

Emmanuel Centre for the Study of Science, Religion and Society

AN INITIATIVE OF EMMANUEL COLLEGE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

NEWS

What drives climate change scepticism?

BY EMMANUEL CENTRE ON 13 MARCH 2017 • ([LEAVE A COMMENT](#))

by Dr Paul Tyson, Director, Emmanuel Centre for the Study of Science, Religion and Society

Dr Johannes Luetz delivered the year's first seminar for the Emmanuel Centre on the science, politics and theology of climate change. The slides and lecture notes are [here](http://www.emmanuel.uq.edu.au/centre/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Luetz-seminar-slides-and-script.pdf) (<http://www.emmanuel.uq.edu.au/centre/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Luetz-seminar-slides-and-script.pdf>). In summary, Dr Luetz pointed out that global warming is a known and rigorously demonstrated empirical fact, and that the unprecedented quantities of CO₂ being emitted into the atmosphere from the combustion of coal and oil is the known primary cause of this fact. His presentation was liberally peppered with short videos, graphs, statistics, quotes from authoritative scientific sources, and biblical citations. On the grounds of science, justice concerns for the world's most climate sensitive people, and theological arguments, Dr Luetz sought to persuade us that global warming is the most urgent issue effecting the entire planet and human life in our times. Even so, once the Q&A started, it was clear that he had not won over the climate change sceptics in the audience.



The message I took away from hearing Dr Luetz was that we must overcome our irrational insecurities about fundamental change. If we can find the political will to change, then, actually, change is not that hard to do; look at Germany. They are the fourth-largest economy in the globe, world leaders in renewable energy, and are on track to being entirely off CO2 emitting energy by 2050. There is no reason why clean and renewable energy technology could not be the basis for the next global economy. But, due to thermal inertia, our window of opportunity is rapidly closing. There is no getting around it: the scientific facts of the matter require urgent and deep reform action now.

READ PAUL'S FULL POST-EVENT REFLECTION (<http://www.emmanuel.uq.edu.au/centre/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Luetz-post-seminar-reflection.pdf>).

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