

From Richard Hinder

Dear Friends

Today the Church remembers William Wilberforce 1833, social reformer, Olaudah Equiano 1797 and Thomas Clarkson 1846: all anti-slavery campaigners.

Looking over the centuries we see just how long it took to ban slavery: and yet we are acutely aware: both of the existence of modern slavery in England today, and of the lasting effects of slavery on human relationships between peoples of different colour and different ethnicities more generally. We are all familiar with the BAME grouping (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic) popularised during the past couple of decades to help focus attention and heal the harm in race relations caused by both historical injustices and corrupt human nature when God's presence is ignored.

One of the psalms set for today is Psalm 14: a short psalm of seven verses only: do read the New Revised Standard Version - Anglicised below. The psalm focuses on the corruption of people who turn away or deny the existence of God. "Have they no knowledge, those evildoers, who eat up my people as it they ate bread and do not call upon the Lord?"

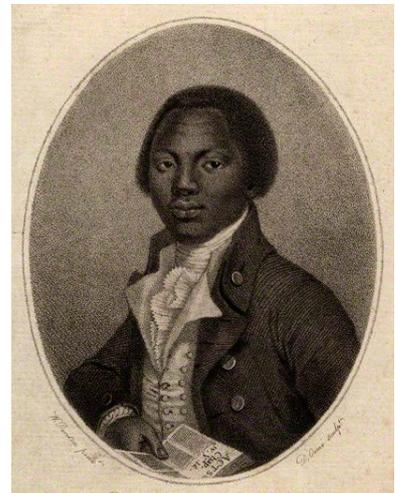
Psalm 14

Denunciation of Godlessness
To the leader. Of David.

- 1 Fools say in their hearts, 'There is no God.'
They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds;
there is no one who does good.
- 2 The Lord looks down from heaven on humankind
to see if there are any who are wise,
who seek after God.
- 3 They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse;
there is no one who does good,
no, not one.
- 4 Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers
who eat up my people as they eat bread,
and do not call upon the Lord?
- 5 There they shall be in great terror,
for God is with the company of the righteous.
- 6 You would confound the plans of the poor,
but the Lord is their refuge.
- 7 O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!
When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people,
Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE BY ANTON HICKEL - IMAGE: BRIDGEMAN ART GALLERY



OLAUDAH EQUIANO, AUTREMENT DIT "GUSTAVUS VASSA", PAR DANIEL ORME, AFTER W. DENTON, LONDRES 1789



THOMAS CLARKSON BY CARL FREDERIK VON BREDA: NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Thursday 30 July 2020

Daily email to friends of St Matthew Croydon

Most of us have experienced just how difficult it is to confront corrupt behaviour, especially when it has become a social norm.

How, for example, does one change attitudes amongst those who habitually help themselves to supplies in their work context without paying?

How does one turn away from established working practices which deny people a level of reward because they are of different colour, or gender, age, or social class?

Tackling reform requires seeds to be sown by such social reformers as these three. Changes in law require a long time before a majority of lawmakers agree on a new way forward. However, a new law is only a small start towards a change in wider society.

For example, looking briefly at another abuse of human relationships: it has taken years to level up the take home pay of women compared with men in in the workplace: and some workplaces still fall far short of equality.

May our modern day reformers continue to highlight the need to tackle such injustice with vigour, whilst we all endeavour to treat our sisters and brothers of different races, colour, gender, intelligence and ability with the deepest respect. Let us love our neighbours as ourselves.

Amen

May the Lord be with you and bless you in all you do today

Richard Hinder