

A Reflection for the 18th Sunday after Trinity from Rev. David

I am always a little bit wary when I read a passage like today's Gospel.

It would be very easy to stand on the sidelines and cheer Jesus on as He lays into the chief priests and elders of the people in this parable of the vineyard.

After all, we're not like them, are we?

We're disciples.

It reminds me of when I was chaplain in the university in Hull.

The local vicar invited me to preach in a series of sermons in Lent on the theme of moral issues.

Just before Lent there was a meeting of the local clergy. I wasn't able to go to it but our assistant chaplain Jackie did go.

She returned with a big grin on her face. She had a message for me from the the local vicar. The theme for my Lenten sermon was pornography and prostitution.

I assumed this was a random choice. I couldn't claim any relevant expertise or personal experience.

When I looked at the congregation - a collection of respectable mostly middle class and middle aged people, I didn't think they had much personal experience either.

It seemed that this moral issue was a bit like standing on the sidelines and expressing our disapproval of the moral lapses of others.

Secure in our own status as respectable members of the church we could be critical of the moral failings of others.

We are tempted sometimes to think that we are secure in God's favour as faithful members of His Chosen People.

Saul of Tarsus probably felt secure in God's favour.

After all, he ticked all the right boxes.

Circumcised on the eighth day

Member of God's Chosen People Israel

Of the tribe of Benjamin.

Pure bred Hebrew of the Hebrews.

A Pharisee who kept all the Law.

Zealous in persecuting the enemies of true religion.

A blameless observer of God's law.

But then he met the risen Lord on the road to Damascus.

And he was left blind, needing to rely on others to lead him on his way.

And not only did he experience being totally dependent on the care of others, he also found himself totally dependent on God's loving acceptance of him.

So all those boxes he could tick were worse than useless. None of them by themselves made him secure in God's favour.

In the dark night of despair on the Damascus road, the only security he could find was in the generous unconditional love of God.

So we too may be tempted to feel secure enough in God's favour to cheer Jesus on when He lays into the chief priests and the elders of the people.

We too may be tempted to speak out about moral issues in our society secure in the knowledge that we are the People of God.

We too may be tempted to tick all the right boxes as the Chosen People of God

But we too may find ourselves, like Paul, entering the dark night of the soul where the only security we have or need is found in the unconditional love of God poured out for us on the Cross.

Notices...

All Angels Open Day at Brookenby Saturday 30th September 10am – 4pm

Short reflective service at 11am

Harvest at Market Rasen

Sunday 1st October 10am

Lissington Harvest

Sunday 1st October 6pm

Bishop David

Will be joining us for worship at Market Rasen 10am and Linwood 11.30am

Sunday 8th October

Legsby Harvest

Sunday 8th October 4pm

Brookenby Harvest

Sunday 15th October 4pm followed by Bring and Share supper

Local Mission Partnership Prayer

A small team will pray together for the Local Mission Partnership at 9am on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Please do join in prayer from wherever you are. A short prayer to assist in this is on its way!

Weekday Services and Events

Mondays

Deanery Fellowship on Zoom 6.45pm

Link on Walesby Group Website <https://www.walesbychurches.org/>

Tuesdays

Morning Prayer at Market Rasen 9am

Coffee Morning in Church Room 9.30 – 11.30am

Wednesdays

Mini Messy in Church Room 10 – 11.30am

Bellringing Practice at Market Rasen 7.30 – 9.30pm

Thursdays

Holy Communion at Market Rasen 9.30am

Open Door in Church Room 2 – 4pm

Fridays

Morning Prayer on Zoom 9am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89033475242?pwd=SmVqUkdRTkp4eUpJdDIGUzJkLy9CQT09>

Rev Claire's Day Off is Monday

Suggestions for Prayer

For the people of Israel and Palestine, and of Ukraine and Russia.

For refugees and those working to provide safe homes.

For the Nomad Trust and the Harbour Place in Grimsby.

For all affected by rising energy costs and for our local food banks.

For the work of Christian Aid and The Children's Society.

For the Diocese of Lincoln, our Local Mission Partnership and for the Caistor group and Rev Catherine following Rev Ian's retirement.

For those who are sick and housebound. Delia, Lesley, Pam, Steven, Jenny, Tim, Sheila, Liz, and Joy.

For those who have died, especially Roy Kirk, Susan Brown, Dorothy Clarke and Fred Pearce.