergencies.

But what of a serious, unexpected, and fatally dangerous situation requiring immediate action that affects everyone in the world – indeed, life as we know it?

If your life was at stake, if the life of your children and grand children was at stake, if life on Earth as we know it was at stake, would you be bold for the changes needed to give you and them a good chance of survival?

If you could see an emergency threatening you and them – a serious, unexpected, and dangerous situation that requires immediate action to save yourselves – would you be bold in pursuing the action needed?

Would you be bold enough to stand up? Would you be bold enough to speak out? Would you be bold enough to take action? Would you pull out all stops, get everyone on deck, do whatever it takes to deal with the emergency to ensure you and your loved ones' survival?

Or would you wait for your elected representatives or other people in power to declare the emergency? Would you wait to see what others do?

That's the problem with being part of a herd. We might sense danger, yet we look to the herd leader to confirm what we should do. But what do we do when the herd leader doesn't respond appropriately to the danger?

At what point do we stop waiting for our human 'herd' leaders to guide us – and instead draw on our ancient wisdom and teachings and act boldly for the change that we need in order to survive the emergency?

That is the situation in which we find ourselves right now.

We are in very serious and dangerous situation. It was unexpected when we put in place the systems that caused the problem. We didn't know the consequences of what we were doing. But we do know now.

The situation is now so serious and dangerous that only bold, immediate and transformative action will give us a chance of coming out the other side safely.

This dangerous situation is the damage done to our precious atmosphere, and the consequences of that damage.

Never before have humans existed with an atmosphere containing such high levels of the gases that keep Earth warm. And, as a result, never before have humans existed with such a warm and unstable atmosphere and oceans.

Already we are starting to see the consequences of that extra warming. For example, we see huge changes to our physical world that are leading to people, animals and plants suffering and dying in heatwaves, in storms, in bushfires, in droughts. And we see huge changes to our social world as people move, fight each other, die.

Our life support system has dramatically changed.

Things are seriously out of balance.

The changes are increasing and we don't know if we humans can cope with them. Indications are that we can't in the long run – unless we take bold action to reverse the damage to our atmosphere and to deal with the consequences already in train.

Some problems are just too big and important to be left to individuals or party politics or even national or international politics.

We need to take the lead.

Now is the time to be bold for the changes needed to ensure our survival.

Will you join with me in standing up, speaking out and taking action – being bold for change – to deal with the unfolding climate emergency and renew our world?

Will you join with me in returning to the two things that God asked us to do right from the beginning: worship God and God alone, and care for God's creation?

Help to raise a powerful voice for change! Help make faith community support for strong action something that is impossible to ignore.

Join me and people of faith around Australia in helping to raise a powerful community voice to ask our elected representatives to do everything in their power to protect people (particularly the most vulnerable) – and life as we know it – from the harmful impacts of the damage to our precious climate.

Faith-based organisations across Australia are joining forces to lead the [Community Climate Petition](#) in all 150 federal electorates. The petition is also Australia's national action for the [Renew Our World Campaign](#), the global movement of Christians who long to see God's world renewed.

It will take a lot of people to generate this powerful voice for change. We will need to work together, in churches, schools, community groups, workplaces...everywhere!

To respond to God's call to renew our world and help raise a powerful voice for change, contact me at [gill@arrcc.org.au](mailto:gill@arrcc.org.au) or on 0407 953 959. Come, join us!

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