

The Only Way is Ethics

Hand of God - God got an awful lot of mentions in the news last week and all because of an Argentinian football player. Rather predictably, it would be extremely rare indeed for any news media to refer to God this much without it being associated with either a sports or other celebrity, or a story critical of the church or clergy. And watching the news over the past couple of weeks, I am incredibly intrigued by how people are so readily forgiving of flaws in high profile people, and how this feels so contrary to much of daily life in our modern culture, where forgiveness and tolerance seem often to be in short supply. In a time when any comment on certain topics can get you 'cancelled', it seems that blatant lies and assorted other dubious acts does not attract the same reaction or even disapproval. On the one hand, I am glad that we can view each other as flawed individuals and be forgiving, and yet, without being overly judgemental, neither should we venerate or ignore those same flaws as though meaningless or insignificant. So, I wonder how many celebs think about setting a positive example or thinking of others and not themselves – it is far more likely that the real hand of God would be in circumstances such as these.

Take-away heaven – Recently, I was driving through Kingston-on-Thames on a Friday evening and was absolutely amazed at the sheer number of take-away delivery drivers that were on the roads. At one traffic light, I made up my own personal traffic jam with five Deliveroo guys on bikes, mopeds, etc., and a similar number from Just Eat. I could not help but think if we were all involved in a pile up, the resulting meal that would come out of it would be interesting/inedible/a new form of cuisine. Did somebody say - you want fries with your chicken curry?

Gogglebox - I have never watched an episode of The Crown on Netflix, and yet it is difficult not to get dragged into the discussion almost everywhere about the truthfulness of its' content. Where does artistic licence begin and historical accuracy end – where do they even meet? The most likely answer is nowhere, especially when it gets in the way of a juicy story. The main characters in these types of series cannot be neutral – it is not a documentary, it is entertainment. The writers deliberately set out either wanting you to like certain characters (sympathise with them) or dislike them (confirm prejudices or popular conceptions against them). It maybe that some people (predominantly,

Americans) assume that this show is broadly depicting the truth, but it will not get in the way of the prime objective of attracting as many viewers (and hence subscriptions) as possible. Fake news, playing fast and loose with facts is nothing new, as even in biblical times, Pontius Pilate once said – ‘What is truth’? But maybe this topic is of interest to me because I was there during the period currently being covered – I have strong memories of the Thatcher premiership, the Diana years and the characters are very real to me. I almost tempted to watch an episode or two just to see how the various people are portrayed – well almost, think I will just ask the wife!!

On a personal note - I just want to finish by saying that our daughter, Katie, has recently celebrated her 21st birthday. Those of you who have met her will know her as a very loving, funny young woman, full of character and personality. She can be a bit of a drama queen (no idea where she gets that from) and sometimes her behaviour is rather challenging, even for her parents. But she has such a loving heart and always wants to help others. You may have seen a recent story about the ITV soap, Emmerdale, filming a storyline where a couple will terminate their pregnancy after being told their unborn child has Down’s Syndrome. When I read stuff like this, it makes me both extremely sad and frustrated at the same time. We ought to have a real respect for life, it is a gift from God - and our daughter is absolutely a gift. She has taught me so much and is the centre of our family unit, and this is not uncommon for many families with DS children. So – Lord, thank you for our amazing and beautiful daughter – happy 21st birthday, Katie, with all of our love.

Check out this podcast if this subject interests you.

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https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/events/2019/11/29/sally-phillips-human-dignity-different-lives-the-illusions-of-choice?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=December%20newsletter&utm_content=December%20newsletter+CID_a11aaa2760a9190d7868f89d941701cc&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=via%20our%20website