

Unless you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

At the start of the film *Trainspotting*- which, of course, isn't about catching a glimpse of the 13:11 from Paddington as it chugs down past Shorthampton, but rather about the lives of heroin addicts in Edinburgh- the main character opens the action with a famous monologue. Choose Life. Choose a job. Choose a career. Choose a family. The list goes on- from these admirable things to the more material parts of life albeit in a distinctly 1990s accent and with a fairly generous smattering of expletives: we hear of compact disc players, televisions, low cholesterol. You get the picture.

The point of the dialogue though is that the main character, Renton, has chosen not to choose these things. He has chosen a more destructive and tragic path which eventually results in something he cannot choose or control: addiction.

Yet for most of us, we do have choices we make in life. Indeed, we live in a world of almost infinite abundance of choice. What then would your list of things that you have chosen over the course of a life be?

What would Christianity's be? Well, seemingly very topsy turvy. Choose being different. Choose swimming against the tide. Choose no lie ins on a Sunday morning. Choose difficult ideas. Choose a God who suffers. Choose a sword that will pierce your heart also. Choose a saviour condemned as a criminal. Choose the cross. Choose Mary Magdalen weeping. Choose the tomb.

Yet- in the midst of all of that, what Christianity does encourage us to choose is life. The end of that list as unlikely it may seem is a choice of life. Indeed the very fullness of life, the very source of life itself, life unlike any other. Choose bread, as Christ puts it that will give us life forever.

This has a knock on effect for our lives and the lives of all believers. Paul tells his listeners in the epistle this: 'be careful how you live'.

Why? Why should we be careful? Much current thinking about the human condition suggests that surely, like Renton in *Trainspotting*, we are absolutely free. To be and do whatever we want. Being careful doesn't sound like us 'living our best life'. Yet Paul's admonition to be careful is not about control or limitation. Quite the opposite in fact. It tells us quite clearly that life has value, that it is worthy of care, that life isn't just what we want it to be but something much much more.

And this is where- conversely- death comes in. Because with the death of Christ every human life is completely changed. It is through God himself entering into this cycle of birth and life and death that the power of that cycle as a finite thing is changed, and which opens up a whole realm of being, a whole new form of life to each and every one of us. Because Christ does not just die. He dies and rises again, the first fruits of a resurrection life which is available to all of us.

That God should thus hallow human life, should make it his own, should bring it into himself changes the nature of that life forever and always. And it changes all lives- not simply the lives of the good or the great or the holy. All of us have the potential to live in such a way that reflects that hallowing of ourselves and our lives.

All lives are therefore sacred- and it does mean all. It doesn't matter whether we are young or old, happy or sad, sick or well: God in Christ might have come to a particular time and place- the Holy Land some 2000 years ago- but the making sacred that was achieved there stretches through the centuries.

How then do we do so? What is it that all of us can do that reflects the fact that God has chosen our lives to be the recipients of his grace? Well, we have thought about them before but they bear repeating,

Come to church, read scripture, pray, serve others, receive Holy Communion.

Because by doing so you demonstrate as Christ says in the Gospel that we heard- that you have life in you. That you have chosen the ways of life and love in a world where life and love aren't always the easiest choices to make, the smoothest paths to follow or the most popular things to proclaim.

Yet to proclaim them is exactly what we as Christians are called to do. And whilst all things will eventually be brought back to God, to attain union with God, there is no guarantee that in our own times, love and life will triumph. That is why it is so incumbent on us to take seriously what it is we are being asked by Christ to do. At the heart of it lies the choice that is before us each and every day. A choice which only we can make, to choose to come to church, to choose to read Holy Scripture, to serve others above ourselves with our time and our resources, to choose prayer, to choose to eat the flesh and to drink the blood of the one who is life itself, and thereby to choose faith, to choose life and to choose love.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.