

Damhegion a Meddiannau

Ar economeg ac iawn berthynas ag arian

Ysgrifennwyd gan Eglwys yr Alban. Cyflwynwyd gan Eglwysi Ynghyd ym Mhrydain ac Iwerddon.



Parables and Possessions

On economics and a right relationship with money

Written by the Church of Scotland. Presented by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.



Paratowyd Cwrs Garawys CTBI eleni gan Eglwys yr Alban, ac fe'i cynigir yn adnodd astudio a thrafod i Gristnogion o bob traddodiad ledled Prydain ac Iwerddon.

Yn 2012 derbyniodd Cymanfa Gyffredinol Eglwys yr Alban adroddiad pwysig dan y teitl *A Right Relationship with Money*. Hwn oedd adroddiad terfynol Comisiwn Arbennig yr Eglwys ar Ddibenion Gweithgaredd Economaidd, a fu'n cyfarfod ac yn casglu tystiolaeth am oddeutu dwy flynedd.

Daeth yr ysgogiad i sefydlu Comisiwn i ystyried economeg o deimlad cryf yn Eglwys yr Alban na ellid, yn dilyn y wasgfa gredyd, y chwalfa ariannol ac effaith y dirwasgiad a ddilynodd, caniatáu dychwelyd at 'fusnes fel arfer'.

Mae'r cwrs Garawys hwn yn datblygu ac yn archwilio rhai o'r canfyddiadau yn *A Right Relationship with Money*. Os hoffech ddarllen yr adroddiad, neu ddod i wybod mwy am beth y mae Eglwys yr Alban yn ei wneud i fwrw ymlaen â'r materion hyn, ewch i'w gwefan,

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Cyflwyniad

Dywed y Beibl fwy am arian, economeg a gwneud bywoliaeth nag am yr un pwnc arall. Mae'n amlwg, felly, fod Duw am inni fod mewn iawn berthynas ag arian, ac y bydd hynny o gymorth inni yn ein hymgais i fod mewn iawn berthynas â Duw.

Yn ein bywyd beunyddiol rhaid inni wneud llawer o benderfyniadau. Mae i lawer, os nad y rhan fwyaf, o'r rhain, boed a wnelont â'n teulu, ein cymuned neu ein cenedl, ddimensiwn ariannol. Mae'n hollbwysig ein bod yn gwneud y penderfyniadau a gaiff yr effaith orau ar y bobl o'n cwmpas (gan ein cynnwys ni ein hunain). Dywed profiad na fuom bob amser yn dda am wneud hyn.

This year's Lent course from CTBI has been prepared by the Church of Scotland, and is offered as a study and discussion resource to Christians of all traditions across Britain and Ireland.

In 2012 the Church of Scotland's General Assembly received a major report called *A Right Relationship with Money*. This was the final report of the Kirk's Special Commission on the Purposes of Economic Activity, which had been meeting and taking evidence for around two years.

The impetus for establishing a Commission to look at economics was driven by a strongly-held feeling in the Church of Scotland that, following the credit crunch, financial crash and the impact of the recession which ensued, things must not return to 'business as usual'.

This Lent course is a development and exploration of some of the insights which were included in *A Right Relationship with Money*. If you would like to read the report, or find out more about what the Church of Scotland is doing to take these issues forward then please visit the Church's website at www.churchofscotland.org.uk

Introduction

The Bible says more about money, economics and making a living than any other subject. It is clear, therefore, that God wants us to be in a right relationship with money and this will aid us in our quest to be in a right relationship with God.

In our daily lives we have to make lots of decisions. Many if not most of these have some dimension of money attached to them, whether the decisions we have to make are to do with our family, our community or our nation. It is vital that we make decisions which will impact for the best on those around us (including ourselves). Experience tells us that we have not always been very good at this.



Yn y blynyddoedd diwethaf, ymddengys inni gefnu ar rai ffyrdd traddodiadol o reoli ein harian a mabwysiadu ffyrdd eraill nad ydynt bob amser y ffyrdd gorau i ni na'n teuluoedd, i'n cymunedau na'n cenedl, na hyd yn oed yn oed i'n planed. Ni phetrusodd llawer ohonom fynd i ddyled ddifrifol er mwyn bodloni ein hawydd am 'well' bywyd. Gofynnwyd cwestiynau hefyd am wariant y llywodraeth.

Gall byw o dan y math o bwysau ariannol a osodasom arnom ein hunain effeithio'n ddrwg ar ein hiechyd meddyliol yn ogystal â'n hiechyd economaidd. Rhaid wrth iawn berthynas ag arian cyn y gall perthynas bersonol iach ffynnu.

Weithiau, cysylltir tymor y Garawys ag aberth – rhoi'r gorau i ryw ddanteithion neu gymryd rhyw gyfrifoldeb newydd am gyfnod. Yn y cwrs hwn fe'ch gwahoddir i roi heibio bob syrthni (golygwn wrth hynny bob difaterwch a diflastod â'r byd) ynglŷn â phwnc economeg bersonol. Weithiau, canlyniad synnwyr o ddiymadferthedd yw hynny. Anogir chwi i fod yn fwy hirben wrth ddewis pobl i ymddiried ynddynt. Herir chwi i chwilio am les gorau eich cymdogion, yn enwedig y rhai sy'n wan ac wedi eu gwrthio i'r cyrion.

Sut i ddefnyddio'r cwrs hwn

Rhennir *Damhegion a Meddiannau* yn chwe sesiwn, un i bob un o chwe Sul y Garawys, gan orffen ar Sul y Blodau. Gall unigolion, neu gynulleidfaoedd a grwpiau lleol, ei ddefnyddio.

Canolbwyntia'r cwrs ar ddameg wahanol ym mhob sesiwn. Rhagflaenir pob dameg gan Fyfyrdod at y Garawys. Er mai fel cwrs Garawys y bwriadwyd ef, gellir ei gynnal ar adegau eraill, neu ddefnyddio dim ond un sesiwn os ydych yn chwilio am adnodd ar thema neu ddameg arbennig.

Y defnyddiau

Cynnwys pob wythnos gymysgedd o ddefnyddiau at fyfyrdod, esboniad ar un o ddamhegion Iesu, ambell ddyfyniad i ysgogi ymateb, cwestiynau a gweddi. Awgrymir hefyd rywbeth i'w wneud – gweithred ymarferol i fynegi disgyblaeth Gristnogol yn y byd.

Gwahoddir chwi i ddefnyddio'r adnoddau hyn yn fan cychwyn; maent yn gryno a hyblyg. Meddyliwch beth fydd yn ddefnyddiol yn eich cyd-destun chwi, a chynhwyswch syniadau ac adnoddau eraill. I gynorthwyo arweinwyr grŵp i baratoi, y mae ar ddechrau pob sesiwn grynodeb o rai o'r prif bynciau a syniadau.

In recent years, we seem to have turned our backs on some traditional ways of managing our finances in favour of others that are not always in the best interests of ourselves, our families, our communities, our nation, and even our planet. Many of us have not hesitated to get into serious debt in order to satisfy our desire for a 'better' life. Questions have also been asked about government expenditure decisions.

Living under the kind of financial pressures to which we have subjected ourselves can have very serious effects on our mental health as well as our economic health. A right relationship with money is necessary for healthy personal relationships to prosper.

The season of Lent has sometimes been associated with sacrifice, of giving up a luxury or taking up a new responsibility for a period. In this course you are invited to lay aside any indolence (by which we mean apathy and world-weariness) around the subject of personal economics which is sometimes the result of a sense of helplessness. You are encouraged to be more discerning about those in whom you place your trust. You are challenged to identify the best interests of your neighbours, especially the weak and marginalised.

How to use this course

Parables and Possessions is divided into six sessions, for the six Sundays of Lent finishing with Palm Sunday. It can be used by individuals, local congregations or groups.

The course focuses on a different parable in each session. Each parable is preceded by a Lent reflection. Although written as a Lent course, it would be possible to run the course at other times, or just use an individual session if you were looking for a resource on a particular theme or parable.

The materials

Each week includes a mixture of materials for reflection, commentary on one of Jesus' parables, the occasional quote to spark a reaction, some questions and a prayer. There is also a suggestion of something to do as follow-up, a practical action expressing Christian discipleship in the world.

You are invited to use these resources as a starting point; they are concise and flexible. Think what would be useful for your own context, or bring in other ideas or resources. To help a group leader prepare there is a brief summary of some key issues and ideas at the start of each session.



Temtasiwn



Wythnos 1: Dameg yr Heuwr

Mathew 13: 1-23

Trafodaeth

Yr efengyl yn ffafrio'r tlawd

Yn y sesiwn hwn gobeithiwn y byddwch yn myfyrio ar ddwy demtasiwn wrthgyferbyniol a wynebodd Iesu gydol ei weinidogaeth: y demtasiwn i godi llais a'r demtasiwn i gadw'n dawel. Yn achos Dameg yr Heuwr, anogwn chwi i ystyried pa mor hawdd yw inni adael i lawenydd canlyn Iesu gael ei wthio allan o'n bywydau.

Myfyrdod

Dysgodd Iesu i'w ddisgyblion weddio 'Nac arwain ni i brofedigaeth'.

Gwyddai Iesu beth oedd cael ei brofi. Gydol ei weinidogaeth wynebodd o leiaf ddwy demtasiwn. Fe'i temtiwyd i godi ei lais, ac fe'i temtiwyd i gadw'n dawel.

Yn yr anialwch cynigiodd y diafol i Iesu holl deyrnasoedd y ddaear, dim ond iddo gydgyllwynio'n dawel i osod y diafol yn uwch na Duw. Profwyd Iesu; a oedd i gadw'n dawel a pheidio â herio anwiredd a drygioni?

Mewn cyferbyniad, cadwodd Iesu'n dawel trwy'r rhan fwyaf o'i brawf gerbron Pilat. Gallai fod wedi arbed ei fywyd, dim ond iddo ddweud y geiriau yr oedd Pilat am eu clywed, geiriau'n cydnabod grym ac awdurdod Pilat. Profwyd Iesu; a oedd i lefaru geiriau bradwrus y dewis diogel a hawdd?

Roedd temtasiwn yn brofiad real i Iesu.

Wrth ddysgu ei ddilynwyr i weddio 'Nac arwain ni i brofedigaeth', mae Iesu'n gweddio y byddwn yn cwestiynu unrhyw gyfundrefn a fydd yn addoli cyfoeth a meddiannau, unrhyw grefydd seiliedig ar brynu. Mae'n gweddio y byddwn yn ceisio heddwch a chyfiawnder i bawb, ac yn enwedig i'r rhai hynny na allant eu ceisio drostynt eu hunain. Mae'n gweddio y bydd gennym y dewrder i wrthod ein diogelu ein hunain a'n dull o fyw tra'n gadael i eraill wynebu peryglon y byd ar eu pen eu hunain. Mae'n gweddio y byddwn yn gwybod pryd i godi llais a phryd i weddio'n dawel.

Y cwbl sydd ei angen i ddrygioni orchfygu yw i ddynion da wneud dim.

Priodolir i Edmund Burke, gwleidydd ac athronydd Gwyddelig o'r ddeunawfed ganrif

Temptation

Week 1: The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13: 1-23

Discussion

A gospel bias to the poor

In this session we hope that you will reflect upon two contrasting temptations faced by Jesus throughout his ministry: the temptations to speak out and the temptation to remain silent. With the Parable of the Sower we encourage you to think about the ease with which we allow the joy of following Jesus to be crowded out of our lives.

Reflection

Jesus taught his disciples to pray 'Lead us not into temptation.'

Jesus understood temptation. He faced at least two throughout his ministry. He was tempted to speak, and tempted to stay silent.

In the desert the devil offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, if only he would silently collude in the delusion of putting the devil above God. Jesus was tested; would he remain silent and allow falsehood and evil to go unchallenged?

In contrast Jesus remained silent throughout most of his trial before Pilate. He might have saved his own life if only he had said the words Pilate wanted to hear. Words acknowledging Pilate's power and authority. Jesus was tested; would he speak the words of complicity for the safe and easy option?

Temptation was a real experience for Jesus.

When Jesus teaches his followers to pray: 'Lead us not into temptation' he prays that we will question any system that worships wealth and possessions through a religion of consumerism. He is praying that we will pursue goals of peace and justice for all and especially for those least able to pursue them for themselves. He is praying that we have the courage to refuse to keep ourselves and our lifestyles secure while allowing others to face alone the dangers of the world. He is praying that we will know when to speak and when to pray silently.

**All that is necessary
for the triumph of evil
is that good men do
nothing.**

Attributed to Edmund
Burke, an Eighteenth-
Century Irish politician
and philosopher





Dameg

Mathew 13: 1-23 - Dameg yr Heuwr

Llefarai Iesu mewn damhegion. Anogai ffydd a heriai ddifaterwch â storïau ag iddynt aml haen o ystyr i'r sawl yr oedd ganddynt glustiau i glywed. Mae dameg yr heuwr yn fynegiant hyderus o'r modd y mae Duw'n gweithio i sefydlu ei Deyrnas. Gall fod rhai o'r gwrandawyr yn cael eu temtio i anobeithio gweld dyfod Teyrnas Dduw i drawsffurfio'u bywydau, mae'r heuwr yn annog hyder wrth iddo wasgaru ei had ar bridd addawol a phridd anodd yn ddiwahân. Fe w'yr yr heuwr, ac fe w'yr y gwrandawyr, mai dim ond pan gledir yr had ar ôl yr hau y gorffennir y gwaith ac y bydd cyfle am gynhaef toreithiog.

Mae Mathew'n dehongli'r stori at anghenion eglwys a oedd yn wynebu profedigaeth a themtasiynau. Iddo ef, 'gair y deyrnas' yw'r had, ac un demtasiwn i'w hosgoi yw 'hudoliaeth golud' a all 'dagu'r gair' (adnod 22).

Sylwch nad yw Mathew'n awgrymu bod meddiannau bydol yn ddrwg ynddynt eu hunain, nac o angenrheidrwydd yn niweidiol i'r Cristion. Y rhybudd yw nid bod dilynwyr Iesu wedi dewis materoliaeth ar draul gair Duw, ond ei bod yn hawdd i air Duw, fel yr had, gael ei dagu gan ofalon a dyheadau eraill.

Yng nghymdeithas Prydain heddiw mae'n haws nag erioed meddiannu 'pethau', y pethau hynny sy'n llenwi ein bywydau a'n diddordebau. Dywed cymdeithas wrthym fod yn rhaid inni gael nwyddau moethus os ydym i fod yn wirioneddol hapus. Mae cylchgrawn teithio cwmni awyrennau blaenllaw'n cynnwys adran ar 'Eitemau Trachwant', ac mae siop adrannol yn defnyddio'r slogan 'troi bywyd yn chwedl'. Yn y cyfamser, mae anghydraddoldeb yn cynyddu yn y wlad; mae rhai pobl yn mwynhau incwm gwario sylweddol tra bod eraill yn gorfod ymdrechu i gael deupen llinyn ynghyd.

Cyhoedda Iesu mai'r bywyd ystyrion yw'r un sy'n derbyn gair Duw fel y mae pridd da yn derbyn had da. Bywyd hapus yw'r un y mae gair Duw wedi gwreiddio'n ddwfn ynddo. Gall temtasiynau ddod, ond ni allant fynd yn ddigon dwfn i ddinistrio'r gwreiddiau. A ninnau'n ddilynwyr Iesu, ceisiwn ras i fod yn bridd da. Yna, gydag Iesu, gallwn ddisgwyl cynhaef lawer gwaith yn fwy nag y gellid ei ddisgwyl oddi wrth yr had a wasgarwyd.

Dos, a gwna dithau yr un modd: yr ystyr i ni heddiw

Mae gan eglwysi ddiddordeb arbennig mewn llefaru ar dlodi. Mae rhybuddion proffwydi'r Beibl ac esiamp Iesu ei hun yn ein dysgu bod yn rhaid i'r cyfoethog a'r pwerus glywed lleisiau'r bregus a'r difreintiedig.

Mae ym Mhrydain heddiw lawer myth cyffredin ynglŷn â thlodi ac achosion tlodi. Mae'r mythau hyn yn gyfleus i wleidyddion a'r cyfryngau am eu bod yn eu galluogi i feio'r tlodion eu hunain am y sefyllfa y maent ynddi a chaniatáu i weddill cymdeithas wrthod pob cyfrifoldeb am eu cyflwr. Mae mythau am ffaeledau personol adran gyfan o'r gymdeithas yn creu diwylliant o ddifrio a beio a beirniadu: collferniar pobl am fod yn ddiog a didoreth, yn grafwyr a thwyllwyr, yn gamddefnyddwyr sylweddau, ac felly ymlaen. Yr hyn sy'n eisau yw unrhyw arlliw o'r egwyddor Feiblaidd o ofalu, dysgu, gwasanaethu a charu. Mae'r mythau hyn, a gredir yn gyffredin gan y cyhoedd a chan fynychwyr eglwys a chapel fel ei gilydd, yn anwybyddu'r dystiolaeth a'r ystadegau, ac yn anwybyddu'r rhesymau cyfundrefnol ehangach am anghydraddoldeb cymdeithasol ac economaidd a'r cysylltiad rhyngddynt ac iechyd, addysg a chyflogaeth.

Mae tlodi yn y DG nid yn unig yn achos elusen; mae hefyd yn anghyfiawnder sy'n gweiddi am gael ei gywiro. Y man cychwyn yw i arweinwyr, mewn gwleidyddiaeth a chymdeithas ac yn yr eglwys, godi eu llais a chodi lefel y ddadl gyhoeddus am dlodi ac anghyfiawnder. Onid e, bydd y mythau a'r celwyddau am dlodi, fel y chwyn yn y ddameg, yn tagu'r gwirionedd. "Gwthir barn o'r neilltu, ac y mae cyfiawnder yn cadw draw, oherwydd cwmpodd gwirionedd ar faes y dref, ac ni all uniondeb ddod i mewn" (Eseia 59:14).

Parable

Matthew 13: 1-23 - The Parable of the Sower

Jesus spoke in parables. He encouraged faith and challenged complacency with stories which had multiple layers of meaning for those with ears to hear. The parable of the sower is an optimistic telling of how God is at work to bring about the Kingdom. Though some of his listeners may be tempted to despair that God's Kingdom would never break in to transform their lives, the sower advocates confidence as he scatters seeds on promising soil and difficult soil without discrimination. The sower knows, and the listeners know, that the job of ploughing in the seed, done after rather than before sowing, will finish the job and give maximum chance for an abundant harvest.

Matthew interprets the story for a church facing trials and temptations. The seed is now 'the word about the kingdom' and one temptation to be avoided is 'the delight of riches' which may 'choke the word' (verse 22).

Notice that Matthew does not suggest that material possessions are in themselves wrong or necessarily harmful to the Christian. The warning is not that God's word has been rejected by the followers of Jesus in favour of materialism, but that like seed it is easily choked by other concerns and appetites.

In British society today there is unprecedented access to 'stuff', those things which seem to crowd out and take over our interests and our lives. Our society tells us that if we are to be truly happy then we must have luxury goods. An in-flight magazine for a major airline has a section on 'Lust-Have' items, a department store uses the slogan 'life made fabulous'. Meanwhile there is a growing inequality in our country; some enjoy considerable amounts of disposable income while many others struggle to get by at all.

Jesus proclaims that a life made meaningful is one which receives God's word like good soil receives good seed. A happy life is one in which God's word roots itself deeply. Temptations may come but they will not cut deep enough to destroy those roots. As his followers we seek the grace to be good soil. Then, with Jesus, we may anticipate a harvest of fruit many times more than might have been expected from the seeds scattered.

Go and do likewise: what it means for us today

Churches have a special interest in speaking about poverty. The Biblical warnings of the prophets and the example of Jesus teach us that the voices of the vulnerable and underprivileged must be heard by the rich and powerful.

In Britain today there are many widely held myths about poverty and its causes. These myths are convenient for politicians and the media as they allow those living in poverty to be blamed for their situation and permit the rest of society to take no responsibility for their condition. Myths about the personal failings of a whole section of society create stigma and a culture of blame and criticism: them for being idle, feckless, scroungers, fraudsters, substance abusers and so on. What's missing is any Biblical principle of caring, learning, serving and loving. These myths, commonly held by the general public and churchgoers alike, ignore the evidence and statistics as well as the wider systemic reasons for social and economic inequality and how they are connected to health, education and employment.

Poverty in the UK is not just a reason for charity, but is an injustice crying out for correction. A starting point is for leaders, in politics, society and the church, to speak out and raise the level of public debate about poverty and injustice. Otherwise the myths and lies about poverty, like the weeds in the parable, overcome the truth. "Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands at a distance; for truth stumbles in the public square, and uprightness cannot enter." (Isaiah 59:14)





“Gwrthodwch y ffug werthoedd a’r ffug foesoldeb sy’n sail i’r agweddau hyn. I lygod y mae ras lygod. Nid llygod mohonom ni. Bodau dynol ydym. Gwrthodwch y pwysau cyfrwys mewn cymdeithas sydd am bylu eich gallu i sylweddoli beth sy’n digwydd o’ch cwmpas, sy’n cynghori cadw’n dawel yn wyneb anghyfiawnder rhag i chwi beryglu’r cyfle am ddirchafiad a dod ymlaen yn y byd. Felly y mae’n dechrau, a chyn y gwyddoch ym mha le yr ydych, yr ydych yn gyflawn aelod o’r giwed hunangar. Mae’r pris yn rhy uchel. Mae’n golygu colli eich urddas a’ch ysbryd dynol. Neu, fel y dywedodd Crist, “Pa elw a gaiff rhywun o ennill yr holl fyd a’i ddifetha neu ei fforffedu ei hun?”

Jimmy Reid, undebwr llafur a gwleidydd o’r Alban

Cwestiynau

1. Pa mor bwysig yw hi inni weddio am ddoethineb i wybod pryd i godi llais a phryd i gadw’n dawel?
2. Mae difrio pobl sy’n byw mewn tlodi yn dod yn fwy cyffredin. Yn aml, bydd y papurau newydd y byddwn i gyd yn eu prynu yn cyflwyno hanner gwirioneddau a mythau am achosion ac effeithiau tlodi. Ym mha fodd y mae efengyl Iesu’n codi llais yn erbyn y fath ddemoneiddio? Ym mha fodd y mae’n cadw’n dawel?
3. Daw’r ymadrodd “llefaru gwirionedd wrth rym” o’r traddodiad Crynwraidd a gychwynnodd yn y ddeunawfed ganrif. Yn fras, golyga ‘grym’ dri pheth: pobl sy’n gwneud penderfyniadau pwysig, gwerthoedd cymdeithasol a diwyllianol, ac ysgogiad neu her bersonol. Beth y mae’r ymadrodd “llefaru gwirionedd wrth rym” yn ei olygu i chwi heddiw?
4. Pe baech yn cynnal arolwg yng ngoleuni Dameg yr Heuwr o’r ffordd yr ydych yn gwario eich arian, a allech neu a fydech yn gwneud unrhyw newid?

Gweithredu

Darllenwch *The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty*, adroddiad a gyhoeddwyd ym mis Mawrth 2012 gan Eglwys yr Alban, yr Eglwys Fethodistaidd, Undeb Bedyddwyr Prydain Fawr a’r Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig. Gallwch ei ddarllen ar-lein ar: www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/truthandliesaboutpoverty

Gweddi

Iesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni yn y distawrwydd,
 yn y man y tu hwnt i bob clebran ac anrhefn,
 yn yr anialwch y tu hwnt i’r demtasiwn i’n bodloni ein hunain â phethau rhad.
 Yno, bendithia ni â’r doethineb i dderbyn gwir oludoedd
 a’r weledigaeth i weld pa beth y gallwn ei rannu.
 Amen

“Reject the values and false morality that underlie these attitudes. A rat race is for rats. We’re not rats. We’re human beings. Reject the insidious pressures in society that would blunt your critical faculties to all that is happening around you, that would caution silence in the face of injustice lest you jeopardise your chances of promotion and self-advancement. This is how it starts and before you know where you are, you’re a fully paid-up member of the rat-pack. The price is too high. It entails the loss of your dignity and human spirit. Or as Christ put it, “What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?”

Jimmy Reid, Scottish trades unionist and politician

Questions

1. How important is it that we pray for the wisdom to know when to speak and when to be silent?
2. Stigmatising people who live in poverty is becoming more commonplace. The newspapers we all buy often present half-truths and myths about the causes and effects of poverty. How does the gospel of Jesus speak out against such demonization or alternatively remain silent?
3. “Speaking truth to power” is a phrase from the Quaker tradition originating in the 18th century. Broadly speaking, ‘power’ meant three things: important decision-makers, societal values / culture and personal motivation / challenge. What does the phrase ‘speaking truth to power’ mean to you, today?
4. If you were to review the way you spend your money in the light of the Parable of the Sower, could you or would you make any changes?

Action

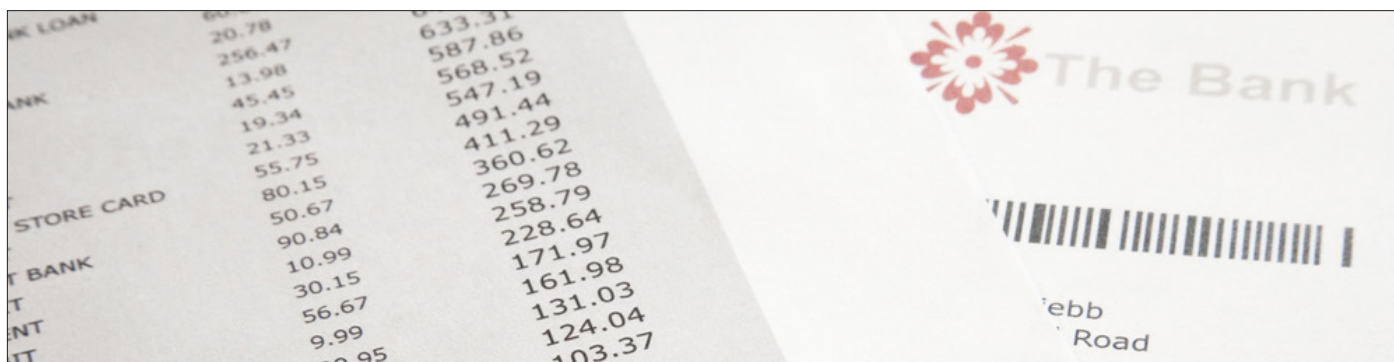
Read *The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty*, a report published in March 2012 by the Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, Baptist Union of Great Britain and the United Reformed Church. It is available to read online at:
www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/truthandliesaboutpoverty

Prayer

Jesus, meet us in the silence
the place beyond the chatter and the clutter
a desert on the other side of the temptation to satisfy ourselves with cheapness.
There, bless us with wisdom to receive real riches and vision to see what we can share.
Amen



Brad



Wythnos 2: Dameg y Tenantiaid Drwg

Mathew 21:33-46

Trafodaeth

Gwerthoedd arbennig Cristnogaeth

Yn y sesiwn hwn gobeithiwn y byddwch yn myfyrio ar y gwerthoedd a'ch lluniodd fel unigolyn, eich ffydd a'ch cymuned eglwysig. Weithiau byddwn yn bradychu'r egwyddorion a'r blaenoriaethau craidd sy'n ein gwneud yr hyn ydym. Mae Dameg y Tenantiaid Drwg yn rhybudd amlwg i arweinwyr crefyddol oes Iesu ac yn her inni bob un.

Myfyrdod

Y mae ffyddlondeb a fradychwyd yn wewyr.

Ymhell cyn i Judas gusanu Iesu yn yr ardd, dywed y Beibl wrthym i Iesu gael ei gamddeall a'i gamddechongli. Trodd y rhai nesaf ato eu cefn arno, gan gweryla dros glod a bri. Ceisiodd eraill, yr ymddangosai fod ganddynt ddiddordeb yn yr hyn a oedd ganddo i'w ddweud, ei faglu â chwestiynau a fyddai'n arwain at ei gondemnio am gabledd. Yn nyddiau olaf ei fywyd, byddai'r dorf yn Jerwsalem yn ei groesawu ar ddechrau'r wythnos, ond yn galw am ei ddienyddio ar ei diwedd.

Mae brad yn beth a brofodd llawer ohonom.

Gŵyr plant yn y maes chwarae am y digofaint a'r boen a achosir pan wna cyfaill rywbeth sy'n bradychu ymddiriedaeth. Dysgant hefyd beth mor anghysurus yw bradychu ffrind.

Pan osodwn ein hanghenion a'n dyheadau ein hunain uwchben lles ein cyfeillion, gallwn fradychu eu hymddiriedaeth ynom.

Mae anffyddlondeb yn rhan o fywyd. Wrth inni dyfu mewn doethineb, dysgwn faddau i ni ein hunain ac i eraill am lawer o'r camweddau hyn, bach a mawr. Wrth inni fynd yn hŷn, a chael mwy o brofiad o fywyd, yn ei oleuni a'i dywyllwch, bydd ein doethineb cynyddol yn ein galluogi i ddygymod a dysgu. Er na chroesewir brad byth, gydag amser gall bod yn agored i ras arwain at gynhyrchu o leiaf beth ffrwyth da: hunanymwybyddiaeth, hunanddealltwriaeth ac empathi.

Betrayal

Week 2: The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

Matthew 21:33-46

Discussion

Distinctive Christian values

In this session we hope that you will reflect upon the values which shape you as an individual, your faith, and your church community. Sometimes we betray those principles and core priorities which make us who we are. The Parable of the Wicked Tenants is a pointed warning to the religious leaders of Jesus' time and a challenge to us all.

Reflection

Loyalty betrayed is an agony.

Long before Judas kissed Jesus in the garden, the Bible tells us that Jesus was misunderstood and misrepresented. Those closest to Jesus let him down, squabbling over prestige. Others, seemingly interested in what he had to say, tried to trap Jesus with questions which would condemn him to blasphemy. In the last days of his life, the crowd in Jerusalem hailed Jesus at the start of the week but called for his execution at the end.

Betrayal is an experience many of us know.

Children in a school playground understand the rage and hurt caused when a friend does something which shows that trust is misplaced. They learn too the uncomfortable knowledge of having let down a friend.

When we place our own needs or desires or fears above the welfare of our friends then we may betray the trust they place in us.

Unfaithfulness is a part of life, but as we grow in wisdom we learn to forgive ourselves and others many of these trespasses both small and large. As we get older, and experience more of life, the light and the darkness, so our growing wisdom enables us to cope and to learn. Though betrayal is always unwelcome, with time, openness to grace may be at least partially directed to produce some good fruit: self-awareness, self-understanding, and empathy.





Mae ambell frad mor bellgyrhaeddol nes ei fod yn newid bywyd pawb y caiff effaith arno. Effeithiodd yr argyfwng bancio diweddar ar bron bob cenedl trwy'r byd. Efallai y dylem, fel unigolion a chymunedau crefyddol, chwilio am ffyrdd i droi'r brad hwn i weithio o blaid y da.

Pan fradychodd Judas Iesu, fe ymwerthodd i gyfundrefn a oedd am ddifa ei feistr. Eto, os oedwn gydag Iesu yn yr ardd, fe'i gwelwn yn gweddïo am droi'r brad rhyfygus a chwerw hwn o'n plaid. Er gwybod am y brad, deil Iesu i alw Judas yn 'gyfaill'. Gallwn ninnau hefyd weddïo am ras i ddwyn daioni o ddrygioni ac ofn. Yn ein bywydau, fe'n bradychir lawer gwaith gennym ein hunain ac eraill, ond fe'n gwahoddir i weddïo am ras i droi'r camweddau hyn yn weithredoedd o blaid teyrnas cariad.

Dameg

Mathew 21:33-46 - Dameg y Tenantiaid Drwg

Mae llawer o storiâu Iesu yn bwerus iawn; gall ei ddamhegion gynnwys negeseuon plaen am yr hyn a wnawn â'r cyfrifoldebau a rydd Duw inni. A chyfeiriwyd rhai o'i eiriau llymaf at y rhai hynny a oedd yn arweinwyr crefyddol ac a ddylai wybod yn well.

Mae'r stori hon yn esiampl o hynny, ac mae'n amlwg bod ei neges yn glir i'r arweinwyr crefyddol a oedd yn gwrandao ac am ei arestio (adnod 46).

Roedd y perchennog tir yn ofalus iawn o'i winllan. Roedd wedi rhoi amser ac ymdrech i blannu, adeiladu waliau, cloddio cafn i'r gwinwryf a chodi tŵr. Fel yr ymddiriedwyd y winllan yn y ddameg i denantiaid, felly yr ymddiriedodd Duw les cymdeithas i'w harweinwyr.

Yn y ddameg, daeth yr amser i'r perchennog dderbyn y rhent a oedd yn ddyledus iddo gan y rhai yr ymddiriedwyd y stad i'w gofal. Peth digon rhesymol, ond nid peth a oedd yn plesio'r tenantiaid! Eu hymateb cyntaf oedd curo, llabyddio a lladd y rhai hynny a anfonwyd yn negesyddion. Yn fuan iawn, teimlent yn ddigon eofn i fynd ymhellach. Pan anfonwyd mab y perchennog i gasglu'r rhent, meddylodd y tenantiaid fod y perchennog wedi marw, a chynllwyniasant i ladd ei etifedd a meddiannu'r winllan eu hunain. Gellid felly osgoi'r holl fusnes blêr o orfod talu rhent a phoeni am oruchwyllo adnoddau rhywun arall. Hwy, o'r diwedd, fyddai'n rheoli.

Yr ydym yn oruchwylwyr nid yn unig ar yr adnoddau materol a alwn yn eiddo inni, ond hefyd ar y Newyddion Da am y Deyrnas. Mae'r Efyngyl yn deillio oddi wrth Dduw y creawdwr; fe'i dygwyd inni gan Grist a'i hymddiried inni gan yr Ysbryd Glân. Nid yw perchennogi'r Deyrnas yn opsiwn i ni, mwy nag yr oedd yn opsiwn i arweinwyr crefyddol dyddiau Iesu. Y cyfan a ofynnir yw ein bod yn trin y winllan yn ffyddlon.

Dos, a gwna dithau yr un modd: yr ystyr i ni heddiw

Mae'n deg dweud i'r rhan fwyaf ohonom gael ein magu gyda gwerthoedd, er nad yw'r ffordd y cyflwynwyd hwy inni nac y dysgasom hwy bob amser yn glir iawn.

Y rhinwedd bwysicaf i Gristnogion, fel i ddilynwyr crefyddau eraill, yw trin pobl eraill fel yr hoffem gael ein trin ein hunain. Mae'r rhinwedd hon mor gyffredin ym mhob crefydd nes y gelwir hi'n aml y Rheol Aur.

O edrych yn ôl ar ein cymdeithas dros y genhedlaeth ddiwethaf, gwelwn newidiadau enfawr. Aeth llawer o'r gwerthoedd a ddsyngwyd flynyddoedd yn ôl yn angof neu fe'u llwyr wrth-drowyd. Mewn rhai achosion,

Some betrayals will prove to be so far-reaching that they change the lives of everyone touched by them. The bank crisis of recent years affected virtually every nation on earth. Perhaps we might seek ways in which, as individuals and as a community of faith, we could make this betrayal an ally of the good.

When Judas betrayed Jesus he sold out to a system that sought to destroy his master. Yet if we linger with Jesus in the garden we may glimpse how he prayed to transform this desperate and bitter betrayal into our ally. Knowing of the betrayal, Jesus still addresses Judas as 'friend'. We too may glimpse and pray for the grace to bring good out of wickedness and fear. In our lives, with many betrayals, our own and others, we are invited to pray for the grace to transform such trespasses into allies of the kingdom of love.

Parable

Matthew 21:33-46 - The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

Many of Jesus' stories are pretty hard-hitting; his parables can contain some blunt messages about what we do with the responsibilities that God gives us. And some of his harshest words were reserved for those who, as religious leaders, should have known better.

The story in this passage is one such example, and the point evidently wasn't lost on the listening religious leaders wanting to arrest him (verse 46).

The landowner cared about the vineyard, because he had invested his time and effort, planting, building walls, a winepress and a tower. As the vineyard in the parable was entrusted to stewards, so God has entrusted the welfare of society to its leaders.


In the parable, the time came for the owner to receive the rent due from those entrusted with the estate. It was a reasonable expectation, but not one which was well received by the tenants! Their initial response was to beat, stone and kill those who had been sent as messengers. Soon they felt bold enough to go further. When the owner's son was sent to collect the rent the tenants assumed that the owner was dead. They hatched a plot to kill his heir and seize ownership of the vineyard for themselves. That way the whole messy business of having to pay rent and to worry about stewarding somebody else's resources would be circumvented, because they would finally be in charge.

We are stewards not only of the physical resources which we call our own, but also of the Good News about the Kingdom. This Gospel originated with God the creator, was brought to us by Christ and entrusted to us by the Holy Spirit. Taking ownership of the Kingdom is not an option for us, just as it was not an option for the religious leaders of Jesus' time. All that is asked is that we tend the vineyard faithfully.

Go and do likewise: what it means for us today

It is fair to say that most of us were brought up to have values, though sometimes these were not very clear either in the way they were presented to us or in the way that we learned them.

The key value for Christians, as well as other faith groups, is to treat other people as we would wish to be treated. The universality of this value across religious traditions mean that it is often called the Golden Rule.

If we look back on how our society has altered over the past generation we see that enormous changes have taken place. Many of the values that were learned years ago have been forgotten or completely reversed. In 



“Mae a wnelo [esgidiau] â hunan-dyb, â sut y mae cymdeithas yn barnu rhywun a’i le mewn cymdeithas... bydd [rhieni] weithiau hyd yn oed yn arbed ar fwyd ac yn mynd i ddyled er mwyn prynu i’w plant y symbolau a fydd yn sicrhau na fyddant yn teimlo eu bod yn cael eu diarddel na’u difrio. Pan fydd pobl yn canolbwyntio ar wneud arian a dod ymlaen yn y byd, byddant yn aml yn aberthu pob perthynas agos, pob perthynas deuluol a phob ymwneud â’r gymuned.”

Carol Craig, Cyfarwyddwr y Ganolfan Hyder a Ffyniant a sylfaenwyd yn Glasgow

mae’r datblygiad hwn yn gwbl briodol; mae’n cynnal y Rheol Aur. Fodd bynnag, wrth geisio dibenion materol, gallwn fradychu’r Rheol Aur, a’n niweidio ein hunain ac eraill.

Mae’n hysbys fod pobl sy’n dlyn buchedd fydol ac ariangar yn debygol iawn o fod yn ysmegu, yn goryfed ac yn cymryd cyffuriau. Canlyniad buchedd o’r fath yn aml yw straen emosiynol, sy’n dryllio’r cydbwysedd rhwng gweithio a byw.

Wrth geisio’r hyn yr ydym yn meddwl bod arnom ei eisiau (gwell ffordd o fyw) byddwn yn colli llawer o’r hyn y gall ei fod gennym yn barod – bywyd teuluol da, cyfeillion a synnwyr o gymuned. Wrth ymlid yr hyn y credwn y daw â hapusrwydd inni, byddwn yn colli’r hyn sydd gennym eisoes.

Cwestiynau

1. Beth oedd gwerthoedd eich teulu neu eich cymuned pan oeddech yn tyfu i fyny?
2. Sut y mae’r gwerthoedd a ddysgasoch yn ifanc yn dal i atseinio yn eich bywyd heddiw?
3. Pam ei bod yn ymddangos fod ar gynifer o bobl yn ein diwylliant bob amser eisiau mwy, a ninnau’n gwybod na wna hynny hwy na hapusach nac iachach?
4. Yn ôl David Myers, Athro Seicoleg Coleg Hope, Michigan, ‘mae a wnelo hapusrwydd nid yn gymaint â chael yr hyn y mae arnom ei eisiau ag â bod eisiau yr hyn sydd gennym’. Beth yw’r pethau sydd gennych ac yr ydych yn hapus a hwy? Sut y mae hyn yn adlewyrchu eich gwerthoedd?
5. Beth sydd wedi dod i’ch meddiant dros y blynyddoedd sy’n eich gwneud yn anhapus neu’n achosi anawsterau i chwi?

Gweithredu

Ysgrifennodd Giles Fraser, offeiriad o Anglican, mai’r ddogfen fwyaf moesol sydd gennym yw ein cyfriflen banc, am ei bod yn cofnodi yr hyn yr ydym yn rhoi gwerth arno: sut y byddwn yn treulio ein hamser, ac yn derbyn ein hincwm a’i wario. Gellir dweud yr un peth am gyllideb eglwys. Edrychwch ar eich cyfriflen banc a/neu gyllideb eich eglwys. A adlewyrchir eich gwerthoedd Cristnogol yn yr hyn yr ydych yn rhoi gwerth arno?

Gweddi

lesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni yn y winllan,
y man y tu ôl i’r waliau uchel
lle y tyf, mewn tir ffrwythlon, y grawnwin gwychaf i wneud y gwin gorau.
Yno, bendithia ni â gonestrwydd i adnabod dyddiau brad.
Nertha ni i dderbyn dy gyfeillgarwch fel na wastraffom ein ffrwyth.
Amen

“[Shoes] are about self-esteem, how someone is judged and their place in society...[parents]...will even skimp on food and take on debt to buy their children the right symbols to avoid feeling excluded and stigmatised... if people focus on making money and getting on they often sacrifice their intimate and family relationships and their involvement with community.”

Carol Craig, Director of the Glasgow-based Centre for Confidence and Well-Being

some cases this development is wholly appropriate; the Golden Rule is upheld. However in the pursuit of material goals we may betray the Golden Rule, harming ourselves and others.

Research and international comparisons suggest that societies with greater disparity in wealth also show more problems with drink, drugs, crime and lower levels of happiness and wellbeing compared to more equal societies. (Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett's book 'The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone' makes this case.) Emotional stress is often an outcome of this kind of lifestyle, putting work-life balance further out of kilter.

As we chase what we think we want (better lifestyles) we lose much of what we may already have, a good family life, friends and a real sense of community. In the pursuit of what we think will bring us happiness we are actually losing what we already have.

Questions

1. What were the values of your family or community when you were growing up?
2. How do the values you learned as a young person still resonate in your life today?
3. Why is it that so many people in our culture always seem to want more, when we know that it won't make them happier or healthier?
4. David Myers, a Professor of Psychology at Hope College in Michigan, says 'happiness is less a matter of getting what we want than wanting what we have.' What are the things that you have with which you are happy? How does this reflect your values?
5. What have you acquired over the years which makes you unhappy or gives you problems?

Action

Giles Fraser, an Anglican priest, has written that the most moral document in our possession is our bank statement, as it records what it is that we really value: how we spend our time, how we get our income, what we spend it on. One could similarly do this for a church budget. Look at your bank statement and / or your Church budget. Are your Christian values reflected in what you find valuable?

Prayer

Jesus, meet us in the vineyard
the place beyond our high walls
where fruit is growing in a fertile land producing the finest grapes to make the best wine.
There, bless us with integrity to recognise times of betrayal.
Strengthen us to accept your friendship that we might not waste our fruit.
Amen



Maddeuant



Wythnos 3: Dameg y Mab Afradlon a'i Frawd

Luc 15:11-32

Trafodaeth

Y rheidrwydd i faddau a'r lles cyffredin

Yn y sesiwn hwn gobeithiwn y byddwch yn myfyrio ar natur maddeuant. Gall hynny fod yn faddau camweddu, pechodau neu ddyledion. Gyda Dameg y Mab Afradlon a'i Frawd anogwn chwi i feddwl am yr hyn a wnawn fel cymdeithas pan fydd ein cyd-ddinasyddion yn methu â thalu eu dyledion inni.

Myfyrdod

Dywedodd Iesu, "maddeuwch, a maddeuir i chwi".

Ar y groes, dywedodd, "O Dad, maddau iddynt, oherwydd ni wyddant beth y maent yn ei wneud."

Nid oedd gan ei ddienyddwyr unrhyw syniad pwy yr oeddent yn ei ladd. Nid oeddent yn sylweddoli bod Iesu wedi ei anfon gan Dduw. Ni allent ddirnad y bywyd y mae Duw'n ei gynnig trwy Iesu, na deall gwir natur pechod nac, o ganlyniad, wir bosibiliadau maddeuant.

A allwn ni?

Ein pechod ni yw nid ein bod yn herio rheolau purdeb na moesoldeb. Nid hyd yn oed ein bod yn cydgyllwynio â thrachwant a hunan-les mewn gwleidyddiaeth neu economeg. Ein pechod yw ein bod wedi ein hargyhoeddi ein hunain mai ni, cyn belled â'n bod yn ddinasyddion cywir a gonest, yw rheolwyr cyfreithlon bywyd.

Yn y balchder hwn, rhagdybiwn mai ni a all farnu orau beth sy'n dda i ni a'n cymdogion. Byddwn yn cyfiawnhau ein barn hyd yn oed pan ddaw'n amlwg ei bod yn drychinebus o anghywir.

Mae gweithwyr yn colli eu gwaith, a phlant yn yfed dŵr budr neu'n tagu mewn mwrlwch, tra bod eraill yn dod i feddu ar arian mawr nad oes arnynt ei angen ac na allant byth ei wario yn eu hoes. Ac y mae miliynau eraill yn troi llygad dall ar eilunaddoliaeth y dosbarth elitaidd hwn er mwyn medru mwynhau eu harglwyddiaeth gyfyng dros eu bywydau eu hunain. Nid yw ein gallu i wneud penderfyniadau, i ddatrys problemau ac i gynaeafu cyfoeth y ddaear ond yn porthi ein hunanoldeb.

Forgiveness

Week 3: The Parable of the Prodigal Son and His Brother

Luke 15:11-32

Discussion

Forgiving obligations and the common good

In this session we hope that you will reflect on the nature of forgiveness. This might be forgiveness of trespasses, or sins, or debts. With the Parable of the Prodigal Son and His Brother we encourage you to think about what we do as a society when our fellow citizens are unable to pay their debts to us.

Reflection

Jesus said "forgive, and you will be forgiven".

Jesus said on the cross "Father forgive them, they do not know what they are doing."

His executioners had no idea who it was that they were killing. They did not recognise that Jesus had been sent by God. They could not conceive of the life God offers through Jesus, nor did they understand the true nature of sin and consequently the true potential of forgiveness.

Do we?

Our sin is not that we defy rules about purity or morality. It is not even that we collude with greed and self-interest in politics or economics. It is that we have convinced ourselves that as long as we are upright and honest citizens we are the legitimate rulers of life.

In this pride we presume to be the best judge of what is good, for us and our neighbour. We justify our judgement even when this is shown to be disastrously wrong.

Workers lose employment and children drink dirty water or choke on smog while others acquire amounts of money they do not need and cannot hope to spend in one lifetime. And millions more turn a blind eye to the idolatry of these elites in order to enjoy their own limited dominion over their lives. Our ability to make decisions, to invent solutions and to harvest the earth's riches only serves to bolster our selfishness.

Jesus taught that a free and creative will is not a right but a gift. God's grace liberates us from





Dysgai Iesu nad hawl yw ewyllys rydd a chreadigol, ond rhodd. Mae gras Duw'n ein rhyddhau o'r pechod o'n gosod ein hunain yng nghanol bywyd. Mae maddeuant Duw'n ein rhyddhau i ddechrau o'r newydd ac adfer perthynas.

Dameg

Luc 15:11-32 - Dameg y Mab Afradlon a'i Frawd

Cyd-destun a chanolbwynt y ddameg am y ddau frawd sy'n gweithio i'w tad yw'r berthynas rhyngddynt. Dywedodd Iesu hi wrth gynulleidfa o bobl a chanddynt brofiadau ac agweddau crefyddol gwrthgyferbyniol. Gwyddom fod y Phariseaid yno (Luc 15:2), dynion a oedd yn dilyn yn fanwl lythyren y gyfraith, ac nad oedd ganddynt unrhyw synnwyr o fod yn golledig, nac o fod wedi crwydro oddi wrth y gwirionedd, nac o fod mewn angen am iachawdwriaeth na maddeuant. Fe'u cynrychiolir yn y stori gan y mab hynaf: sownd, dib-ynadwy, gweithgar, diwyd.

Yn y dyrfa hefyd yr oedd rhai a allai weld yn gwbl glir fod arnynt angen iachawdwriaeth, y 'casglwyr trethi a'r pechaduriaid' (Luc 15:1). Gwyddai'r rhain yn iawn am bwysau cymdeithas a chywilydd personol, a beth oedd eu rhan hwy yn y stori; yr oeddent yn anufudd, yn bwdr ac yn ofer.

Ni fuasai'n syndod i neb yn y gynulleidfa pe bai stori'r athro'n dangos bod ymddygiad da'n cael ei gyfiawnhau a'i wobrwyo, a'r rhai hynny a fu'n ymddwyn yn anghyfrifol yn derbyn eu haeddiant.

Yr oedd gan Iesu, fodd bynnag, syniadau eraill. Ni fernir yr hyn a wna'r mab ieuangaf. Yn hytrach, ymatebir i'w edifeirwch a'i dröedigaeth â breichiau agored, llawn gras a chariad ac iachawdwriaeth. Mae'r mab wedi sylweddoli ei gamgymeriad ac wedi symud o ddweud: 'Fy nhad, dyro imi' (adnod 12) i ddweud: 'Fy nhad, maddau imi' (adnod 21).

Fe all fod yn rhaid i ninnau symud oddi wrth y diffyg ymwybyddiaeth o'r angen am faddeuant a ddangosir gan y mab hynaf calongaled at ddealltwriaeth realistig a gwylaidd o'n sefyllfa. Dim ond pan gydnabyddwn ein hangen ein hunain am faddeuant y gallwn gael perthynas onest a thrugarog ag eraill sydd mewn angen cyffelyb.

Mewn ymateb i gwestiwn a ofynnodd Pedr am sawl gwaith y dylai faddau, fe ddywedodd Iesu ddameg arall. Yn Mathew 18:23-35, darllenwn am was y maddeuodd ei feistr iddo ddyled anhygoel o fawr, ond a fethodd wedi hynny â dangos trugaredd at gyd-was yr oedd arno ddyled lawer yn llai iddo ef. Wrth derfynu, eglura Iesu fod yn rhaid inni, os ydym am fod mewn iawn berthynas â Duw ac â phobl eraill, nid yn unig faddau, ond maddau "o galon" (Mathew 18: 35).

Dos, a gwna dithau yr un modd: yr ystyr i ni heddiw

Yn Gymraeg, fel yn y ffurf gyffredin, draddodiadol ar Weddi'r Arglwydd yn yr Alban, gofynnwn am gael maddau ein 'dyledion, fel y maddeuwn ninnau i'n dyledwyr'. Gall traddodiadau Saesneg ofyn am faddau 'pechodau' neu 'gamweddau'. Wrth inni feddwl am arian ac economeg, gall canolbwyntio ar ddyledion ac ymrwymadau fod o gymorth. Anoga'r termau hyn ni i ystyried effeithiau a chanlyniadau go iawn. Byddai maddau'r hyn sydd ar eraill i ni yn gychwyn byd llawer tecach.

Dros y deng mlynedd ar hugain diwethaf, lledodd y bwlch rhwng cyfoethogion a thlodion y byd. Fe all nad aeth y tlodion bob amser yn dlotach mewn termau absoliwt ond, mewn perthynas â'r cyfoethogion, dyna'n sicr fu eu hanes. Bu hyn yn arbennig o amlwg yng nghymdeithas Prydain ac Iwerddon. Byddai rhai'n dadlau nad yw hyn ond yn adlewyrchiad o'r modd y mae ein cyfundrefn economaidd yn gweithio, ac nad yw o fawr bwys. Mae cwestiynau mawr ynglŷn â'r pwnc hwn, nid yn lleiaf y ddyletswydd i ofalu am y tlodion sydd ar hyn o bryd yn mynd yn dlotach. Dadleua rhai mai canlyniad polisi'r Llywodraeth yw hyn. Dywed eraill fod hwnnw, yn ei

our sin of placing ourselves at the centre of life. God's forgiveness frees us to make a fresh start, and restore relationships.

Parable

Luke 15:11-32 - The Parable of the Prodigal Son and His Brother

The context and focus of the parable about the two brothers who work for their father is the relationships. Jesus told it to an audience of people with contrasting religious experiences and outlooks. We know that the Pharisees were there (Luke 15:2), those who carefully followed the letter of the law, and who felt no sense of being lost, of having wandered from the truth, and therefore not in need of salvation or forgiveness. They are represented in the story by the older son: solid, dependable, hard-working and diligent.

Also in the crowd were those who could quite clearly see their need for salvation; the 'tax collectors and sinners' (Luke 15:1). Only too aware of social pressures and individual shame, these people knew their part in the story; they were the disobedient, debauched and dissolute.

It would have surprised no one in the audience if the outcome of the teacher's story had been that good behaviour is vindicated and rewarded, while those acting irresponsibly got their just desserts.

Jesus, however, has other ideas. The younger son's actions are not judged, but instead his penitence and transformation is met with open arms, full of grace and love and salvation. The son has realised his mistake and has moved from saying: 'Father, give me' (verse 12) to: 'Father, forgive me' (verse 21).

We too may need to move from the ignorance of the need for forgiveness displayed by the hard hearted elder brother, to a realistic and humble understanding of our position. Only when we recognise our own need to be forgiven will we be able to have a relationship of honesty and compassion with others in similar need.

In response to a question from Peter as to how often he needed to forgive, Jesus told another parable. In Matthew 18:23-35, we read about a servant who was forgiven an incredibly huge debt by his master, but who then failed to show mercy to a fellow servant who owed him a much smaller debt. In concluding, Jesus makes it clear that to be in a right relationship with God and other people we not only need to forgive, but to forgive "from our heart" (Matthew 18: 35).

Go and do likewise: what it means for us today

In Scotland, in the common traditional form of the Lord's Prayer, we ask for forgiveness of 'debts, as we forgive our debtors'. In other English-speaking traditions people may ask for forgiveness from 'sins' or 'trespasses'. When we think about money and economics, focussing on debts and obligations can be helpful. These terms encourage us to consider tangible effects and consequences. If we could forgive others their obligations to us we would begin to make a much fairer world.

Over the past 30 years the degree of separation between the rich and poor in this world has widened. The poor may not always have become poorer in absolute terms but, in relation to the rich, they certainly have done so. This has been especially noticeable in British and Irish society. Some would argue that this is simply a reflection of the ways in which our economic system works and that it does not really matter.

There are big questions around this subject. Not least is the obligation to take care of the poor who are currently becoming poorer. Some argue that this is a result of Government policy. Some say that this in turn





dro, yn ganlyniad anochel i'r modd y buom yn byw ein bywydau yn y gorffennol. Rhaid lleihau ein dyledion ariannol, nad yw neb yn debyg o'u maddau, a'r canlyniad yw bod llai o arian i'r Llywodraeth ei wario. Yr hyn sy'n gofidio llawer yn ein heglwysi yw bod gormod o'r baich yn syrthio ar y tlodion.

Wrth gwrs, y mae i dlodi sawl ffurf. Mae llawer o'n pobl ifainc yn dioddef oddi wrth dlodi uchelgais. Ni allant weld ffordd ymlaen, ac anaml yr anogir hwy i chwilio am un. Mae eraill yn dioddef oddi wrth ddiffyg cyfle i weithio neu ddiffyg darpariaeth hyfforddi. Mabwysiadodd Comisiwn yr Alban ar y Gwirionedd am Dlodi y slogan 'Hebom, nid yw dim o'n cwmpas drosom', i fynegi pryder bod rhwystro pobl rhag trafod a phenderfynu yn arwain at ddiffyg grym a hunanbenderfyniad.



Cwestiynau

1. Beth a achosodd yr anawsterau ariannol ac economaidd presennol? Sut y cyfrannodd yr hyn a wnaethoch, neu na wnaethoch, chwi at y sefyllfa?
2. Mae baich yn cael ei drosglwyddo i eraill yn y dyfodol a fydd yn gorfod talu'r ddyled. Sut y gallwn geisio eu maddeuant?
3. Pam ein bod fel pe baem yn barod i fyw mewn cymdeithas lle y mae cynifer o'n cymdogion yn poeni am ddyledion?
4. Yr ymateb i'r cwmpas ariannol fu i lywodraethau gwledydd geisio lleihau gwariant cyhoeddus. Sut y gall eglwysi sicrhau bod y newidiadau'n deg ac y dygir llywodraethau i gyfrif?
5. Pe baech yn benthycu i aelodau o'ch teulu, neu'n benthycu ganddynt, sut y gallai'r berthynas rhyngoch newid?

Gweithredu

Rhowch amser o'r neilltu i ysgrifennu popeth sydd arnoch i bobl, a phopeth sydd ar bobl i chwi. Os oes rhywun wedi gwneud cam â chwi, rhywbeth a barodd niwed neu golled i chwi, neu wedi gwneud rhywbeth a ystyriwch yn anghyfiawn, pa broses o faddeuant yr ydych yn ei phrofi? Cymerwch gam at faddau er mwyn gwella'r berthynas rhyngoch a'r bobl sydd o'ch cwmpas.

Gweddi

Iesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni.

Rhed yn gyflym i'n cyfarch

yn y man lle yr anghofir hunanbwysigrwydd a pharchusrwydd,
y cartref lle y buost yn hir ddisgwyl amdanom.

Yno, bendithia ni â maddeuant

a'n cofleidio'n ddiderfyn,

a dathlu yng ngŵydd pawb ein bod yn werth ein caru er gwaethaf ein camgymeriadau.

Iesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni wrth ddrws y wledd,

y man lle y mae cenfigen a briw yn rhemp

a chariad brawdol fel pe bai'n llawn darnau miniog o wydr,

a'r blas yn ein genau'n chwerw.

Yno, bendithia ni â maddeuant

mewn geiriau tyner a fydd yn meddalau ein calonnau

ac yn ein cymell i'r wledd â sicrwydd y cerir ni i graidd ein bod.

Amen

is a necessary result of the way that we have lived our lives in the past. Our financial debts, which no one is likely to forgive, have to be reduced and the consequence is that there is less money for Government spending. What many in the Churches find difficult is that too much of this burden is falling on the poor.

Of course poverty takes many forms. Many of our young people are affected by poverty of aspiration. They cannot see a way forward and are seldom encouraged to look for one. Others are affected by lack of employment opportunities or lack of training provision. Scotland's Poverty Truth Commission adopted the slogan 'Nothing about us without us is for us', expressing a concern that exclusion from debate and decision contributes to a poverty of power and self-determination.

Questions

1. What caused the current financial and economic difficulties? How did your action, or inaction, contribute to the situation?
2. A burden is being passed to others in the future who will have to repay the debt. How might we seek their forgiveness?
3. Why do we seem to be prepared to live in a society where so many of our neighbours are troubled with debt problems?
4. The response to the financial crash has been for national Governments to try to reduce public expenditure. How might churches ensure that changes are fair and that Government is held to account?
5. If you were to borrow from, or lend to, members of your family, how might your relationship change?

Action

Set aside some time to write down all the obligations you owe to people, and the obligations that others owe to you. If someone has done you a disservice, something which has harmed or resulted in a loss to you, or taken an action which you believe is unjust, what process of forgiveness do you experience? Take a step towards forgiveness to improve your relationships with those around you.

Prayer

Jesus, meet us running at high speed to greet us in the place where dignity and decorum are forgotten, a home where you have watched and waited for our arrival.

There, bless us with forgiveness in an embrace that never leaves us and a celebration for all to see that we are worth loving beyond our mistakes.

Jesus, meet us at the door to the party
the place where jealousy and hurt are rife when brotherly love seems loaded with shards of glass and bitterness is the taste in our mouths.

There, bless us with forgiveness in gentle words that soften our hearts and coax us in to the feast with a certainty that we are loved to our very core.

Amen

Gwawd



Wythnos 4: Dameg yr Ynfytn Cyfoethog

Luc 12:13-34

Trafodaeth

Trafodaeth: Rhan o'r byd ynteu ar wahân i'r byd?

Yn y sesiwn hwn gobeithiwn y byddwch yn myfyrio ar y difrïo a ddioddefodd Iesu ar ôl ei arestio. Gyda Dameg yr Ynfytn Cyfoethog, anogwn chwi i ystyried sut y mae bod yn dlawd ym Mhrydain yn yr unfed ganrif ar hugain yn ennyn mwy o ddifrïo nag o gydymdeimlad. A sut y mae'r Eglwys, sy'n cyhoeddi â llais proffwyd weledigaeth o'r Jerwsalem Newydd, y gall y byd fod yn lle gwahanol iawn, yn cael ei diystyru fel rhywbeth amherthnasol gan y pwerus a'r breintiedig.

Myfyrdod

Ac y mae wedi dod i hyn.

Mae Iesu are ei ben ei hun.

Yn guredig a distaw gerbron y dorf ferw.

Mae'r goron ddrain yn peri i'w ben bwyo ac yn ei ddallu â gwaed. Nid ymddengys fod gweld croen wedi'i fflangellu'n gareiau yn ennyn dim ond gwawd a cholffarn ymhlith y rhai a ymgasglodd i gymryd rhan yn y gwaradwydd hwn.

Pwy ydynt? Y grymus a'r gwan, teithwyr a phobl leol, y da a'r drwg a'r dihidio. Pawb wedi'i feddiannu gan anobaith ac yn cael rhyddhad dros dro yn y floedd: "Croeshoelie'r ef!"

Ni wŷyr y rhan fwyaf hyd yn oed pwy ydyw, nac o ba drosedd y cyhuddir ef, heb sôn am a ydyw'n euog ai peidio; o leiaf, bu'n ddigon gwirion i gael ei ddal gan gyfundrefn wleidyddol ddiostur. Ond nid yw ddim gwahaniaeth gan y dorf ai dyn drwg ydyw, neu ynteu ddyw naif neu anlwcus.

Mae'n sefyll yma, heb gyfaill, heb obaith, heb esgusodion.

Mae Iesu'n deall. Mae bob amser wedi deall. Mae'r gynddaredd hon yn cuddio ofn mawr; straen estynedig ingol pobl orthrymedig a wawdir yn feunyddiol ac sy'n gorfod sefyll yn guredig a distaw a goddef hynny. Mae'n ymwybodol o'r llanw o atgasedd sy'n codi megis ton o'r dyrfa hon, ac yn rhoi tuag ato. Ac fe wŷyr pam.

Ridicule

Week 4: The Parable of the Rich Fool

Luke 12:13-34

Discussion

A part of or apart from the world?

In this session we hope that you will reflect on the ridicule Jesus suffered after his arrest. With the Parable of the Rich Fool we encourage you to consider how being poor in Britain and Ireland in the 21st century invites more ridicule than sympathy. And how the Church, proclaiming in a prophet's voice the vision of a New Jerusalem, that the world can be a very different place, is often dismissed as irrelevant by the powerful and by vested interests.

Reflection

So it has come to this.

Jesus stands alone.

Beaten and silent in front of this seething crowd.

The crown of thorns makes his head throb and blinds him with blood. The sight of skin flogged to shreds seems only to provoke ridicule and condemnation among those gathered to participate in this humiliation.

Who are they? Great and weak, traveller and local, the good, the evil, the apathetic. Possessed by despair and finding temporary relief in the cry: "Crucify him!"

Most do not even know who he is, of what crime he is accused, let alone whether or not he is guilty; he is at least foolish enough to be apprehended by a merciless political regime. But whether this man was wicked or naïve or unlucky is of no consequence to the crowd.

Here he stands, without friends, without hope, without excuses.

Jesus understands, and has always understood. This fury masks an intense fear; the prolonged traumatic stress of an oppressed people who experience ridicule on a daily basis and must stand silent and beaten under it. He is aware of the tide of loathing that rises like a wave in this crowd and thunders towards him, and why.





Gwawdio'r hyn a ofnant y bydd pobl. Fe all mai'r ddelwedd fwyaf heriol o Ddiodeffaint Crist yw'r esiampl y mae'n ei gosod o un sy'n glynu at gywirdeb cariad yn wyneb camfarnu a gwawd treisiol.

Mae lesu ar ei ben ei hun.

Mae ar ei ben ei hun wrth fyrddau'r gwleidyddion a'r gweision sifil, y diplomyddion a'r cynghorwyr arbennig, y rhai sy'n gwneud penderfyniadau yn ein cymdeithas wrth eu gwaith. Ânt i'r afael â dyledion y trydydd byd, y gyfundrefn les, strategaethau a chynlluniau at adferiad economaidd. Sut y gallai lesu ennyn gwawd yn y sefyllfa hon? Pa ofnau y gallai eu datguddio yn y rhai sydd mewn grym?

Wrth i'r dorf floeddio "Ymaith ag efi!" ymhle y safwch chwi?

Dameg

Luc 12:13-34 - Dameg yr Ynfytn Cyfoethog

Pwysleisia'r ddameg hon rai o'r problemau sy'n wynebu pobl gyfoethog. Mae'r dyn yn y stori yn meddwl amdano'i hun, ac am bethau'r byd hwn. Ond mae'n anghofio Duw a phawb o'i gwmpas, a fyddai, bid siŵr, yn anghenus ac wedi elwa'n fawr pe bai ef wedi bod yn barod i rannu ei olud.

Yn ein cymdeithas ni, nid y cyfoethog a wawdir, ond y tlawd. Dychmygwch rywun yn ein dyddiau ni sy'n gwbl wahanol i'r Ynfytn Cyfoethog – rhiant darbodus, efallai, sy'n gwneud heb rywbeth neu'i gilydd fel y gall y plant gael gwisg ysgol a dathlu'r Nadolig? Nid yw ein diwylliant ni yn anrhydeddu rhieni fel hyn; yn hytrach, fe'u beir am fod y raddfa uchel o ddibyniaeth ar fudd-daliadau yn cyfrannu at y diffyg ariannol. Dylent ddod o hyd i waith, a chynilo at y dyfodol ...

“Enillwch gymaint ag a allwch, rhowch gymaint ag a allwch, cynilwch gymaint ag a allwch.”

John Wesley, Sylfaenydd Methodistiaeth

I lawer o bobl, meddiannau yw popeth. Mae nofio yn erbyn y llif yn golygu cael eich gwrthod a'ch gwawdio.

Nid yw cyfoeth a meddiannau yn foesol ddrwg ynddynt eu hunain. Camddyfynnir Paul yn aml; wrth ysgrifennu at Timotheus, nid dweud mai 'arian' yw gwraidd pob drygioni a wnaeth Paul; 'cariad at arian' (1 Timotheus 6:10) yw'r drwg. Y peth pwysig am feddiannau yw nid faint ohonynt sydd gennym, ond beth yw ein perthynas â hwy.

Y mae gwersi ymarferol amlwg mewn dangos haelioni ym mhopeth a allwn. Yn ogystal â chynorthwyo eraill, gallwn ailasesu ein perthynas ein hunain â meddiannau ac arian.

Ymateb i'r Ganolfan Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol

Yn y sesiwn cyntaf, cyflwynasom yr adroddiad *The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty*, a gynhyrchwyd gan bedair eglwys ym Mhrydain. Ymatebodd y Ganolfan Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, seiat ddoethion sydd mewn cysylltiad agos â'r Ysgrifennydd Gwaith a Phensiynau, Iain Duncan Smith, trwy gynhyrchu ei hadroddiad ei hun, *Setting the record straight*, a geisiai danseilio, yn hytrach nag ateb, y pwyntiau heriol a godwyd yn *The lies we tell ourselves*. Gallwch ddarllen ymateb yr eglwysi yma: www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/response-to-centre-for-social-justice/

Trwy ein cyd-dystiolaeth a'n hesiampl gyffredin, gallwn rannu rhai o elfennau ein ffydd y mae iddynt fudd ysbrydol. Cariad a maddeuant sydd wrth galon y ffydd Gristnogol, nid golud.

Men and women ridicule what they fear. Perhaps the most challenging image of Christ's Passion is the example he sets of one who insists on the integrity of love in the face of misrepresentation and violent mockery.

Jesus stands alone.

He stands alone at the table of the politicians and civil servants, diplomats and special advisers; the decision-makers of our society at work. They tackle decisions about third-world debt, welfare system, economic strategies and plans for recovery. How might Jesus invite ridicule in this situation? What fears might he be exposing in those with power?

As the crowd gathers to cry "Away with him!" where will you stand?

Parable

Luke 12:13-34 - The Parable of the Rich Fool

This parable emphasises some of the problems faced by those who are wealthy. The man in the story thinks of himself, and the things of this world. But he forgets God and all those round him who would no doubt have been in need, and who would have greatly benefited if he had only been willing to share his prosperity.

"Earn all you can, give all you can, save all you can"

John Wesley, Founder of Methodism

In our society it isn't the rich who are ridiculed, but the poor. Imagine the opposite of the Rich Fool in our time. Perhaps a thrifty parent who goes without to make sure their children had school uniforms and could celebrate Christmas? And yet our culture does not honour these parents; they are instead blamed for causing the deficit by the high level of welfare dependency. They should just get a job, and save for the future...

For many people, the pursuit of possessions is everything. Swimming against the tide of consumerism may invite rejection and ridicule.

The abundance of wealth and possessions is not in itself morally wrong. Paul is often misquoted; in writing to Timothy he didn't say that 'money' is the root of all kinds of evil, but that it is the 'love of money' (1 Timothy 6:10) which is the problem. The important thing about possessions is not how many or few we have, but what our relationship is with them.

There are obvious practical lessons in demonstrating generosity in all that we can.

As well as helping others, we can reassess our own relationship with possessions and money.

By our common witness and example, we can share some of the elements of our faith which have spiritual benefits. Love and forgiveness, not wealth, are at the heart of the Christian faith.

Response to Centre for Social Justice

In the first session we introduced the report *The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty*, produced by four British Churches. The Centre for Social Justice, a think tank with close links to Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith responded by producing their own report *Setting the record straight*, which sought to undermine rather than engage with the challenging points raised in *The lies we tell ourselves*. You can read a response from the Churches here:

[www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/
response-to-centre-for-social-justice/](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/response-to-centre-for-social-justice/)





Sut felly y gallwn sicrhau bod ein perthynas â'n meddiannau nid yn unig yn un foddhaol, ond yr un orau posibl, yn berthynas berffaith? Sut y gallwn barhau'n rhan o'r byd, ond heb lynu wrth arian nac, yn sicr, gael ein rheoli ganddo? Fe all fod bod yn ymwybodol o natur fyrhoedlog ac, yn y pen draw, anfoddhaol golud yn fan cychwyn da. Mae ymwybyddiaeth o'r niwed posibl y gall meddiannau ei wneud i'n perthynas ag eraill ac â Duw hefyd yn gymorth.

Ond gwahodd dirmyg a gwawd yw mynd mor groes â hyn i'n diwylliant. Heddiw, fel yn nyddiau Iesu, bydd dweud rhywbeth sy'n mynd yn groes i arferion cyffredin cymdeithas yn sicr o ennyn cerydd oddi wrth y rhai hynny sy'n dal awenau grym.

Dos, a gwna dithau yr un modd: yr ystyr i ni heddiw

Mae ymrwymiad yr eglwysi i sefyll gyda'r di-rym, y rhai a wthiwyd i gyrion cymdeithas a'r bregus yn rhan o'n ffydd. Ac eto, pan fydd eglwysi a Christnogion yn cwestiynu golud neu'n herio rhagdybiaethau am economeg neu wleidyddiaeth, fe'u dilornir yn aml. Beth wŷr criw Duw am y byd go iawn beth bynnag?

Yr hyn a wŷr yr eglwysi yw profiad bywyd pobl yn ein cynulleidfaoedd a'n cymunedau, o bob safle cymdeithasol. Hen ac ifanc, cyfoethog a thlawd, merched a dynion. Pobl ffyddiog ac amheuwyr. Bancwyr a gwleidyddion, yn ogystal â rhai sy'n ddi-waith neu'n bobl grwydrol heb gofnod amdanynt.

Disgrifiodd Eglwys yr Alban 'ryfel ar y tlawd', lle y mae'r cyfoethog a'r pwerus yn ein cymdeithas yn difriô'r tlodion ac yn eu beio am eu hanfanteision. Arweinir y rhyfel gan y cyfryngau a'r dosbarth gwleidyddol sy'n taenu mythau a chelwyddau am achosion tldi i gyfiawnhau torri ar wario a diwygio nawdd cymdeithasol. Y gwir yw nad oes unrhyw dystiolaeth i gefnogi'r ideoleg sy'n gyrru'r diwygiadau hyn. Cam yn ôl ydynt at ragfarnau oes Fictoria am dldi 'haeddiannol ac anhaeddiannol'.

Parodd cwmp adeilad ffatri yn Bangladesh y llynedd i lawer o bobl, a llawer o gwmnïau, sylweddoli i ba raddau yr aeth economïau'r Gorllewin i ddibynnu ar lafur rhad pobl mewn sawl rhan o'r byd. Dan un â difriô'r tlodion yn ein gwlad ein hunain, yr ydym yn cymryd rhan mewn ecsbloetio pobl yn gymdeithasol ac yn economaidd mewn sawl gwlad arall. Mae hyn yn cyffwrdd ein bywydau mewn ffyrdd personol iawn; sut y gwneir y dillad a wisgwn bob dydd? Mewn gwirionedd, nid yw'r pwnc, gartref na thramor, mor wahanol â hynny i bwnc caethwasiaeth yr ymgyrchodd ein heglwysi mor

“Pan roddaf fwyd i'r tlodion, gelwir fi'n sant. Pan ofynnaf pam eu bod yn dlawd, fe'm gelwir yn gomiwnydd.”

Dom Hélder Pessoa Câmara,
Archesgob Eglwys Rufain yn Brasil

How, then, do we ensure that our relationship with our possessions is not only a satisfactory one, but is an optimal, perfect, one? How do we remain part of the world, but not hold tightly to money and certainly not be driven by it? Being aware of wealth's transient and ultimately unsatisfying nature is perhaps a good place to start. An awareness of the potential damage which possessions can do to our relationships with others and with God is also helpful.

But to be so counter-cultural is to invite scorn and ridicule; in Jesus' time as well as today saying something which flies in the face of the prevailing cultural norms will no doubt attract rebuke from those who control the levers of power.

Go and do likewise: what it means for us today

The Churches' commitment to being in solidarity with the powerless, the marginalised and the vulnerable is a core part of our faith. And yet when Churches and Christians question affluence or challenge assumptions about economics or politics, they are often derided. What do God-botherers know about the real world anyway?

What Churches know is the real life experience of people – in our congregations and communities, from every walk of life. Old and young, rich and poor, women and men. People confident in their faith and those who are full of doubt. People who are bankers and politicians, as well as people who are unemployed or undocumented migrants.

The Church of Scotland has described a 'war on the poor' where the rich and powerful in our society blame and stigmatise poor people; 'chavs', 'neds' or 'scallies' for their disadvantages. This propaganda war is waged by the media and political class when they spread myths and lies about the causes of poverty to justify cuts in spending and reform to social security. The truth is there is no evidence to back up the ideology which drives these reforms. It is a return to Victorian prejudices of 'deserving and undeserving' poor.

The collapse of a factory building in Bangladesh last year brought home to many people, and to many companies, the extent to which Western economies have come to depend upon the cheap labour provided by poor people in many parts of the world. While we stigmatise the poor in our country we collude with the social and economic exploitation of people in many

**“When I give food to the poor,
they call me a saint. When I
ask why they are poor, they
call me a communist.”**

Dom Hélder Pessoa Câmara, Brazilian
Roman Catholic Archbishop





hir ac mor galed i'w orchfygu yn y ddenawfed ganrif a'r bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg.

Fel prynwyr, gallwn ddarganfod mwy am amodau gwaith y sawl sy'n gwneud ein dillad ac yn llunio ein peiriannau. A gallwn wedyn benderfynu a ydym am brynu nwydd arbennig neu ynteu hysbysu ein teimladau i'r gwerthwr. Fel buddsoddwyr – buddsoddwyr unigol neu ran o sefydliad megis yr Eglwys – gallwn ofyn mwy am fuddsoddi moesegol, fel nad â arian yr eglwys i gefnogi osgoi talu treth, a lle y gall gefnogi cwmnïau sy'n cyfrannu at y lles cyffredin.

Cwestiynau

1. Rhoddodd Duw inni'r rhyddid i ddewis sut i ddefnyddio ein hamser, ein sgiliau, ein galluoedd a'n meddiannau. Beth yw eich perthynas chwi â rhoddion Duw i chwi?
2. Dywedwyd y gall 'ein meddiannau ein meddiannu'. Pa un gwrthrych sydd â chymaint o afael arnoch fel y gwelech ei golli yn fwy na dim arall? Ar ôl siarad am y peth, a wnewch chwi rywbeth yn wahanol?
3. Faint o gyfrifoldeb sydd arnom, yn unigolion ac yn aelodau o sefydliad i ymchwilio, i herio ac i gwestiynu, ac i alw am a gweithredu dros newid?
4. Yn eich bywyd bob dydd, ym mha le y gwelwch 'ryfel ar y tlawd', naill ai fel dioddefydd eich hun neu fel un sy'n cymryd rhan yn ddjarwybod?

Gweithredu

Yng ngoleuni'r deunydd a astudiwyd hyd yn hyn yn y gyfres hon – sut y byddwn yn trin pobl eraill yn ein cymdeithas, yn gwario ein harian, yn buddsoddi ein hegri – enwch un weithred y byddwch yn ystyried ei gwneud i beri gwahaniaeth.

Gweddi

lesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni yn y man lle y teimlwn yr ofn mwyaf
 yn y man lle y mae gwawd yn ein parlysu,
 y tu mewn i'n meddyliau,
 lle y mae celwyddau'n argyhoeddi a hunan-werth yn absennol.
 Yno, bendithia ni â'r sicrwydd dy fod yn deall ein poen
 ac atgoffa ni i ti brofi gwaradwydd
 fel y byddai i ni ymddiried drachefn.
 Amen

other countries. This touches our own lives in very personal ways; how are the clothes we wear every day made? The issue, both home and abroad is not really so very different from the slavery that our churches campaigned so long and so hard to overcome in the 18th and 19th centuries.

As consumers we can find out more about the conditions of the workers who make our clothes and manufacture our hardware. We can then decide whether or not we are going to purchase that particular commodity, or make our feelings known to the retailer. As investors, individuals or part of an institution such as a Church, we can ask more about ethical investment, so that the Church's money does not go to support tax dodging, or where it can support companies which contribute to the common good.

Questions

1. God has given us the freedom to choose how we make use of our time, skills, abilities and our possessions. What is your relationship to the gifts God has given to you?
2. It has been said that 'what we possess may come to possess us'. What one object has a hold over you so that you would feel its loss more deeply than any other? Will you do anything differently having talked about it?
3. How much responsibility do we have as individuals and as members of an institution to find out, to challenge and question, and to call for and act for change?
4. In your daily life where do you witness a 'war on the poor' either as a victim or as an unwitting perpetrator?

Action

In the light of the material studied so far in this series - how we treat others in our society, how we spend our money, how we invest our energy - name one action you will consider taking in order to make a difference.

Prayer

Jesus, meet us where we feel the most fear
the place where ridicule paralyses us
inside our minds where lies are convincing and self worth is absent.
There, bless us with security that you understand our pain
and remind us that you experienced ridicule that we might trust again.
Amen



Aberth



Wythnos 5: Damhegion y Ddafad Golledig a'r Darn Arian Colledig

Luc 15: 1-10

Trafodaeth

Beth y mae pobl eraill yn ei aberthu drosom ni?

Yn y sesiwn hwn gobeithiwn y byddwch yn myfyrio ar wahoddiad Duw inni i aberthu i fynegi ein cariad at ein cymydog. Gyda Damhegion y Ddafad Golledig a'r Darn Arian Colledig anogwn chwi i ystyried beth y mae eraill yn ei roi heibio (yn groes i'w hewyllys, efallai) er mwyn i ni gael dillad rhad neu economi seiliedig ar garbon.

Myfyrdod

Byddwn weithiau'n oedi rhag ceisio nesáu at Dduw rhag ofn i Dduw ofyn inni aberthu rhywbeth na fyddem yn barod i'w aberthu. Edrychwch ar Iesu, meddwn, ni fu neb erioed yn nes at Dduw; yr oedd hyd yn oed yn galw Duw'n 'Abba' – cyfarchiad clòs iawn. A mynnodd Duw iddo aberthu ei fywyd.

Ofnwn y bydd Duw'n ein profi i weld a ydym yn deilwng o'r agosatrydd a geisiwn trwy fynnu ein bod yn gwylio'n ddiymadferth tra bydd rhywun a garwn yn dioddef.

Os arhoswn am ennyd i ystyried pa ddelwedd o Dduw sydd y tu ôl i'r ofnau hyn, fe all y sylweddolwn na ydym yn deall cariad Duw nac aberth Iesu, Mab Duw. Y gwir yw nad yw Duw'n profi ein cariad trwy beri dioddefaint i ni nac i'r rhai a roddwyd inni i'w caru.

Nid yw'r torcalon mewn bywyd yn ddim ond torcalon. Nid yw'r trychinebau y bydd pawb ohonom yn eu profi yn ddim ond trychinebau. Nid rhwystrau mohonynt mewn rhyw garchar-wersyll ysbrydol.

Gwahoddiad sydd inni i aberthu. Nid yw byth yn brawf o'n teyrngarwch.

Y mae gennym oll flaenoriaethau y mae Duw yn ei ras yn ein gwahodd i'w newid neu i adael iddynt farw o'n mewn. Y dewis arall yw gwylio eraill yn aberthu drosom ni, nid o'u bodd ond o angenrhaid a than orfodaeth.

Rhieni'n aberthu'r bwyd a dyfant i fwydo'u plant i'w werthu ym marchnadoedd moethus y goludog.

Dinasyddion Tuvalu ym Môr y De, yn aberthu eu tir i'r môr sy'n ei fwyta, yn gwylio'n ddiymadferth wrth i'w hynys suddo am fod lefel y môr yn codi oherwydd newid yn yr hinsawdd.

Sacrifice

Week 5: The Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin

Luke 15: 1-10

Discussion

What do other people sacrifice for us?

In this session we hope that you will reflect on God's invitation to us to make sacrifices which will express love to our neighbour. With the Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin we encourage you to consider what others give up (perhaps unwillingly) in order that we might have cheap clothes or a carbon-based economy.

Reflection

Oftentimes we hesitate to seek a closer intimacy with God fearing that in return God will demand a sacrifice from us that we are not willing to contemplate. Look at Jesus, we say, no man or woman was ever closer to God; he even called him 'Abba' – a very intimate form of address. And in return God required that he sacrifice his life.

What we fear is that God will test us to see if we are worthy of the intimacy we seek by requiring us to watch helpless as one we love suffers.

If we pause a moment and consider what image of God this fear portrays we may begin to realise that we neither understand God's love nor the sacrifice Jesus made as God's son. In reality God does not test our love by inflicting hardship on us or those given to us to love.

The heartaches of life are simply heartaches. The tragedies we all experience are simply tragedies; they were never obstacles in a spiritual boot-camp.

Sacrifice is an invitation, and never a test of loyalty.

We all have priorities that we are invited to change or let die within us, by God's graceful invitation. The alternative is to watch as others make sacrifices for us, not by their willing participation but of necessity and under duress.

Parents who sacrifice the food they might grow to feed their children instead grow cash crops for the luxury markets of the wealthy.





Mewn heolydd nid nepell oddi wrthy chwi, plant yn aberthu eu plentyndod i ofalu am riant neu frawd neu chwaer.

Yng ngoleuni aberth Iesu, ac aberth eich cymdogion pell ac agos, drosoch, beth yr ydych chi'n fodlon ei roi o'r neilltu er mwyn eraill?

Os yr ateb yw 'dim byd', bydd Duw'n dal i wyllo tra aberthir pobl a'u hamgylchfyd i dduw nad yw na chariadus na thyner ond sy'n rheibus a gwancus; onid Mamon yw'r duw y dylem ofni nesáu ato?

Dameg

Luc 15: 1-10 - Damhegion y Ddafad Golledig a'r Darn Arian Colledig

Yn yr Efengyl yn ôl Luc, mae'r storïau hyn, ynghyd â dameg y Mab Colledig (neu Afradlon) yn ffurfio trioleg. Ar yr olwg gyntaf, ymddengys eu bod oll yn ymwneud â cholled, ac atgyfnerthir yr argraff honno, efallai, gan y teitlau a roddir i ddwy ohonynt – y Ddafad Golledig a'r Darn Arian Colledig.

Mae colled yn amlwg yn elfen gyffredin i'r tair stori, ond nid dyna eu prif bwynt. Mae diweddgo'r ddwy gyntaf, a gofnodir bron yn yr un geiriau (cymharwch adnodau 5-7 a 9-10), yn pwysleisio llawenydd y perchennog pan ddaw o hyd i'r hyn a gollwyd, a'r modd y mae'n rhannu'r llawenydd hwnnw ag eraill.

Er nad yw'r rhan fwyaf ohonom erioed wedi colli dafad, buom oll yn chwilio am bethau, darnau arian, allweddi, ffôn symudol. I ddiweddarau'r damhegion gallem, efallai, feddwl am ein llawenydd o ddod o hyd i ddogfen bwysig ar y cyfrifiadur yr oeddem yn meddwl ei bod wedi ei dileu!

Dyweddodd Iesu'r storïau hyn i ddangos y pwysigrwydd a rydd Duw ar ddod o hyd i'r peth a gollwyd, i'r bobl a aeth ar gyfeiliorn, o fwriad neu trwy ddamwain, a'r ymdrech y mae'n rhaid wrthi i'w hadfer.

Rhan o'n galwad yw dirnad ystyr aberth yn ein bywydau. Fe all y bydd amserau pan fydd Duw'n gofyn inni aberthu meddiannau materol; fe all y bydd amserau pan ofynnir inni aberthu ein statws. Bydd yn gymorth inni os ystyriwn ai colled i ni yw'r aberth, ai ynteu rhodd neu elw i eraill.

Cariad Crist at eraill a barodd iddo aberthu'r cyfan. Yn ei lythyr at yr eglwys yn Philipi, mae Paul yn ein hatgoffa sut y'gwacaodd ei hun, gan gymryd ffurf caethwas ... fe'i darostyngodd ei hun, gan fod yn ufudd hyd angau' (Philipiaid 2: 7-8).

Gall cofio cymhelliad Crist dros ei aberth ein cynorthwyo i ddeall tymor y Garawys yn well. Nid tymor i hunanymwadu'n dduwiol mohono, ond yn hytrach tymor sy'n ein galw a'n gwahodd i fyw dan garu.

Dos, a gwna dithau yr un modd: yr ystyr i ni heddiw

Mae darbodaeth yn air na chlywir mohono bron byth yn ein heglwysi heddiw. Arferai Albanwyr eu disgrifio'u hunain fel pobl ddarbodus. Ystyr gyffredin 'darbodaeth' yw bod yn ofalus o arian. Ond mae iddo ystyr ehangach, sef bod yn ofalus o'n holl adnoddau a'u defnyddio'n ddoeth.

Yr hyn sy'n cyfateb yn y byd modern yw stiwardiaeth. Mae a wnelo stiwardiaeth â defnyddio'n doniau'n

“Wrth edrych, Iesu, ar y groes, a meddwl dyfnder d'angau loes, pryd hyn rwyf yn dibrisio'r byd a'r holl ogoniant sy ynddo'i gyd”.

*Allan o gyfieithiad William Williams
Pantycelyn o emyn Isaac Watts*

Citizens of Tuvalu in the South Seas sacrifice their land to the encroaching sea, helplessly watching as their island drowns in rising sea levels caused by climate change.

In streets not far from you, children sacrifice their childhood to care for a parent or a sibling. In the light of the sacrifice Jesus made for you, and the sacrifices made for you by your neighbours both near and far, what are you prepared to forego for the sake of others?

If the answer is 'nothing' then God will continue to watch as people and environment are sacrificed to a god who is neither loving nor tender but rapacious and demanding; surely Mammon is the god with whom all should fear to be intimate?

Parable

Luke 15: 1-10 - The Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin

In Luke's Gospel, these stories, along with the parable of the lost (or Prodigal) Son form a trilogy. At first glance it looks as though these tales are all about loss, impressions which are perhaps reinforced in our minds by the shorthand English titles which we have given to these stories: the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, the Lost Son.

Loss is clearly a common element, but in many ways it is not the main point of these stories. The parallel conclusion of the first two stories, recorded for us in near-identical words (compare verses 5-7 and 9-10), emphasises the rejoicing of the owner over finding what was lost, and the sharing of that joy with others.

Although most of us may never have mislaid a sheep, we have all spent time looking for things, coins, keys, mobile phones. To update the parables we might reflect on our joy at finding that crucial document on a computer which we thought was deleted but was in fact saved!

“Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all”

From Isaac Watts' hymn *When I survey the wondrous cross*

Jesus told these stories to illustrate the importance which God places on finding that which was lost, those who have gone astray, whether wilfully or by accident, and the efforts required to restore them.

Part of our calling is to discern what sacrifice means in our lives. There may be times when God will ask us to sacrifice material possessions; there may be times when we are invited to sacrifice our status. It will help to consider whether the sacrifice is about loss to us, or alternatively about the gift or gain for others.

It was Christ's love for others that led him to sacrifice everything. Paul reminds us in his letter to the church in Philippi how he 'emptied himself, taking the form of a slave... he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death.' (Philippians 2: 7-8).

Remembering Christ's motivation for sacrifice may help us to more fully embrace the season of Lent. It is not a season for pious self-denial. Rather it is a call and an invitation to a life of living through loving.

Go and do likewise: what it means for us today

Thrift is a word that is hardly ever heard in the Church nowadays. Scots used to describe themselves as thrifty people. Mostly it meant being careful with money. But it has a wider meaning. It means being careful with all our resources and using them wisely.

The modern equivalent is stewardship. Stewardship is about using our talents wisely. It is very easy to look





ddoeth. Peth hawdd yw edrych o'n cwmpas, yn ein bywydau ein hunain a bywydau eraill, a gweld doniau'n cael eu gwastraffu. Yr ydym wedi dyfeisio dulliau hynod wastraffus o wneud pethau.

Rhoesom drwyddedau i gwmniau nad oes ganddynt fawr ddim gofal am ecoleg ac y mae eu gweithgareddau wedi anrheithio darnau enfawr o'r Ddaear.

Yn naif iawn, cymerasom yn ganiataol y byddai'r sawl sy'n gwneud penderfyniadau mewn llywodraeth a diwydiant yn gweithredu bob amser er lles pawb ohonom. A gadawsom iddynt fynd rhagddynt. Gwnaethant hwythau bethau'n aml er eu lles byr-dymor hwy eu hunain, a neb arall.

Gelwir ni i fyw bywyd yn llawn mewn dynwarediad o fywyd Crist. Taflood ef y cyfnewidwyr arian o'r deml. Rhaid i ninnau wneud yr un peth.

I Iesu, lle cyhoeddus oedd y deml, ac fe'i trowyd yn 'ogof lladron' (Mathew 21:12). Yn y blynyddoedd diwethaf bu tuedd annymunol i gau pobl sy'n Gristnogion allan o drafodaethau cyhoeddus. Rhaid inni beidio â derbyn hyn yn dawel. Rhaid inni hawlio ein lle drachefn mewn bywyd cyhoeddus. Rhaid inni herio difaterwch a diogi, yn ein cyd-ddinasyddion yn ogystal ag yn ein calonnau ein hunain. Gwyddom fod gan bobl yn ein gwlad ddemocrataidd y grym a'r gallu i newid pethau, ac eto yr ydym yn aml yn ei chael hi'n anodd mynegi beth yr ydym yn gobeithio amdano na lleisio'n dyheadau.

Rhaid i'n dynwarediad o Grist fod yn Gristnogaeth fwy gweithredol, fwy cyfranogol. Fel y chwiliodd y bugail am ei ddafad a'r wraig am ei darn arian, rhaid i ninnau chwilio, a rhoi ein hamser a'n doniau er y lles cyffredin.

Cwestiynau

1. Beth allwn ni ei wneud fel unigolion ac eglwysi i sicrhau yr adlewyrchir ein credoau Cristnogol mewn polisiau cyhoeddus ac ym mholisiau'r llywodraeth?
2. Trafododd Comisiwn yr Alban ar y Gwirionedd am Dlodi gynnwys yr holl bobl mewn penderfyniadau sy'n effeithio arnynt, gan ddefnyddio'r arwyddair 'Hebom, nid yw dim o'n cwmpas drosom'. Sut y gall Cristnogion weithio i greu lle i wrando i'r rhai sydd fel rheol yn llefaru, a lle i lefaru i'r rhai hynny na chlywir eu llais yn aml?
3. Sut beth fyddai ein bywyd pe baem yn gwneud darbodaeth yn egwyddor arweiniol?
4. Diffinwyd stiwardiaeth fel cadw rhywbeth mewn ymddiriedolaeth i eraill. Sut yr ydym yn anrhydeddu'r ymddiriedaeth hon?

Gweithredu

Digwydd Wythnos Gweithredu ar Dlodi a Digartrefedd ar ddiwedd Ionawr a dechrau Chwefror bob blwyddyn. Trefnir yr wythnos hon o weithredu, gweddi ac eiriol gan yr Eglwys yn Gweithredu ar Dlodi, Eglwysi'r Alban yn Gweithredu ar Dai, a Chyfiawnder Tai. Ystyriwch sut y gallech chwi, eich grŵp a'ch eglwys gymryd rhan yn y gwaith hwn yn y blynyddoedd sydd i ddod, i ddangos eich gofal am bawb a'ch gofal hefyd dros gyfiawnder. www.actionweek.org.uk

Gweddi

Iesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni ar noson dywyll, lawog,
yn y man lle na allwn ddod o hyd i'n ffordd adref,
lle'r ydym yn drallodus, yn lluddedig ac yn unig.
Yno, bendithia ni ag adnabyddiaeth o'th gariad
a gad i'r olwg yn dy lygaid ddangos inni
iti aberthu drosom am dy fod yn meddwl ein bod yn werth yr aberth. Amen

around, in our own lives and in the lives of others, and see talents being wasted. We have invented ways of doing things that are enormously wasteful.

In the process we have given licences to companies whose concern for ecology has been minimal and whose activities have laid waste vast tracts of the Earth.

Naïvely we have assumed that decision-makers in government and industry will act in the best of interests of all of us at all times. So we have let them get on with it. They, in turn, have often acted in the best, short term, interests of only themselves.

We are called to live life to the full in imitation of the life of Christ. He threw the money changers out of the temple. We must do the same.

For Jesus the temple was the public space and had become a 'den of robbers' (Matthew 21:12). There has been a disturbing trend in recent years for people who profess their Christianity to be shut out of the public space. We must give up our quiet acceptance of this and reclaim our place in public life. We should challenge apathy and indolence, in our fellow citizens as well as in our own hearts. We know that people in our democracy have power and the ability to change things, yet so often we find it hard to articulate what it is that we hope for, to voice our aspirations.

Our imitation of Christ needs to become a more active, a more participative, Christianity. As the shepherd searched for his sheep, and the woman for her coin, so we must search, giving our time and talents for the common good.

Questions

1. What can we do as individuals and as Churches, to ensure that our Christian beliefs and values are reflected in public / government policy?
2. Scotland's Poverty Truth Commission talked about involvement of all people in decisions which affected them, using the motto 'nothing about us without us is for us'. How might Christians work both to create a safe space for those who normally talk to listen, and a place to speak for those whose voice is rarely heard?
3. What would our lives look like if thrift became our guiding principle?
4. Stewardship has been defined as holding something in trust for another. How do we honour this trust?

Action

Poverty and Homelessness Action Week takes place at the end of January / beginning of February each year. This week of action, prayer and advocacy is organised by Church Action on Poverty, Scottish Churches Housing Action and Housing Justice. Think about how you, your group and your church might participate in this work in future years to demonstrate your commitment to inclusion for all and reflecting your concern for justice. www.actionweek.org.uk

Prayer

Jesus, meet us on a dark and rainy night
the place where we can't find our way home
distracted, exhausted and abandoned.
There, bless us with knowledge of your love
and show us with the look in your eyes that any sacrifice you made was because you think we are worth it.
Amen



Trawsnewid



Wythnos 6: Dameg y Samariad Trugarog

Luc 10: 25-37

Trafodaeth

Gorchymyn Newydd

Mae sesiwn yr wythnos olaf hon yn edrych ymlaen at fore'r Pasg. Newid, twf, adnewyddiad – dyna y mae a wnelo'r Eglwys â hwy ar yr adeg hon o'r flwyddyn. Myfyriwch ar eich gobaith y gall fod dyfodol gwell a disgleiriach i ddynolryw. Meddyliwch beth y gallwch chwi ei wneud i wireddu'r gobaith hwn i bobl a barlyswyd gan dlodi neu a dagwyd gan gyfoeth.

Myfyrdod

Cyfododd Duw Iesu o blith y meirw.

Yn groes i bob tebygolrwydd a phob disgwyl.

Ni allai neb fod wedi rhagweld bore'r Pasg cyntaf hwnnw. Roedd Iesu wedi marw: ei gorff yn friw, ei waed wedi'i dywallt, y gobaith wedi mynd, yr anadl wedi peidio, yr ysbryd wedi'i gyflwyno i Dduw.

Wylodd y nefoedd, a mynd yn fud.

Disgynnodd tywyllwch.

Ac yna llefara Duw Air y trawsnewid.

Gwawria goleuni diwrnod newydd.

Yn sydyn, y mae stori newydd i'w dweud: am sut y gall cariad drawsnewid hyd yn oed y profiad tywyllaf.

Transformation

Week 6: The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Luke 10: 25-37

Discussion

A new commandment

This final week's session anticipates Easter morning. Change, growth, renewal is what the Church is all about at this time of year. Reflect on your hope that there might be a better, brighter future for all humankind. Think about what you can do to make this hope a reality for people trapped in crippling poverty or strangulating affluence.

Reflection

God raised Jesus from the dead.

Against all the odds and all the expectations.

No-one could have predicted that first Easter morning. Jesus was dead, body broken, blood shed, hope gone, breath stopped and spirit committed to God.

The heavens wept, and fell silent.

Darkness descended.

And then God speaks, the Word of transformation.

Light dawns, on a new day.

Suddenly, there is a new story to tell; of how love may transform even the darkest experience. Death





Rhaid i angau ei hun ildio a gwywa pob dialedd yng ngoleuni'r atgyfodiad, pan yw Iesu'n dod yn rhydd o'r bedd.

Sut y gallwn ddeall sut brofiad yw atgyfodi o blith y meirw?

Dychmygwch eich bod yn deffro'n sydyn yn gwybod sut i ddatrys yr argyfwng economaidd byd-eang am byth, sut i drawsnewid y byd fel y bydd gan bawb ddigon i gynnal bywyd, a gwaith ystyrlon i bawb fel y gallant baratoi at y dyfodol. Dychmygwch sut y byddech yn teimlo. Wrth bwy y dywedech gyntaf? Wrth y person nesaf atoch, mae'n debyg – pwy allai gadw'r fath newyddion da iddo'i hun? Yna, wrth y rhai agos, gan gynnwys y cydweithwyr y bu eu hymdrechion yn gymorth i chwi wneud y darganfyddiad. Sut y byddech yn hysbysu'r bobl a fu'n ffynnu dan yr hen drefn, ac arweinwyr y byd a fyddai'n gyfrifol am weithredu'r ateb? Fe all y byddai hynny'n peri i chwi bendroni. Byddai angen cynllun rhag i'r newyddion da am achubiaeth o gaethiwed economaidd gael ei wrthod.

Torrodd Iesu'n rhydd o'r bedd er mwyn i ni dorri'n rhydd o'n bedd ninnau.

Fel y gall bywyd newydd ysgubo ymaith bob dialedd am niweidiau'r gorffennol a'r presennol.

Dywed Iesu wrthym fod cariad yn trawsnewid hyd yn oed marwolaeth. Gall yn sicr drawsnewid bywyd ac, o fewn bywyd, y cyfundrefnau economaidd a gwleidyddol y bydd dynion a merched yn eu creu a'u haddoli ac yn mynd yn gaeth iddynt. Rhaid i'r rhain symud o'r ffordd, fel y symudwyd y maen ar borth y bedd, a chaniatáu i fywyd newydd ffrwydro i drawsnewid y byd.

Dameg

Luc 10: 25-37 - Dameg y Samariad Trugarog

Yn y ddameg, cyfreithiwr sy'n gofyn y cwestiwn 'beth a wnaif i etifeddu bywyd tragwyddol?'. Ni chaiff ateb, dim ond cwestiwn arall – beth y mae'r gyfraith yn ei ddweud? Roedd Iesu'n gyfarwydd â chrefydd rodresgar. Dychanodd hi fel pobl yn gweddio ar gorneli'r heolydd, yn gwisgo mentyll llaes ac yn gofyn cwestiynau i ddangos eu gwybodaeth. Yma, mae'n torri crib pob hunanbwysigrwydd chwyddedig trwy gyfeirio'r cyfreithiwr at y gyfraith.

Yna, mae'r cyfreithiwr yn gofyn ail gwestiwn, 'pwy yw fy nghymydog', am ei fod 'am ei gyfiawnhau ei hun' (adnod 29). Yn lle rhoi ateb cyfreithiol iddo, mae Iesu'n adrodd dameg y Samariad Trugarog.

Clyw'r gwrandawyr am y dyn anffodus yr ymosododd lladron arno ar y ffordd beryglus i Jericho. Clywant am yr offeiriad a'r Lefiad, yr oedd deddfau crefyddol yn gwahardd iddynt gyffwrdd â'r hyn yr ofnont ei fod yn

itself must give way and recriminations wither in the light of resurrection, of Jesus breaking free from the tomb.

How can we understand what it feels like to be raised from the dead?

Imagine that you wake with the sudden knowledge of how to solve the global economic crisis forever. You know how to transform the world so that everyone has enough to sustain life and meaningful employment to allow them to plan a future. Imagine for a moment how that would feel. Who do you tell first? Probably the person nearest you, because who could keep such good news to themselves? Then you tell those closest to you, including the team of co-workers whose efforts have assisted you to this breakthrough. How would you tell those who have prospered under the old system? How will you alert the world leaders whose responsibility it will be to implement your solution? These last two might give you pause for thought. A plan will be needed if the good news of deliverance from economic slavery is not to be rejected.

Jesus broke free from his tomb so that we might break free from ours.

So that new life may be allowed to sweep away all recriminations for past and present injuries.

Jesus tells us that love transforms even death. It can certainly transform life and within life the economic and political systems men and women create, worship, and to which they become slaves. These must give way like the stone at the entrance to the tomb, allowing new life to burst forth for the transformation of the world.

Parable

Luke 10: 25-37 The Parable of the Good Samaritan

In the parable the question 'what must I do to inherit eternal life' is asked by a lawyer, but he does not get an answer, only another question – what does the law say? Jesus was familiar with showy religion. He caricatured it as people praying on street corners, going around in flowing robes, or asking questions to showcase their own knowledge. In this story, Jesus punctures any sense of inflated self-importance by referring the lawyer to the law.

The lawyer then asks his second question 'who is my neighbour' as he 'wanted to justify himself' (verse 29). Jesus does not give him a legal answer, but tells the story of the Good Samaritan.

His listeners meet the unfortunate victim of robbery on the dangerous road to Jericho. They meet the priest and the Levite, bound by religious laws not to touch what they suspect may be a dead body. They





gorff marw. Daliant eu gwynt wrth glywed am y Samariad: un y byddent hwy'n ei ddilorni.

Y Samariad a ddangosodd gariad a thrugaredd cymdogol. Gwyddai na allai wneud popeth, nad oedd arno eisiau perthynas oes â'r dyn hwn. Ond nid ymrwymiad byr-dymor mo'i gymorth ychwaith. Mae ei gymorth yn achub y dioddefydd, yn ei roi ar ei draed drachefn ac yn ei gyfeirio at y gefnogaeth y mae arno'i hangen. Dengys ei addewid i ddychwelyd i dalu unrhyw beth dros ben i'r gwsteiwr ei fod am ddilyn y peth i'r pen, am wneud yn siŵr fod popeth yn iawn.

Mae lesu'n gofyn i'r cyfreithiwr pa gymeriad a fu'n gymydog i'r dioddefydd. Gwelwn yn yr ateb rôl i'r Eglwys. Does dim rhaid i'r Eglwys fod yn arbenigwr, does dim rhaid iddi ddarparu'r gwasanaeth gorau, ond gall gynorthwyo pobl i ddod o hyd i'r gefnogaeth y mae ei hangen arnynt.

Darlunia'r stori rym trawsnewidiol cariad a thrugaredd pan ddangosir hwy gan bobl gyffredin. Gall cymdogaeth dda drawsnewid y byd.

Dengys lesu nad y bobl yr ydym yn ei chael hi'n hawdd gwneud â hwy yw ein cymdogion bob amser. Yn aml, pobl ydynt yr ydym yn ei chael hi'n anodd iawn cyd-dynnu â hwy. Yn union fel nad arhosodd Duw nes oeddem ni'n dda cyn estyn allan atom mewn cariad, rhaid i ninnau ddangos cariad, trugaredd a gofal at yr anghenus, ni waeth a ydym yn eu hoffi ai peidio nac a ydynt yn bobl fel ni.

Dos, a gwna dithau yr un modd: yr ystyr i ni heddiw

Bydd cipolwg sydyn ar y cylchgronau mewn unrhyw siop bapur newydd yn ein hatgoffa ein bod yn byw mewn diwylliant sy'n rhoi mwy o werth ar enwogion nag ar ddim arall. Mae bodio trwy ddwsinau o sianelau teledu sy'n canolbwyntio ar feddiannau, eiddo, cyfoeth, prydferthwch, yn peri anesmwythyd. Nid norm yw'r foeseg Gristnogol bellach, ond rhywbeth sy'n gwbl groes i'n diwylliant.

Nid yw cymdeithas yr ymddengys ei bod yn annog ffordd o fyw nad yw er lles neb yn debygol o'i gwneud hi'n hawdd i bobl ystyried o ba le y daw eu dillad neu'r niwed i'r amgylchfyd y gall teithio'n ddiangen ar awyrennau ei achosi.

Mae'n anodd osgoi'r dylanwadau diwylliannol hyn. Maent o'n cwmpas ymhobman. Maent hefyd yn ein hannog i feddwl amdanom ein hunain yn fwy fel unigolion nag fel aelodau o deulu, cymuned, cenedl. Ac i feddwl am genhedloedd eraill fel estroniaid yn hytrach nag aelodau o gymuned o genhedloedd. Mae diwylliant fel hyn yn ei gwneud hi'n anodd inni fyw mewn iawn berthynas â Duw.

Geilw hyn oll am ffordd newydd o feddwl am y modd yr ydym yn byw ein bywydau, y pethau a fawrygwn, y sefydliadau y gallwn ymddiried ynddynt a'r foesoldeb a ddylai gyfarwyddo ein llwybrau.

gasp to hear of the Samaritan who rides onto the scene: a man whom Jesus' listeners would have reviled.

It was the Samaritan who practiced neighbourly love and mercy. He knew he couldn't do everything, that he didn't want a lifelong relationship with this man. But his help is not just a short-term commitment either. The Samaritan's help saved the victim, got him sorted out, back on his own two feet, and put him in touch with the support that he needed. His promise to return to pay any balance to the innkeeper shows that he follows it through, to make sure everything is all right.

Jesus asks the lawyer to identify which character was the neighbour to the victim. In the reply we see a role for the Church. The Church does not need to be an expert, it doesn't need to be the best service provider, but it can help people to get the support they need.

The story illustrates the transformative power of love and mercy when practiced by ordinary people. Neighbourliness can transform the world.

Jesus shows that our neighbours aren't always the people we find it easy to relate to. They are often the people with whom we find it most difficult to get along. Just as God did not wait until we were good before reaching out to us in love, so we need to show love, compassion and care to those in need, regardless of whether we like them or if they are people like us.

Go and do likewise: what it means for us today

A quick look at the magazine rack in any newsagent's store will remind us that we live in a celebrity culture where celebrity lifestyles are valued more than any other. Flicking through dozens of TV channels with the focus on possessions, property, wealth, glamour is perturbing. A Christian ethic is no longer the norm but is deeply counter-cultural.

A society which seems to encourage a lifestyle which is not in anyone's best interests is hardly likely to make it easy for people to think about where their clothes come from or the ecological damage which may be caused through unnecessary air travel.

It is difficult to escape these cultural influences. They are all around us. These influences have also encouraged us to think more of ourselves as individuals rather than as part of a family, community, or nation. They also encourage us to think of other nations as completely foreign rather than as part of a community of nations. And that kind of culture makes it difficult for us to live in a right relationship with God.

All of this calls for a new way of thinking about how we are living our lives, the things we value, the institutions in which we can trust and the moral code that should direct our paths.





Ni fydd newid yn hawdd. Bydd yn rhaid inni roi heibio rai pethau, ymafael mewn pethau newydd, ac aiddysgu rhai o wersi ein hieuenctid. Yn anad dim, bydd yn rhaid inni chwilio am gariad Duw yn ein bywydau ac ym mywydau pobl o'n cwmpas.

A phan ddown o hyd iddo, bydd yn rhaid inni ddal gafael ynddo, a'i rannu ag eraill, fel y gallwn ni yn ein heglwysi fod yn ganolbwynt yn ein cymunedau i bopeth sy'n dda mewn bywyd.

Mae gennym ni, Gristnogion, y potensial i wneud gwahaniaeth yn ein byd. Mae pob diwrnod newydd yn rhodd gariadus, oddi wrth awdur cariad, i ni ac i'n cymdogion ymhell ac agos. Mae bore'r Pasg yn rhoi sicrwydd llawen o allu cariad i orchfygu ofn, dim ond inni lamu o'r bedd a gloddiodd ofn inni.

Cwestiynau

1. Beth fyddai'r camau cyntaf a allai ein harwain o ddifaterwch a diymadferthedd i lawenydd yr atgyfodiad a thrawsnewidiad? Sut y gallwn gymryd y camau hynny?
2. Edrychwch dros sesiynau'r cwrs hwn; pa syniadau annisgwyl a heriol y daethoch ar eu traws? Hwyrach yr hoffech eu rhestru ar ddarn o bapur.
3. Sut y gallai'r rhain arwain neu gyfeirio at drawsnewid?
4. Sut y bu trawsnewid yn gymorth i wneud ein byd yn fwy teg a chydredd? Sut y gallai wneud hynny yn y dyfodol?

Gweithredu

Mae stori'r Samariad Trugarog yn sôn am weithredu elusen a chyfiawnder, ac yn ein herio ninnau i wneud yr un fath. Sut y gallwch chwi, yn eich cyd-destun eich hun, fod yn Samariad Trugarog? Er enghraifft, os yw eich eglwys yn trefnu banc bwyd, meddyliwch sut y gallwch nid yn unig roi rhoddion ac amser, ond sut y gellir cywiro pa gyfundrefn bynnag sy'n peri bod yn rhaid i bobl ddibynnu ar fanc bwyd o gwbl.

Pwy yw'r dieithriad a'r bobl a wthiwyd i'r cyrion o'ch cwmpas? A wnewch chwi estyn allan atynt a ffurfio perthynas â hwy a chynnig iddynt elusen a thrugaredd? Peth bychan iawn ydyw, ond gallai wneud gwahaniaeth i fywyd rhywun neu'i gilydd.

Gweddi

Iesu, tyrd i gwrdd â ni wrth inni gerdded heibio,
tyrd i'r man lle y mae arnom fwyaf o eisiau ymateb,
ond na wyddom sut.

Yno, bendithia ni â thrugaredd ac â than yn ein calonnau
fel y gwelom nad oes ond un dewis o'n blaenau,
sef troi a chael ein trawsnewid.

Amen

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Change will not be easy. It will require us to give some things up. It will require us to take up new things. It will require us to learn again some of the lessons of our youth. But above all it will compel us to look for the love of God in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

And when we have found it we must hold onto it, share it with others so that we, in our churches, can be a focus in our communities, for all that is good in life.

As Christians we have the potential to make a difference to our world. Each new day is a gift of love, from the author of love, for us and for our neighbours near and far. Easter morning is a joyful assurance of the ability of love to triumph over fear, if only we will leap from its tomb.

Questions

1. What first steps might take us away from indolence and powerlessness into resurrection joy and transformation? How do we take those steps?
2. Look over the past sessions in this course; what have been the surprising and challenging ideas that you have come across? You may want to write a list on a piece of paper.
3. How might these be indicators or pointers to transformation?
4. How has transformation helped to make our world fairer and more equal? How might it in the future?

Action

The story of the Good Samaritan holds together acts of both charity and justice. We are challenged to do this too. In the context that you find yourself, how can you be a Good Samaritan? For example, if your church supports a food bank, think about how not only to offer donations and volunteer time, but how to rectify whatever system is in place which means that people need to rely on food banks in the first place.

Who are the strangers and the marginalised people round about you? Will you reach out to them and form relationships and offer charity and justice? It can be a small thing, but could make a difference in someone else's life.

Prayer

Jesus, meet us as we are walking on by
 the place where we judge ourselves the most
 wanting to respond to need, but not knowing how.
 There, bless us with compassion and a fire in our hearts
 that we see we only have one option before us — to turn around and be transformed.
 Amen

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