

Shared Conversations West Yorkshire and Dales 30th January 2016

Listening to the Bible

In the book of Revelation there are 7 letters to churches which each end with the command *"Listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches"* (Rev 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:29, 3:6, 3:13, 3:22)

Romans 15:4 *"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope"*. And that hope according to the book of Revelation is a new heaven and a new earth, and the arrival of the heavenly city *"prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"* (Rev 21:2).

"People will bring into it the glory and honour of the nations. But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev 21:26, 27).

Rev 2:2, 2:14, 2:20,21; Rev 18; Rev 19:11; Rev 3:20.

Matt 5:8; *"be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"* (Matt 5:48); *"repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near"* (Matt 4:17); *"forgiveness of sins"* (Matt 9:6).

Creation

Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:18-25

"Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife and they become one flesh. And the man and the woman were both naked and were not ashamed" (Gen 2:24, 25); Matt 19:5; Ephesians 5:31; Genesis 6-9.

Law and Prophets

Gen 12:1-3, 15:1-6 (blessing); Ex 20:1-21; Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 (prohibition of same-sex unions); Matt 5:27-31; *"in the beginning it was not so"* (Matt 19:8).

Isaiah 61 (surely one source for Revelation's metaphor): *"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all nations"*.

Prophets: see Hosea (all of it) and Ezekiel 16, among many examples; Jeremiah 3-7 (God's no to idolatry, immorality and injustice).

Story and Song

Gen 19:5; Judges 13-16; 2 Samuel 11.

"In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes" (Judges 21:25); Ruth and the Song of Songs; 1 Samuel 18-20; 1 Sam 20:30.

Psalms 19: *"the heavens declare the glory of God...In the heavens he has set the sun which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy" or the law of the Lord which "is perfect" "more to be desired are they than gold"; "moreover by them is your servant warned"* (Psalm 19:1, 5, 7, 10, 11).

Gospel

Luke 3:15-22 and parallels. Matthew 5:27-30, 19:1-12 and John 4:16-26, 8:1-11; (the author of the 4th gospel *"the beloved"* (John 21:20); Mark 10:21. *"You are my beloved"*).

Mark 10:28-3 those *"who hear the word of God and do it"* (Luke 8:19-21); Matt 16:21; Matt 16:24-26; Luke 18:9-14.

"The Son of Man has come to seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10); Luke 7:36-50.

Church

Ephesians 5:32; Acts 2:42; Acts 15:20, 29; Lev 17 -18; Ephesians 5: 21-32 echoing Genesis 2:24; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Hebrews 13:4: *"Let marriage be held in honour by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers"*; 1 Corinthians 5; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Peter 4:1-5; 1 Cor 6: 9-11 and 1 Timothy 1:10;

Romans 1:18-32; Rom 1:18,26-27; Rom 3:21-26: *"for there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"*.

"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul. Conduct yourselves honourably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge" (1 Peter 2:11-12).

Difference and Doubt

1 Cor 5, 7 and 14, 1 Cor 7:10, 22, 39, 1 Cor 7:12, 25; Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8, 9 and 14.

Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; Philemon; 1 Timothy 2:12; Romans 1; false teaching (as per Revelation) *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect"* (Romans 12:2). Genesis 3 *"Did God say..."* and then *"you shall not die"* (Gen 3:1, 4), *"Sanctify them in the truth, your word is truth"* (John 16:13, 17:17).

Love

"If I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing!" (1 Cor 13:2); 1 Cor 13:4-7.

"Now we see in a mirror dimly, then we will see face to face" (1 Cor 13:12), the remaining part of that verse also has relevance *"Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known."*

"Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures" (Luke 24:27); *"go, sell what he owns and give the money to the poor"* (Mark 10:21); *"loving his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end"* (John 13:1). to *"lay down their lives for my sake"* (Matt 16:25).

"I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door I will come in to you and eat with you and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches". (Rev 3:19-22).

Keith Sinclair, Bishop of Birkenhead

Websites for reference:

www.eggscofe.org.uk

www.livingout.org

www.truefreedomtrust.co.uk