

359 *Not sure why I'm writing this*

I don't have a 'message' today, but I've recently been very inspired by a number of people, and at a time when there's so much evil manifesting itself, I guess a bit of positivity – even if it's not specifically 'Christian' – is no bad thing.

It started when, struggling to find any TV programmes worth recording, I stumbled upon the BBC interview series, *My Life at Christmas*, to which I was attracted by seeing the name Rev Richard Coles. I met Richard, briefly, around a breakfast table at an editors' conference where, as an author himself, he was the keynote speaker. He was a joy to meet!

Sue and I knew of Richard as the host of *Saturday Live*, a Radio 4 chat show which often had inspiring stories about people's positive actions, often in caring for others. Richard formed the 1980s pop duo The Communards which topped the UK charts for four weeks in 1986 and became the best-selling single of that year. He is also an openly gay vicar who, relatively recently, left the Church of England.

We really enjoyed the interview but what bowled us over was another interview in the mini-series of three by Sally Philips.¹ We'd never heard of Lemn Sissay, but he's a multi-talented poet of Ethiopian decent, brought up by white parents in NW England. He shared how they had put him *back* into the care system after a 'spiritual experience' convinced these Christians that he was possessed – actually, it was faulting earth wiring on a bath!

His life and attainments and charitable work are quite remarkable. Whilst his faith might not be considered 'conventional', it was clear to us that God has used him (is using him!) very powerfully, in a thy-kingdom-come sort of way, and he is clearly highly respected outside Christian circles.

We then watched another series,² this time with Anita Rani as interviewer: Sheila Hancock, Rudolph Walker and Spencer Matthews, only the first of which we had heard of. All were amazing, seeing how – I would claim – God brought real good to the subject and to others around them in a thy-kingdom-come way without their having a 'conventional' faith.

To be honest, I'm not sure that God is too fussed about the exact details of a person's faith. If they are open and willing and keen to do something worthwhile then I feel that God is willing to use them – maybe quite powerfully – to bring good into people's lives.

Finally, my Tim recommended the consummate young multi-instrumentalist, singer and composer, Jacob Collier, currently in the middle of a world tour, at age 30! Tim and the family saw him in Paris recently, and were stunned. Sue and I watched a documentary³ about him, and I was in tears at the end, seeing what joy a straightforward, humble guy brought to so many people. I'm certain God's heart is warmed, seeing how those concerts bring people together, despite their being no hint of anything Christian in Jacob's life.

Paul Bev. 19.12.24

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001g56p>

² <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0025p0x>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERvd5QjupSU>