

WEEKLY SERMON

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Faith to Feed the Hungry

Luke 3: vs7-18

I can't imagine many churches today longing to have John as their Vicar. He compared the people to a bunch of snakes and tells them that they are in huge trouble just like trees about to be cut down for firewood! John attacked the listening crowd because, although they knew what the Lord desired, they sadly chose their own selfish ways.

When they asked John 'what should we do?' he gave them very simple instructions: 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise', while tax collectors are told to 'collect no more than the amount prescribed for you' and soldiers are told 'do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages'.

John wanted the people to live out their faith in simple practical ways so that God's justice and mercy could be seen and shared by the whole world.

Meeting basic human needs such as food and clothing, together with treating each other fairly, is not complicated and yet the people John was speaking to had become distracted and looked to their own interests rather than caring for those around them.

We often pretend that the world of the Bible is very different from Lancashire today but I'm not so sure. I think most of us find it frighteningly easy to slip into selfishness; neglecting the basic needs of those around us.

Jesus famously taught us to 'love our neighbour as ourselves', with our neighbour being whoever is in need.

Just imagine what impact it would have if every Christian in Lancashire played our part in feeding the hungry, clothing those in need and working for a more just world?

John gave the people very practical instructions so that God's justice and mercy could be seen and shared by the whole world. What practical steps might you take this week to love your neighbours and reveal God's justice and mercy?

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