APPRECIATING THE GOSPELS

Posted on October 20, 2014 by Eddie

When we read the story of the crucifixion, we feel angry at the rigged trial that Jesus had to go through and we are deeply saddened by his suffering on the cross, but we also feel a sense of relief as we read because we know everything will work out at the end. We cannot begin to share the gut-wrenching agony and despair that the disciples experienced when they saw all of their hopes for the future die along with Jesus on the cross. Those who lived with Jesus didnâ€™t know how it would work out and they didnâ€™t really understand who Jesus was. When he died on the cross, they really thought that it was all over.
Category: Observations

When it comes to fiction, my taste in literature is far from highbrow. I love reading thrillers and crime novels. If I have time to spare to read something for light relief, I really donâ€™t want to have to struggle with questions of metaphysical angst or postmodern identity. I want helicopters, spies or a body in the library with the door locked from the inside. There is nothing I like better than a story which carries me along at a fast pace with lots of action and thrills. But, I have to confess to a weakness; I canâ€™t bear reading stories where innocent people, especially children, get caught up in the action. All too often, I cheat and flick through the last chapter just to make sure that the kids who have been threatened, kidnapped or whatever are fine at the end of the book so that I can read on without feeling stressed. Of course, it does mean that I miss out on some of the experience that the novelist planned. They sat up all night thinking of ways to build up the tension in the story and I short circuit it all by jumping to the last page.

The same sort of thing happens when we read the Gospels. Most of us are familiar with the stories of Jesus and we know how things work out in the end. When we read the story of the crucifixion, we feel angry at the rigged trial that Jesus had to go through and we are deeply saddened by his suffering on the cross, but we also feel a sense of relief as we read because we know everything will work out at the end. We cannot begin to share the gut-wrenching agony and despair that the disciples experienced when they saw all of their hopes for the future die along with Jesus on the cross. Those who lived with Jesus didnâ€™t know how it would work out and they didnâ€™t really understand who Jesus was. When he died on the cross, they really thought that it was all over. It was only with hindsight that they were able to put the pieces together and to start to grasp the implications of all that he said and did. As we go through Jesus story, try and imagine it from the disciplesâ€™ point of view.

At some point, I will eventually finish writing my book. When I do, you will find these paragraphs in chapter 4.Â