

## **Introduction:**

Thank you very much for your invitation to come and to share in the conference. I have heard over years many reports of the good fellowship here at the prayer conference and it's good to be able to come and share in it this year. Over many years, knowing Alan Tovey, the EFCC has been very much part of my understanding of the work of the Gospel in the UK. My first memory of Alan is seeing him walk up the steps of the Theological College, the staircase in which I studied. He was then the travelling secretary with IVF as it was then in Wales. Always a great encourager of God's people, and enjoy fellowship with Alan through the years in BEC and also on the Council of the Evangelical College of Wales. A man who I think could take on his lips the words of the Apostle, Paul "I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the Churches". We thank God for every remembrance of Alan and are grateful that Mike has taken up the work and is carrying on that same ministry amongst the EFCC Churches. We are glad to have his fellowship on the Council at Bryntirion as well.

So I want to speak a little bit about mission. If you want some information about UFM you can pick up some of these leaflets from the table if you don't know a great deal about UFM. This one gives you just an outline of the countries where missionaries linked to UFM are working. Some 18 countries around the world across - all continents. We don't have a large number of missionaries, something like 80 altogether and so often they are in small teams, sometimes just individuals and couples. We don't believe we send missionaries, God calls missionaries and churches send them and it's our privilege to work together with churches as they commend people to service and that is really why the number of countries has increased significantly in recent years. There is a leaflet here on mission convictions and by all means take that as well. Also a few copies of our magazine if you would like to take one. Our link with EFCC has been strengthened with Anatole's link with us, our most recent addition to the UFM family, with the church in Middlesborough and also the Heath behind him as he prepares to go back to his own country. That too is a developing part of our thinking that God not only calls people to go cross-country but sometimes those working in their own countries can be encouraged and helped in the work of the Gospel. So if you want to pick up that information by all means do so.

## **Jesus is building his Church:**

I wonder when you think about World Mission whether, as we thought this morning, eschatology is something that comes first to mind.

Gordon read earlier from Revelation ch7 "that great multitude whom no man can number from every nation, every tribe, every people, every language under Heaven". Times of conference are great, aren't they, to meet with God's people, but what a time it will be to be there in that great crowd. Perhaps to bump into one of the Karen people and say that we heard about you at one of our conferences. Because God has His people, for all their troubles and difficulties, God has people, he has his Church there and the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed building his church. We are part of that and one of the reasons for being involved in mission is because we have just a part, a small part but a significant part, of the work that God is doing around the World. That is why it is so important for individual Christians and churches to see World Mission as something that we have a place and a role in. Between 1960 and 2000 the world population doubled from just over 3 billion to just over 6 billion. The growth rate has slowed down now but that's a lot of people added to the world population. The percentage of those who take the name of Christian (and we know that is a very broad spectrum of people) and if you want to get all the statistics you can read this book which is a very helpful resource on Mission - 'Operation World'. The percentage of Christians stayed about the same, it was about 34% of the world population in 1960 and it was about 32% in the year 2000. And so if you think of that percentage as staying the same in a doubling of the world population you'll realise that there was very significant growth in the Church. Even when we allow for the fact that many who take the name of Christian are not really born again of the Spirit of God and do not know Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Nevertheless, many people have come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ during those years. The growth in the number of those who are named Evangelical (and there again we know that is a very broad group) but those who have named themselves as Evangelical in 1960 there were 84 million in the world, in year 2000 there 420 million - five times as many. So that's going up from the percentage of 2.8% of the world population in 1960 to 6.9% of a bigger population in the year 2000. The Church has grown rapidly in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America. It is more or less static in the USA and in the Pacific and only in our own continent of Europe is the Church in decline. So it does your soul good to realise what God is doing around the world. I was certainly no seasoned traveller before I joined UFM. I've had two ten-year passports and I had used each of them once. Once to Switzerland in 1974 and once to Zambia in 1992. Since then I've had the privilege of going to many countries, so just seeing a little bit, as we've seen this evening as David and Eileen have just given us a glimpse into God's work amongst one people in

Thailand. Something of the Church of Jesus Christ around the world. Of Christians who often face tremendous difficulties but who are faithfully serving the Lord. Until recently the UK was the second largest sending country of Missionaries behind the USA. We have now been overtaken by South Korea. The commitment to world mission in the modern movement from the UK has been something very significant and it's important that we keep that vision in our minds.

### **God's purposes for the nations:**

I wonder as you read the Bible you have that sense of that golden thread that is running through it from the beginning to the end of **God's purposes for the nations**. When he came he made a promise to **Abraham** (who at that time was childless) that he would make him into a great nation. He also said that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you". He spoke about his descendants being like the sands on the seashore and the stars in the Universe. Just recently scientists have been telling us that there are probably more stars in the Universe than there are grains of sand on the seashore, so vast is the Universe.

I had the privilege last autumn of going to Mongolia where we have some missionaries working and saw some semi-nomadic people living in their gers in the middle of nowhere and my mind went back to Abraham. He was a semi-nomad living in tents with his son Isaac and God said to that man "through you all nations on earth are going to be blessed". That was God's purpose, that was something Abraham had something of in his heart as they try to understand how God would fulfil those purposes even in the birth of their first son. He knew that something very big was involved in the work of mission. In the **Psalms** we read "Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession". That is the claim that our Saviour has to the ends of the earth and to the nations to be His inheritance. **Isaiah** tells us "Many peoples will come and see" It is a thrilling thing to catch that glimpse of what God is doing in His World".

He uses very imperfect people. He sent people like **Jonah** to the pagan city of Nineveh and to proclaim a message and even those people responded to it. And when His son came, **John** the Baptist (in an amazing insight into God's purposes) bearing in mind how exclusively God's purposes had been bound up with the Jewish people. When he saw the Lord Jesus coming to him after the temptations he pointed to him and said "Look, The Lamb of God who takes away the

sins of the world". Not just the Jews but the Jews and the Gentiles and this man is going to be the sacrificial Lamb who, by His blood, will cleanse the sins of the nations.

And so **Jesus** takes that small group of Apostles at the end of His ministry and His resurrection appearances before His ascension and He tells them that all authority in Heaven and earth has been given to Him. "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you and surely I am with you always even to the very end of the age". Can such a small group of men, who act in the conscious knowledge that Christ their Lord is in the highest place heaven affords, that He has authority and therefore they are too to go. And it challenges our fearfulness and doubts and our struggles.

Mike reminded us last night of the importance of faith in the ministry and in the whole realm of mission faith is so important. What can we do? These earthen vessels in which the Gospel has been put to take the Gospel to the world. For Jesus said the **Spirit** would come and when the Spirit came His Disciples would receive power and be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

And I wonder whether that is your vision as a Christian leader and whether that's a vision that you communicate to the congregation to which you minister. But God has a great purpose and ultimately the end of that will be that vast multitude in heaven from every nation and tribe and family and language under heaven.

### **Mission and the church:**

I want us to consider how the **church** of Jesus Christ is central in this work. It isn't primarily the work of mission agencies, it's the work of the church of Jesus Christ to undertake this great task. Local churches, local congregations with a vision for the work of God throughout the world. None of us can engage with all the world but all of us can engage with some part of the world. It's interesting for me to see how in the **New Testament** the early congregations took that on board; whether it was the church in Jerusalem, or the church in Antioch or the other churches that came into being through Paul's missionary journeys. They seem to be on the whole able to hold together that they were **true churches** in their own right and yet at the same time they belong to something much bigger than the local congregation.

There was **one church** - the church, which Jesus Christ was building; the church which He loved and for which He gave himself. They sensed that they were part of that.

It's so vital that in our own individual congregations as we are busy with the work that God has given us in our Jerusalem that we are also conscious of Judea and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. Some of the things that the early Christians did as it is recorded in the Book of Acts, in terms of the wider work, were these.

For instance they exercised the **ministry of care and encouragement**, they sent the Apostles down to Samaria to see what was happening through Philip's ministry. They sent Barnabas to Antioch; Paul and Silas re-visited the churches established on the first missionary journey. and they sense all the importance of that, of interest, of care. The sort of things we have heard from David and Eileen tonight are an example of that. Going to visit other people and telling the people who are isolated and suffering and troubled, you are part of something much bigger and we care about you. A visit, a simple visit and the bringing of practical help can be so important to Christians who are struggling. Again the early Christian congregations did that, the church in Jerusalem was struggling, the Judean church was struggling and the Gentiles churches sent gifts, through Paul and Barnabas, to tell them we care about you. Some of those in Macedonia who are very poor themselves send help to their brothers and sisters in Judea. We can do that and demonstrate that we are one with them and that we care about them. We were reminded as far as our books are concerned that we have been given much. We've been given much in other ways too. As you see those pictures you realise that there are brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ who have very, very little in terms of this world's goods. Though they are poor they are rich in faith and faithful in their service. Certain people always say thank you for coming but those who go receive far more than ever they take with them and an enrichment in our fellowship with Christ and we are able to help in that way.

There was also the **provision of leadership and ministry in pastoral oversight** as Barnabas was sent to Antioch and as Timothy was settled in Ephesus and as Titus was settled in Crete. There are times when mature men are needed who can lead, who can teach, who can help new churches and young Christians and have a real input into their lives. A congregation may send their Pastor to be involved in helpful significant ministry in a cross-cultural situation. We

have a Barnabas ministry where we seek to encourage experienced Pastors and teachers to consider visiting, on a regular basis, a particular place to help in the training of men. In May I was in Vietnam where we have a missionary travelling in and out meeting with the persecuted churches there. Travelling in secret to places where they would begin to gather over a course of time. Just finding a tremendous hunger for the Word of God from Christians from all over Vietnam who would come together for a week of teaching and then they would go back and teach others what they had learned.

They had such a tremendous input into the lives of those churches and the early Christians did that. The distances they travelled were far greater than the distances that we have to travel. By the means that they had to travel there would be many days of travelling and by land and perhaps by sea. It doesn't take very long to get to any part of the world by air from Heathrow. We call it a long flight but I think Paul would have thought it was an amazing way to get around and have meals on the way and somewhere to sleep and no ship wrecks and you are there and you are fairly fresh when you arrive. The whole world in a sense is as easy to reach for us if not easier than the immediate circumstances in which the early Christians ministered was to reach. Though it was a big place it's so accessible for us. So perhaps a leader could help to teach or a ministry could be provided for people who just need that bit of help in the training of others.

And also the early Christians met together to **define what is the truth** being picky about our doctrine as we were reminded today. Churches need help in this whole area of what is the truth. Teachings sweep the world so quickly. One of our missionaries in Papua New Guinea heard that a group in PNG were starting to manifest things similar to the Toronto experience and he wondered "is this a spontaneous work? I will go and visit" and he found out that somebody from another part of the world had visited and they had introduced those teachings. The early Christians met together in Jerusalem to define the truth. What is the Gospel?

Then they **communicated that truth** to the other churches to provide a bulwark against error and false teaching and we have a tremendous theological heritage in the West. We have our Catechisms and other confessions as we heard earlier and yet many Christians are trying to find their way in the whole area of doctrine. We can be of so much help to them in that way as they try to wrestle with all the different teachings, with often very little background and very little understanding of some of the issues. Yet even there can

be a surprising maturity. Some churches in Iryan Jaya or Papua as it is now, were faced with some of those teachings of the Toronto teachings. The elders in tribal situations sat down with the Word of God and they said "this is not the teachings of God Word and this is not what we were thought by those who brought the Gospel to us". Sometimes the maturity of people in very ordinary circumstances can be a tremendous encouragement and almost a rebuke to us in the West who can be so easily swept along by every wind of doctrine.

And then in the work of mission, what can be accomplished by **churches working together?** Again if you look at the New Testament (the book of Acts) you will find the churches **co-operating** together. Paul's team gradually grew as people from the newly established churches joined him and became part of his team. So that that wider work was never a work which one or two churches took on, the Jerusalem church, the Antioch church, the bigger churches but the various churches began to play a part. They set men apart to that task and they recognised it was one work that they all had a part in. How encouraging it is when churches do co-operate in that way and perhaps the EFCC in the churches that you have are able to work together in cross-cultural mission enterprises and to pool your resources and to share the skills, the gifts that you have for gospel work cross-culturally. So those early congregations provide a **pattern, a model** an example to us of what churches can do. Even new churches in the work of mission and in our world today where communication is so easy and where knowledge and information is so readily to hand, we can make a difference in the whole area of mission.

### **Identify and set apart spiritually gifted men**

But one thing I want to concentrate on in the rest of the time available to me is this; that one of the great priorities of the New Testament Churches and of the Apostles was to **identify and set apart spiritually gifted men** to the work of mission. The raising up of another generation was so important. Mike touched on that last night but that's absolutely vital. It's vital in our own country and it's vital around the world. One of the great needs of the churches today is the raising up of a new generation of men who will preach the gospel, teach the people of God, build churches and establish churches and take the gospel into places where it's not presently known and heard. We are very familiar with those words of Paul to Timothy "and the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable or faithful men who will also be qualified to teach others".

We need faithful men who are able to teach others. Some of the great priorities in Paul's ministry, "I not only teach myself, but I raise up others alongside me" and it should be a priority I believe in pastoral ministry to be constantly looking to bring on others who will not only share in the work but made and supersede us in the work and accomplish far more than ever we have been able to accomplish.

One of the great needs in **world mission** is people of that kind and people who up to some extent have been **proven in their situations**. A couple of years ago I was driven to Heathrow where I parked my car by a young man who flies jets with one of the small short-haul carriers at that time out of Birmingham Airport. He had been very keen on flying from his childhood and now he is flying 737s and he had gone through extensive training exercise so several months of training. So I said to him "how many times do you actually take a plane up before you actually take it with passengers in". Now if you are a regular passenger this might concern you, he said "Oh we don't. We just take it up for the first time. We have some of the Captains by our side but we take it for the first time with our full load of passengers". So next time they say this is your captain speaking you might want to ask him how many times he has done this. He said the "simulators are so very real we've done it many, many times on the simulators and that is why when you come to do the real thing you feel like you have done it before." Or if you went to the doctor and you went into the surgery and he said "where did you train" and he said, "I didn't actually. I just thought I'd like to be a doctor and to stick needles into people and cut them up". You would say "well thanks very much but no thanks". In mission work sometimes those who go to do mission work have had very little experience. I talked to a church leader in Spain and he said to me, "we know you send people who haven't had much experience to us and we accept that. We are glad to have them and we are happy to train them.

One of the things we want them to be is good examples of what a Christian is". I suppose that's right isn't it? You have people who have been very little tested. They may have been Sunday School teachers, they may have helped out at the young people's meeting and then they are thrown into a cross-cultural situation to cope with issues just the same as if they would have to cope in our own country, if not more. They find that many of them do. It's amazing how well so many of them do but that training ground, that preparing, that equipping in the local church has been very limited. I wonder whether we are committed to giving people an opportunity to really learn and to really take on experience in our local churches where we tend to be very

careful about entrusting anything to people. I am sure that if we've been in the ministry some years and we look back to our youth, we had opportunity to do things as young people in the churches we grew up in of which we seldom give to young people today. We had a meeting in the college of Bryntirion when we were meeting the first year students and we have our council members with us. I was asking our council members to explain how old they were when they preached their first sermon. Almost all were under 20 years of age when they preached their first sermons. Some of them had only been Christians a matter of months and they spent a lifelong ministry but that's where it began. I said to the students how many of you have had a chance to preach in your local church and how many have preached several times and it wasn't very many and yet they were being commended for ministry and no doubt call of God to ministry. Do we give young people and others called to work with the Gospel an opportunity to exercise their gift to learn to grow in that ministry. I was very encouraged to hear about the Summer teams this morning that are coming from Ireland to work in England and to encourage smaller churches.

Wasn't it great to hear of that young man who is coming to Thorpe Edge. It was a real burden for a tough situation, God is raising up people. I loved hearing about that man on the Summer team, that young man who preached; not that he had an evident preaching gift. I hope that somebody encourages him on, gets alongside him, apprentices him and encourages him. One of our missionaries in Spain is encouraging Spanish young people to go cross-culturally and their first visit was to Ireland (I will leave you to make what you will of that) and to understand something of another culture and they came back convinced tea drinkers. Next year they are going to Turkey and they are going to get the feel of a Muslim situation. It's just helping to understand what's involved in another culture. Who knows whether God may use that to lay upon the heart of a youngster, a passion for people outside their own culture.

**Jesus trained his Disciples**, he spent time with them, he invested so much of his own ministry into those men. He did preach to the crowds, he did heal the sick but primarily he was with those men because they were the future of the work. He gave them his time, he gave them his patience, he prepared them, he sent them out, sent them out on that mission - the 12 and later the 70. When they came back they told him how it had gone and they were full of joy and encouraged in their hearts. I am involved at Bryntirion with their arranging of the students placement they go out in the month of

February between their first semester and second semester. And you know, there is always a buzz about college when the students come back from their placements. It does them good in the midst of the other study of the year to go out and get involved in ministry. They come back feeling perhaps a little bit like the 70 not quite as thrilled as that, but feeling that they had been involved in the work and that's what it's all about. That's why I am here training and preparing; that's why the things I am doing are important. We have a lady of about 50 years old who have been accepted to work amongst street children in Brazil. She was converted late in life, in her late 40's, and has a passion to use her life for the Lord with all the energy He'll give her. She has wasted so many years. She is going at 120 miles an hour to catch up. She went on her placement, from All Nations College, to Brazil in the Summer. She said, "I didn't want to go back to college, I wanted just to get straight involved in that work. But I know I had to go and prepare and then come back". But it's that interaction of teaching, training, experience.

That's what apprenticing is all about. It isn't just teaching. It isn't just reading. It's all those things as well but the triumph of seeing how to do it, taking the wheel for a time, getting involved with things, understanding the issues, being able to face the challenges. Jesus was there with them and by the time he ascended to Heaven they had something of the experience they needed. Then the power of the Spirit came and the work went on in a remarkable way.

**Yes there are disappointments**, there are those we invest a great deal of time in and sadly, in one way or another, they or their ministries are undermined. When I visited Papua New Guinea a few years ago one of our missionaries there, who is involved in training of Pastors in Port Moresby and who has been investing his life into men who are pastoring there, took me to meet a lady holding a small baby. He said, "You know this lady's husband was the most bright and promising of the men I've been training. He had been with me for years" and he said "About three weeks ago he left his wife and took another wife back in the tribal situation and he's made shipwreck of his Christian witness and his ministry". Those things happen; there are disappointments along the way; there was one of the twelve who turned out to be a traitor. There were men in Paul's ministry who didn't fulfil their promise and he felt the pain of that but that doesn't stop us investing in the lives of others. Indeed when people fail in ways that are not catastrophic, getting alongside them to rebuild them as Jesus got alongside Peter (who personally felt that he had destroyed everything) and remaking him and re-establishing him,

re-commissioning him. That's often part of what we need to do getting alongside people, they may preach and sometimes it doesn't go well but that's not the end of the chance they get like opening batsman for England. Now if the men who have two or three opportunities who often make it, men who only have one and get bowled first ball don't get a second chance. Perhaps there was someone in your life who got alongside you so patiently when you were struggling and making a mess of it. Much of what you are now is because they didn't give up on you, they showed confidence in you and I wonder whether you are ready to let your best people go into the work of the Gospel.

### **Let your best people go into the work of the Gospel:**

Last week I was in Cornwall in a small church in Goranhaven (lovely fellowship) and there was a young couple there who are interested in serving in Brazil. We've been encouraged to see a number of new missionaries going out to Brazil. We have had five in the last three months who've gone full-time, long term and they had gone for the first time.

About this little church in Goranhaven. This young couple they were telling me how it's really coming on well. The wife hadn't been a Christian that long but they are both really growing. It's a small community and many of the young people in that community, in the normal course of life move away. You know how it is, you want to hold on to people and you want them to be involved in the life of the church. Seeing that little church saying "we recognise that this is God's call to Jason and Andrea. We are really going to miss them but we feel that we must get behind them in this". You think yes that's a loss isn't it, yes, it's always a loss, it was a loss to **Antioch** when Paul and Barnabas left but the Lord fills the gap somehow. He provides grace and the church was ready to let those people go.

The work demands people who are equipped, who are prepared, who are called of God. And when those people are called who really are equipped for the work their **support** comes together, people pray for them, take them upon their hearts. That preparation work within the local churches is so vital. We need a new generation in Britain, don't we? We need a new generation cross-culturally. Now there were times when people didn't want to mention the Welsh rugby team because you felt you were intruding upon a private grief and it would be more than an ordinary Welshman wanted to do to mention rugby in England but we are getting a little hopeful again. We will see and

we wish England well next week. One of the things I would use as an illustration is, about the Welsh rugby team, one of the things, when things were getting hard, was they kept on playing the same men the whole the time hoping that somehow they would find an inspiration they didn't have. What they have done now is bring some new blood in and found that these chaps could actually play, if we only need to find another 12½ to really get the team going. You know sometimes it is the maturity of years and the energy of youth. Youth takes chances. Young people are naturally optimistic and God has used young people in a remarkable way through the history of the church. Look at all the times when God has brought blessing and again and again he's blessed relatively young men. The Apostles, the Methodists in England, in Wales, Spurgeon. Time and again his hand is on the young. Now that's not to say when we get older we have nothing to do but one of our great tasks is to encourage the young. To be there to advise and to encourage them as they have their visions and their dreams and to see them emerging in that. We may well say how will they cope, as people says "how does these youngsters cope" playing for the Welsh rugby team but they did cope. Those rising generations are part of the ongoing work of the church and sending them out and letting them go. It's so important in the work of the Gospel. So I would encourage you to make that a constant prayer, a constant priority. If every Pastor here saw one man trained for ministry to succeed him and if that man was a faithful man who would train others think of the possibilities.

We sometimes get greatly discouraged when we think that we haven't got much that we can do. We say, "Well where will all the resources come financially?". I don't know how many members there are in EFCC but for every thousand members you have, in total amongst you, if every member of that church gave £1 a week for a period of ten years for every thousand member of you, you would have £½ M. It's surprising how when Christians work together resources of human kind and financial kind can come together and God does meet those needs as he gives us a vision for what can be done from our local churches and together as churches. On top of all that, what we look for most of all is the blessing of God.

**Let me conclude** by telling you of a work in Macedonia just on the edge of Skopje. It's a work that has a Congregational link. This particular work is linked to the Congregational churches in that part of the world and I visited Macedonia and Kosovo and Albania just shortly after the Kosovo war. I went as part of that visit to this Gipsy

community, a Roman Gipsy community called Shutga on the edge of Skopje, it has some 50 thousand people living in it. The Gipsy people are from a folk Islam background. And God had called a couple from the States; (two couples initially but one was still there). A young couple with young children who had a specific concern to reach Romany people. They came to Macedonia and they moved into Shutga. They had very young children, (babies) and it was a place where power was very intermittent and water was very uncertain. When they went into Skopje to shop the people would say, "where do you live?" and they say, "we live in Shutga" and people looked at them a bit strangely and say "you don't look like Gipsies, why do you live in Shutga? Nobody lives in Shutga!" because people were afraid of the Gipsies and suspicious of them and they said "well we believe God has called us to work there" and they lived for some four years in that community. They used to get in trouble. The man was a 'new man', he helped with the children, he helped with the washing, he would be hanging out the clothes on the line. The Gipsy men would shout at him and tell him to stop doing that because if he did that they would be expected to do the same and they weren't up for it. So he was setting a bad example. But they worked for those four years and they could get all the people who were converted into an ordinary little front room in one of the small houses in Shutga. They went back for home assignment, they came back and they started again. I went there in the March and went at a time when they had seen a remarkable time of blessing from the October through to the January. It's a period of some four months they had seen 160 people come to faith. I went to their mid-week Prayer and Praise meeting. A little building absolutely packed, people leaning through the windows to see what was going on sitting on the floor. The meeting was led by a Macedonian man because it's illegal in Macedonia for a stranger to speak at a meeting. That makes you train up your people right away because you can't do it. They sang joyfully scripture in song translated in their own language; they read from the scriptures; there was an exhortation given; then we had a time of prayer when about a dozen people prayed. All very significant. I couldn't understand a word they were saying but you could tell that it was serious and joyful. I've been in few meetings that I can remember where there is more evidence of life; spiritual life or indeed a higher percentage of new Christians. Afterwards we were talking to the man and his wife and saying, "Well, what have you done? Was there any secret that had brought about this blessing?" And they said, "No. God just began to work and one was saved and then another and then a family and

the Spirit began to move. One convert per day in a period of 4 months had come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Much of the blessing amongst Gipsies has been in the Pentecostals situation. This was just in a straightforward Evangelical church situation and God's hand was upon it. That is the kind of thing which excites us. Excites us about where we are, that at any time, and I know some people had known this, when God had just suddenly began to work. You know it's nothing to do with you because you are just a clay pot. But it's to do with Him and the power that is in the treasure of the Gospel and the glory that belongs to Him. So we give ourselves to the work in our Jerusalems but we need at the same time that passionate concern for the Judeas and the Samarias and the uttermost part of the world. One of the best ways to have an interest in that is to see God raising up men and women, called of Him, to engage in that task; sent out sacrificially by the church and supported, just to have a little part in the gathering of that great multitude 'from every nation, family, people and tribe under heaven'.

May God give us a vision for those things and we might see His blessing not only upon our own work but upon His work around the world.