

# **Clinging to the Cross**

## ***Chester Diocese (Lent) Study Course 2023***

Bishop Mark's recent book, *Clinging to the Cross*, can be used as a four week study course, at Lent or at another time, and might be used as a way to discuss our response to the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) project (in the Church of England).

Each main chapter has questions for reflection (called 'Pausing for Breath') at the end, and therefore the book can be used as it is if you would like to do this. Further resources are provided below, though for those who would like to use it to reflect on LLF.

### ***Obtaining the book***

The book can be ordered directly from Amazon by following the links below, or if you would like to purchase 10 or more copies these may be obtained from Bishop's House at a discount. Please e-mail Rachel Hsuan on [rachel.hsuan@chester.anglican.org](mailto:rachel.hsuan@chester.anglican.org) if you would like to discuss this option.

For paperback copies from Amazon visit: [www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1PB](http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1PB)

For Kindle copies from Amazon visit: [www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Kindle](http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Kindle)

### ***Using 'Clinging to the Cross' as a Post LLF Course***

#### ***1) Preparation***

- a) The leader should read the Introduction in the book (the first main section) and listen to the audio material for session 1:
  - i) The opening reflection: [www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR211](http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR211)
  - ii) The podcast: [www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course1](http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course1)
- b) If members would like to do so they can do the same
- c) If the group would like to engage in the written material they are invited to read Chapter 2, otherwise the leader does so and is prepared to summarise.

#### ***2) Session 1***

- a) When the group meets they listen to the opening reflection from the Prologue, which can be downloaded from [www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR211](http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR211)
- b) Someone prays
- c) The group is invited to discuss their reactions if they wish to.
- d) The group then discusses Chapter 2 (or the leader summarises it for the group and they discuss)
- e) The group can listen to Bishops Mark, Sam, and Julie discussing Chapter 2 (this can be accessed via [www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course1](http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course1))
- f) Either the group discusses the questions in Chapter 2a
- g) Or they work with the Bishops' questions:
  - i) What things do you find yourself turning your back upon? (Bishop Sam's question)

- ii) How do you understand the cross working with regard to LLF? (Bishop Julie's question)
- iii) Given that we are cross-shaped people, how does this affect the way we relate to people in discussing LLF? (Bishop Mark's question)
- h) The group closes in prayer
- i) Preparing for next week, if the group would like to engage in the written material they are invited to read Chapter 3, otherwise one member of the group does so and is prepared to summarise.

### 3) Session 2

- a) When the group meets they listen to the first reflection, which can be downloaded from <http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR212>
- b) Someone prays
- c) The group is invited to discuss their reactions if they wish to.
- d) The group then discusses Chapter 3 (or the leader summarises it for the group and they discuss)
- e) The group can listen to Bishops Mark, Sam, and Julie discussing Chapter 3 (this can be accessed via <http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course2>)
- f) Either the group discusses the questions in Chapter 3a
- g) Or they work with the Bishops' questions:
  - i) How has your view of God changed through thinking about the cross? (Bishop Sam's question)
  - ii) How do you find a balance between flourishing in life in all its fullness and following a crucified Christ? (Bishop Julie's question)
  - iii) How do we become aware of the danger of misusing questions of faith when we are talking about complicated issues, for example LLF? (Bishop Mark's question)
- h) The group closes in prayer
- i) Preparing for next week, if the group would like to engage in the written material they are invited to read Chapter 4, otherwise one member of the group does so and is prepared to summarise.

### 4) Session 3

- a) There is no specific reflection for this week, but the group meets may wish to relisten to the opening reflection from the Prologue, which can be downloaded from <http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR211>
- b) Someone prays
- c) The group is invited to discuss their reactions if they wish to.
- d) The group then discusses Chapter 4 (or the leader summarises it for the group and they discuss)
- e) The group can listen to Bishops Mark, Sam, and Julie discussing Chapter 4 (this can be accessed via <http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course3>)
- f) Either the group discusses the questions in Chapter 4a
- g) Or they work with the Bishops' questions:
  - i) What does cross-shaped love look like in our daily life (and in relation to LLF)? (Bishop Mark's question)
  - ii) How is the cross shaping your daily living? (Bishop Sam's question)
  - iii) If Christ has the victory over sin and death, why are we so often afraid? (Bishop Julie's question)
- h) The group closes in prayer

- i) Preparing for next week, if the group would like to engage in the written material they are invited to read Chapter 5, otherwise one member of the group does so and is prepared to summarise.

5) *Session 4*

- a) When the group meets they listen to the closing reflection from the Epilogue, which can be downloaded from <http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&FQR213>
- b) Someone prays
- c) The group is invited to discuss their reactions if they wish to.
- d) The group then discusses Chapter 5 (or the leader summarises it for the group and they discuss)
- e) The group can listen to Bishops Mark, Sam, and Julie discussing Chapter 5 (this can be accessed via <http://www.little-house-in-joppa.uk/S&F1Course4>)
- f) Either the group discusses the questions in Chapter 5a
- g) Or they work with the Bishops' questions:
  - i) Where is God calling us to live generously? And why *that*? (Bishop Sam's question)
  - ii) How do we live in a manner which is relevant to those around us? (Bishop Julie's question)
  - iii) How do we shape our lives to be missional in all that we do and are? How do we take the first step in sharing God's love? (Bishop Mark's question)
- h) The group closes in prayer