

162 Journeyings – Where are we going?

From 1987 to 2008, I published a monthly subscription magazine about computers; in the first few issues I established a half-page ‘Godslot’ – almost 240 ‘thoughts’ about the Christian faith.

I knew then that **I was right**, and my job was to try to goad the unbelieving readers into thinking about the claims of Jesus. A worthy cause? Well, I know of at least two people for whom those articles were a step on their journey to finding faith.

But here, in these 162 articles, it’s me who is on the journey, hoping to (re-)find my faith, and it seems to be working – I’m getting more and more excited as I journey.

How many people do you know who started their journey – as I did – with great excitement but then, over time, the fire grew cold? Is that you? Or members of your family? Or your church?

As I journey now, the feeling is growing in me that it’s **not actually our fault**. Something has gone wrong, very wrong – fundamentally wrong – with the Christian religion. In my articles, I keep using the phrase, “we’ve always been taught”,¹ and I keep questioning if it really is right.

What do we **say** about our faith? It’s about having a relationship with the creator of the universe; God loves us very much; Jesus died on the cross to take away our sin. Isn’t that fantastic?!

“Well, yes, of course it is!” I used to say, trying to convince myself.

One of the stages on my own journey was to take a good long honest look at the Old Testament, and I didn’t like what I saw. (You too?!) Well, what has helped me most on that issue is to see the big picture of the Bible:

– Abraham was a man of his time – he thought God was angry and needed to be placated.

– The OT authors thought very much the same but, inspired by the Holy Spirit, they put pointers into their writings that were nearer to what God was really like.

– Then Jesus came to earth and showed the people of his time what God is **really** like.

Finally, two very significant journeys: the Emmaus road (I absolutely love that story!) and the Damascus road. In each case, the protagonists knew their (OT) Bibles, but Jesus opened their eyes to see it in a new light – to see those pointers that the Holy Spirit had inspired, and suddenly the whole thing made sense. Talk about exciting!

That’s why, inspired by the Holy Spirit, belief in Jesus absolutely exploded over the next few short years. It was all there, in the Old Testament, waiting to be discovered.

What has gone so wrong? You’ll have to wait for the next exciting episode of “Journeyings”!

Paul Bev. 30.08.21

¹ Just checked: “always been taught” occurs 37 times in 162 articles!