

# Politicians have to 'do God', says Blair

**guardian.co.uk**

Former PM suggests religion will be as important to 21st century as ideology was to 20th

- 
- [guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk), Thursday 19 March 2009 09.37 GMT



Tony Blair and Alastair Campbell in 2001. Photograph: Murdo Macleod

Political leaders have to "do God" if they are to engage properly with the modern world, even if they personally have no religious faith, former prime minister [Tony Blair](#) said today.

Blair was notoriously reticent about discussing his own religious faith while prime minister, with his head of communications [Alastair Campbell](#), once famously saying: "We don't do God."

But since leaving Downing Street, Blair has converted to Catholicism and become increasingly open about the importance of religion to his thinking.

Writing today in the New Statesman – guest-edited this week by Campbell – he suggested that even while still in office he felt that religion was a key to understanding the modern world.

And he suggested that religious faith might be as significant to the new century as political ideology was to the last.

Blair said: "As the years of my premiership passed, one fact struck me with increasing force: that failure to understand the power of religion meant failure to understand the modern world.

"Religious faith and how it develops could be of the same significance to the 21st century as political ideology was to the 20th. Leaders, whether of religious faith themselves or not, have to 'do God'."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/mar/19/tony-blair-god/print>