

Not Very PC!

Proverbs 9¹⁻⁶; Psalm 34⁹⁻¹⁴; Ephesians 5¹⁵⁻²⁰; John 6⁵¹⁻⁵⁸

*Lay aside immaturity and live.
[Prov. 9⁶]*

You may have noticed - I struggle to be Politically Correct!

The first complaint received against me as a teacher was from the German parents of a 6th form student to whom I said, after she had made a stupid comment, that it was obvious that she didn't dye her hair!

A father immediately picked up the telephone to my Headmaster when, at the end of a 20 minute conversation about poor grades, he said to me that he was paying for an A, to which I responded that he should have provided the genes for one.

Or the student who came to me and asked how they should prepare for a resit - the answer was obvious: don't fail!

Jesus isn't very PC either - in fact, in the readings today he is deliberately provocative and trying to offend!

- ✦ To the Jews - who in the Commandments could not accept any image of God - he claims to be God (YHWH - I AM) and so goes beyond a sketch (that would have been enough to have you stoned) to claim that he is God in flesh and blood!
- ✦ He doesn't try to calm things down but throws fuel on the fire when he suggests the metaphor of cannibalism! The verb he uses for eating isn't polite (*trogo* - to gnaw, to gorge) but suggests eating to avert starvation, or competing to get food.

This is a choice between life and death and should not be made civilised: this is what it will take to be alive spiritually!

Instead of religion that is a taster-menu in a posh restaurant or a civilised buffet when we select what we might like, this is eating for survival: when we feed on Christ we are driven by need not manners and survival rather than appearance.

You could think that the strange reading about Wisdom from Proverbs is more acceptable, but beware of such preconceptions:

- ✦ Wisdom is building a perfect house ready for a feast - the seven pillars make that clear.

- ✦ The meat, the wine and the table are ready but when the invitations are sent out, alongside those you would expect, the invitation is also issued to the **simple** and **those without sense!**
- ✦ God calls us to accept his invitation - not to decide who or the sort of people that we share his banquet with!

Neither is living faith PC! (At least, not according to Paul!)

Before he encourages us to sing (always good for the soul) we have a number of contrasts:

- ✦ Non-Christians are **unwise**/Christians should be **wise** (the parallel is much clearer in the Greek - *sophoi/asophoi*).
- ✦ Non-Christians are **foolish**/Christians should have **understanding**
- ✦ Non-Christians would rather be drunk/Christians are **filled with the [Holy] Spirit.**

Ouch! I just wonder if that is what people perceive when they look at the Church or meet Christians!

Robust faith isn't PC!

In choosing Christ you reject all else as a means of hope or life!

In choosing Christ you choose to live like a Christian!

Let me conclude with an un-PC story:

In 1987 my Church was next to a Mosque and you may remember that Heineken came up with the slogan that it was a lager that "Reaches the Parts Other Lagers Can't Reach!"

I had a poster made up and put it on the front of the Church facing the A10 running through the London Borough of Hackney - *Jesus Christ reaches the parts other faiths can't reach!*

It may not surprise you to know that, one Thursday evening, this poster was torn down. However, God has a sense of humour! The Hackney Gazette was published on the Friday morning and they had published a photograph of the poster!

Faith isn't PC - it isn't even polite: it is life and death!