THE SHACK

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Category: Reviews

I must admit that I came to William Paul Young's book The Shack expecting to hate it. Best selling and fashionable Christian fiction has never been my favourite literary genre. However, I have to say that I thoroughly enjoyed it and ended up reading it in a single sitting.

Mack, the central character of the book, is traumatised by the abduction and death of his daughter, whose blood stained dress was found in the shack of the book's title. Against his better judgement, Mack returns to the shack and has a profound meeting with the the triune God, in three most surprising guises. The upshot is that through meeting with God, Mack finds healing and restoration.

The bare bones of the story hide some profound truths and insights that make this a very worthwhile book. It is true that the picture of the Trinity emphasises the threeness of God at the expense of unity. Then again, Western theology has typically emphasised unity at the cost of threeness, so I would see this as an over correction of an existing error. Perhaps we can only find the truth of the Triune nature of God by swinging from one extreme to the other.

Complicated concepts, such as God using pain and suffering to refine us, while not being the root cause of the suffering are handled sensitively. The heart of the book is that the Triune God is a realtional God, and that humanity and the whole of creation exist for relationships (a point of view that readers of this blog know I share). There is a video of a talk I gave on how the relationships at the heart of the Trinity lead to Christian mission and Bible translation available here.

While I was reading the Shack, a nice snow fall covered our garden - very early in the year for that.