

+WEEKLY REFLECTION

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An act of hope

Last weekend I found myself sitting in a packed cinema at the brilliant cultural centre HOME, in Manchester, watching something that had once been thought lost.

It was a sold-out screening of the first three episodes of what was originally a 12-part Doctor Who story from the mid-1960s featuring the Daleks. Two of the episodes shown were only recently returned to the BBC archives, but the flickering images, rescued and restored, felt like more than entertainment.

There was something deeply moving about it. Not just the episodes themselves, but the stories behind them: archivists tracking down missing reels; collectors preserving fragile film in attics; new charities like 'Film is Fabulous!' working ethically to safeguard entire collections; not just the obvious treasures, but everything. Nothing discarded. Nothing deemed insignificant.

It struck me on the journey home that this work echoes something at the heart of the Christian faith.

Again and again, scripture calls us to remember: the faithfulness of God, the stories of those who came before us, the small and seemingly ordinary moments through which God has worked extraordinary things.

'Do this in remembrance of me,' Jesus says, inviting us into a living act of holding on to what matters most.

And yet in our fast-moving world, so much is wiped, overwritten, or quietly forgotten - just like those old television tapes once were. People's stories. Acts of faith. Even parts of our own spiritual lives can be lost if we don't attend to them.

At the HOME event we also heard from a TV legend: Peter Purves.

Purves, now 87, presented Blue Peter for many years but before that, as an actor, he brilliantly played companion Steven Taylor in many Who episodes including the ones being shown at the special event. What stood out from Purves' stories of those early Doctor Who recordings was the sheer care and attention that went into them. Director Douglas Camfield planned meticulously, every movement rehearsed, every moment prepared - before the cast stepped into a single, intense recording session for each episode lasting just 90 minutes.

It required trust, skill, and a shared commitment to the task. And then, almost miraculously, it all came together.

There is something there, too, about the life of faith. God's work often unfolds not in endless retakes and second chances in quite the way we might wish, but in the lived, present moment - calling us to preparation, faithfulness and trust. We play our part imperfectly, but we trust that God is weaving something lasting from it.

Preserving culture in this way is not just about nostalgia. It is an act of hope. It says that what has gone before still matters, that stories are worth saving and that future generations deserve to know them.

In faith, we believe the same: that no life is wasted, no story beyond redemption and nothing offered to God is ever truly lost.

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