



into the Melting Pot

the question is more important than the answer

Sunday 09 September 2018
The Open-Ended Bible

Although many see the Bible as 'the word of God', it was a humanly written, edited, redacted and translated document, with different versions in varying traditions. At our last meeting, the idea was raised that there are many examples in all categories of literature, art, film and music that can have an impact as equally powerful and compelling, in effect a 'divine revelation'. We asked the question 'What would you wish to add to 'scripture' if the Bible was 'open-ended'. Here are a number of contributions. We shared by listening to music, readings and individual stories.

JH – The album 'Nadurra' by Capercaillie contains a track: 'The Cockerel and the Creel'. I play this a lot. It calms me, makes me feel fully alive, with heightened senses. I feel a connectedness and joyful for being alive.

AL – Recounted a story of relationship. What is important to me is people, and relationships. Seeing the good in all people. Having a light, unconditional love. Would add the novel 'The Only Story' by Julian Barnes which explores love and its impact on life and relationships.

BB – Loves escaping from people, being self-sufficient and finding solitude in the mountains. The poem 'Because I Could Not Stop For Death' by Emily Dickinson, a meditation on immortality and death.

RH – A Roman Catholic upbringing emphasising sin, guilt, repentance and confession was replaced by Vineyard Church where an emphasis on grace, forgiveness and people's intrinsic goodness were appreciated. The book 'Classic Christianity' by the evangelical author Bob George opened my eyes to the New Testament advice on how to live your life as a Christian.

BB – Recounted the impact a 'father figure' in a Methodist tutor had upon him. He would add 'The Bible for Grown-Ups' by Simon Loveday, which supports understanding of such a big book. Karen Armstrong's 'A History Of God' explains how humanities ideas have developed over the centuries.

JA – Finds spirituality in people and places. She recounted a visit to the Devils Tower in Wyoming which is considered sacred by indigenous communities there; she could feel sympathy with that idea. She would add 'Catch The Whisper Of The Wind' edited by Cheewa James, a collection of native American Indian inspirational poetry and stories.

SA - Spoke of coming across the writings of theologians John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg, and suddenly everything made sense. He would add 'The Heart Of Christianity' by Borg. He listens to a lot of music, so even though this band is fairly 'evangelical' in approach, the song 'Lifesong' by Casting Crowns which speaks of worship as our 'being' - the very act of living love would be a favourite.