

# things of value

▶▶▶ Dear Friend

I find myself working with a lot of churches and young people in the town of Harpenden and around the country. As a leader, my focus is to invest in young people and my desire is to see them saved. This inevitably raises questions in my mind such as: “What would it take to see a town/community transformed?”; “How can we see revival?”

As I look back in history, a lot of these transformations have occurred in communities. For example, Billy Bray, a Cornish tin miner in the 1820s, influenced his entire community but started with those immediately around him in the mine. The Roberts brothers, part of the Welsh revival, started with a small youth group and from there began to share their message with other communities throughout Wales. Transformation often starts small; it is for this reason that our schools’ evangelism team is focusing in the schools community. It is vital that we start where we are.

I think that it was Oscar Schindler, in the film *Schindler’s List*, who took his ring off and held it in his hand, saying, “This could have bought two more lives.” As I reflected on what he said, I realised that we often do not see the things of value that we have within us: our friendships, our relationships and our abilities — things which money cannot buy. These are the resources that matter the most and yet are the very ones we often overlook. We are so busy looking for external solutions or trying to maintain our existing programmes that we fail to see the talents God has given us already, in people.

I heard it once said, “You can only influence others to the extent that you are willing to sacrifice yourself.” Often we quit too soon and go for the easier option. We look at what’s been successful elsewhere — a structure, a programme, numbers saved, people in church — and think that replicating the formula will lead to a successful ministry. However, Jesus’ model was simply to value a few people and invest His time and energy in bringing out the gold in them rather than mass producing something over and over again. He heard from God and took every opportunity to demonstrate that He valued those ministering more than the method by which they ministered. We need a new paradigm that understands that success comes from obedience to God rather than from following formulas. If we listen to Him in each situation He will guide us to the strategy that will work for that given time. When Jesus healed people the method was different every time — but no less effective because of this. We must expect the same in our ministries.

Jesus’ model  
was simply  
to value a  
few people  
and invest  
His time and  
energy in  
bringing out  
the gold in  
them



YOUTH WITH A MISSION

Highfield Oval, Harpenden,  
Herts, AL5 4BX  
Tel: 01582 463216  
Fax: 01582 463213

Registered Charity No 264078

# Transformation of a community also lies in getting back to our roots of loving one another

The key to transforming a community or town lies not only in seeing and valuing the people and resources that we already have, but in learning to work with and alongside the churches and organisations that already exist in the locality and through maximising the resources already available. God blesses unity. We must all see ourselves as parts of the same jigsaw: the vision will only come together when every bit slots into the place for which it was designed rather than trying to take another's place or work out of our weaknesses.

Transformation of a community also lies in getting back to our roots of loving one another — of honouring, respecting and encouraging each other. When I think of the people who have encouraged me the most, they are those who have seen what is most valuable in my life, dusted it off and put it somewhere where it can shine. That, in turn, has released me and freed me to be me.

What will it take then, for us to see through God's eyes and understand more clearly the things of value that we have? What do we need to do to finish the race we're called to run? As I see it, there are five things:

- It is Vital that we start where we are.
- Accept the things of value that we have within us personally and as a community.
- Learn that success comes from obedience to God in individual situations.
- Unity — working together in communities to achieve the bigger picture.
- Encourage each other in our strengths.

“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 3:12–14)

Let us help each other to press on to all that God has for us, so that we win the prize and see our communities and society transformed!



Yan Nicholls  
Leader, ETEAM (Evangelism Through Education And Missions),  
YWAM England

**If you would like to receive the devotional letter by e-mail, and have not told us yet, please contact us on [ywamnews@oval.com](mailto:ywamnews@oval.com), giving your full name and address.**