

Reflection: Becoming

for week of 27th September 2020

'Let the same mind be in you as was in Christ Jesus'



This week we continue in this season of Creationtide with its call to a renewed awareness of both the wonder of God's creation, with its amazing beauty and generosity, and its fragility in the face of our assault on it, which has brought about climate change and all its consequences.

Most of us manage to make some small adjustments; 'reduce, reuse, recycle', has impacted our use of plastic, what food we buy, how much we add to our store of clothing, gadgets, and just things, how we heat our homes or use water, to some degree. However it is clear that if we are to restore anything close to an equilibrium within our world then much, much, more will be needed. Those who talk about us being on a war footing are right. And all of this is in the midst of the immense impact of a global pandemic.

Our challenge is to work out what our Christian response should be; to act, not out of fear but with faith and trust in God, to be ready to make significant, even sacrificial, changes in the way we live.

I believe the reading from Paul's letter to the Christians at Philippi set for this Sunday, indeed the whole of the letter if you can make an opportunity to read it, offers us encouragement, instruction and, most importantly, a guide to how we should understand ourselves.

Philippi, in north eastern Greece, was a city of some importance in the Roman province of Macedonia. Paul, according to Acts ([Acts 16:9–40](#)), established at Philippi the first Christian community in Europe. He came to Philippi, via its harbour town of Neapolis, (modern Kavalla), on his second missionary journey, probably in A.D. 49 or 50, accompanied by Silas and Timothy and probably Luke.

Paul's letter to the Christians at Philippi was written while he was in a prison and in danger of death. Although under guard for preaching Christ, Paul rejoices at the continuing progress of the gospel and expresses gratitude for the Philippians' renewed concern and help. Much of the letter is devoted to instruction about unity and humility within the Christian community at Philippi and exhortations to growth, joy, and peace in their life together.

This beautiful letter is rich in insights into Paul's theology and his apostolic love and concern for the gospel and his converts. In Philippians, Paul reveals his human sensitivity and tenderness, his enthusiasm for Christ as the key to life and death and his deep feeling for those in Christ who dwell in Philippi. With them he shares his hopes and convictions, his anxieties and fears, revealing the total confidence in Christ that constitutes faith. The passage we are looking at this week incorporates an existing hymn about the salvation that God has brought about through Christ, an understanding that Paul applies to the relations of Christians with one another and indeed the whole of creation.

Philippians has been termed "the letter of joy". It is the rejoicing of faith, based on true understanding of Christ's unique role in the salvation of all who profess his lordship.

So the message to us is that if we accept Christ's lordship over our lives, then God, 'who is at work in you', will enable us to be more Christ like. We will be more able to see each other and the world through Christ's eyes, more ready to put the needs of that world and others first, because we more fully understand our own worth in Christ.

This is our starting point for making our response to the challenges of climate change, Corona19 and all of the other challenges of our daily lives.

Sue Loveday 22.9.20