

God as Father August 4 2013 Morning Service

Intro

If you were expecting a sermon with the humour of Neil the theological insight of Charlie, the eloquence of Rick or their hi tech wizardries, I apologise in advance; you can take early coffee and I won't be offended!

I intend to tell you a story, a true story, of one person's journey of exploration, conversation and coming to terms with **God as Father**

Think on this as we go on our exploration

God as Father what does it bring to your mind do you feel comfortable calling God Father?

Is this a reasonable picture?

A saying attributed to the Jesuit's ...

GIVE ME THE BOY UNTILL HE IS 7. I WILL GIVE YOU THE MAN.

William's father was absent like 1 in 5 today in the UK, and 1 in 3 in America.

At 9 years old William, having seen his brother killed, was dispatched to a farm in Kent by his Mother, to live with a family who turned out to be his Father, who he had never known, a new step mother and 2 younger step sisters.

Williams Father was an angry, violent, heavy drinking man who often commented that William was only there to save the money he had been ordered by the Courts to pay for maintenance whilst William was living with his ex- wife.

William's life was one of working hard on the land before and after school, cutting fire wood, milking, seasonal harvesting - all back breaking. He didn't have any contact with his mother or extended family for nearly 30 years, but that's another story, **God as Mother** perhaps.

There was no love, encouragement, support in school, very often no food, constant fear and beatings you could not believe.

Or maybe you could with what has been in the news this week - the death of 4 year old Daniel Pelka.

God as Father then

So who sets the example, the standards, the emotions, and the respect, life skills, morals in these Fatherless families?

T/V personalities, Wags, Gangs, Rap stars, the state, face book, twitter, internet porn, papers or magazines?

Think about the news and gossip this week

As a Church, and for me as an Urban Evangelist, these are real issues.

We men, fathers and grand Fathers have a real ministry with the fatherless. I digress.

So William learns how to survive. He loves learning, he learns how to switch off his emotions. He gets bigger and stronger and then the day comes when he makes his mind up that the next beating will be the last. When it comes he retaliates and attacks his father (he was off work for 3 months) and the beatings stop.

God as Father

William became a success by the world's standards and acquired money, a house, a wife and children.

Then he had a Damascus road meeting with the living Christ.

William did not know how to pray, he was told by well meaning people to talk to God like you would your Father????????????

Every song he sang in church talked about the Fathers love ???

The example he had of Father did not work. He understood Jesus because William had met him. He had felt His peace, love and his attractive presence.

William had no vocabulary to enquire or agenda to work towards experiencing **God as Father.**

However William was a logical thinker.

Books are read from beginning to end, so that is how he approached **The Bible**

Old Testament from the beginning

(Mistake!!!! Perhaps?) William found that ...

God is jealous.

God is vengeful.

God holds all the cards.

God is the Rule maker and punisher.

God is demanding.

God presides over pestilence, war, unspeakable acts.

(Like 200 Philistine soldiers deaths for their foreskins to win a bride.)

God Controls everything, He created everything.

He knows our going out and coming in.

God knows when a sparrow falls to earth and every hair on our head (or *had* as the case may be!).

William learnt that God says honour, love, respect and obey your Father and Mother!!!!!!!!!!!!

William's thought: Where was God the Father when the proverbial hit the fan in my life? Where was God when I was caned for refusing to change for P.E at school because I was ashamed of the bruising on my body from a beating at the weekend?

William's Bible notes

If I am not careful I could start inventing a personal God that suits my needs and cosy image of Him/Her

Great Malachi

Enter C S Lewis

The Screw Tape Letters was the first of many Given to him at his Baptism

C S Lewis Quote

“God allows us to experience the low points of life in order to teach us lessons that we could not learn in any other way.”

Tough, but in the ministry William has today. True.

New Testament

Thank God.

William devours Mathew, Mark, and Luke and as if God was waiting to ambush him with open arms - at John Ch. 14 to be precise.

It is marked in William's Bible dated 14.12.1982

Read John Ch 14 V 1 to14

William has spent a lot of time researching the family he never knew he had, with the help of archivists, UK Ancestry and other sources he has traced his earth while family back to the 14th century. But this revelation from John 14 meant that William's Great Grand Father to the power of let's say 1000 was God himself he created William, me and all of us in his image. Wow. Awesome!

Clearer picture of God the Father now.

But ...

God is demanding of

Respect, obedience, worship, prayer, adoration etc etc.

But God is Father/ Mother, creator, sustainer, omnipresent and omnipotent.

And we as his children have rights.

When someone says "Just wait until your father gets home", it will be positive.

We never have to make an appointment to speak to Him or wait for Him to come home.

He loves us unconditionally. Look to the Cross, Jesus' death and resurrection.

He gives us an example to live by with Jesus.

He wants a personal relationship with us.

He wants to be involved with our lives and families; the good & the bad, and is there when the preverbal hits the fan.

He is preparing a place for us in heaven, to spend eternity with us and meet all those who have gone before.

That is the **God as Father** William and I have come to know.

If William and I have touched a nerve, or you want to talk, come and find us.