

Wrington & Lynch Chapels Minister's Website Article January 2021

If you've suddenly come across this message by surfing the web, well done. The thing is, how do you feel? Perhaps you feel, 'It's a church thing, and churches are full of people who don't put a foot wrong. They're pious, faithful, boring. Maybe they're critical and sanctimonious. But they're not like me.'

You'd be wrong.

Churches are full of people who make mistakes, who say the wrong thing, who get angry. Our chairs (we don't have pews) contain people with family problems, money problems, faith problems. Some of us doubt God. Some occasionally wish we were somewhere else. In other words, we're normal.

Perhaps the only difference between church folk and non-church folk is that most of us know a simple truth. We know that God is God of love and none of us deserve it. We know that nothing we do or say, no matter how much effort we put in to be 'nice', makes any difference to God's love.

That simple fact is enormous. It means we may be normal, but we have a deep assurance. We still bicker and fight, but we know we can take it to God and he understands. We know that the only reason we try to be 'good' is because we are so grateful for God loving us that we respond as best we can.

That's our motivation; at least, it should be. That's what we believe. Unfortunately, on occasion, we don't believe it. Preachers like me say God is loving and caring, and we all have odd doubts. That's why we have church. You may think, 'It's okay to believe in God. I'll do it at home, privately, that will be okay.' But it isn't. Why? Because of those times when we don't believe.

You see, all us church folk are there to keep all those who don't believe it from falling through the cracks. We are to say to each other, when it needs saying: 'God is good, and he's good all the time. Even if you don't know it, even if you're so angry you could spit and curse: I'm here to help you believe it because I believe it.'

We need each other. That's the truth. We can't do this life alone. When it's really dark, somebody needs to point out the light. When you think God's not there, somebody has to show him. That's why God put us together. That's why we're a church family, so that nobody falls through the cracks. That's being church.

I feel better when I know that even the Apostle Paul - a great saint who wrote much of the New Testament part of the bible - panicked because he couldn't hear God. That's like me. I hear God well after a good meal, or when worship is uplifting and nothing bad has happened, or before I get up. But in the middle of the night, or the midst of the problems, I don't always hear him. That's when we're to remind each other of the truth.

We believe in Jesus. He showed us God as he really is. He revealed the love and care. Then he died to make sure we can always come close. He rose again, to call us together, as his people. Our reason for living is to help everyone else walk this way, all supported, all knowing God's love. If you don't know that fact, perhaps you've found this message for a reason.

Have a fantastic 2021.

Duncan