

encounter it! Zechariah tells us that as the faithful we should rejoice in what God does in our lives and when His majesty is revealed ~ our freedom ~ our Hope, Matthew records that Jesus knew that rejoicing in expectation would be hard for us and that we would criticise those God sends and in turn be criticised ourselves ~ but that throughout Christ will be recognised in our very being ~ “Wisdom is proved by her deeds”. We have to live by our faith for Wisdom to be revealed in our time and it starts with our words and actions.

Ministry Musings (9th July 2017)

This morning we welcome our year 6 pupils for their “Moving On” Service. It seemed fortuitous that one of the readings set for today is Paul writing to the church in Rome and Says~

“I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.”

All sorts of worldly and material things influence the way we behave but Paul is teaching that there is now a much better influence that will help us to behave in ways that we do not regret or hate. Jesus shows us the way to behave that will reflect God's love for all that He has created.

We explored this with year 6 ~ we thought about all the pressures they encounter as they move on to their new schools and we discovered Dr Seuss had written a book reflecting the changes “ Oh, the places you'll go” ~ which they are sharing with us this morning.

Zechariah reminds us that the coming of our King is a cause for rejoicing because He brings God's Love and Peace for all who become children of hope.

Matthew speaks of the contradictions found in each of our personalities as we try to go it alone and deny God, refusing to recognise that He is with us in all things. How contrary we can be!

To help year 6 to discover how Christians recognise that God is with us and desiring we should know his love we are delighted, as a church, to present each child with the gift of a Bible. The Youth Bible relates scripture to daily life and we pray this will be valuable during this time of transition.

And so we celebrate today ~
Knowing Jesus ~ making Him known



Zechariah 9: 9-12

OT page 898

Romans 7:15-25a

NT page 153

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

NT page 11

When are the times that you do not behave in ways you want to? Those times that leave you wondering what you have said or done in reaction to a situation you find yourself in and wondering what impact your actions or words will have ~ whether you have helped or hindered or been about God's work?

Paul writes ~

"For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me."

Do you and I as Christians actually stop to associate everything we think, say and do to the way we live for Christ ~ with Christ in us: which we believe He is! The answer, for most of us sadly is a resounding NO! The reality is that we may be full of good intention but when it comes to it we are not practiced enough to consider our every movement and action let alone every word we utter! The good news is that we can practice and become quite skilled and when we do we realise that it makes a real difference both to us and those around us and recipients of our behaviour.

We can all spot when someone's words and actions are contrary to how our faith would have us behave ~ the extremes are obvious and sadly we have encountered expressions of them here in London and Manchester over the past month or so. But is it so easy to recognise the contrary in our own behaviour? Sometimes we are only too aware of getting things wrong or not getting round to doing things in case we get them wrong! But at other times we only know when the result is hurt, upset or anger and we see we have distanced another person from God ~damaged their



relationship in faith or even stopped them getting to begin that relationship.

When a friend or neighbour tells you that faith is to blame or faith is not relevant, that if the faithful can behave in a particular way then faith is not worth having ~ then we (or someone) has marred God's image in them ~ has knocked or damaged His presence and purpose for His creation and has even distanced the kingdom coming in its fullness! How can I say that? Scripture tells us that when the kingdom comes, when the Lord returns it will be the time when every knee has bowed down at the name of Jesus. That is a time a long way off ~ it doesn't need you and I to push it further away!

So the challenge this week is to learn afresh how to recognise the times where we find we do not behave as we should or would like to and when we recognise them try to do something about them so that we can change our behaviour and not find ourselves hating the way we have been!

We explored this with our year six pupils and discovered that we often did and said things that we did not like or expect to do when we were afraid, stressed or hurting ~ perhaps because of family attitudes or a new experience and feeling inadequate and we got it wrong if we let the worry, hurt or anger continue or we tried to put on a brave face and resorted to bravado or even bullying or demanding things of others. They also discovered that when we do behave in away we feel right about; away that our faith shows us, we can trigger threatened responses in others because we tend to stand out in the crowd and not do as everyone else does or expects to excuse as being alright. They recognised that being the one that stands out doesn't always initially feel too good and might prompt us to give up!

We should not be surprised that there is a paradox in that our other readings today acknowledge we will

