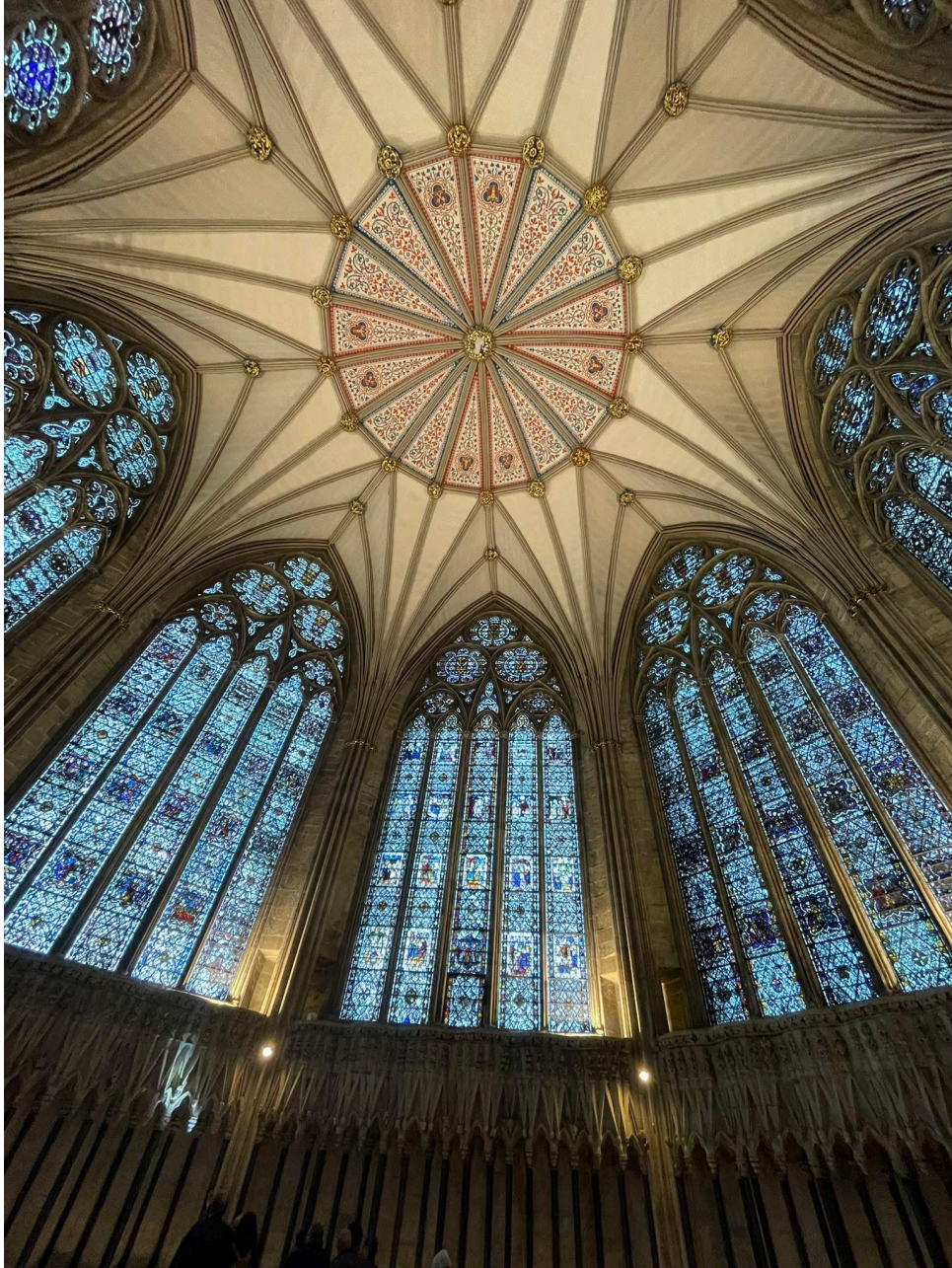


Speaking to the soul



False philosophies

Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human

thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. Colossians 2:8-9

Paul didn't believe in beating around the bush! He was so convinced that Christ was the complete answer to the human predicament that he saw every other philosophy as a waste of time. That didn't mean he was unwilling to spend time listening to people with other beliefs. He simply didn't believe that they had anything to offer when compared with Christ. When Paul visited Athens, he spent a great deal of time speaking with the philosophers and gladly accepted an invitation to address the Areopagus, which was the forum where the Greeks held debates. He sensitively referred to their own poets and thinkers, but his focus was always to proclaim Christ.

It is the fact that Jesus was both fully man and fully God which marks him apart from other great teachers. I love the words of Victor Hugo, the French novelist and poet, who stated: "Pythagoras, Epicurus, Socrates, Plato, these are the torches of the world; Christ is the light of day." Great thinkers and philosophers have contributed insight and wisdom through the ages, but they pale into insignificance alongside the Light of the world. We live in a society which wants to suggest that every philosophy and religion is of equal significance, but Paul would robustly disagree. Only of Jesus can it be said that the fullness of God dwelt in him. He alone can be described as "the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6).

Everyone should be able to believe what they want, and it is our Christian duty to protect their right to do so. At the same time, I believe we are called to be faithful to the truth that we

have received. Jesus came to bring life to the world, and we need to seize every opportunity to share this good news with the people we meet.

QUESTION

How do you respond when you are faced with false philosophies?

PRAYER

Lord God, keep me strong when I face up to people who reject your truth. May I always be both clear and gracious when I disagree with others. Amen

