

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

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Judge not

Recently I received an email that listed people who had spoken in a derogatory manner about God; these had unfortunately had difficult or violent deaths and the email was implying that this was the wrath of an Old Testament God who would have His revenge.



I felt very uncomfortable with this and reflected on it for several days.

My Baptism means that I have promised not just to follow the teaching of Jesus but to LIVE it and that when people look at me they should see Jesus.

However, I am human, that means I have all the failings and weaknesses of humankind and I do not reach the ideal. I struggle constantly in myself every hour, every day to live the Gospel. In short, it is very difficult to be a Christian and realising that makes it clear that I have not the right to judge others. How can I possibly know what others are going through in their lives or what difficulties they are trying to overcome? Only God knows that and His love and compassion encompasses each one of us as we battle on. No, He does not seek vengeance, He only seeks our love.

St Paul knew about weakness and prayed to be freed from it, but continued to have to fight it all his life. St Paul recognised that in this weakness he was forced to rely on Christ, that he could fulfil his commitment as a Christian only with the help of Jesus and in that he was strong (2Cor.12:7-10). He did not have to rely on his humanity; he relied on Christ, on His promise that He is with us always to the end of time (John 14:18-19).