



A Letter from our Chairman (Issue 18 Jan/Feb 2000)

Dear Friends,

In my last two letters in this magazine I have been looking at the society in which we live. In pastoral care, counselling and evangelism we always have to be aware of where people are, so that we can come alongside them as we share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even these last few words challenge me in relation to almost every group of people, for in most situations I would rather say - "we share the truth from Joshua, the Messiah of God." We readily use many words and phrases which it would be best to change. The word "church" carries too many loaded ideas. We almost have to relearn how to speak, because so many concepts, which our ancestors could use freely, have been emptied of meaning for most people. They could assume a framework of widely agreed absolutes and standards which are alien to so many now.

But having said this, the truth, the good news, has not changed. It is absolute and never can change. It is about one person at one point in history, achieving for us what we cannot otherwise have. It's about grasping "who" He is, and it's about helping people to reach out and receive Him in the way He says we must. There is in all existence only one such person, and, what's more, only one such way.

So in recent weeks I've been dreaming and musing about our effectiveness in simply showing Jesus to others. So much of our life-style, habits, inhibitions and lack of confidence, is shown as we live amongst others. I seem to spend so much of my time trying to understand, where other people are "coming from", and seeking to "communicate" in a way they will understand and, what's more, only saying what I feel they can take, that in the end I seem to say very little to them. Is this what God wants? Is it really under the Lordship of the Holy Spirit, or does it just demonstrate something about me in today's world?

So once again, as so often in life, we are driven back to look afresh at the written word of God, asking first for the help of the Holy Spirit. I would assert there is nowhere else to go. We Christians can spend many years of our lives reading all sorts of books by all sorts of people, and I have thousands of them, but they are always a poor substitute for the word of God. The Holy Spirit of God will help us to come with a radical openness, which we always need, and to see what He intends.

As I do this I have to ask the question of Luke and Paul and Peter and John;

"How did you share Jesus in your day?"

As we look for the answer, we will also be able to consider what their attitudes were to the message, and why they had boldness and confidence, often in very intimidating circumstances.

So this month, I would like to commend a few Bible passages to you, for you to consider against this background.

All material is copyright of its creator and permission must be sought before it is reproduced. Please use the "Contact Us" page on our website www.anglicanrenewalministries-wales.org.uk in order to gain such permission.



From Paul, the words to the Ephesian leaders as he said good-bye at Miletus,

Acts chapter 20 verses 17-end.

From Luke, with Paul, the riverside at Philippi in

Acts chapter 16 verses 11-end, and what followed.

From Peter, in

1 Peter chapter 1 verses 13 - end,

which is more about us personally, inside, in our relationship with Jesus and our motivation.

And as the word of life is our message, from John in

1 John, chapter 1 verses 1-4, the prologue.

I have a conviction though I find it hard to do, that more time spent in feeding ourselves in the good things God has given us would build us up and equip us for today's task.

Phil