



## Pastor's Page

### ***"In the field of human conflict"***

Its 70 years ago this month since the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war and the media this week has run many programmes to commemorate this occasion. For some of us this date just reminds us of a world-shattering time in our history but for others it brings back painful personal memories. It's impossible for those of us born after 1945 to imagine just what it must have been like to live through such times but others know exactly what it was like. My parents are amongst those who know and my father sometimes recalls one of his memories;

It was Easter Monday and my Dad was just yards from his house when he heard a distinctive noise overhead. Looking up he saw a solitary plane and assumed it was British. But as the aircraft turned he noticed, to his horror, that it bore the unmistakable sign of the Swastika on the underside of its wings. Rooted to the spot he watched open mouthed as the plane, now directly overhead, suddenly released 5 bombs! At fourteen years of age he thought his time had come, he truly believed that his house was going to be bombed. To his relief the bombs missed both him and his house but hit A.V. Rowe a local aviation factory. A.V. Rowe, located about a mile from my father's house, was the place where the famous Second World War *Lancaster Bombers* were built and this was the Luftwaffe's intended target. The incident happened in spring 1941 but my Father will never forget it because for him it brought home the stark realities of war.

I heard a presenter on Radio 5 last week read out an email from a man who as a little boy used to sit on his Granddads knee and ask him what it was like fighting in the Second World War. His grandfather used to say "Don't ask – you don't need to know" He then went on to say that he fought and endured all that he did so that others like his Grandson would never need to know "what it was like"

War is a terrible thing but at the same time it can bring out the most noble of human traits namely 'sacrifice'. We feel inspired and thankful (at least we should do) to those who are prepared to put their lives on the line for others. This is what happened between 1939 and 1945 in Europe and is also happening today in Afghanistan. People are making the ultimate sacrifice. And as I reflected on the words of the Grandfather to his grandson I couldn't help but think of the sacrifice of Jesus. Just as that Grandfather and many other men went through the horrors of war at first hand in order that others wouldn't have to, so Jesus went through the horrors of God's wrath and separation from His heavenly Father in order that we won't have to. As Charles Wesley said;

Died he for me who caused him pain?  
For me who him to death pursued?  
Amazing love how can it be  
That thou my God should die for me?

As many people ponder the events of 70 years ago in Europe let's also remember the events of just over 2,000 years ago in Palestine "where the dear Lord was crucified who died to save us all"

6<sup>th</sup> September 2009