

# ‘The Trouble With Normal’

## The Australian Canary in the World’s Climate Change Coalmine

*The recent Australian bush fires were the worst on record, and widely attributed to climate change. Gordon Preece charts the weight of scientific evidence against the slowness of governments to take action, and then draws attention to the biblical messages of stewardship of the earth and the hope that by seeking the peace of the city these disasters give opportunity for us to do good. Finally, he looks at some signs of change, such as the Transition Movement, and the call by major institutions to invest in non-carbon entities.*

### **I. Introduction: Does Climate Always Get Worse?**

This summer, conversing with friends self-mockingly about Melbourne’s normal four seasons in one day, we

soon switched subject to the acrid smoke and poor air quality pervading our cities. I tried to motivate my mates towards climate action by saying ‘the trouble is, it’s the new normal’. But I’ve

been corrected by Canadian Christian Bruce Cockburn who sings ‘the Trouble with Normal is it Always Gets Worse’.<sup>1</sup> These 1983 lyrics ring true today. The Jeremiads who are the scientific prophets of doom have proved accurate.



House destroyed by the bush fires

Photo: Peter Parks