

(Queens words in RED)

Our Queen was a woman
who looked in 2 directions for her entire life:
Upwards to God
and outwards towards her people she was to serve.

She was a remarkable woman
who insisted that she was not the hero of her life,
her King, Almighty God was.

The Queen didn't reveal what she thought
about a whole host of subjects,
but she was open, clear, and direct
about her trust in Christ.

Almost every year since her accession to the throne
she gave a Christmas broadcast,
and today she is going to preach for us.

And it is a huge honour to read her words to us today:

“The simple facts of Jesus’ life

give us little clue as to the influence
he was to have on the world.

As a boy he learnt his father’s trade as a carpenter.

He then became a preacher,
recruiting twelve supporters to help him.

But his ministry only lasted a few years
and he himself never wrote anything down.

In his early thirties he was arrested, tortured,
and crucified with two criminals.

**His death might have been the end of the story,
but then came the resurrection
and with it the foundation of the Christian faith.”**

“I know just how much I rely on my faith
to guide me through the good times and the bad.

Each day is a new beginning.

I know that the only way to live my life
is to try to do what is right,
to take the long view,
to give of my best in all that the day brings,
and to put my trust in God

I draw strength from the message of hope
in the Christian gospel.”

And to what **greater inspiration and counsel** can we turn
than to the imperishable truth to be found
in this treasure house, the Bible?

"To many of us our beliefs are of fundamental importance.
For me **the teachings of Christ**
and my own personal accountability before God
provide a framework in which I try to lead my life.

I, like so many of you,
have drawn great comfort in difficult times
from Christ's words and example."

"Jesus of Nazareth makes it clear
that **genuine human happiness and satisfaction**
lie more in **giving** than **receiving**
more in **serving** than in being **served**.

We can surely be grateful that,
two thousand years after the birth of Jesus,
so many of us are able to draw inspiration
from his life and message,
and to find in him a source of
strength and courage."

"Many will have been inspired
by Jesus' simple but powerful teaching:
love God and love thy neighbour as thyself—

in other words, treat others
as you would like them to treat you.

His great emphasis was to give spirituality
a practical purpose.”

“His simple message of love
has been turning the world upside down ever since.

He showed that what people are
and what they do,
does matter,
and does make all the difference.

He commanded us to love our neighbours
as we love ourselves,
but what exactly is meant by ‘loving ourselves’?

I believe it means trying to make the most
of the abilities we have been given,
it means **caring for our talents.**

It is a matter of **making the best of ourselves,**
not just **doing the best for ourselves.**

We are all different,
but each of us has **his own best to offer.**

The responsibility for the way we live life
with all its challenges, sadness, and joy
is ours alone.

If we do this well,
it will also be good for our neighbours.

If you throw a stone into a pool,
the ripples go on spreading outwards.”

“Although we are capable
of great acts of kindness,
history teaches us that we
sometimes need saving from ourselves—
from our recklessness or our greed.

God sent into the world a unique person—
neither a philosopher nor a general
(important though they are)—
but a Saviour,
with the power to forgive.

Forgiveness lies at the heart of the Christian faith.
It can heal broken families
it can restore friendships
and it can reconcile divided communities.

It is in forgiveness that we feel the power of God’s love.”

“In the last verse of the beautiful carol,
O Little Town of Bethlehem,
there’s a prayer:

*O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray.
Cast out our sin
And enter in,
Be born in us today.*

It is my prayer that we might all find room
in our lives **for the message of the angels**
and **for the love of God**
through Faith, Hope, and Love”

**“God sent His only Son ‘to serve,
not to be served.’**

He restored love and service
to the centre of our lives
in the person of Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that his example and teaching
will continue to bring people together
**to give the best of themselves
in the service of others.”**

'Christ not only revealed to us
the truth in his teachings.

He lived by what he believed
and gave us the strength to try to do the same –
**and, finally, on the cross,
he showed the supreme example
of physical and moral courage.'**

In difficult times
we may be tempted to find excuses
for self-indulgence
and to wash our hands of responsibility.

Christmas stands for the opposite...
we need to **go out and look for opportunities**
to help those less fortunate than ourselves,
even if that service demands sacrifice.'

“For Christians,
as for all people of faith,
reflection, meditation, and prayer
help us to **renew ourselves in God’s love,**
as we strive daily
to become better people.

And the Christmas message shows us
that this love is for everyone.
There is no one beyond its reach.”

"It has **always been easy** to hate and destroy.
To **build and to cherish** is much more difficult."

We know the **reward is peace on earth,**
goodwill toward men,
but we cannot win it
without determination and concerted effort."

"But when peace comes,
remember it will be for us,
the children of today,
to make the world of tomorrow
a better and happier place."

"I therefore declare before you all
that my whole life
whether it be long or short
shall be devoted to your service
and the service of our great imperial family
to which we all belong.

God help me to make good my vow
and God bless all of you
who are willing to share in it.

Amen