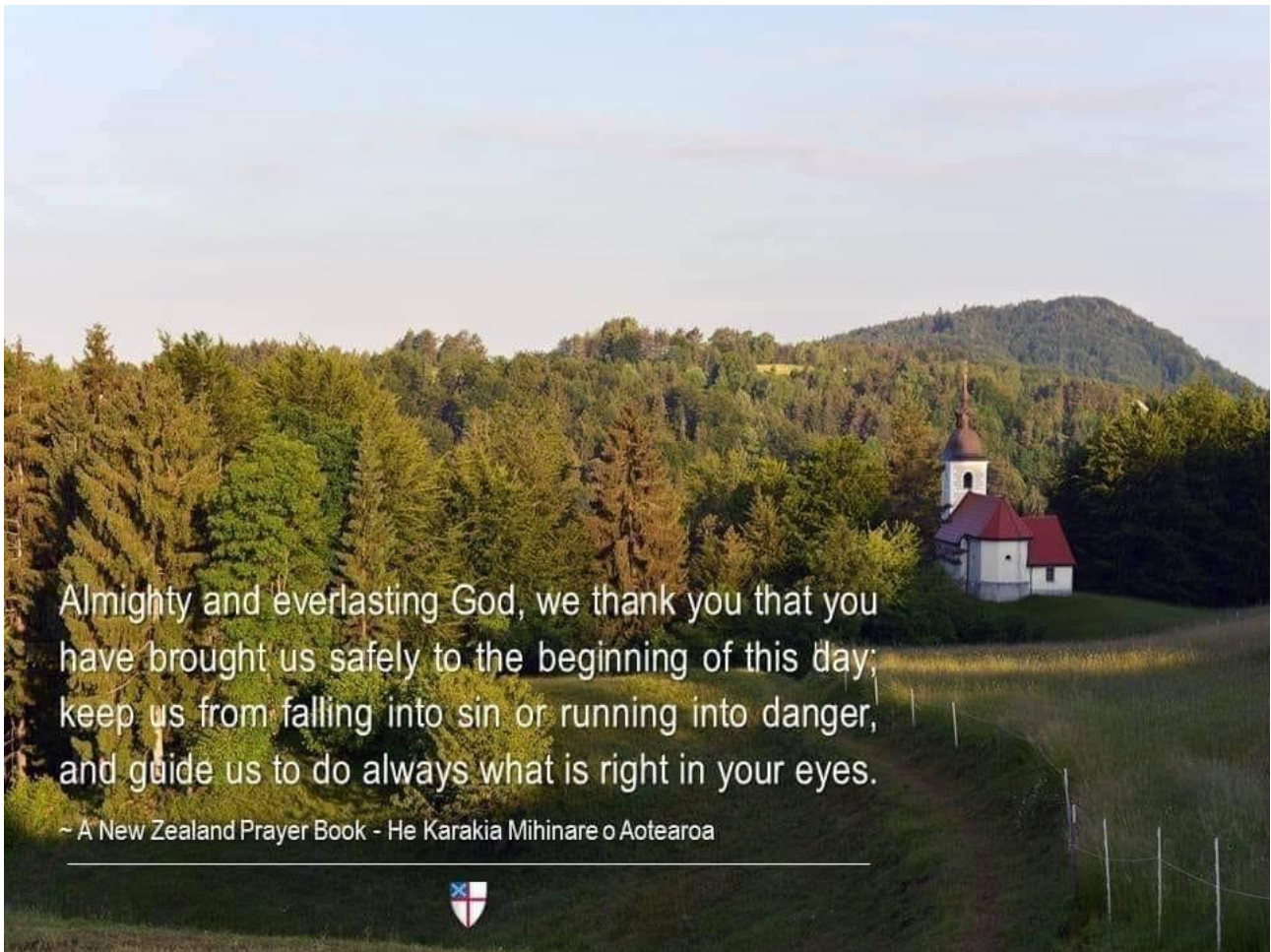


# Speaking to the soul



## Preaching

**It's true that some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry. But others preach about Christ with pure motives...Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. Philippians 1:15 and 18**

From time to time we probably all think how nice it would be to live in a perfect world where everyone agreed with everyone else. We could then get on with living our Christian lives with the confidence that what other people

said was a mirror image of our own thoughts. But the reality is people disagree on almost every subject and Christian faith attracts the complete spectrum of reactions. There are people who love every word we speak, and others who hate it with a passion. And, as Paul observed, people speak in a whole variety of ways. Some are loving and gracious, others are bitter and divisive. It's all very confusing, but Paul drew a strong and interesting conclusion. Amid all the confusion he recognised that what really matters is that the name of Jesus is being preached. Of course, I am sure he would have preferred everyone to speak of Christ in the same way as he did, but recognised that in the real world we have to get on with the confusions that come with it.

In a few months' time we will be celebrating Christmas and I am really grateful that our very secular country still stops for Christmas and pays so much attention to it. My reasons are exactly the same as Paul's. I fully recognise that many people will just see it as a holiday, or a season to make a lot of money. But I love the fact that in our post-Christian and materialistic society we are given the opportunity to promote the fact of Jesus' birth. More than three times as many people attend church over the Christmas period when compared with the rest of the year, and millions more will sing carols that clearly affirm the good news. I think we ought to stand with the apostle Paul and rejoice.

## **QUESTION**

How do you react when people speak about Jesus in a way that you dislike?

## **PRAYER**

Loving Father, help me to do everything I can to help people hear about Jesus. Amen