

14th July 2022

Disappointments

**“The natural state of the football fan is bitter disappointment,
no matter what the score.”**

Nick Hornby, *Fever Pitch*

As an avid football fan, I know the truth of Nick Hornby’s quote above. And you only have to be one of the Tartan Army that follows Scotland to know that there are thousands of others who’re in the same natural state.

But disappointments are part of life, whether you follow football or not. In recent weeks, we’ve had three different family members who’ve not been able to be part of family gatherings because of Covid. They were disappointed, and so were we. It wasn’t their “natural state”, but it was a natural reaction to something that hadn’t worked out as we’d hoped.

How do we deal with disappointments? If they’re caused by our own mistakes, we have to learn from that. In university, I was disappointed when I failed a Sociology exam. But I hadn’t put the work in, so the failure was my own fault. I had to learn from that, *and* I passed the exam at the resit. If *we* didn’t cause the disappointment, we often try to find someone to blame. That’s legitimate if your football team plays badly, for example. They deserve to get pelters! But what of your disappointment when Covid strikes? No one to blame there ... So disappointments just have to be lived with, with no “cause and effect”, personal or external. There’s always a life to live afterwards. One disappointment isn’t the end.

When Jesus was arrested before his crucifixion, Peter, head-honcho disciple, was singled out as his follower. But, we are told, he denied that fact three times – “before the cock crowed”. Disappointment? Yes, at himself, because he’d failed big time. But was that the end? Not at all, for this man was “the rock” on which Jesus was to build his Church. Peter could have turned in on himself and been destroyed by his disappointment or turned outwards to blame someone else. But Jesus saw beyond both of these and offered Peter a new life, a life beyond the disappointments.

Our natural state *shouldn’t* be “bitter disappointment”, but an opportunity to learn and grasp the opportunities that new life offers to us.

A prayer for today

Lord, help me move on from my “natural state” to be closer to fullness of life in you. Amen

An original reflection by @ Tom Gordon Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>