



Pastor's Page

Wind of Change



For me August is the month for holidays. As a child it was the only month of the year in which I never went to school, hence I've only just learnt how to spell it! It was also the time when I spent six glorious weeks (four in August) on the Lleyn Peninsula at the caravan that I loved so much (see last week's Pastor's Page)

It was here too one August that my father taught me a great spiritual lesson that I've never forgotten: There was a little tree behind our caravan which served as a great landmark for our holiday home and a barometer for the weather! From the road you couldn't see the van but you could see the tree, so we knew when we were nearly there. This tree was very easy to spot because of its windswept branches. The branches clearly and constantly pointed in what I later discovered was an easterly direction. This was, my father informed me, due to the prevailing winds, which in this part of the country are warm westerly ones. This meant that it was a very mild climate here. However, there were days in this corner of North Wales when cold easterly winds blew and we shivered in the wintry weather! It was at these times, my father advised, when we doubted the truth about the warm westerly weather, that we needed to look again at the little tree and remember the direction of the prevailing wind. The lesson was obvious; there will be times in life when things are difficult and hard, when we feel the cold easterly winds. When we may doubt God's love and purpose for our lives, or his forgiveness and cleansing of our sin; times when we wonder if he has broken his promise never to leave us nor forsake us. Well it's at times like these that we need to look again, not at a little windswept tree in North Wales, but at the tree of Calvary on which the 'Prince of glory' died.

And what does that cross at Calvary tell us? Firstly it reveals the awful nature of sin However nice we might like to think we are, the cross reminds us of our wickedness. Those who called for and supported the death of Jesus were nice people like you and me. In fact they were the kind of people you are likely to meet at a religious gathering! The Apostle Peter preaching to worshippers at the religious feast of Pentecost said; "***This man (Jesus) was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross***" (Acts 2:23) The Old Testament puts it more poetically; "***We all like sheep have gone astray each of us has turned to his own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all***" (Isaiah 53:6) So we are all somehow involved; our sin and rebellion was the reason for the death of Jesus.

But the cross also shows us the depth of God's love. The bible says "***But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners Christ died for us***" (Romans 5:8). He took the punishment that our sin deserves. The Apostle Paul says; "***If God is for us who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?***" (Romans 8:31-32) God loves us unconditionally

So whatever comes your way this week, however tough your life may be, however cold those autumn winds may blow, look again to the tree at Calvary and remember that God is for you; he loves you dearly and the cross proves his point!