

Sunday Sermon

Revd Canon Charles Jenkin – 13th June 2021 – Trinity 2

Ezekiel 17.22-end; Psalm 92; 2 Corinthians 5.6-17; Mark 4.26-34

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” The concluding verse of our first reading this morning.

Part of the invitation to be a Christian is the invitation to say Yes to God for making something new out of you, and out of us, and out of the world. “So if anyone is in Christ, there is (already) a new creation.” Of course there are other parts to this invitation, most notably the invitation to be saved from the eternal consequences of our sins. But the invitation doesn't stop there. Indeed salvation needs to be placed in the wider context of the invitation to become, more and more, part of God's new creation, the Kingdom of God.

For the purposes of God are not merely to make the best of an old creation that has become tired and sad, but to do transformingly new things in people's lives, and in human communities. “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” And in our Gospel reading this morning, we heard a couple of Jesus' wonderful parables of the Kingdom. The Kingdom is something that God plants in the world, in people's lives, in human communities, and which grows into something wonderful and new. It starts small and ends up affecting everything. And it has good purpose. There will be a good harvest of the Kingdom.

So are you, are we ready, for the new things that God wants to do in your life, in the life of this Church, in your families, and in the communities around us. For make no mistake, the Kingdom has never been about standing still. Even though many people have wanted the Church to be a still point around which all else swirls, that has never been the general purpose of God for his Church. As we come out of the pandemic lockdown, of course many of us are yearning for things to go back to the ways they were before. But the world has changed; many changes that were beginning to happen anyway have been dramatically speeded up; and the challenges of the future means that we cannot just go back to the old ways.

Christians, however, have no need to be afraid of all this, for we are a Kingdom people; people of God's new creation, called to be ready for the new things that God wants to do. We already know that God is making something new out of us; so we should be used to it. Indeed we should welcome it, though of course we often don't; change is often a difficult thing. But we are not afraid, because we are held secure, in the love of God. “The love of Christ urges us on,” is another line from our first reading, “The love of Christ urges us on.” Whatever changes come upon us, we are securely held in the love of Christ.

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So, like St Paul, we can, we should, be confident too. For whatever lies before us, in God's hands we will still be part of his growing Kingdom, whatever happens. We do not hold fast to the past; rather we hold fast to the love of God and his Kingdom. Amen.

CJ. 13:06:21