



Pastor's Page

The Father Heart of God

The M1 motorway was heaving with traffic as the weekend travelers cut loose. We were making steady if rather slow progress towards the garden of England (Kent) when I noticed that the temperature gauge on the dashboard was working overtime. The little needle which usually rested comfortably close to the cool sign was now alarmingly pointing to the boiling sign! My immediate thought was "faulty gauge - have to get it fixed next week." But as we approached Milton Keynes I noticed steam pouring out from under the bonnet. (Milton Keynes has that effect!!) I decided to quickly pull onto the hard shoulder. My colleague and I both got out of the car and as I gingerly opened the bonnet he began to take photographs of the engine! (I never discovered the reason for his strange behaviour!) But now with smoke freely emanating from the vehicle I decided to call the AA. I didn't have to walk too far (no mobile) to the nearest emergency phone to call the organization, However, in a short conversation with them I discovered that I wasn't a member! Nevertheless they agreed to come out to me if I agreed to join them. Seemed like a fair deal, and so I did! What a relief then to see them arrive on the scene half an hour later with my friend still taking pictures! I filled in a few forms and became a fully fledged member before the nice man went to look at my engine. After a quick examination he said "Oh dear.....I'm afraid your head gasket has gone" "Oh dear" I said, "and what does that mean?" "It means" he continued "you ain't going nowhere mate!" "But" I said "my friend (the photographer!) and I are on our way to Kent for a very important interview". "Well" he said "I can't see how you can get there now". He continued, "we can arrange to tow your car to the nearest AA garage but it will take at least a week to repair -that's the best we can do" I nearly resigned my membership on the spot! This was May 1976 and my friend and I were on our way to Hildenborough Hall in Sevenoaks Kent for an interview to join a Christian organisation. What were we going to do now? There was only one thing for it, I would have to do what I always did when I really needed help - call my Dad! But what would he say? After all the car was owned by him, and he would probably have to pay for the new head gasket which blew largely because I'd failed to put water in the car radiator. Still, risking his wrath, I telephoned him and explained what had happened to us. He instantly left his office, shot round to our house, picked up my mum, and drove 150 miles to where I was waiting at a garage with my poorly car. He then bundled me and my paparazzo friend (with guitars) into his car and drove us all the way to Kent for the interview.

Why would a busy business man, who had every right to be angry, go 300 miles out of his way to get a young aspiring musician and his friend to an informal interview? Easy, he is a loving father who wants the best for his son - whatever the cost. I'm so grateful to the Lord for giving me parents who have shown me the Father heart of God in so many ways. And on this Father's Day (which may have been invented and driven by commercialism) let us celebrate again the amazing Father heart of God as seen in the story of the Lost Son (**Luke 15:11-31**) On seeing his son a long way off the Father, filled with compassion, runs out to meet him. He then embraces and kisses him before organising a great banquet in his honour. As Stuart Townend says; **"How deep the Father's love for us - how vast beyond all measure - that he should give his only son - to make a wretch his treasure"**

Thank God for good earthly fathers and even more for being our loving heavenly Father

17th June 2007