

## 2023-10-15 ... 6.30pm Evensong Sermon ... Mrs Jane Rylands

### Proverbs 3: 1-18; 1 John 3: 1-15

There are great words of comfort in both tonight's readings assuring us that we have a loving Father God.

When this has been the message of faith – that we should love as we are loved - for so many people for so many hundreds of years- it makes you wonder how we can still be making such a mess of it.

I really have no qualifications to talk about what is happening in Israel and Palestine, or between Ukraine and Russia, or any other of the areas of vicious conflict in the world – somehow we must hold these atrocities in our awareness, knowing that they are not God's way but that, like us, it is God's people, that is people that God loves, who are affected. I feel that these are rather useless comments but I believe that we must let the burden of these horrors rest close to our hearts and not turn away from them so that our prayers are constant and profound and are a channel for God's grace.

**The first letter of John** was probably written around the end of the first century as a round robin. It seems some doubts have crept in amongst the faithful to do with whether Jesus was really human or alternatively whether he was really divine. It didn't suit the Greek view of gods' ways of conducting themselves – that such shameful suffering as death on a cross would be allowed by the 'chief god'.

I think this is one of the doubts we still hear today – even for those of us who say we believe it each week, we have no real understanding of how that works. But we take it on faith.

John is writing to reassure those congregations that he mentors. In the opening verses of the letter he is able to say how he saw and touched Jesus but all those of us who call ourselves Christians have our own moments of light to show us who God and who the Son are.

**In chapter 2** of this letter John says: **'if anyone obeys His Word the love of God is truly made complete within them.'**

John encourages the congregations to be active in seeking to live in the light and not to choose the way of darkness. In doing so we are claiming our place as Children of God. And we will learn more about what that means the more that we practice the way that Jesus demonstrated. Amen.