



More of the ordinary...

Wow. Who would have thought that the ordinary could have such a response. Since I started writing this weekly email, I have not had so much feedback than what I received for last weeks Pastor Connect. I guess there was something to say about the 'ordinary' worship that we have each week. So I thought I'd continue on this theme again, and have a think about what it means to live an 'ordinary' life.

Ordinary. It is a word that generally has negative connotations. We don't like things to be ordinary do we? We are told by advertising that ordinary is bad and that we need to buy product x or product y so that we are no longer burdened by this horrible 'ordinary-ness'. Because we are all better than that. Right? And we can rise above it because we use the latest spray on deodorant, drive the latest car, eat the newest burger or wear the latest fashions. But logically this just doesn't make sense to me. If we have to buy something to be happy in our lives, if our sole goal in life is to be a consumer, and if we have to have something more to be happy, then what do we actually get out of day to day life? If we can't be happy till we spend or have, does that make us worthless if we can't? And what about the words of Jesus when he said "leave everything and follow me?" Maybe he is saying here that we can afford to leave behind what the world tells us makes us special, because Jesus has so much more in store for us, if only we believe and follow in faith. For when I think of special times in my life, they don't involve things but people. People that I have met in my 'ordinary' day to day life that, when encountered, have made the day special. Those precious moments that are often so fleeting, but more precious than gold or diamonds.

Holidays. We love to take them don't we. And gosh don't companies love to sell them to us! Glossy brochures, amazing television ads, all enticing us to leave the 'ordinary' and come and be a better person in an amazing environment. But does it work? If the ads are to be believed, the moment

we arrive at our destination we will be transformed into wonderfully sweet and beautiful people, swimming with a big smile on our face and sipping cocktails by the pool in the throes of ecstasy. Now I have worked in a luxury hotel in Sydney. And let me tell you that this isn't true! Amongst the hotel guests there seemed to be just as many people with ordinary everyday problems, issues, frustrations and trials. Indeed it was the minority that seemed to have smiles on their faces! So this got me thinking about how powerful our 'ordinary' everyday lives are. Because who we are there will be who we are all the time. I could be a tense, stressed, angry person every day. Will going on holidays make a difference? Not really. I will still be a tense, stressed, angry person. Just now I have paid money to be this person away from home. Where I am doesn't really change who I am. Just as what I buy doesn't change who I am.

The point here is that again, the 'ordinary' life is not something to be feared or seen as bad. Because it is how we go about our day to day lives that makes us who we are. So embrace the 'ordinary-ness' of daily life! Revel in what you can experience and in the contact you have with others. Rejoice in the small wonders that you see around you. Donate \$20 to a worthy cause rather than purchase something that won't really make you special. Always strive to be the best person you can be everyday. Don't wait for a holiday to make you happy! And, above all, remember that in all things it is God who makes life special, with grace that can only be given and a gift that cannot be bought.

Rev Gavin Ward