



Pastor's Page



Weathering the Storm

Nineteen years ago tonight I went to bed in a house in Tonwell, Hertfordshire. (I just thought you'd like to know that!) I and two others were staying with a lovely family who worshipped at Hoddesdon Baptist church where we were involved in an evangelistic mission with a Christian organization. As we headed off to bed on that night of 15 October I was looking forward to a good night's sleep. The next morning I woke early only to discover that there was no electricity on in the house! "Strange"! Then looking out of the bedroom window I noticed a large tree lying right across the driveway! "Didn't notice that yesterday" I thought. Later on as we travelled to school to take a morning assembly I noticed that many trees had gone missing and indeed the whole of the Hertfordshire countryside (well at least the bit that we drove through!) seemed to have changed overnight.

Yes it was the morning after the night that Sevenoaks in Kent became one-oak! It was also the morning after the most infamous weather forecast in history! Let me remind you; Late on Thursday afternoon (15 October 1987) Michael Fish informed British television viewers that; "A woman rang in to say that she'd heard there was a hurricane on the way. Well don't worry, there isn't" He then dismissed this fanciful notion with a chuckle before predicting "sea breezes' and a "showery airflow". Soon after this forecast, Britain was hit by 120mph winds that ripped up 300 miles of power cables, plunged a quarter of the country into darkness, blocked 200 roads with fallen branches, felled 25 percent of the trees in Kent, caused around £1500 million of damage and stopped all the rail traffic in the south of England for 24 hours. The meteorological office said it was the worst hurricane to hit Britain since 1703. A spokesman for Michael Fish later said "It's really all a question of detail"

Despite his spokesman's best efforts Mr Fish ended up in Stephen Pile's brilliant "Book of Heroic Failures" for that forecast. I have to confess; I love this book, which is full of people's blunders. It makes me feel less inadequate! However, superb as it, is it's not the original! The original book of Heroic Failures is called the Bible. If you don't believe me read it! It's littered with mistakes, and the first one comes in the third chapter of Genesis. It's the mistake that Adam and Eve make when they think they know better than God. And from there onwards everybody makes the same mistake over and over again. Disobeying God because they think they know better. It's a rebellion against Him. The Bible is full of these failures, full of people like you and me. Yet in the midst of all this despair comes great hope as the central character emerges -. Jesus Christ –the only human being who never failed - And because of his perfect life and sacrificial death on behalf of rebellious failures, there is hope for us. For this man, who actually claimed to be God, conquered death and now offers life in all it fullness. What a book! What a man! What a hope!

So, if you want to be truly entertained read Stephen Pile's book of Heroic Failures. But if you want to be assured that God loves failures including you, read the bible and discover God's great plan of salvation for lost mankind. You don't have to be an Heroic Failure like Michael Fish an ordinary one will qualify for God's saving grace!

15th October 2006