

Hi everyone - sorry for the delay in sending!

Dear members and friends of SEC,

April 2010 – glorious blue skies, free not only of clouds but also of aeroplane vapour-trails, while the earth-bound inhabitants of the United Kingdom indulge themselves in the latest round of televised debates between the three main party political leaders! This may well be how the month is remembered for some time to come.

Anyone interested in the social and spiritual attitudes of our times will be intrigued by the way that British people, and especially the media, have reported these phenomena. The Eyjafjallajökull (my spell-checker threw this one out of the pram!) volcano in Iceland erupted and sent a vast plume of ash into the atmosphere which grounded aircraft for several days. What is interesting is not so much the rights and wrongs of the decision not to fly as the public response to this ‘act of God’. The delayed and stranded travellers – who could they blame for this inconvenience? The officials who were called upon to give their views about when the flying ban would be lifted – who did they think was ultimately responsible for this unforeseen and unprecedented set of circumstances? Blame it on the volcano! The public face of our culture ‘doesn’t do God’ – unless a minority group like Muslims on their way back from the Hajj in Mecca are being interviewed, in which case it is politically correct to say to them ‘Inshallah’ – ‘God willing’.

Christians who know and fear the true and living God need to be able to confess the words of Psalm 115:3. ‘Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.’ We need to be persuaded, and to seek to persuade others, that our great and mighty God is not a narrow and cramped being whose domain extends only to the sphere of ‘religion’. He is the God of the whole earth, and nothing that happens is outside his sovereign control, wise decree, and royal providence. This includes the provision of rulers and governments in this land and across the world. Such is the greatness, power and wisdom of our God that he rules by means of human instruments – Browns, Camerons and Cleggs – even as these individuals act as free agents. He gave Israel a king in his anger – Saul – and then gave them David, a man after his own heart. Let us remember that rulers are appointed by God and are accountable to him, ‘for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God’ (Romans 13:1).

Your brother and fellow-servant in the Lord Jesus,

Paul Yeulett

Superslabs and country lanes

I dislike travelling on motorways, preferring instead the quiet meandering country lanes that abound in the beautiful county of Shropshire. Motorways, with their width and featureless monotony made me think about the broad road described by our Lord Jesus in His discourse as recorded by Matthew in chapter 6 of his gospel.

Our M roads are filled with vehicles nose to tail rushing like lemmings towards their destination, just like unbelievers who tear through life taking the path of least resistance, content to ‘tailgate’ the crowd in unbelief. Their end is described by Jesus as ‘destruction’.

By contrast, the narrow winding country roads that demand care and concentration to negotiate safely, but hold the enjoyment of clean air, quietness and beautiful landscape reminded me of the narrow road that Jesus said leads to life. Only a few find it, He said, but

that narrow road of obedience to Christ's commands leads eventually to the ultimate fulfilment of God's purpose for mankind, that is to be with Christ and enjoy His presence for eternity. - *Robert Morris*

Missionary Update

Please pray for Heather Cox that the Lord would watch over her while the political unrest continues in Bangkok, where she is living.

Please also remember Emmanuel and Esther Durand in prayer. Emmanuel is continuing his programme of speaking engagements throughout Wales prior to their departure for Brittany later this summer.

New Word Alive 2010

It was with some trepidation that Annette, Candida, Beth, and I set off at the end of last month to New Word Alive in Pwllheli (Fran also went with her friends from University). Maybe it was the fact that some of us hadn't been before, or if we had, it was a very long time ago. Maybe it was the prospect of some of us leaving our husbands to fend for themselves for just under a week, or maybe it was the realisation that we were going to be sleeping in a caravan and all four of us snore!!!

However, it would be true to say that we had a fantastic time and all thoroughly enjoyed the experience! The programme was packed with talks and seminars and there was too much to choose from! We enjoyed talks in the morning from Hugh Palmer on 1 Thessalonians and we all especially appreciated a series of excellent seminars from Jerry Bridges on 'Gospel Based Holiness'.

In the afternoons we went to different seminars including 'Mission in the Modern World', 'Fact, Faith and Feelings in the Christian Life', 'Engaging with Popular Culture', 'Serving Christ in the Creative Arts', 'Growing in Prayer' and 'God and government; how should I vote as a Christian?', all of which stimulated lots of good conversation.

In the evenings the talks were based on the Psalms and led by different speakers. It was wonderful to sing hymns and songs with thousands of other Christians in the large marquee and learn some new songs too, led by Stuart Townend.

It was a fantastic chance to spend time together, hear from God's Word, sing, discuss and share things that were helpful and to take time out from normal everyday life in a Christian environment.

The heavens declare the glory of God;

the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Day after day they pour forth speech;

night after night they display knowledge.

Psalm 19:1,2

