

# Calne Baptist – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**1.** Thank for inviting me to come + speak on behalf of TF this morning.

Quite bit's happened at CBC since I was here last!

From what I can tell, most of it = v gd!

But gt to be back.

Supported TF all my adult life, but been vol speaker on their behalf for last 7-8 yrs,

**2.** + 1<sup>st</sup> thing want to do this morning = say v big, heartfelt thankyou for your support for TF.  
= gtly appreciated. + On behalf not just of TF,

- but even more on behalf of communities they've helped to transform, THANKYOU!

When peop think re TF, what often 1<sup>st</sup> comes to mind = work of disaster relief (nb. T.E.A.R.).

+ that's certly part of what TF does: .... V much involved in emergency appeal

- following earthquake in Myanmar.

Also involved in places like Gaza, West Bank + Lebanon.

But most of our work = more long-term

: enabling peop to be permanently released from extreme poverty.

+ = that –focussing on this morning.

But like to begin talk with q.

**3.** Do you have enough?

Enough money? Food? Clothes? Gadgets?

If ans = no, what would need to happen for you to feel – had enough?

Different peop have different ideas re this, don't they?

Few yrs ago, at my son's house, - noticed - ½ downstairs toilet - taken over by gt pyramid of toilet rolls.

Some of the lesser-known Pharaohs would have been proud of pyramid like that.

Counted grand total of 50 loo rolls.

50!! There was some serious over-provision there. ....I thought.

But what did I know?!

Few mths later, covid struck, + (you remember this??) suddenly - were no toilet rolls in shops anywhere.

Or pasta. Or hand sanitiser.

My fam were laughing!

Now, interesting thing re those empty supermarket shelves in early days of covid =

- there was never shortage of anything.

**4.** It's just that peop thot there might be, so went into panic-buying mode: *"In danger of running out!"*

+ so, sure enough we ended up with shortages.

See, mindset of scarcity = contagious: everybody catches it. Suddenly nobody's got enough!

+ = self-fulfilling: produces what it most fears.

That mindset of scarcity produced the shortages.

Our reading described sit of genuine shortage, genuine need.

You have 5000 peop on hillside with v little to eat.

Even discs of J = afraid there will never be enough: have mindset of scarcity.

But one little lad = not hoarding in fear, but sharing in faith.

Remarkably, he unwraps little picnic he's brot, + makes it avail to Lord. *"Will this help?"*

+ of course, logic says *"No, it won't make scrap of difference."*

*5 small bread rolls, 2 tiddlers, 5,000 people. Can't possibly make difference!"*

+ yet of course it does: releases mir of multiplication that sees imposs needs met.

:= saying, *"The impossible we do at once. Miracles take a little longer"*

Now this mir = unique to Jesus.

What J did was impossible. Nobody's ever done what J did on that hillside.

+ yet, around world today, := another kind of mir taking place in similar circs of gt need.

Miracles that indeed take little longer, but = nonetheless wonderful acts of G.

+ = those miracles I want – talk to you re this morning.

:= actually some real parallels as well as real differences between what J did on that hillside

- + what J = doing thro TF around w today.

**5.** I'll headline them here, + then we'll look at them again as we go thro.

**1. Needs = eyewateringly huge** in comparison with resources – seem to be available.

Was true then: 5000 peop = lot of peop to feed.

+ = true now: in world today, = estimated – over 700 million peop live in extreme poverty.

**2. J used resources that were already within sit**, hopelessly inadequate as they appeared to be.

+ we'll see – JC = still in business of doing that in today's world!

**3. J worked through people of G:** miracle actually takes shape in hands of J's disciples.

He broke 5 loaves but their hands distributed food enough to satisfy 5000 peop,

- with 12 baskets full of leftovers at end .

The miracle took place in their hands.

And so it is today.

**4. The very little, in hands of Lord, = multiplied many, many times over.**

In 50 countries in w, TF = helping lift peop out of poverty

- thro programme called Church + Community Transformation.

**6.** = based on biblical understanding – human lives = impoverished as result of 4 broken relats

1. relat with God

2. relat with ourselves

3. relat with other peop.

4. relat with creation.

If you = familiar with early chs of Genesis, this will ring lots of bells for you.

At beginning of ch 3, 1<sup>st</sup> human beings turn backs on G + end up hiding from him.

Then relat with each other = broken, as fellowship turns into recrimination + blaming each other.

Relat with selves = spoiled, cos = no longer at peace with who they are: no longer comf in own skin.

+ so try to cover up, sewing fig leaves together for clothes.

+ finally, relationship with created world = thrown out of sync + good earth is cursed.

However you und early chs of Genesis, + chrs don't all see eye to eye on this,

- you're left with 4 broken relats that now need healing.

+ of course, in many ways, the relat with G is key to healing all of them.

So how does that healing work out in context of Church + Community Transformation programmes?

Across 3<sup>rd</sup> world, TF helps peop, but don't do it by giving handouts.

Do it by providing training + resources to heal those 4 broken relats.

First up = **our relat with God.**

B studies run by the local ch help peop to find hope + purp as they discover G's love for them.

7. 1<sup>st</sup> project I was ever involved in sharing as TF speaker featured young woman called Birungi from DRC. Birungi grew up thinking – cos she was “only a woman”, she had no real potential  
- apart from producing children.

Her uncle enabled her to take part in CCT programme in her local ch.

Came to believe - *“as child of G I’ve got potential + value: can be > I ever realised”*

: G had put within her the resources for better future than her community expected for her.

Learned to sew, was given old sewing machine, developed her skills.

Came to invest in decent sewing machine, built up business, + also became successful farmer.

But all started from understanding who she was in Christ, + beginning to see what = poss under G.

Once she had her relat with G on rt footing, her sense of who she was became much healthier.

There was healing in **her relat with herself**.

8. Then CCT progs address peop’s **relats with each other**.

: get whole community tog to plan and org in way that benefits everyone.

In that context, it turns out – a lot hangs on whether have mindset of scarcity or theol of abundance

: whether folks act out of fear of not having enough for selves,

- or out of f – G can use ltd resources they possess to build up their community.

So they identify resources they have, work tog to create long-lasting, whole-life change.

They might, for instance, run training on vocational skills, establish community projects (like saw in video)

Might set up support and savings gps.

+ then, 4thly, around world, CCT programmes help bring healing in peop’s **relat with created world**.

Biggest (but not only) chall in this context = climate change.

9. Let tell you re Komola from Bangladesh.

On face of it, v ord middle-aged Bangladeshi woman.

Left school at 16 + got married in same yr to husband who’s day-labourer.

But = member of local Transforming Communities gp: + also involved in disaster management cttee.

Now Bang has > its share of disasters to manage.

As K says, *“ We have floods, droughts, floods again, river erosion, salt in water*

*All these disasters occur here.”*

Her own house got washed away by river, which has also washed away most of land her fam had.

+ all while = getting worse as result of rising sea levels + unstable weather patterns.

TF’s transforming communities prog started there in Nov 2018.

Rising sea levels meant – ground water was becoming more + more salty + unfit to drink.

TF’s local partner provided water tanks, but they weren’t enough.

*“So we worked tog to build dam to keep out salt water. Peop could now grow vegetables to eat”*

Life-changing..... until cyclone damaged dam.

*“Then we realised a dam using only mud wouldn’t last,*

*- so we got money + we built dam with concrete blocks”*

Komola says of TF, *“You took a step forward, so we could take another step on our own”* .

K = just one example of how TF = helping peop around w adapt to climate change

- + to survive despite destruction = bringing.

10. Elsewhere, TF =

- helping communities access drought-resistant crops to help them survive + thrive when rains fail.
- involved in tree-planting,
- using geological expertise to help communities dig wells in rt place to access underground water.
- = involved, as with Komola’s community, in helping provide water storage.

Key thing re CCT programmes = - the change = brot re by peop selves *in their own sit*.

They do it themselves!

Does it work? Bit of talk, some B studies, community mtg tog to plan.

Doesn't sound like anything v much, does it??

So..... does it work?? Video we saw earlier gives resounding "Yes" to that q!

CCT progs = amazing!

In last 18 yrs, 47 million lives – been transformed thro TF's community projects.

That's roughly 10 times pop of Swindon *every yr!*

This = just such brilliant thing to have opport of investing in!!

+ I'm so thrilled – you guys = doing just that.

TF's Church + Community Transformation programmes = doing amazing job in making poverty history.

Going back to feeding of 5000, miracle used resources – already there.

Inadequate as they obviously were.

5 bread rolls, 2 little sardines. Not much among 5000 peop!!

+ the contemporary mirs we're looking at this morning

- = being done by the communities selves.

No gt white saviours here, flying in from Eur or America with all answers!

Just one Galilean Saviour, who = same, yesterday, today + forever!

That Galilean Saviour, Saviour of world, = again bringing extraord mirs of multiplication.

+ these present-day mirs, like J's miracle in John 6 = involving peop of G

: taking place under inspir of local ches.

In v real sense, = their min, not ours, as next slightly tongue in cheek video makes clear.

## **TF ADVERT – "Practise what you pray"**

By any standards, CCT progs = amazing!

### **11. 1. Buy phenomenal value for money.**

Been found – for every £1 – TF invests in a CCT process, another £7 worth of time + material

- = unlocked within community.

But that's only beginning.

Cos that £7 of community resources typically produces > £200 worth of community benefits.

= by any standards extraord return

- when every £1 we give produces £200 worth of benefit to a needy community.

### **2. Build pride in the community.**

Cos TF doesn't come airlifting in solutions from outside: enables the peop selves to change their sit.

Encours attit – says,

- "*we've done this ourselves, tog under G. Met challs that face us. We've done it with own hands.*"

I love that TF's work doesn't undermine confid + self-respect of communities we help: builds it up. .

### **3. Bring permanent change.**

Cos folks get taste for bringing health + wellbeing to their communities.

+ = not sitting around waiting for someone else to do something re it.

Saying in effect - "*We've done it before, + as new challs arise, we'll do it again. Under G, we have enough!*"

### **4. (+ this for me = by no means least imp aspect of it all) Build Kingdom of G.**

Cos all of this, each CCT programme, works thro local ch.

So Ch doesn't just *speak* re gd news of J: it *becomes living embodiment* of it.

What happened to ch in Mubira = not unusual

: doubling in size, folks coming to Chr, + new ches being planted...

¾ of ches involved in CCT programmes see significant growth as result.

New chrs. New ches. Multiplication of ch's ministry + mission.

**12.** = these miracles of multiplication - you = investing in as ch.

Poverty in all its shapes + sizes can be overcome.

IS being overcome ..... + we all have part in it.

:= scope, with adequate resources, to extend this min much further.

Currently partner with 25,000 ches worldwide: our vision= to multiply that by 10

- so we're able to roll out CCT thro ¼ million ches in next 7 yrs

We're so grateful that you as ch are involved in all this, cos your support = absolutely transformational.

.....

There may be number of diff ways in which G = challenging us this morning

- to make available to him our limited resources of money, time + talents

A no of ways G's challenging us to say to Lord,

- *"I have enough, to make what I have available to you in service of your kdom"*

Coming alongside TF + sharing in our work = not only way, but I bel = one of them.

:= opportunity, if you wish to, to invest individually in this min thro your pers giving + prayer.

I feel real sense of priv – my wife Sue and I = able to do that

- + to share in these mirs of multiplication.

Like to invite you to join us!

Opportunity = there for you too if you'd like to take it.

**13.** Even modest levels of support can make real difference.

Over a yr,

- £6 a month could deliver CCT training to community thro the local ch.  
Not bad, is it?! Transform the life of a whole community for not much > tankful of petrol!
- £25 a month could train 10 local ch members to run a community transformation prog every yr.

Have plenty of info if like to know more re TF! Frankly, don't want – take it home with me!

+ I look forward to chatting with you after service.

If this morning you'd like to partner with us in this work and give to TF,

- please fill in one of the forms on table in front of you + hand it to me at end of service.

Or, for those of you who aren't dinosaurs, I understand you can give by scanning on to phone

- QR code that's on the screen.

Thankyou again for the invit to come + share with you today.

Together we have opportunity to do something absolutely amazing!

**14.**