

Summary of the sermon preached at St. Andrew's United Reformed Church, Sheffield on Sunday October 28<sup>th</sup> by The Very Revd. Peter Bradley, Dean of Sheffield.

Sometimes we need to be emphatic about what the scriptures mean. For example, in the Anglican Funeral Rite the service opens with the words ' I am the Resurrection and the Life.' People grieving the loss of a loved one need to hear that message. However, at other times it is not appropriate to say dogmatically ' this is what the scriptures say therefore I do.' The scriptures have evolved, often contradicting each other, and are like a conversation. The most useful bible for really understanding the scriptures is one which links references to the same story or topic in other gospels and in the Old Testament. Translations of the Hebrew have changed over time. The scriptures reflect a particular cultural norm – for example slavery was taken as the norm. it is not until Paul that we learn that there will no longer be the enslaved and the free. The scriptures are precious jewels in clay pots; our best friend and the spectacles through which we see the true God, his intention for our lives and His abundant love for us.

Judith Adam