

The Lord is my Shepherd ... I shall not want.

I have been watching a BBC drama on TVNZ on Demand, called The Spilt. It's about a well to do family who live in London, and whose lives are torn apart by infidelity, dishonesty and selfishness.

And then finally a divorce.

It sounds grim and it is, but it is also incredibly human, and I have spent quite a lot of time drying my eyes as the characters do all manner of foolish things ... and yet the undercurrent of the story is that love, marriage and relationships are all we have, and that working on what we've got every day is vital. That the ordinary is precious, the mundane heroic and the discipline to stay on track ... a display of wondrous human goodness.

The show doesn't for one second say that divorce or separation is wrong, not at all, sometimes it's very necessary. But it does suggest it isn't without consequence. And it wasn't in my case, either.

The Lord is my Shepherd ... I shall not want.

When I thought about my life, in the light of my TV watching, I realised one of the reasons I became a Christian was because I wanted to be loved. Loved in such a way that would be all encompassing. All enveloping. All embracing.

My parent's divorce left me, I now understood, feeling unsure about many things, and one of those things was love. If our parents, who are to love us most, can leave us, what does that say about the stability of other human connections.

It certainly left me feeling very shaky about the whole idea. If Mum and Dad couldn't be trusted with loving, who could?

The Lord is my Shepherd ... I shall not want.

As I thought about this lack of trust, I also realised that this effected my belief in Marriage. As a teenager, I couldn't for the life of me understand why anyone would get married. My observation was that it led to heartache and tears at best, lying, deceit and utter tragedy at worst.

I looked at my Mum and Dad over the time they were together, and some of it was good, but the end, was the most horrifying thing I could imagine. Then I looked around at my friends and their girlfriends, and I saw much the same.

People cheating, people wrecking lives; their own and others. It seemed to me thoughtless and pain filled.

Marriage and relationships were one foot in the grave and the other on a banana skin, as far as I was concerned, and nothing in my parents' foray into the experience had made a dint in that.

The Lord is my Shepherd ... I shall not want.

When I came in to contact with the church and Christianity, these enormous doubts and holes in my life were crying to be filled. There was a yearning for a love, a trust, a ground to stand on, that was solid and firm. It was what I desperately wanted.

As I watch this excruciating BBC drama, the memory of that pain and hurt, fear and disbelief, the shocked dumb wondering, resurfaces. It's the feeling that your world is cracked and moving. And it won't stop.

As these emotions rise, my first response is to feel as I did then. Overwhelmed, lost and hugely disorientated. But thanks be to God, it no longer lasts. It is very quickly overcome with a deep sense of gratitude and thankfulness ... because this is not my reality anymore.

These large wounds which pulled me in the direction of the Lord Jesus in the beginning, have largely been healed, and as my first responder emotions fall away, they are replaced with something I can only describe as miracle.

Love.

A deep-seated experience of feeling cared for, held. Encompassing, enveloping, embracing.

I found what I was looking for.

Janet and I got married. We have a family. I haven't followed my parents in to divorce.

And as I watch The Split on TVNZ ... I am reminded in every episode ...

That **The Lord is my Shepherd ... and that I do not want ... for love ... ever.**

Thanks be to God.

Amen.