

**SERMON PUY DE SERRE 12<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER**  
**TRINITY 2015 YEAR B**

Peter, the one who makes so many mistakes, who gets so much wrong says: “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.” And this time he got it so right.

The ones who had left wanted to pick and choose what they believed about Jesus. They were fascinated and awed by the miracles and the healings but weren't ready for the tough bits of following Jesus. Are we prepared for the less comfortable parts of believing in God? If our faith is to be real and developing we will be challenged.

Paul reminds us that we need the armour of God and to pray in the Spirit in order to cope with the wiles of the devil. Some of the problems we face in following Christ are because the devil is so subtle and clever.

One day I was being plagued by thoughts that I knew were not of God and like any other niggler I couldn't stop them, and prayer didn't seem to be helping, so I started singing, in my head you will be pleased to hear, a hymn every time my mind let them in, it was a very good distraction. Much like ping-pong on your wrist when you are tempted with something. But it worked, eventually my thoughts were turned around.

This is how the devil is so clever, often it isn't the obvious sins that cause our faith problems, but our thoughts and ingrained reactions to things or people that hurt God. Paul is not talking about escaping the 'evil' physical sphere into the 'good' spiritual sphere, because it's in the spiritual sphere that the hardest battles are fought. In God's world as it should be the physical world and the spiritual world exist together in harmony. In Jesus flesh and spirit, heaven and earth have been brought together once and for all.

We have nowhere or no one to turn to except God who is our beginning and our end. Through the Gospels we meet Jesus, who has the words of eternal life. Those words will be difficult sometimes, difficult to understand, difficult to apply to our lives, difficult to live by. However we have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us and guide us.

We have now had several weeks hearing Jesus speak about being the bread of life and we return today to hear the important message; we need to look beyond the miracles, amazing as they are, into the everyday, to make a choice. If we choose to follow Jesus he needs to become as important and necessary to us as food and drink, so that he fills every cell of our body with life and light and then accept the Holy Spirit into our lives who can lead and direct us, pointing us always to become closer to God, his will and his glory, so that we can become the people he intended us to be.