

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster  
Sunday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Luke 4:21-30

A prophet not without honour except in his own hometown. Richard Rohr has said that the definition of an expert is someone who has come from at least 300 miles away.

I am reminded of Matthew 11:18-19 where we find the complaints about John the Baptist because of his ascetic behavior is thought of as insane and Jesus a glutton and a drunkard for eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners.

This all fits together because this is all about finding a way of discrediting the message by discrediting the messenger.

We are content if the message is what we expect and want to hear but when this is not the case, we begin looking for a way to get out of following what is being proposed.

It is as if we keep wanting to simplify.....

Henry Ford has been quoted as saying; you can have any colour of car you want if it's black.

We seem to come into any situation with some preconceived notion of what to expect and what will happen and who the other person is.

Maybe that is what Paul is talking about in Corinthians when talking about love. That we are to love the person for who they are, not who we expect them to be. The problem arises when our expectation and our perception don't meet. The person is exactly who they are and how we perceive them, but they don't meet our expectation. In romantic relationships this is often called the end of the honeymoon stage. At the beginning the expectation and the perception meet because we are blinded by romantic feelings. Then when that changes and the blinders come off to continue the relationship need to change our expectations and love the person for who they are.

Is this like our relationship with God? It is different because we cannot actually see God.

We are created in the image of God, but do we create God in our image, and our spiritual journey is moving to seeing God as different from us and not always doing things that and the way we would like to see.

The issue of COVID comes to mind, and we cannot help wondering what God is doing or not doing as this continues and we are in another wave of stricter isolation.

Maybe the longer this goes, the less likely we are to take for granted what we can go back to when this is over and finding new ways of supporting one another which will not be lost when this is over.

Is there more learning that God is trying to show us before this is over?

Amen