

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 111

Trinity Sunday 30th May 2021

'Virtually Church but with some way to go...'

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of Cutting Edge Camelot.

Scripture Verse

John 3: 16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

Reflection

The language of Christianity is littered with words like salvation, and redemption, and we know what we mean, but people we try and share with might not. It becomes a sort of jargon. So what do we mean, and where do we start? We start with the idea of sin. It isn't universal, but most cultures, going right back to ancient times, and primitive cultures in recent times, have a concept of right and wrong, what is acceptable behaviour and what isn't, and they've most often explained those rules as being laid down by their god or gods, because that's the only way they could explain the inner feeling we have that some things are just *wrong*. Sin.

And in our own faith, we believe that God passed on to us his definitions of what's right and what's wrong, and gave his people a set of rules to live by, which can really be summed up in two - love God, and love other people. Loving someone means avoiding anything that would cause them hurt, distress or pain. So as we come to understand what God is like, what he

wants of us, what he likes, and what he hates, we try to do what he would want of us. That's loving him. And the same with other people. The Golden Rule has been *treat other people as you would like them to treat you*. And however you cut it, none of us can boast that we've always done that. So we have offended God, driven a wedge between him and ourselves, and don't deserve his love and friendship, but fortunately, deserving has nothing to do with it.

So here we are, individually and collectively cut off from God, and there's nothing we can do about it. God is just, which means sin must be punished, or the universe is a chaotic place where anything goes. And the punishment for sin isn't death in the sense that our physical lives will be ended – that's going to happen anyway - but in the sense that we would always be cut off from God.

God always had the solution to this. It isn't that he gave the Law a thousand years, and then thought, *No, this isn't working. People are still killing and fighting and stealing and adulterating. I need another plan. What might I do?* That wasn't it. The Law is there to show *us* what God wants us to be like, and in most cases, the lesson didn't sink in, or if it did, we were too feeble to follow. Temptation is very strong.

So, in his own good time, God became human - born into our world. Jesus was called the Son of Man, but also the Son of God, and we worship him now as God the Son. *If you've seen me*, he said, *you've seen my Father*. And he spelled it out. *I and the Father are one*. And Jesus lived a life just like ours, with one crucial difference. Jesus was without sin. Nothing he did upset his Father, or made a rift between them, and he never did anything with the intention of hurting anyone else. True, he got up the noses of a lot of people who just didn't get him, and he made people angry, but that was their problem, not his.

It became Jesus' problem when people wanted him dead, and put in motion

the machinery that would make that happen.

A bit of an aside here. When a war happens, a president or a prime minister makes the decision to invade another country, or to send troops to defend against an invasion, so we get things like the Iraq war, and Afghanistan. But you notice the politicians don't go, gun in hand, and fight? They send the army - the husbands, brothers and sons of other people to fight, get blown up, wounded or killed.

That isn't what God did. He didn't *send* his Son. He became human in the person of Jesus, so if there was any dying to do, any suffering to happen, he did it. God, in Jesus, was on that cross.

What happened on the cross? What difference does it make? God accepted the suffering and death of Jesus, who was without sin, as the price and punishment for all and any of our sins. We are forgiven, because the punishment has already happened. That's what being saved means. So if some spotty Evangelical guy in a fair-isle tank-top comes up to you and asks "Are you saved?" you can just say "yes".

The other word we use is Redeemer. One of our Christmas hymns says *Hail redemption's happy dawn*. The last time that word was used outside the church was in the days of Green Shield stamps. A lot of shops, and particularly garages, gave you stamps with your stuff, and when you had enough, you took them to a Redemption Centre and spent them on electric kettles or pillow slips. (They became Argos, by the way). But there is this idea that because we are sinners, we belong to the devil, only Jesus has bought us back out of pawn, by paying with his life. We're his now.

But there's that other bit. *Whoever believes in him...* because we have to trust Jesus that all this is true. Unless we accept that our sins are forgiven, they might as well not be, so we go on feeling guilty and bad. It's like if someone, usually a Nigerian prince, puts a vast amount of money in my

bank account, if I don't believe it's there, I can't enjoy it. Benny Hill suffered from that. He never really believed he was rich, because he couldn't see a roomful of cash, and the figures on paper meant nothing to him. So he lived over a shop, and only had one suit.

So we have to trust Jesus that we are forgiven, and splash it around. All that forgiveness can't just rot in our account - we have to use it, forgive anyone who hurts us. My friend Jennifer used to have trouble with that bit in the Lord's Prayer, and she'd say *try to forgive*. I have a different problem. I find it hard to think of anyone who's sinned against me.

Years ago, my boys and I were watching skiing on TV. Every time a skier crossed the line, a hand would emerge from the spectators waving a little sign in front of the camera. It said *John 3:16*. And that's why the little prompt if I mistype my computer password says *Good News Skiing*.

Ron

Points for Prayers

- To know that we are forgiven as we trust in Jesus
- Continued thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes demonstrated throughout the course of this pandemic
- Wise decisions in relation to the final step in the easing of lockdown restrictions due to take place on 21st June
- Those whom we know who are facing illnesses of all kinds, those who have recently been bereaved and those suffering as a result of social isolation and in other ways
- India and other countries currently in crisis from coronavirus
- Bishop Ruth and the rest of the Diocesan staff as they take on additional responsibility following Bishop Peter's retirement

- For North Cadbury Church Primary School and other local schools currently enjoying the half term break
- Prayers for those affected economically by the lockdown, for businesses and those who have become unemployed
- Prayers and thanksgiving for contributions to the foodbanks and for those helping to take these to the foodbanks.

Hymn

‘Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty’ is an appropriate hymn for Trinity Sunday as it witnesses to the threefold nature of God.

Congregational Singing

Congregational singing is now permitted for those services which are taking place outdoors in the churchyard. However, the position remains unchanged for services inside the church. Here congregational singing is not permitted.

Services for this Sunday and next

Sunday 30 th May	8.00 am Communion, Blackford
Sunday 30 th May	11.00 am Morning Service with Baptism, North Cadbury
Sunday 30 th May	6.30 pm Evensong, Galhampton
Sunday 6 th June	9.00 am Communion, Yarlington
Sunday 6 th June	9.30 am Communion, North Cheriton
Sunday 6 th June	11.00 am Group Communion, North Cadbury

Excalibur

We are pleased to be able to report that the current Excalibur is to be distributed in a paper form. It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes. Previous editions of Excalibur can be found online at camelotparishes.co.uk

The Parish Office

If Rob is not in the Office during normal office hours, please contact him via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family

*We pray that 'we might live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5:2)