

THINKING ABOUT THE BIG QUESTIONS

AN INTERVIEW WITH KATHY PAINE



Kathy, have you always had a faith?

No, my experience of church and God as I grew up was not the greatest, so much so that I didn't set foot in a church for many years. I struggled to find a faith over at least five years when absolutely nothing made sense except a sure belief that there was something to find!

What made you search for faith?

My three lovely children (now adults). Of course I wanted only the best of everything for them, and so my mind was, through life events, turned to matters of faith – an area I had sorely neglected. These babies helped me think about God's purpose for us all.

How did that happen?

My brother-in-law Laurie, one of the few Christians in our family, died tragically in 1988. He had been horrified some months before his death when my daughter Hannah, age 4, sat on

a huge Bible in his flat and asked what a Bible was. I began to understand from his reaction that there was much more to life and that my children deserved to know more. That was a pivotal moment in my journey to seek answers and to find out more.

So what did you do?

I began going to church and turned my attention to those who had a living faith, who had this relationship with Jesus which seemed so distant from me and well out of my reach! The children and I were christened the following year and over the next five years I began to search in earnest for my questions to be answered. This included going to at least two Alpha type courses.

What questions did you have?

The big questions in life, such as suffering and what a personal relationship with Jesus looks like.

What did you find?

I began to understand that there are no easy answers. I certainly can't come up with instant answers when challenged on the truths within the Bible and how it is God-breathed. However I did find the relationship with Jesus that I had been seeking.

How has that impacted you?

Now I am in a place where my faith waxes and wanes but I have a sure knowledge that no matter what, Jesus won't leave me.

Can you tell us about Rethink?

This is a special week, 21st-25th November, when there will be opportunities to think through the big life questions and make new sense of them. Students from the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics (OCCA) will speak at events on topics such as 'A Christian perspective on pain and suffering' and 'Can I trust the

Bible?' There should be some really interesting discussions. It would be great if everyone can come to at least one event and even better if we can all invite friends and family to come, too.

What is your hope for Rethink?

That Rethink will give us an opportunity to think more about and grow in faith. The two places where my faith was nurtured most was in a lifegroup [small group in which members grow in friendship and faith] where I soon realised that I wasn't the only person with questions, and on an Alpha Course where I saw that even those who were leading groups had doubts at certain times in their lives and were able to talk about them openly!

A final thought?

A simple thought or a comment can change lives as Laurie's did for me – and so can an invitation to an event!

rethink
21-25 Nov 2018

All Rethink events are clearly marked in the Calendar (centre pages).

Find out more at...

www.denhamparish.church/rethink
www.rethink-southbucks.org