

Sanctuary First

A PLACE TO BE

September: Thinking Outside the Box(set) Resource Pack

The nights are fair drawing in. In Scotland small furry mammals (and several not so small or furry mammals) are getting ready to hibernate for the winter. It's time to batten down the hatches, get your slippers/giraffe onsie/slanket, put on a boxset, and wrestle with emotional and theological complexity...

This September Sanctuary First is going to be reading the Bible alongside the defining storytelling medium of the 21st Century: the series boxset. Whether it's a literal box of DVDs or a digital one you stream online, the range, quality and popularity of TV drama available to contemporary audiences is incredible. Through the internet people are rediscovering loved programmes of older generations, obscure cult hits they missed first time around, and compelling series from around the world in different languages.

While Hollywood is often accused of complacently churning out bland, safe franchises; TV in the UK, America and around the world, is having something of a renaissance. Many actors, writers and directors have migrated from film to TV appreciating the space and time you can give character and plot over a running time of several hours.

What is interesting is how often these series draw, both indirectly and directly, on biblical themes and motifs. A common feature of a lot of the most popular and critically acclaimed TV Series is the depiction of morally complex characters wrestling with identity, responsibility and brokenness. These struggles are personal, existential, political and life-threatening. These universal struggles are an essential part of the biblical narrative.

For our Daily Worship series we will be asking 4 writers to select 2 series they will talk about during their week. We have listed potential programmes to draw from each week and pointers for sub themes based on the readings but feel free to adapt this material to feature programmes that you or your group are familiar with - many of these programmes are dark in tone and content.

*Each week contains 7 Bible references. Usually 6 from **Lectio** + 1 additional reading relating to the sub theme.*

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
3 Sept	Conflicted Characters <i>The Sopranos</i> <i>Nurse Jackie</i> <i>Morse</i> <i>Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy</i> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> <i>Sherlock</i> <i>Auf Wiedersein</i> Pet	1. Exodus 3:1-15 2. Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b 3. Jeremiah 15:15-21 4. Psalm 26:1-8 5. Romans 12:9-21 6. Matthew 16:21-28 7. Psalm 88	A recurring theme in contemporary drama is the turmoil between good and evil that can reside in one conflicted person. The redeeming features of a criminal or the crookedness of a cop. Much of the Bible explores internal conflict - the want to do good and the fear we are not good enough. 1. Curiosity, fear and doubt 2. "...to deal craftily with his servants..." 3. "...my pain unceasing, my wound incurable..." 4. Trying to escape your environment 5. "...hate what is evil..." 6. "Get behind me Satan!" 7. "...my eye grows dim through sorrow..."

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
10 Sept	Bad blood, good blood - Decisions, burdens, responsibilities <i>Walking Dead 24</i> <i>West Wing</i> <i>The Wire</i> <i>Doctor Who</i> <i>M*A*S*H*</i> <i>Orphan Black</i>	1. Exodus 12:1-14 2. Psalm 149 3. Ezekiel 33:7-11 4. Psalm 119:33-40 5. Romans 13:8-14 6. Matthew 18:15-20 7. Exodus 24: 1-8	<p><i>If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand."</i> (Ezekiel 33:8)</p> <p>Recurring theme of blood, cause and effect, and consequences in the Bible passages.</p> <p>Much compelling drama depicts the fallout from a fatal flaw, a wrong decision, an inability to act or a dereliction of duty. Many plots hang on one mistake or moment of weakness that has disastrous repercussions as the stories unfold.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blood and responsibility 2. Dancing and punishment 3. Blood and sentinels 4. Vanities and precepts 5. Darkness and light 6. Binding and loosing 7. Blood and covenant
17 Sept	The Point of No Return <i>Mad Men</i> <i>Better Call Saul</i> <i>Deutschland 83</i> <i>The Returned</i> <i>The Crown</i> <i>Being Human</i> <i>The Night Manager</i>	1. Exodus 14:19-31 2. Psalm 114 3. Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21 4. Genesis 50:15-21 5. Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13 6. Romans 14:1-12 7. Matthew 18:21-35	<p>TV drama often highlights those moments of 'no return', where a character has tipped over the edge. Perhaps they have 'said the unsayable', broken a promise or done something else they can never undo.</p> <p>Our lives do have moments when we reach a certain point and realise things have changed fundamentally, but we normally understand this in retrospect rather than as it is happening. Our lives are more complicated than even the complex lives of our dramatic heroes! Things that we think are settled and sewn up can suddenly unravel, perhaps there are no points of 'no return'?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 'closing' of the Red Sea 2. Sea flees, mountains skip, earth trembles 3. Song of triumph 4. Family reconciliation 5. As far as the east is from the west... 6. Depends on where you are standing 7. What if there's no point of 'no return'?
24 Sept	Unfair! <i>Breaking Bad</i> <i>Call the Midwife</i> <i>ER</i> <i>Cathy Come Home</i> <i>3%</i> <i>War and Peace</i> <i>Life on Mars</i>	1. Exodus 16:2-15 2. Jonah 3:10-4:11 3. Philippians 1:21-30 4. Matthew 20:1-16 5. Job 38:18 6. Matthew 5:38-48 7. Psalm 145:1-8	<p>As we have seen, inner turmoil is a key engine of contemporary drama. Characters are pulled between opposing poles like good and evil, family and friendship, romance and responsibility. But they - like us and those we find in the Bible - are also victims of circumstance, vulnerable to forces out of their control.</p> <p>The cry: Everything is unfair! is so familiar. We have heard it, and likely said it, often. It's human to identify with that feeling of being stuck, trapped, a hostage to fortune... or has the ransom been paid?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hunger 2. Frustration 3. Suffering 4. Unjust 5. <i>Unfair limitations?</i> 6. <i>A new kind of fair?</i> 7. <i>Unfair generosity?</i>

