

WEEKLY SERMON

communicate@blackburn.anglican.org



Talking Straight

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

These marvellous words from John's Gospel are one of many examples of God speaking directly to us through the person of Jesus. I always find strength and inspiration and comfort when I hear Christ telling it like it is.

The master of American country /folk Johnny Cash sings in his song Man In Black: *"I wear the black for those who've never read, or listened to the words that Jesus said ... About the road to happiness through love and charity, why, you'd think He's talking straight to you and me!"*

Talking straight. That's one of the great comforts of our Christian faith. Over and over again in the Bible God paints a crystal-clear picture for us of the way home.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says: "Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Worrying is one of those things we do that separates us from God's love. And we have had such cause to worry in more recent times haven't we? Life in this world is tough enough without a pandemic to give us so much more to worry about!

Being exhorted not to worry isn't a free pass to not caring though. When our energies are turned towards helping others ... members of our own or church families, neighbours, our local community ... we are fulfilling a deep and lasting Christian principle and commandment, love your neighbour as yourself.

Dwelling on the Lord, waiting quietly and peacefully for rest to come or a word or picture that points a way forward for us, dispels fears and strengthens us for what lies ahead.

The former First Lady of the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt, notably said: "We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face...we must do that which we think we cannot."

In John's Gospel Christ tells us: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

God has an answer for every single one of us. Listen and you will hear him talking straight to you. And the future suddenly becomes full of joyful possibilities, rather than spirit crushing worries.

Mark Ashley, Vision Champion for Appley Bridge All Saints Church

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES