

From the Rector

This month as well as the rescheduled Village Fete the Gardeners Association will be holding their Autumn show and at the Rectory we will be looking to see which of our produce will be good enough to enter. While gardeners have pleasure growing fruit and vegetables, it can be hard work tending to them.

Jesus used many illustrations in his talking about God and the love that he has to show to us and used parable about sowing seeds and weeds growing amongst the good crops. He also knew about the care given to vines. In John 15:1-8 Jesus compared Himself to a vine and referred to God as the gardener. In this parable, God is responsible for pruning the vine. He sees what parts are useful, and what parts useless. The unproductive parts are cut away, so that growth is encouraged. Jesus is telling us that God will prune our lives, not to harm us, but to encourage our spiritual growth.

God’s pruning cuts away wrong attitudes and wasteful behaviour, all of which serve no useful purpose in our lives. This pruning is required so that we become more fruitful. And the fruit God wants is love, joy, patience etc. (see Galatians 5:22-23) These holy qualities are intended to influence the world to change it from the bad to all that is good.

To encourage its growth, a vine has regularly to be cut back. The effect looks drastic, but it is still essential. When God cuts away the dead wood in our lives, He does it because He knows how our lives can grow. The pruning knives are in the hands of our Father God who only desires the best for us. This pruning process can be painful, but Jesus says that it is vital if the Holy Spirit is to flow through us to produce the fruit that God wants.

Also in this parable, Jesus said He was the Vine, and we are the branches. We have no existence apart from Jesus. We can do nothing for God on our own and must be joined to Jesus. In the same way a vine utilises the life-giving sap to flow into the branches, so we need the Holy Spirit to flow His life into us. It is only by us remaining in Jesus, that He can give us the inner resources for an effective fruit-producing life.

Jesus said, ‘Abide in Me’ (John 15:4 King James Version). Abiding speaks of sustenance, being upheld and supported, enduring and withstanding. So, if we are to reap a harvest of holiness, may we be prepared for God’s pruning, and continue to abide in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

With many blessings

Fr David