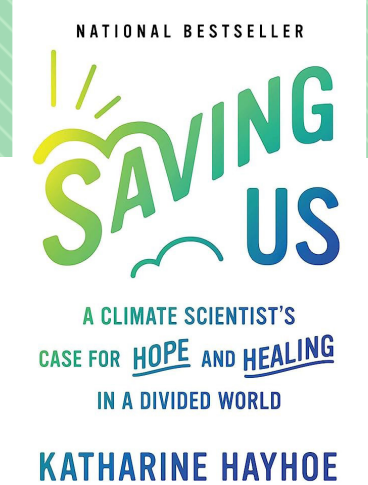




CBF Book Discussion Guide

by Alexis Weaver



Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World

By Dr. Katharine Hayhoe

About the Author

Dr. Katharine Hayhoe is an atmospheric scientist who studies climate change and its impacts on people and our planet. She is the Chief Scientist for The Nature Conservancy and Distinguished Professor and Endowed Professor of Public Policy and Public Law at Texas Tech University.

Hayhoe holds a B.Sc. in Physics from the University of Toronto and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Atmospheric Science from the University of Illinois. Her research focuses on developing and applying climate projections for assessing regional to local-scale impacts of climate change. This research has resulted in more than 125 peer-reviewed publications. She was the lead author for the Second, Third and Fourth U.S. National Climate Assessments.

Hayhoe is the host of the PBS Digital Series Global Weirding and co-founder of Science Moms. She has been named to *TIME*'s 100 Most Influential People and Foreign Policy's 100 Global Thinkers lists. She also serves as Climate Ambassador for the World Evangelical Alliance. Hayhoe and her husband, Andrew Farley, a pastor and best-selling author, co-authored *A Climate for Change: Global Warming Facts for Faith-Based Decisions*. Read more about Dr. Hayhoe at www.katharinehayhoe.com.

About the Book

Climate change tops any list of politicized and divisive issues in the United States. Overcoming polarization seems nearly hopeless and solving climate change even more so, writes Dr. Katharine Hayhoe, a Canadian climate scientist living in West Texas. What's the path to remedy this growing divide?

"I'm convinced that the single most important thing that anyone...can do to bring people together is ironically the very

thing we fear the most: Talk about it," argues Hayhoe. "Why are people not talking about something that matters to them so much? Even if we agree it's real and serious, talking about it can be discouraging and depressing. We want to talk about it; we just don't know how."

In *Saving Us*, Dr. Hayhoe wants to teach us how to talk about climate change. She contends persuasively that reciting facts are only one part of the equation when it comes to changing hearts/minds and inspiring collective action. Hayhoe looks to science, faith, psychology and personal stories to show readers the big impact of conversations.

"So, instead of reacting to something you disagree with, what if you started a conversation about something you agree on," she encourages. "What if you asked questions rather than arguing? What if you shared, genuinely and personally, how climate change threatens what you care about? And what if you talked about practical real-world solutions that are available today?"

Beginning a conversation with something that unites rather than divides means starting at a place of mutual respect, agreement and understanding, she says. With *Saving Us*, Hayhoe aims to leave readers with the tools to help reconnect with family, friends and others about how we can all advocate for change.

"The research I do is clear: it is not too late to avoid the most serious and dangerous impacts," she concludes and challenges. "Our choices will determine what happens. The future we collectively face will be forged by our own actions. Climate change stands between us and a breathtaking, exhilarating future. We cannot afford to be paralyzed by fear or shame. We must act, with power, love and a sound mind. Together we can save ourselves."



Questions for Conversations

1. How have you felt about your personal capacity to effect change in attitudes or behavior about climate change? Coming to this conversation (or prior to reading *Saving Us*), what is or was your “level of alarm” about climate change?
2. Dr. Hayhoe asks: “Why are people not talking about something that matters to them so much?” Please discuss—from your perspective, what are reasons “it” isn’t being “talked” about? What would make discussing climate change easier?
3. Dr. Hayhoe posits: “What if you started a conversation about something you agree upon? What if you shared genuinely and personally how climate change threatens what you care about?” Spend several minutes writing down things you care about most and how climate change threatens them. Share with the group.
4. Based on the areas/things listed and discussed, where are there shared concerns? Did 2-3 areas of agreement emerge?
5. What is one way in your household that you are making an effort to impact climate change? How is it connected to the list you shared?
6. Dr. Hayhoe discusses the disproportionate impact of climate change on the poor, hungry and sick. These groups of concern are the focus of mission and outreach for congregations. What is your church currently doing to minister to/these groups? How might your church take action to add additional climate consciousness to those efforts?
7. Consider the importance of story and lived experience in making behavioral and attitude shifts. What ways might you communicate differently about the connection between climate change and these groups of people? How can we use our stories of church and individual experiences to emphasize how marginalized communities are impacted by climate change in order to motivate change?
8. Explore the idea of “contagion” as it relates to influencing others on climate change and the necessity for collective action.
 - a. Talk about things we care about
 - b. Talk with people in your circles—be an influential messenger
 - c. Look for opportunities to work together
9. Discuss Dr. Hayhoe’s commentary on fossil fuels, carbon and potential solutions. What was your reaction? What did you learn? Reflect on the explanation of corporate responsibility as well as individual responsibility. When you read “We Can Fix It,” what gave/gives you hope?
10. Spend time thinking about the next person in your life that you might share your story with. What solutions would create mutual excitement with that person? Similarly, what is the conversation you want to have next with your congregation (and with whom?). Remember to think through this with a frame of building mutual respect, agreement and understanding.

Alexis Weaver is a Cooperative Baptist and nonprofit and community leader focused on environmental sustainability, poverty transformation and food security.