

175 “*This is probably my final article*”

(Yes, I know, I’ve said that before! But I want to stop spending so many hours writing for [myself and] fellow believers, and get on with sharing with the not-yet-believers around me about glorious good news that I’ll try to sum up here.)

The Bible is the most amazing book: it’s totally and brilliantly inspired – and inspiring! Think about it – the Old Testament is the only “*Bible*” that the early church had and yet it inspired them to do some of the most wonderful and sacrificial things, in order to tell people about the “*Good News of Jesus*”, that God is in the business of restoring relationships, and this spread like wildfire around the then known world, and yet...

The Old Testament is about the “*People of God*”, a tribe that originated from a single family, headed by Abraham and Sarah, of whom God said, “they will surely become a great and powerful nation, and *through them all the nations of the earth will be blessed*”. That was the plan, anyway.

It took rather a long time. Why? Well, Abraham and many other key members of that family→tribe→nation – including people like Moses and David – despite their doing some of the most wonderful and sacrificial things, got it wrong, big time, and did some terrible things, even as they were “trying to do the right thing”.

And here’s the amazing bit: God used those self-same flawed, fallen people to write the Old Testament which had, hidden within it, the “*Good News of Jesus*”. (“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” Luke 24:32)

And what was the message? It was that through the death of the Messiah (Jesus) on the cross, the powers of evil – that had fed and nurtured all the terrible things we do – were defeated once and for all, so that we, the people of God, could be restored to one another and to God.

Exactly how did the cross bring the defeat of evil and restore humankind to full relationship with God? Well, that’s what Christians have been trying to fathom for centuries. The cross is a beautiful diamond with many aspects, which we can both glory in and apply to our everyday lives. But basically, on the cross, Jesus “died for our sins” (as the early church summed it up in the creeds) and brought new life through the resurrection.

Unfortunately, we, the people of God, have continued that long tradition: we have done some wonderful and sacrificial things to help humankind, but we have also made some horrendous blunders, despite always “trying to do the right thing”.

Right, let’s get out there, do some wonderful and sacrificial things to help humankind, and try to minimise the blunders by developing our relationship – both as individuals and as the family of God – with this glorious, wonderful, Bible-inspiring God.

Let’s do this! Let’s share the Good News of God’s unconditional love – and use words, if we have to.

Paul Bev. 26.9.21

“*Please can I stop now, Father?*”