

WEEKLY SERMON

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Living water and sustaining life



Last month we were on holiday in St Andrews and took our grandsons to the Aquarium. As we looked at all the brightly coloured fish, the turtles, the seahorses and the penguins we also found an information board reminding us that the world's oceans are rapidly becoming polluted with plastic waste.

I was on holiday. I had a rucksack with our disposable drinking-water bottles in the outside pockets. Should I hide them? Then Henry needed his next bottle feed. It is a special formula, and although we dispense it into a re-usable bottle, the container comes with a plastic straw glued to the side. The straw is thrown away without even being opened.

One of the 550 million thrown away every day between the USA and the UK alone (so the information board tells me).

Back home again and a chance to sit down and watch TV. What comes on but 'War on Plastic with Hugh and Anita'.

Something is really getting to us now. My wife went out the next day to buy a re-usable water bottle (I already have one – I just have to remember to use it). “Do you want a plastic bag to put it in?”

Erm, no! I’ll use the one I’ve brought with me. You see, plastic is everywhere and we really can’t ignore it for much longer. We are part of the problem and it is up to us to do something about it.

I think Jesus had it easy. When he needed a drink of water after a long journey all he had to do was sit down by a well until someone came by with a bucket.

No plastic bottles then. However, he did have some rather startling words to say to the woman with the bucket: “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” (The Gospel according to John, Chapter 4, verse 10).

Jesus is probably referring to the Spirit of God, but it is a cryptic saying, and I can’t help thinking of ‘living’ water as water capable of sustaining life. Much like the oceans would be if we cut down our use of plastic and stop polluting the planet. And maybe if we had more of God’s Spirit we would.

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