**Cul de Sacs**

When travelling on holiday in Tasmania, Australia, we came to a side road that led along a beach named “Six Mile Beach”. We turned off along the road just to see what it was like – a little uninviting with sea mist everywhere. At the end we stopped, looked, got back in the car and started to retrace our steps. No sooner had we turned around than we noticed a side road, so, having the time, we turned off along it and within half a mile it too came to an end. However, there was a large car park and there appeared to be something just the other side of a mound that was along one side of the car park. Being inquisitive, and having the time, we got out and walked over the mound and down to a river. At the river we walked onto a jetty and there we were transfixed as we watched a bird sitting on the water, trying to swallow a fish it had caught. We stood still and the bird slowly drifted past us on the current, at its closest it was just 6 feet away. The little cul-de-sac that was off a bigger cul-de-sac produced one of the most memorable sights I have ever watched.

God then spoke to me about journeys and cul de sacs.

Humanly, we like to go straight from where we are to where we are going. Generally speaking, we want to go there as quickly as possible e.g. going to work, going on holiday. The sat nav or route planner will give us the **quickest** route; not necessarily the shortest route but definitely the quickest.

With God the journey **IS** it. It is not the destination that matters but how we travel towards it, or more importantly, the life changing experiences we encounter on the way. If we are hurrying along, we don’t have time to notice what is around us. We don’t have time to see the life changing experiences we could encounter. Cul de sacs are worth their weight in gold as we gain experiences that would not normally come our way! At the end of a cul de sac we have to slow down and stop. In turning around we see things from all sorts of different angles and perspectives. In stopping, we can even make an inquisitive excursion into the unknown; to discover something new that God is bringing our way.

So for us, the learning of lessons, the transforming of lives is achieved most readily in cul de sacs. A fast drive up a motorway may take you many miles very quickly, but where are the life changing views? Not often on a motorway will you see a spectacular view and even if you do, you are not allowed to stop to enjoy it. Cul de sacs give us the opportunity to encounter something completely different from the normal; like the 20 minutes watching a bird slowly drift past us as it swallowed a fish. By experiencing something different from the normal, God can show us something new of Himself, of His creation, of His will for us; He can change us in ways that we might not normally be open to.

Reflection:

How can I change my lifestyle so that I have time to slow down and ‘see’ what is going on around me?

Prayer:

God, help me to see the unexpected opportunities that you lead me to.

Help me to take these unexpected opportunities.

God, help me change this life of mine so that it becomes more like You.

Bill Hunter 2011