



Wishing you a peaceful Christmas & a
blessed 2009 with love & best wishes
from Paul Bennison

CHRISTMAS / WINTER 2008-09

In a time of perhaps the greatest uncertainty our modern world has ever faced, isn't it wonderful to know that the Jesus, whose birth we are about to celebrate, is the SAME – yesterday, today, and forever! For some, this hasn't been a season of peace: it has been one of worry, not just about the present, but the future, too. I hope and pray that this Christmas and New Year will be a time of immense blessing to you, and that the perfect love of God will drive out fear... 1 John 4:18

Whoever would have predicted the collapse of the economy of so many nations? Paul said in Romans 8:28 that 'all things work together for good to those who love him (God)' and in 8:38, 'For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers...nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord'. How reassuring is THAT in times of uncertainty? **God has been faithful up until now**, why should that stop? He will be faithful from now on. I'm so grateful that God spoke that to me as a prophetic promise through Rodney Nelson, a prophet from the USA, that He has been faithful up to now ('Thus far has the Lord helped us' 1 Samuel 7:12), and will be faithful from now on. As you read through this newsletter, you'll see what I mean!

THE LAST FEW MONTHS....

It is only a few months since my 'summer' newsletter, but so much has happened since then! Visits to Sweden, Romania, Ireland, England, Scotland, as well as the United States... the postponement of the trip to Colombia for no other reason than I'd put too much in my diary (going in February instead). Lots of lovely stories of God's power and intervention from the places I've been... it still blows my mind whenever someone is saved, healed, or their life is changed in some way. It's been a few months of intense busy-ness, still not over as there's a lot going on in December, but I'm very blessed to have the opportunity of a holiday/vacation with some wonderful friends over Christmas.

The global financial 'meltdown' has hit me quite hard, as a lot of my expenses are in - and from - the USA, with most of my support coming from England: the past few months have seen the pound plummet against the dollar, losing about a third of its value on 6 months or so ago. Even as I write (December 1) the BBC report that the pound had its biggest drop today(5.2%) against the dollar than at any time since 1992....

*I've also lost a few regular supporters because of it: I know that's a story repeated often amongst people like me right now, BUT...
God has been faithful up until now....*



Hoping that some of the anointing of these two amazing men of God – R T Kendall & John Paul Jackson – will rub off onto me! They graciously allowed themselves to be photographed with the man in the same shirt as in the last newsletter (I do have other shirts!)

God has been faithful up until to now.....

Thirty years on and still going (strong?)....

1979 was a 'watershed' for me. Working in a bank, I'd been arguing with something that God had been saying for a good 4-5 years. I'm sure you don't argue with God for that long! A great friend of mine in Sweden told me once that he argued with God for a long time – when I asked him 'how long?' he said '8 hours'! God wanted me out of banking, but it was secure (then!!!), cheap mortgage, good prospects, though in truth I hated the job, made worse by my fear of doing what God wanted. I lived for the 18th of each month, payday. Near the end of January 79, I was sent home from work with gastric flu. I never went back to the bank... I don't for one moment believe that God MAKES us sick, but I do believe that He uses illness as a means of getting our attention to see and hear things we wouldn't do normally. I was only paid for a month, as my length of service didn't qualify me for any more: so the last salary I EVER received was in January 1979, 30 years ago... **God is Faithful!** Learning to live on less for what turned into a fifty one and a half week illness (tested for everything, including hospitalisation, as they thought I had leukaemia): it turned out to be brucellosis, the cow's disease! It's like glandular fever/mononucleosis but 'cow sized' and devastating (No comments, please!). It made it easier to make the 'leap' from a salary via Sickness Benefit to what most people call 'living by faith' (I hate that term, as we ALL live by faith if we're doing what God wants us to do, even millionaires!).

For me, it has been an amazing road.... I hope you don't mind me reminiscing, but many of you have prayed for me, some right from the start of this journey; if you ever feel that you can't fulfil God's call on your life, then it might help you to know that neither did I – and even now, sometimes feel I can't. I'm glad that God doesn't give us the whole picture to start with, because if He did, we'd never move.... Real spiritual growth came in a youth group in Mayfield, East Sussex: I owe so much to Brian & Penny, who were my youth leaders from about 1970; to Clive Calver & Graham Kendrick (neither were 'famous' then!), who revolutionised my life. It was Clive who told me when I was 18, having been in church all my life, that it was time I got saved... I did, and Graham prayed for me to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Thank you guys, still love you loads! (And yes, that really IS me, aged 18, in the picture! With hair, and relatively slim (thanks to rugby!).



In 1980, I began four years' full time work with **Wealden Youth for Christ** in East Sussex as a shy administrator; God blessed that work to become one of the largest YFC centres at the time within British YFC. As my shyness went, I became involved in schools and prisons, as well as churches. Many hundreds of young (and not so young) people found faith through Wealden YFC: a good number went into full time ministry of one sort or another. **God is faithful!** A regular teaching slot called 'Growmore' was a vital ministry to a rural area where young people struggled in small village churches, bringing together quite large groups of them to hear anointed preachers like Terry Virgo, Gerald Coates, Eric Delve, David Pawson, Colin Urquhart, and many others.

A conference on **Healing** 1983, organised by Youth for Christ, with Ian Andrews speaking, was a major turning point in my life: I came away from it wondering why God had birthed in me such a passion and desire to see people healed, when I was still far too shy to ever be 'up front' speaking and praying for the sick....

Mid '83 and all involved with Wealden YFC knew it was to end. To my astonishment, God's plan involved a time at **Roffey Place Christian Training Centre**: I really didn't want to 'study'! Going there presented a bigger challenge to my faith than quitting the bank: God made it very clear, 5 days before Christmas (the course began January 7), that the house had to be sold to pay the fees for the family to go to there. You don't sell without buying again, do you (and having to do it when so many people said it was crazy (it was!)? Of course, that close to Christmas it would never sell – would it? Sold, in 24 hours... **God is faithful!** Nine valuable and at times incredibly tough months there: then what?

A big ministry? A big house (how, with no money)? No big ministry (honestly, I want it to stay that way), but start a Christian video library (**Video Aid**) for schools, prisons, and churches... not what I had in mind after the enormous step of leaving a house behind, but **God IS faithful**, and he provided a wonderful house for us to live in through an amazing man & his wife in West Sussex: a man who, nearly 25 years on, still houses me (even in America), and blesses me in so many ways. Much to my astonishment Video Aid took off with material going into schools & prisons all over the UK, & AIDS education material from the great charity, ACET. At the same time, I

was one of the youth leaders at a church in Littlehampton, a youth group that had some of the wonderful guys that became first 'The Cutting Edge Band' and then Delirious... They took off too...!

*Video Aid & the youth group had to go when God started speaking prophetically to the church that it was to be more 'mission-minded' and that I was the guy who was going to be **the missionary** to the 'four corners of the earth'.... (missionaries were ageing people with nothing better to do when I was a boy, not people like me!). I didn't DO mission OR travel (and more's the point, my family didn't do that historically! I didn't do foreign food, strange bed or toilets, and different cultures. I argued with God again (the story of my life...?) – not four years this time, just a few weeks, before I caved in and said I'd go: I knew it would take a long time to happen as I didn't know anyone outside of England...! Make that 'long time' 12 hours! Hong Kong, France, and Ghana invitations all arrived in that time. **God is faithful!** And scary. If someone had told me then that 20 years on (it was '88 when God interrupted my comfortable existence again with this mission call) that I'd still be doing this, and never wanting to stop, I'd have laughed and laughed!*

Hong Kong was God's 'ploy' to get me to China, though being around Jackie Pullinger was inspirational and scary to say the least! In China, I met *ex-dead people* (yes, really! I'd not met too many in south east England by 1988!) and I heard pastors telling stories of miracles on a daily basis that were a natural part of life. 1983's healing conference was becoming reality: now I really DID have to see these things happen. In China that I KNOW God told me that I'd see the dead raised... A man called Henry, crippled, a street sleeper, was wonderfully healed back in Hong Kong

*...and so began a journey – so far to 100 countries – Serbia took that milestone - (some, like Romania, Colombia, Mexico, Ghana, and many others, multiple times), mostly to places that can't afford to give me anything for going, so faith grows as God provides, even if it is sometimes with panic on my part! Only one trip in 20 years has not happened because the money wasn't there... **but for 20 years of travelling He's been FAITHFUL!!** If God can do this with shy old me, just think what He can do with you!*

*...I've had the awesome privilege of **praying for hundreds of thousands of people** in 20 years... seeing **thousands saved, and countless numbers healed**....*

*... **limbs growing, blind eyes opening, deaf ears hearing, dumb/mutes speaking, non-existent eye-lids being miraculously created...cancers disappearing, the paralysed walking, bullet holes 'cauterized', fibro myalgia/ME and other 21st century curse diseases healed**....*

*...**hospital wards full of adults and children emptied, AIDS and tuberculosis healed; cirrhosis, asbestosis, diabetes, motor neurone disease, autism, sleep deficiencies healed; scoliosis (curvature of the spine), and so many more:***

*... **churches & lives changed because of miracles, hundreds saved because of the demonstration of God's power... and in July, the first (of many, I believe) coming back from the dead. GOD HAS BEEN FAITHFUL UP TO NOW...***

*...**hundreds of prisoners saved, including 220+ in a couple of hours in Villa Hermosa jail, in Cali Colombia...many healed***

*...**an invitation to the Swedish 'Riksdag' (Parliament) ...befriending the Ugandan Ambassador to the European Union and praying for him and his wife***

*...**the rescue, miraculously, by an angel, from a car crushed between to 38 ton trucks on the exit ramp to Heathrow Airport, London, during morning rush hour... and no injury from an astonishing crash in Mozambique...a stroke in North Dakota on a preaching tour, the threat of hospitalisation, but I told them I didn't have time for a stroke, so please discharge me... many got healed after that!***

DIARY/AGENDA

December

- 6-11 Bangor, NORTHERN IRELAND
12-15 ROMANIA
17-18 World Harvest Church, London Conference
19 United States of America
23-30 Barbados

2009

January

- 16-26 Bethel, **West Alaska** – Evangelistic Healing Crusade
30 Fly to England

February

- 3-5 Rhinos Accountability Group
6-13 **NORTHERN IRELAND**
14-15 Eastbourne, **England** (tbc)
16 Fly to USA en route for
20 – March 15 **COLOMBIA**

March

- 1-15 **COLOMBIA**
19 Fly to **England**
21 Stockholm, **SWEDEN**
22-30 **FINLAND**
31 – April 10 **SWEDEN** (tbc)

April

- 1 -10 **SWEDEN**
14 **NORTHERN IRELAND**
17-19 West Church, Bangor, Men's Weekend
20 **England**
21 USA

May Early May, **SERBIA, CROATIA, MONTENEGRO** + more!

June **SWEDEN** Summer

The past few months have taken me to a good number of places! It is such a privilege to be given opportunity to preach in other people's churches, one that I never take lightly. I'm always nervous, and long for God to speak what he has to say to the church I'm in... **Ireland** has again featured regularly: both in terms of churches, but also the national conference for the **Healing Rooms**, in **Coleraine**, where it was a joy to share alongside Alan & Valerie, Geoff & Wilma, who pioneer that ministry. **Melton Mowbray** Vineyard, King's Church **Wellington**, Maranatha Church **Exeter**, City Church **Plymouth**, **Kingsbridge** Baptist, **Selkirk** Baptist, Southside Christian Fellowship **Ayr**, **Frensham Baptist** Fellowship...

Healings like Sam, a little boy from one church, who didn't speak, but is now speaking (I hope his parents are still happy in a few months!!); a lady with cancer and a bone spur on her foot, who couldn't walk, but later the same day went on a long bicycle ride and walked to her car for the first time in many months... a guy with gout (particularly bad in his arm) who God healed totally in time for his wedding... a number of people whom God healed of long-term sleep issues, especially in Scotland (my preaching has that effect on people!), my brother in law, whose prostate cancer seems to have 'gone away'... such a low PSA reading! The Rhinos, my accountability guys, were such an amazing blessing in November, our get togethers are always such a highlight and so vitally important in all that I do.

I'd so appreciate your prayers for the coming months, especially for the visit to Bethel, Alaska: there are many very damaged tribal Indian groups, who live in the past and have lost hope... also, with the intense cold (-40 degrees!) and long nights, depression and suicide rates are unbelievably high. It's a wonderful opportunity to go there: Dave & Clare Cleave, great friends, are going with me. Lots of opportunities coming up elsewhere, and I need wisdom (and the ability!) to know what to say 'yes' and 'no' to.

Also, I'd value your prayers concerning the pound to dollar issues! It is becoming something of a crisis! If you're able to help financially, thank you and bless you – Stewardship will get the tax back if you're willing to let them, and their gift aid form is here: www.paulbennison.com/pdf/gift_aid.pdf. (cut and paste into your browser if the link doesn't work!). Also you can give online on the web page (below), 'giving' tab through Dove Trust, using credit & debit cards. Thank you so, so much. If you can give regularly, even a cup of coffee amount, it makes SO much difference!

If you are in England and want to send a cheque, as I don't have a UK address anymore, please can you send it (and any cards – I love getting cards! Most have been lost for the last 2 years with the mail redirection!) c/o 13 Meadow Way, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 1UF.

In the USA, if you can help, send a check to the address below please. I'm so grateful for your love and support.

If you would like me to come to your church, please get in touch. I'll do what I can to make it happen! Have a peaceful Christmas, and a very blessed 2009. **GOD HAS BEEN FAITHFUL UP TO NOW.... And He'll be faithful in 2009. Bless you!**

Paul Bennison

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