

My Somerset Life

A diary by Brian Snellgrove

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Our church service, the devil, and temptation



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e organized part of our church service this morning run by our two affable leaders. Their style is definitely impromptu, 'make it up as you go along', but it seems to work so who is complaining. One of the reasons I like this church is that you can go along without dressing up. I like to wear a hat or cap in my case so I do and no one even notices it

Today's Vineyard Church was unusual in that we combined two groups, one from Bath and our own home grown group. There were about 60 people in total plus numerous off-spring and I noticed a slight difference in wavelength from the Bath people who seem to be a tad more sophisticated and streetwise. I found the mixture of chemistry between the two groups very interesting and indeed refreshing.

There was a person who was in the main hall, crying, and being comforted by someone. I said that if you can't do it here in this church where can you do it. I said this is one of nature's ways of balancing the system and it is nothing to be ashamed of. In other words I totally accepted their condition and in fact encouraged her. We had a period of about 30 minutes when we engaged in singing and praising God. I don't do this very well so I normally sit it out but take part of the Spirit of it nevertheless.

The children went to play in the main hall while we had an address from one of the leaders of the local vineyard group and he spoke about the Sermon on the Mount, including '*let your life so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven*' Matthew 5:16 King James. This tells me that we should not fall into the normal British habit of apologizing for anything and everything. The use of the word 'let' is interesting. It means allow. Be joyful in the Lord.

The preface to this text is '*you are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick and it gives the light until all that are in the house*'. We are not what we think we are or even what we say about who we actually are and we should be re-radiators of God who made us.

One of the participants had a birthday and we all sang Happy Birthday to her. In our group I asked her how she was going to celebrate and she said that she was going to play a board game. This sounded a bit understated to me so I encouraged her to say how she was going to celebrate especially and I didn't get a response.

In our little prayer group was a man whose father-in-law cancer, prognosis uncertain. He also had recently received an extra demand for his rent where he and his wife were residing. No wonder they asked for prayer. When we walk around the streets a person may look perfectly ordinary and yet they are carrying a great burden from day to day and if they are snappy or short with us we should take that into consideration.

We discussed the general question of spreading the gospel and inviting others to share the faith. I emphasized that the responsibility for this did not lie with one person, having said that it may take seven mentions of a topic before people become interested in it and said that if you were number one,

you would get abuse, if you were third in the queue, you would get mild interest but if you were the seventh and someone was converted it was not solely due to your own words but the words of those that preceded you so hubris is not in order.

The Universality of thought

To continue on religious thinking. Universal thoughts and truth can be found everywhere.

Christianity says that **God Is Love.**

Buddha said **what you think you become. What you feel, you attract, what you imagine, you create.**

Christianity also says **you are the culmination of your thoughts.**

Also ' **as a man thinketh so is he** (Proverbs 23.7)

Also ' **as you sow, so shall you reap**

Shakespeare said **there's nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so**

and also from Hamlet. Claudius says '**My words fly up, my thoughts remain below; words without thought never to heaven go**



Satan and Temptation

This word Satan must strike fear into the hearts of most sentient people . It is the proper name of the supreme evil spirit and great adversary of humanity in Christian terms anyway . A satanist is one who is a disciple of this and in case you wondered satanophobia is excessive fear of the devil,

a morbid dread of Satan.

In Jewish belief, it is an angel always commanded by God to tempt humans to sin, to accuse the sinners, and carry out God's punishment. (This seems to be a rather unloving Old Testament fire and brimstone rendition. Not sure if this is the genuine Jesus version. Ed.)

What do the great writers say about Satan

Satan, the leader or dictator of devils, is the opposite not of God but of Michael (who succeeded satan himself when he fell but that story is complicated) C.S Lewis

But who prays for Satan? Who, in 18 centuries, has had the common humanity to pray for the one sinner that needed it most? Mark Twain

I do not fear Satan half as much as I fear those who fear him . Saint Theresa of Avila.

God's truth judges created things out of love, and Satan's truth judges them out of envy and hatred . Dietrich Bonhoeffer

God of The Creator, Satan is the counterfeiter Edwin Lewis Cole

Satan is wiser now than before, and tempts by making rich instead of poor Alexander Pope

If Satan wasn't around, churches would go out of business Marilyn Manson

The word comes from the Hebrew Satan "an adversary, one who plots against another", literally, one whose throws something across the path of another. In biblical sources the Hebrew term the 'satan' describes an adversarial role. It is not the name of a particular character. Although Hebrew storytellers as early as the sixth century B.C.E. occasionally introduced a supernatural character whom they called the satan, what they

meant was any one of the angels sent by God for the specific purpose of blocking or obstructing human activity.

According to the speaker in the reference video on this website, The word Satan has two meanings. One of them is deceiver and manipulator; the other one is inner temptation which I think is really interesting because our inner self is our own temptation. It is very convenient to externalize and imagine some evil force with horns trying to seduce us but is it accurate . Our own unfulfilled needs may be the culprit.

So how do we tell if an impulse is an external beckoning from evil? What is external and what is internal? Does it come from an energy or thought field which is universal or does it come from within our own subconscious and we are just externalizing it for convenience? That is my thought of the week to ponder on

The origin of the word 'Temptation'



We could argue that our entire existence is a temptation of the physical form. So to be free of the temptation of the physical form is to evolve beyond it, to go past it as all great masters do such as Jesus Buddha Baba Ji and other luminaries. . They have 'released' the temptation. They have no temptation to inappropriate physical actions.They even get to the point where they don't even have attachment to the body which some would say is the ultimate release.

c. 1200, temptacioun, "act of enticing someone to sin," also "an experience or state of being tempted," from Old French temptacion (12c., Modern French tentation) and directly from Latin temptationem (nominative temptatio), noun of action from past-participle stem of temptare "to feel, try

out" (see tempt). The meaning "that which tempts a person (to sin)" is from c. 1500.

The ever resourceful Oscar Wilde said that **the only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it.** I can resist everything **except temptation**". This may not be a very good route.

Other quotes include

"every moment of resistance to temptation is a victory"
Frederick William Faber

' lead me not into temptation, I can find the way myself'
Rita Mai Brown

" we usually know what we can do, but temptation shows us who we are' Thomas a Kempis

Good discussion point – how do we minimize temptation in other words being tempted to do acts that we know deep down are not in our best interests. Is it due to insecurity? Is it due to lack of knowledge? Is it due to impatience?

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Next Level Soul podcast. BRACE YOURSELF: Jesus' TRUE Teachings! It'll Give You GOOSEBUMPS! | John Davis

My Somerset Life by Brian Snellgrove

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