

From The Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster
Sunday, August 22nd, Pentecost XIII, a difficult message
1 Kings 8:1,6,10-11, 22-30, 41-43, Psalm 84, Ephesians 6:10-20, John 6:56-69

Why is Jesus' message so difficult? Is it that *the one who eats this bread will live forever.*" This may be impossible to believe? Yet Peter says "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life"

Or is there something else?

At first glance, Paul in Ephesians in talking about the armour of God would make one think that all this armour is a good thing and of benefit to the person, so why not continue? Yet as we look closer to some of it, it is not so easy and helpful for us ourselves.

Paul says: *fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. And as shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.*

The words which come to mind are; truth, righteousness and gospel of peace. This is never easy. To speak the truth to the abuse of power, and I like to use the word justice instead of righteousness, as in the sermon on the mount; *blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice.* And proclaiming the gospel of peace, which is combined with justice.

So are they going to follow this Jesus character who talks about justice, and peace together and is offering the bread of eternal life? We know something they don't know. There were messiahs who came before and after Jesus and when the leader of the group was killed, the movement faded away. So what makes Jesus different? The difference is that this Jesus movement did not fade away after the crucifixion, but continues through us and others to this day.

So this is both good news and a challenge; eating the bread of eternal life, but striving to bring about peace with justice for all

Amen.