

A reflection for the third week of Lent, beginning 20th March 2022

We are living in unsettling times. Between global events both passing and unfolding, and the challenges of our own lives, there is much for us to think about, to reflect upon.

I have recently finished reading a very small book with a disproportionately large title: “Experiencing God in a time of crisis”. As I understand it, its basic premise is threefold:

Firstly, a “crisis” is something which undermines the values or “certainties” upon which we build our lives. These may be bad things such as the loss of a job or a loved one; or they may be a good things, perhaps the birth of a baby, or unexpected good news. In either case, the crisis radically alters the way we see ourselves and the world around us.

Secondly, if – as some argue – God is a projection of our own imaginations, then God would be limited by the extent of our imaginations, and we would ultimately be disappointed in such a God. But the God revealed in the Bible, time and time again calls people out of their lives into new lives which they could not have imagined; such a God is beyond our imaginations and could not therefore be a projection.

And thirdly, drawing these two strands together, if and when we find ourselves in a time of crisis, when we find the “certainties” on which we have built our lives shaken and disturbed, that is a good time to seek out – or open ourselves to - the God who calls us out of where we are into something new, to rebuild our lives based on new certainties.

Perhaps your own life experience bears out this premise; or perhaps it does not. Nevertheless, as we navigate these uncharted waters into which our world seems to be sailing, we could do much worse than to contemplate such things.

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Luke 6.36-38

Karen Chaplin

karen.chaplin@halasteam.org.uk