



Pastor's Page

“An Uncomfortable Truth”

On Thursday I only just made it in time to a crematorium in Gloucestershire where I was leading a funeral (10 minutes to spare!) So with the trauma of the experience fresh in my mind (which involved getting changed in the car park as the mourners filed past me!!) I decided yesterday to accept the offer of a Sat Nav to help me find a church in Leicestershire. I was travelling to Leicester with 3 others for a ministry training day and the Sat Nav was a great help as we made it with time to spare!

The day was excellent as we considered the important ministry of pastoral prayer. It was in a small group discussion that I shared with the others the sobering fact that I had been the minister at my church for 10 years! And this ‘rude awakening’ and the theme of the day (plus the Sat Nav) got me thinking about where we were heading as a church. I remembered again the first sermon I preached as minister here from Philippians 1:1-11. I talked about a “Partnership in the Gospel”. From the same passage I saw that it was a **Partnership with a Past**. That is so true of our partnership now. For ten years we have been serving God together here in the Selly Park area. We haven't always got it right, but the Lord has been gracious. And as we look back we have a lot of things for which to thank the Lord. It's also a **Partnership with a Purpose**. The purpose being to extend his kingdom. I believe he wants to use this unique partnership as a witness to him in the area, as we obey his great commission. Hudson Taylor said “God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply”. So let's continue to do His work. But it's also a **Partnership with a Promise**. “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus”. There's an old song that says; *“He didn't bring us this far just to leave us He didn't teach us to swim to let us drown He didn't build his home in us to move away He didn't lift us up, to let us down”*. I find this really encouraging.

But we were also reminded yesterday that God wants each Christian to ‘grow up’ and become ‘mature in Christ’. In the maturing process God may have to shake us up a bit. The following illustration underlines the point;

“When a mother eagle builds her nest she starts with thorns, broken branches, sharp rocks, and a number of other items that seem entirely unsuitable for the project. But then she lines the nest with a thick padding of wool, feathers, and fur from animals she has killed, making it soft and comfortable for the eggs. By the time the growing birds reach flying age, the comfort of the nest and the luxury of free meals make them quite reluctant to leave. That's when, apparently, the mother eagle begins “stirring up the nest.” With her strong talons she begins pulling up the thick carpet of fur and feathers, bringing the sharp rocks and branches to the surface. As more of the bedding gets plucked up, the nest becomes more uncomfortable for the young eagles. Eventually, this and other urgings prompt the growing eagles to leave their once-comfortable abode and move on to more mature behaviour”

So perhaps its time for God to ‘stir up our nests’ a little as we head towards his future. It could be a new direction for the church (No Sat Navs required!)

25th April 2010