



St Andrew's Parish Church Guernsey
3rd Sunday after Trinity – Sermon for 10.00am
Bible Readings: Romans 6: 12-end & St Matthew 10: 40-end
'Under the microscope'
Given by Rev Juliette E C Robilliard

As I said in the welcome to this service, my sermon is short today because I asked you to write the first half in your imaginations. The task I gave you was to focus on the hymns, liturgy, bible readings and prayers to see how often the word sin, singular or plural, sinning and sinners appeared: it was 16 times. Were you getting to the point of thinking 'Give me a break!' The point of the exercise was to focus on how our Christian witness is skewed when we sin.

Today's Epistle puts me in mind of an old children's hymn, you may recall it, here's the first verse:

'Do no sinful action,
Speak no angry word;
Ye belong to Jesus,
Children of the Lord.'

How often do we think about sin? We all know that we do sin but how often do we take it really seriously? How often when we repent, are we truly intent on resisting temptation subsequently? So often the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. The trouble is the devil is always dangling tempting metaphorical carrots in front of our noses but we know that when we bite into them, they're always rotten at the core. Sin spoils so much in our lives putting distance between us and God as well as other people.

St Paul writing to the Romans gives us a gritty message on which to focus, when he says:

'Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.'

In his erudite way Paul expands on this theme putting us under the microscope examining how sin affects our lives, so that we become enslaved by it, which is the opposite of the life God intends for us. Today's Collect explains the essence of the comforting life God would have us enjoy:

'Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts
whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be brought
to the glorious liberty of the children of God;'

If only we used God's grace effectively, we would enjoy the liberty of freedom from sin more often rather than being enslaved by it. In calling us his children, how grieving it must be for God when we follow the easy line of temptation that then enslaves us. Sinful actions inevitably weaken our spiritual and personal integrity. Sometimes we need to be brought up short to see ourselves as others see us, Jesus, in the Gospel, says:

“Whoever, welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.”

I wonder, how welcome are when we when we call on people? In welcoming us, is it Jesus and our Father God they see shining from our hearts or, someone they're rather not know? Now there's a thought to ponder with!

Amen