



Looking at the Person at the centre of our faith

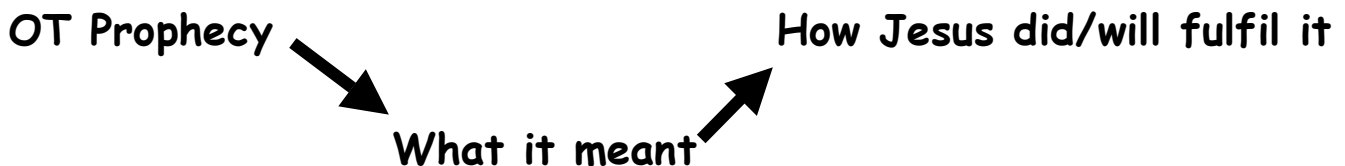
MR SLATE'S QUARRY

We are going to do some quarrying together. The Rock we are digging up is *Jesus*...learning more about Who He is, what He has done and how He fitted the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah.

Each study examines a different aspect of His character, nature or history. At the end of the study, try to prepare a short lesson that will get across the main facts of what you have learnt to someone else. You could use drama, poetry, art or whatever. Preparing such a lesson will itself help you to make sure that you have fully understood what it is you have been studying. The lesson you prepare should not take more than 5 minutes to present.

But don't spend the whole time doing fancy visual aids! Including the coffee break you've got around an hour and a quarter. At *least* 45 minutes should be spent on the study, then divide up the presentation and do any visuals/planning over coffee.

For many of the studies it will be helpful to keep in mind the link:



Mr Slate's quarry has several areas, each one producing different precious minerals and resources, as follows:

Area	Theme	Page
Fred's Rockface	Family History	2
Wilma's Rockface	Events surrounding Jesus' birth	3
Barney's Rockface	The Prophecy in the Passover	4
Betty's Rockface	The Resurrection	6
Pebbles' Rockface	Is Jesus God?	7
Bamm-Bamm's Rockface	The humanity of Jesus	8
Dino's Bonepile	What Jesus has done for us	10
Mr Slate's Office	A Titled Man	11
Other Quarries	All religions equally valid?	12
Unmined areas of Mr Slate's Quarry		15
Putting Cats Out for the Night		17



FRED'S ROCKFACE: Family History

Fred wants to know about Jesus' family tree, and about the promises made to his ancestors. After all, Fred was at school with Abraham's granddad, and his pet Dino was born on the Ark.

The Old Testament traces Jesus' family tree, even though it was written long before He was born. God knew the Family that His promised Messiah would be born into! So now we look at the promises made to some of those people. Some will have more good,

visible, 'rock' in them than others.....but try to get at least a pebble from each of them.

Firstly look at Matthew chapter ONE. Here we see the record of ancestors of the family into which Jesus was born, His *Family Tree*. (In Luke 2 the record goes back past Abraham to Adam). There are several things to note:

1 Not many women are mentioned. It may be worth your while looking up the three that are and reflecting on what their lives tell us....why were *they* included?

2 there are some names missed out from the equivalent list in 1 Chronicles ch 2, this one seems to be a list of 'headline' names

3 from David on it's the Royal Family line....Jesus was born with a genuine claim to the Throne.

Now we'll look at some of the people, and the promises made to them. You probably won't have time for them all, so choose from the list below:

Abraham and Isaac See Genesis 22. Isaac was the promised son given to Abraham and Sarah at a late age, yet here Abraham is to sacrifice him.

This is a prophetic picture of what God and Jesus did for us. What can we learn about God by looking at Abraham, or Jesus by looking at Isaac, here? Especially compare the following verses:

v2 with John 1:18

v6 with John 19:17

v7 with John 1:29

Note too the place of the sacrifice (v2). Why is this significant? See 2 Chronicles 3:1.....the mountain of Jerusalem. Where was Jesus sacrificed? On the same hillsides!

Judah See Genesis 49:8 - 12 for Jacob's prophetic blessing of Judah, and also Genesis 43: 8-9 for Judah's promise to his father to bear the responsibility for his brother. *How do these passages parallel Jesus?*

Rahab See Joshua 2 and compare with Proverbs 18:10

Boaz See Ruth chapter 4 (especially vv 4 - 10)

David to whom so many promises were given about the Messiah, who would be of the 'line of David'. Not just descended from him, but like him in many ways too. See:

1 Samuel 16:18,19

1 Samuel 17:15

Psalms 23

2 Samuel 9 *where grace is shown to the enemy's family*

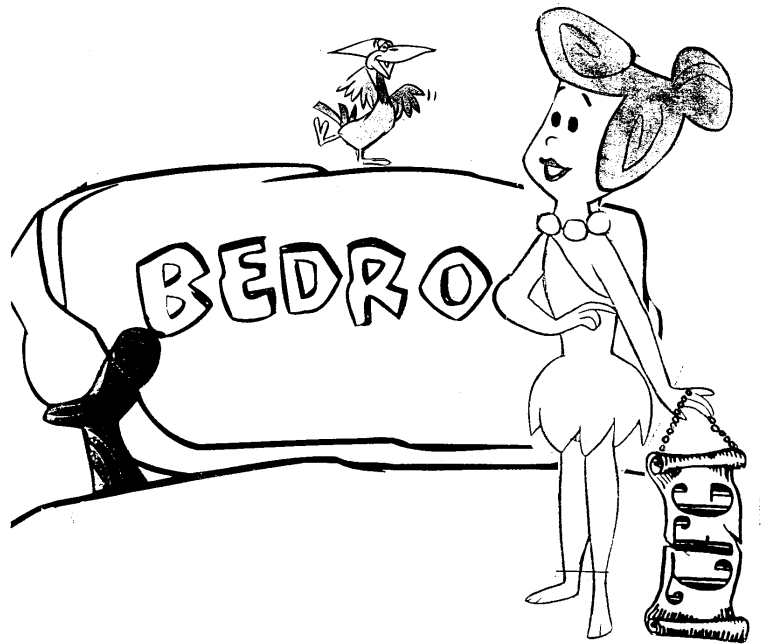
1 Samuel 22:2

and, if time permits, read more of David's Psalms (e.g. Psalms 3, 51 or 110....there are many others!)

WILMA'S ROCKFACE: Events surrounding His birth

We all know the story of Jesus' birth, don't we? Wilma thought she knew all about it...she'd been telling the story to Pebbles since she was knee-high to a Bronto. But maybe it was all too familiar.

In biblical times the stable was a most offensive place. The floors were composed of impacted dung and other filth which had accumulated for decades. The stench was so great that (stables) were placed as far away from other dwellings as possible. By today's standards they would not even be fit for animals. That the Lord of Glory should choose to make such a place to make His entry into this world is one of the more profound revelations of His message to man. We would do well not to miss His point as He has not ceased to use such places to make His appearances. The Harvest, p128. Rick Joyner, Whitaker House 1989.



Spend a few minutes reflecting on the above passage and thinking through what the stable must have been like. Then:

Bethlehem see Micah 5:2

The Shepherds brought Him lambs Read the following and think about the meaning of the shepherds' gifts.

Exodus 12:5	1 Peter 1:19	Leviticus 4:32-35	Isaiah 53:7
Revelation 5:12,13	John 1:29	Luke 22:20	

Later (not to the Stable), the Magi came Magi derives from "Mede", one of the ruling nations of Persia in Daniel's day. You can see the sort of people they were by reading about the court enchanters and astrologers in Daniel (see Daniel chapter 2 and chapter 4). Read also:

Psalm 72:10 - 15 and Isaiah 60:3,7

The gifts were Gold, incense and Myrrh What was the significance of each of these? They are mentioned a lot in the Bible, try these verses:

<i>Gold:</i>	Exodus 25:1-8	Exodus 30:3,4	
<i>Incense:</i>	Exodus 30:1, 7-10, 34-38	Exodus 40:5	Malachi 1:11
<i>Myrrh:</i>	Exodus 30:22-29	Esther 2:12	Psalm 45:8
	Proverbs 7:16	Song Solomon 1:13	
	Mark 15:23	John 19:39	Revelation 18:13

The Three together: Exodus 39:38

So Joseph.... took the child and left for Egypt

See Jeremiah 31:15 Matthew 2:16 - 18 Hosea 11:1
Matthew 2:19 -23



BARNEY'S ROCKFACE: The Prophecy in the Passover

Barney is a real quarry worker. He knows how to dig further into the rock, but also that the minerals found further down are worth the extra effort. There's an awful lot in the Old Testament about the sacrifice of lambs as an offering for sin, and Jesus came to put an end to those sacrifices by being the ultimate one.

So, what do we learn from the OT sacrifices and feasts, especially the Feast of Passover?

Why did blood have to be spilt? See

Leviticus 16:9,22,33 and 17:11 (read all of chapter 16 if you have time)

1 Peter 1:18,19

Exodus 12: 5 - 7, 27

Hebrews 10:11-17

Matthew 26:28

The Passover It is important to understand the meaning of the Passover. The Israelites were captive in Egypt (which is used in the Bible often as a *picture* of the godless world). God was calling them to the Promised Land (a picture of heaven). Pharaoh would not let them go. Now read:

Exodus chapter 12

Joshua 5: 10 - 12

1 Corinthians 5:7

Luke 22:7,15,16

Passover was always celebrated as a mark of national revival (see Kings, Chronicles and Ezra, e.g. Ezra 6:19)

Passover celebrated the redemption of the firstborn son from death. What is the significance of Jesus' crucifixion being at Passover time?

Prophecies of His death in the OT There are many! Remember as you read the following that they were written hundreds of years (in some cases thousands) before Jesus was born.

Psalms 22

Isaiah 53

Amos 8:9

Zechariah 12:10 & 13:6

What the cross meant to a Jew Agony, of course, but more than that. remember that Jesus was handed over to the Romans, and that they were Gentiles. See:

Deuteronomy 7: 1 - 6 and Deuteronomy 21:22,23

Creation Fact

Water, as it cools, like all liquids becomes more dense (heavier). Unlike most liquids, however, when it gets to 4°C (40°F) it starts to get less dense again. That means that water colder than 4°C floats on top of warmer water, and the coldest is at the top.

When it freezes, therefore, the ice floats. In other liquids, the frozen liquid is heavier than the fluid and it sinks....eventually the whole liquid freezes solid.

***BUT NOT WATER!** The ice in the surface prevents the depths getting colder than 4°C.....if this didn't happen life would be impossible in water and probably on earth too, as the ice at the North Pole would sink and more would form, making the whole of the oceans and then planet much colder than they are.*

God, when He made water, knew what He was doing!



BETTY'S ROCKFACE: The Resurrection

Betty wants to know more about the resurrection. The other day she heard the Bishop of Durrerr??Ummm! say that it was not a physical event, just a spiritual one.

Old Testament pictures and prophecies of the resurrection See

Genesis 22:1 - 16 Jonah 1: 17
- 20 Hosea 6:1,2
 Luke 11:29,30 Matthew
12:39,40 Psalm 16:8-11
Matthew 22:31,32

Contemporary Evidence for the Resurrection See

Acts 2:27 - 32
Acts 1: 21,22
! Peter 1:3

1 Corinthians 15: 1- 8
Acts 4:33

Matthew 27:50 - 54
Romans 1:3,4

also read the Resurrection accounts in the Gospels: Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24 and John 20. *It is significant that this event is included in each account!*

There are also non-biblical writings that refer to the life of Jesus and the fact that, from early times, His disciples were claiming He had risen. In his book *The Resurrection Factor*¹ (available in the TFG library) Josh McDowell quotes historian Prof Thomas Arnold, of Rugby School. He says: *I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine the weight of evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead.* Or Lord Lyndhurst, the former Attorney-General of Britain who said: *I know pretty well what evidence is; and I tell you, such evidence as that for the resurrection has never been broken down yet.*

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Importance of the Resurrection

Does it actually matter? Suppose Jesus stayed crucified, suppose His resurrection was a 'spiritual' happening, that His body stayed where it was and He just went to heaven. Does it matter?

See 1 Corinthians 15: 12 - end of chapter, especially vv 12 - 34

Also John 11:25.....*what does Jesus mean by this?*

Colossians 2:12

Romans 8:11

1 Corinthians 6:14

Ephesians 1:19,20



PEBBLE'S ROCKFACE: Is Jesus God?

The other day on her way home from Bedrock Middle School, Pebbles heard a man shouting in the Town Swamp: "I am the Messiah!" he said, "I can make rocks out of bread, worship me!" This got Pebbles thinking, how can we be sure that Jesus is God? Did He claim to be, and what evidence is there to support it?

Passages stating that Jesus is God

See

John 10:30

John 19:7

John 5:18

Luke 24:25-27,
44-47

Jeremiah 23:5,6 John 1:1

Colossians 1:14 - 20 (especially 19)

Philippians 2:6 1 Timothy 2:3

Then compare

Isaiah 40:3 with Matthew 3:3

Psalms 24:7,10 with 1 Corinthians 2:8 and James 2:1

Psalms 2:7 with Matthew 2:15, 3:17, 8:29, 14:33 and 17:5 and also with 1 John 4:15

Also, in John's Gospel, Jesus frequently says "I am". To His Jewish audience, this was in itself a claim to be God. In John 8:58,59 it almost costs Him His life. See Exodus 3:13 -15 for the reason why "I AM" became the Name of God for the Jewish people.

Passages stating that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah)² See

Matthew 16:15, 16 John 5:39 John 4:25,26 Acts 9:22
1 John 5:1

What Jesus claimed about Himself See

John 5:23 John 14: 7 - 10, 24 John 12:45 Matthew 11:27
John 10: 27 - 30, 36 John 6: 35 John 4:14

The Relationship between the Messiah and God See

Malachi 3:1 and compare with Matthew 11:1- 15

Who is the messenger? Who does he prepare for? In Malachi 3:1 God describes that person as "Me"!

Some other places to look

Revelation 4:2,3 *Who is on the Throne?*
Revelation 5:1 *Who is on the Throne?*
Revelation 5:6 *Who is on the Throne?*
Revelation 1:17, 18
Revelation 21:6,7
Revelation 22:3, 13, 16
and, also (when you have time),
Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21

BAMM-BAMM'S

ROCKFACE: The humanity
of Jesus

Bamm-Bamm had an unusual childhood,
raised as he was by the animals
before finally being adopted by the



² The Greek word CHRIST and the Hebrew w
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Rubbles. It took him a very long time to work out that he was actually a human being. So he is therefore very interested in Jesus' humanity....raised as God and then adopted by Joseph and Mary. Was he *really* human, or just pretending to be?

Ways in which Jesus was clearly human

In many ways it is harder to see that Jesus is God in His early life than that he is human. Mary had a normal pregnancy (after conception!), Jesus was born in a normal human way.... the following verses tell of other very human things He did or that happened to Him:

Luke 2:40,52	John 8:40	Acts 2:22	Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:2
John 19:28	John 4:6	Matthew 8:24	Luke 9:58
John 11:35	Matthew 9:36	Matthew 21:13	Matthew 26: 37,38
John 12:27	Mark 6:3,Luke 3:23		Luke 8:1,John 4:4
Mark 1:35, John 17:1,15			

Other passages which speak of His humanity See

Luke 1:11, John 1:14	John 10:33	Hebrews 2:16-18	1 John 4:2
Matthew 8:20	Matthew 11:19	Romans 1:3,4	Romans 8:3
Romans 9:5	Galatians 4:4	Colossians 2:9	1 Timothy 2:5
1 Timothy 3:16	Hebrews 2:14	Hebrews 10:5	Philippians 2:5 - 11

In the Old Testament, too, it is clear that the promised Messiah (Christ) would be human.
See

Genesis 22:18	Genesis 26:2 - 4	Genesis 28: 13,14	Numbers 24:17 - 19
Isaiah 11:1,2	Isaiah 7:14	Isaiah 52:13,14	Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12

Ways in which He was different to other men See

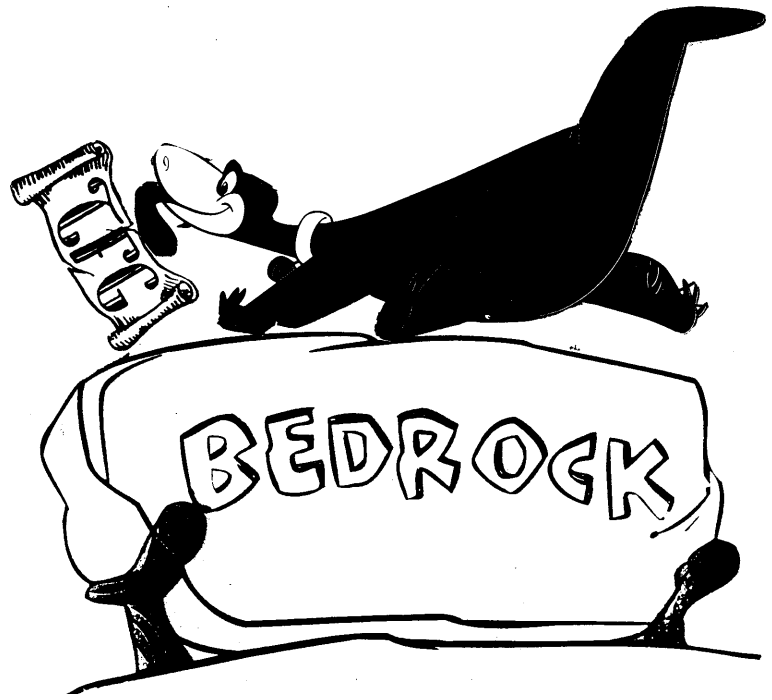
John 8:46	Luke 23:4, 14, 22	Matthew 4: 1- 11	John 8:29
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.....and He is STILL human! See

1 Timothy 2: 5	Hebrews 8:1 - 5
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DINO'S BONEPILE: What Jesus has done for us

Some people get the idea that this subject is old hat, that there is nothing new to learn about it. Not Dino! He loves to go back to old bones that he has buried and dig them up and chew them again. There's always more to get off them, and even if they're dry he always feels good after chewing them again.



The meaning of Atonement. "Atonement" is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'to make at one' (at - one - ment). It is to do with bringing those who have fallen out back into unity. So much for the dictionary, now let's look at scripture!

Our need for atonement See

1 Kings 8:46	Psalms 14:3	Romans 3:20,23	Ecclesiastes 7:20
Habakkuk 1:13	Isaiah 59:2	Proverbs 15:29	Colossians 1:21
Hebrews 10:27	Numbers 32:23	Proverbs 20:9	Galatians 2:16

Atonement under the Old Covenant See

Leviticus 17:11	Exodus 32: 30 - 32	Numbers 25: 6 - 8, 13
Leviticus 16: 9, 22,23	Exodus 12: 5 - 7, 27	Exodus 30:16

The Old Covenant is not enough See

Psalms 51: 14 - 17	Hosea 6:6	Isaiah 1:11	Isaiah 53: 10,11
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Atonement through Jesus See

Hebrews 9:15	Romans 5:8	John 3:16	Hebrews 2:9
Romans 4:25	Matthew 26:28	1 Peter 2:24	1 John 2:2
Mark 14:24	Ephesians 5:2	1 Corinthians 5:7	1 Peter 1:19
John 1: 29	2 Corinthians 5:14	1 John 2:1	Mark 10:45
Isaiah 53: 4 - 12	2 Corinthians 5:21	Galatians 3:13	Romans 3: 21 - 26

Hebrews 9:28 1 Timothy 2:6 John 11:50
Romans 8:1 - 4 (and the rest of the chapter!)

Romans 6:14,22

Grace, not works

It is a common mistake to think we have to earn God's forgiveness. In the first section above we have seen that we desperately need it! And no amount of sacrifices, we have seen, are enough. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit* and also *Romans 6:23*. What a gift! Neither by doing good works, attending church services, praying three times a day in routine, fasting, nor by any other means will we ever *earn* atonement. Only by doing what it says in **John 6:37!**



Mr SLATE'S OFFICE: A Titled Man

Of course, if it wasn't for all those workers out in his quarry, old Slatey would be living in a cave with no hot geysers. But he's not about to get his hands dirty with them. This Jesus is a new customer to him, and he wants to check out His credentials. He got quite a shock when he realised Jesus had about 80 different names and titles! "He must be quite some guy!" he thought.

Names and Titles of Jesus

Don't just look them up. The Bible teaches that we can know a lot about a

person by understanding the name that God gives to them (which is why God often tells the parents in the Bible what to call their child, and why He sometimes gives people new names). What do these names tell us about Jesus? There is more than one name in some of the verses, and remember, you are looking for *titles* as well as for *names*. How many can you find????

It may help to work in a group using several different versions of the bible. There is some method to the apparent random listing of verses, but you might prefer to look up all the "Matthew" verses in one go, and so on. Whichever way you do it, you'll get a long list!

Revelation 3:14

Genesis 48:16

Exodus 23:20,21

Psalms 2:2

Hebrews 3:1	Hebrews 12:2	Revelation 22:13	Matthew 3:17
Ephesians 1:6	John 1:14,18	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:23
John 6:32	Matthew 9:15	John 1:41	Luke 2:25
Ephesians 2:20	Luke 1:78	Isaiah 9:6	Colossians 2:3
Luke 2:11	John 10:9	Isaiah 7:14	Revelation 5:5
Isaiah 9:6	John 1:1	Revelation 1:8	Isaiah 45:15
John 1: 2,3	Matthew 2:6	Ephesians 5:23	Hebrews 1:2
Isaiah 41:14	Mark 1:24	John 8:58	Isaiah 49:3
Matthew 1:21	John 1:17	Mark 1:24	Luke 24:19
Matthew 2:1,2	Matthew 21:5	Psalms 2:6	Revelation 19:16
John 1:14	1 Corinthians 15:45	John 14:6	John 8:12
Isaiah 40:3	Mark 1: 1 - 8	Psalms 110:1	John 20:28
1 Timothy 2:5	1 Corinthians 15:47	Matthew 9:11	Matthew 23:8
Daniel 9: 25,26	Isaiah 61:1	Luke 4:16-21	Hebrews 3:1
Psalms 110:4	Hebrews 3:1	Hebrews 5:5,6	Isaiah 9:6
Ephesians 2:14	John 1:49	John 20:16	Deuteronomy 11:15,18
Matthew 21:11	John 11:25	1 Corinthians 1:30	Deuteronomy 18:15-18
John 12: 49,50	Matthew 16:18	Luke 2:11	Titus 2:13
1 John 4:14	Isaiah 42:1	Isaiah 49:7	Isaiah 52:13
Philippians 2:7	Genesis 15:5	Galatians 3:16	John 10:11
Genesis 49:10	Ezekiel 21:27	Mark 14:61	Matthew 12:23
John 10:36	Mark 10:45	Psalms 2:7	Hebrews 5:8
Daniel 7:13	Matthew 20:28	Matthew 21:42	1 Peter 2:8
John 3:2	Matthew 9:11	John 15:1	

...which must all have taken the vicar a long time at the christening!!



Are there any other Quarries about?

Some people say that Jesus is not the only Way, Truth and Life. For instance, we can approach God through a variety of teachings. "All roads lead to heaven" they say.

Are all religions equally valid?

Yes!

Now you didn't expect to read that here, did you? But it is absolutely true, because **no** religion can ever lead us to God. From all that we have discovered in our time in the Quarry we can see that what God requires of us is *relationship*, not *religion*.

Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice.... 1 Samuel 15:22

"I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be My people..." Jeremiah 7:22,23

Or read the Psalms to see the intimacy the writers had with their God. An intimacy possible because they were 'looking unto Jesus', the promised, coming Messiah. All religion can ever do is become a routine set of codes, rules and restrictions that lead to bondage, not freedom. It does not matter if that religion is Judaism (as it was in the verses quoted above), Islam, Hinduism, Humanism, Atheism or even Christianity.

By "Christianity" here I mean a religious attendance at church Sunday by Sunday, saying all the right things, singing the songs, sniffing the incense or raising your hands but *without* a personal friendship with Jesus to Whom we are singing. Jesus Himself warned *Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only (s)he who does the will of my Father in heaven* (Matthew 7:21)

Being in a relationship with Jesus does not mean being all 'chummy', though God declares Himself to be our friend. We have to remember that it is *He*, not *me* that is LORD or BOSS. So it means *obeying*. Jesus said *"If you love me, you will obey what I command"* (John 14:15, see also John 14: 23,24 , Deuteronomy 11, Nehemiah 1:5, Psalm 119, Daniel 9:4, John 14: 23,24 and 1 John 5:3). He also said *"If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love"* (John 15:10).

One of the strongest pictures God gives us of our relationship with Him is that of Father to Son. Both males and females are in the Bible able to become sons of God. It is not surprising that the enemy has vested vast resources in destroying the picture of Fatherhood over the centuries. Read again the parable of the lost ('prodigal') son in Luke 15, but this time mediate on how the father is feeling.

Another picture that God gives us is that of a lover. Song of Solomon gives a very clear picture of the love that Jesus has for His bride. That sort of intimacy is what God wants with us!

But does it have to be through Jesus?

Acts 4:12 says Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5)

Jesus Himself said *"I am **the** way and **the** truth and **the** life. No-one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6, my emphasis)

The Bible is fairly clear! We can reject it if we wish, but then we have to reject it completely, because if it is wrong about this it becomes totally suspect and unreliable.

Logic also says that God would not Himself set up different systems over the earth which contradict each other. He can't re-incarnate some, but give others only one life to find Him in. Nor can He then say to others "I will judge you on whether your good outweighs your bad or not" whilst He tells Christians "I'll forgive you if you ask".

So what about those who are not Christians?

Don't read on unless you are sure that you love Jesus. And, remember, *"if you love me, you will obey what I command"*! The answer to the question is found in the following passages:

Matthew 28:18-20

Mark 16: 15 - 18

Acts 1:8

Awesome, isn't it? And there's more! See Ezekiel 3:16 - 19

But, remember, it's not *fearful obedience* but *loving, relationship, obedience* that God wants. If we love Him we will do it because we want to please Him, not because we are scared of the consequences of not doing so.

And the really good news is that, when we come to God and tell Him we want to love Him... He helps us to do it! As we begin to spend time with Him, He'll help us to fall in love with Himself!

Developing a relationship with Jesus

It takes time, just like it does when you are getting to know your boyfriend or girlfriend. The time that counts is not just the doing things time (going to the cinema together, or trainspotting, perhaps) but also the quiet times alone, when you can talk or just be together, not even saying anything but just enjoying each other's company.

It's like that with God. Ignore the appeals from your vicar, minister, youth leader etc to 'do things'. Set aside time to be with God. Reading the Bible, studying it. Also talking to Him. Tell Him *everything*. Eventually, He will tell you what you should be doing....don't ignore *that* call!

It's not just our sins we bring to the cross, it's our whole selves. Imagine coming to Him to thank Him that He is on that cross, not you. Then tell Him about your day, *including every shameful, embarrassing thing*. Don't try to hide those from Him. Tell Him even when you enjoy those things, admit to Him that you enjoy sins, He does not want you to be anything other than honest with Him.

And when you have said it all, be still. Be quiet. Perhaps meditate on a verse of scripture (especially if otherwise your mind is full of *Neighbours* or your boy/girl friend or the row you've had with someone). Have a pen and paper close to write down thoughts that come to you in this time. *Practise* spending time like this and before long you will begin to recognise God's voice through all the other thoughts.

If you are not sure whether something was God or not then you could ask Him to confirm it later in some other way; or ask an older Christian whether they think it is God speaking. Often when God has got something to say He'll keep repeating the same verse or same picture/example through different people, talks, etc.

Another thing to do at these times is to simply hold up your hands and to pray "*Come Lord Jesus, I welcome You now. Minister to me, meet with me, I love You*" and then again just to wait.

Also spend time praising and thanking Him. Perhaps use a Psalm or sing a song or have a tape of worship music playing quietly in the background.

And when you are just walking around, on a bus, having a shower, bored in Maths lessons, get into the habit of thanking God *then and there* too. The more you make God a part of every moment of your life, the more you will be getting intimate with Him, the more deeply in love with Him you will be becoming. It takes time, and patience, but so does every other relationship we ever have.....and this one is the best and most important of them all!



Back to Mr Slate's: Places where we have not been digging

It's a huge quarry! We have not had time to explore the other rockfaces this weekend. But hopefully, your appetite for hard work has been sufficiently whetted. If you'd like ideas for where else to look in the days to come, why not try some of these? The lists are not exhaustive, they're only there to get you started.....

Jesus as Prophet See

Deuteronomy 18:15 - 18
Matthew 21:11

Acts 3:22 - 26

Hebrews 1:1,2

For the role of a prophet you could look at the lives of Elijah and Elisha in the books of Kings

Jesus as High Priest See

The whole of the letter to the Hebrews!

Exodus 28:1

Numbers 16:40

Psalm 110

Zechariah 6:12,13

Leviticus 5:17,18

For the role of High Priest look at the instructions given to Aaron in Exodus 28 and 29

Jesus as King See

Genesis 14:18

Hebrews 7

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Jeremiah 30:21,22

Matthew 22:41,42

Isaiah 9:6,7

Isaiah 32:1

Psalm 2:6

Luke 1: 30 - 33

Hebrews 1:8

Isaiah 22:22

Revelation 20:4 - 6

Zechariah 14:9,16

Acts 2: 34,35

1 Coriinthians 15:25

Revelation 11:15

John 18:33 - 37

Daniel 2:44, 4:34, 7:13,14,27

Luke 1:33

2 Samuel 7: 10 - 16

Psalm 72: 8 - 11

Zechariah 9:9

Matthew 21:5

Revelation 19:11-16

Matthew 27:37

Acts 5:31,32

Revelation 1:5

John 1:49

For the role of King you could look at the life of David, the picture-of-Jesus King in 1 and 2 Samuel.

Jesus, the returning Lord

Yes, He *is* coming back! But not as a baby, as Man-God in glory, and all shall see Him. It won't be quietly in a corner! See

Psalm 50: 3- 6

Hebrews 9:27, 28

Matthew 24:30, 26:64

Revelation 1:7

Zechariah 14:4 - 8

Matthew 16:27

Acts 2: 19,20

Isaiah 66:15,16

2 Thessalonians 1: 6-10

1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 5:2,3

Matthew 25:31

Miracles and Parables

We can learn a lot about the purposes of God towards us by reflecting on the healings and miracles that Jesus performed. Also by understanding the lessons He gave, mostly in parables.

Now the *really* hard work starts.... you will have to read all four Gospels! Aim to do so in three ways:

1/ A quick reading. Try to get through each Gospel in no more than 3 or 4 days.

2/ Passage by passage. Slowly work through the gospels making notes on things that strike you as you go. Always be asking the question *What do I learn about Jesus through this reading?*

3/ Just read each miracle or parable, and also compare the other accounts of the same event in the other gospels.

....and then....

If you have done all of that (!) and you *really* know it well, then start on the rest of the Bible., looking for Jesus all the time, *even in the Old Testament*. Keep on asking *What do I learn about Jesus through this reading?* There are plenty of books you can buy to help, but the important thing is to be taking seriously your regular reading of God's Word.



Putting Cats Out For The Night.

You know the song, and the scene that goes with it:

*Someday, maybe Fred will win the fight
Then that cat will stay out for the night*

When I watched that as a kid I could never understand why Fred didn't just do what the cat did: jump in through the open window! But he never learnt, and he never succeeded in getting victory over the pesky sabre-toothed feline. Time after time he'd try his best, and every time he failed.

Isn't it just the same with us so often? We're fighting some sin perhaps that we can't get victory over, or some guilt complex from the past. Just when we think we've mastered it or forgotten it, it jumps back in and troubles us again.

The reason is we still have not learnt the basic, simple lesson that God lovingly goes on trying to teach us:

It is by grace....through faith....it is the gift of God.....not by works (Ephesians 2:8,9)

Now that verse doesn't just apply to salvation but also to everything else about the Christian life. *Everything*. The moment we start to think that *we* know what we're doing, we take our eyes off Jesus, fail to notice the open window, and BOOM!....the cat's back on the mat and we're out in the cold.

The *only* way to get victory over these things is to hand them over to Jesus by placing them at HIS feet by the Cross. It takes honesty, not pretending that 'it' does not exist. It takes guts....it can be a painful process admitting not only the sin (or the problem from the past), but also our inability to conquer it: our failure.

It takes patience. God sometimes wipes things out in a single moment but often He will do so gently, over a period, teaching us as He does more than we realised we needed to learn as he does so! Everytime the "cat" shows up again we need to bring it back to Jesus: "*Here I am with this same old thing Lord*" is much more pleasing to Him than our pretending it does not exist. Romans 12:2 says we are to be *transformed by the renewing of our minds*. Only Jesus can renew our minds; we might be able to temporarily clean them, but that is not the same as making them new. He does this as we offer our bodies and minds as *living sacrifices* (Romans 12:1).

It takes a willingness to be humbled, shamed up even. Sometimes He might call on us to confess the "cat" to another Christian. Speaking about it in this way can be very powerful, for by doing so you are actually releasing your grip on it, and its grip on you. So choose a trustworthy friend or two and get into the habit of being open, honest, even 'transparent' with each other. Or, perhaps, go to a Catholic style confessional but remember, you do not need to do penance afterwards! It has all been done for you by Jesus on the Cross! God forgives you, nothing you do will *make* Him do so, He already has forgiven you at Calvary. We confess it in order to receive *what is already there for us*.

It also takes a willingness to forgive. Often we keep the "cat" there because we are holding on to resentment about what someone else has said or done *to us*. This breeds bitterness, and in time hatred. See *to it that no-one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble* (Hebrews 12:15). *If anyone says "I love God" yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.* (1 John 4:20).

Logically, the only person affected by your hatred is you, especially if the person you are bitter about is one you no longer even meet in passing. They are unaware of your hatred, or if not they are able to keep out of your way! But you can't avoid yourself, and this thing is constantly gnawing at you.

So admit it to Jesus, ask for His help to forgive the person. Actually say aloud the words: "I choose to forgive.....", and then the cat will begin to stay out!

Lastly, when the cat shows up, the best defence is to ignore it and to focus instead on Jesus and to praise Him. By filling your mind with His praises in this way you will be amazed at how quickly the problems/temptations vanish. This is far better than a frontal attack on the problem saying things like "I will try not to think about this" or "I bind you".....just keep praising Jesus and the cat will flee.....and your mind will be renewed!

