

## **A word in your ear from the Project Coordinator of the Bedford Street Angels**

Late for a meeting a man is driving round and round in a busy city centre car park, looking for a parking space, up and down the ramps he went, along those long big squeaking halls full of cars, and as frustration being to set in; he observed the most ancient but most common form of religious practice 'Oh God' he said 'if you will just find me a parking space, I will go to church forever, I will even fill in one of those forms with my postcode, and I will seek to be a better person from this day forward, I promise.' Just then, as he turned the corner, there was a free parking space recently left for a bigger car. He would be able to get in and out without having to be up against any cars; it was exactly what he wanted. So he turned in and parked. Great!

Then, he remembered his recent outburst of religious piety and then addressed God anew; 'Oh by the way, you can forget all that I said just now, you don't need to do anything now, because I've found a space for myself. Cheers!'

If people ask 'what is the main thing about living a life with Jesus?' One of the central features of a life focused on the message of Jesus is the acknowledgement that we are free to be thankful. Being thankful is not simply about the 'here and now' requests which we put to God for times which go right, but rather the knowledge we have someone in whom we place the whole of our lives and that affects our entire life.

On Saturday 6th March 2010, we are giving thanks for the one year ministry on the streets of Bedford each Saturday evening. Giving thanks to God is a way of showing to God that we acknowledge this truth about ourselves and our life. We know that we do not live our lives in a vacuum but rather with others, some more personally than others. Nonetheless this does not play down that we live in our lives in community.

One of our blessings in having our faith is that we see someone to thank for the whole of lives. The man in search of the parking space was simply saying 'Oh God' as a knee-gerk. Atheists also have this same problem. They may offer this kind of comment, but unless they acknowledge Christ, they have to realise in their own mind, they are not speaking to anyone at all.

The women at the well who was the focus in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel reading acknowledge in the encounter with Jesus, someone who would give her something which she lacked. This Samaritan woman, who is no saint in earthly standards has a lesson for us today. Life often tells us that we are to aim high for total love and complete happiness. Yet even when we do that, we are still left spiritually empty.

Our celebrations later this month and those of Lent are about receiving from God his many blessings to us and growing in our devotion to him. As we look in our familiar passages this Lent, let start by asking God to reveal himself to us. At times we might feel that God does not seem to have changed us since we have been praying. But scripture tells us we are not to feel dull, but to keep searching after him.

So may we all continue to search after Jesus, as the women at the well met with our Lord, and be open to be changed by him, but never must we stop in giving our God unchanging praise. Love so amazing, love so divine, it demands my soul, my life, my all.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our celebration on Saturday 6th March.

Every Blessing  
Adam