

Darkness to light - Tragedy to Triumph



Layers of thick clouds were suspended low over us, their dark grey shapes edged by shades of indigo and purple - an ominous threat of heavy rain or a storm. The sea, a completely different shade of grey looked as though a large pot of green liquid had been mixed with it. There was nothing attractive about this visit to our popular, favourite seaside resort of Southwold for a walk and a hot chocolate. Everyone who visits us, whether they are family, friends or visitors has a visit here. So too do those who come to talk to get things straightened out. A walk by the sea is far more helpful and less threatening sometimes than the armchair chat in someone's house.

An art college student accompanied us regularly on these visits. Issues of rejection in her childhood still affected her and sometimes left her troubled as to her abilities and belief in herself and these walks by the sea were looked forward to as she talked things over. Her studies, our work commitments and the uninviting weather almost had us cancelling the visit. But we all decided that fresh air and the break would do us all good. We walked onto the promenade and the stormy conditions took our breath away. The tide had just turned and laid bare a small, smooth section of clean sand. Amongst many other topics discussed we compared the regular, cleansing affect of the tides on the sand with the need for the cleansing love of Jesus as we spend time with him every day.

We enjoyed our hot chocolate and were getting up to go home when there was a lightening of the dull greyness around us. I had often seen the transforming effect the sun had as it broke out through the clouds so it encouraged us to stay a little longer – it took an hour and a half exactly for travelling, walk and hot chocolate. So we stopped to watch as the narrow funnel of light piercing the clouds widened as it touched down on the sea and dispelled the greeny-grey sludge replacing it with a silvery, gold sheen. We lingered for ages enjoying the transformation. What a surprise when we looked up at the sky. Only a small bank of clouds was left on the horizon to the north. We looked up into the most beautiful blue sky.



We talked together of the power of the love of Jesus which dispels the effect of darkness in our lives. Darkness brought about not only because of sin but also because of the experiences which have deeply imprinted on us how silly, or useless we are. The things that make us think we are not as good as the next person or that we can never achieve anything because we haven't had the same opportunities as other people have. We came to the conclusion that whereas human love might have failed us Jesus never would because just as the sun always

shines above the clouds, Jesus as the light of the world, would always faithfully be there for us.

'Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life' (John 8:12).

It is wonderful thing to have Jesus, as the light of the world, to penetrate the darkness of our lives and permeate every part of us and to become a child of God. The joy of having a life free from things that drag us into the gutter or feel like a ball and chain around our necks! To have the courage to make right choices and live in them! To know what it is to be free from anxiety and guilt.

John 1:1-14 captures so well the transformation of light to darkness that can be ours as we accept the tragedy of the crucifixion of Jesus and the triumph of his resurrection – where all the influences and consequences of our sin were destroyed - where too the lack of a father is replaced with God, the perfect heavenly Father.

It did us all good to watch the scene as it unfolded before us and to talk of such important and meaningful things. We had all made the right decision to come out and it had done our souls good.

'Wow! I am so glad that we came.' was our guest's appreciative response as we finally left for home.

