



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### Times of refreshing from the Lord



In recent days, three gospel missions were conducted by Free Presbyterian evangelists in Annyart Free Presbyterian Hall, an extension work in Co. Monaghan run by our Tullyvallen church, Convoy Free Presbyterian Church in Co. Donegal and Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church in Co. Tyrone. All three missions commenced coincidentally on October 29th. Here are reports from Rev. James Porter, Rev. Ivan Foster and Rev. Gordon Dane.

**Sunday, 29th October saw the commencement of a 3-week Gospel mission in Convoy Free Presbyterian Church. The evangelist was Mr. Ronnie McLean. The mission was a time of great blessing and to God alone be all the honour and glory. The mission had been planned since May 1999 and had been much prayed for by the members of the congregation.**

In the summer and early autumn of this year, two souls who have had connections with the church, sought Christ for salvation and this was but the forerunner to more blessing that lay ahead. Also, during the summer, there was an attempt to burn the church building down. This, no doubt, was hell-inspired and was an attempt by Satan to hinder God's blessing in the coming days. However Satan always oversteps the mark, for God preserved the building and has greatly blessed in the time that followed.

In the week before the mission, the visitation got under way and on the Wednesday morning of that week Ronnie had the joy of leading an elderly man from Larne to the Lord. This man was visiting relatives who live in the area. The next day on visitation, a man who had been a backslider came back to the Lord. The mission got under way the following Sunday and throughout that first week the numbers in attendance were quite small. However every night there were unsaved people in attendance.

Then on the second Sunday of the mission, I received a phone call from a young man living in Donegal town. He had read the mission notice in the local newspaper while attending the barber's shop on the previous Friday. My phone number was also printed in the notice. Stirred up by the Spirit of God to come, he phoned looking for directions to the mission. That Sunday night he came, and after the meeting called upon the Lord for mercy. He was backslider from England, a modern day prodigal. The second week witnessed better attendance at the meetings with many unsaved present each night.

Then, following the Sunday night meeting at the beginning of the last week, a young couple indicated their desire to get saved and Mr. McLean had the joy of leading them to Christ. The young lady has since testified of being under terrible conviction of sin during the days of the mission. On the Wednesday of that same week, another elderly man who is related to members of the congregation came to Christ while Ronnie and I were visiting in his home. He is house-bound through a stroke and in recent times had been greatly troubled about death and his need of salvation. Since his conversion, despite his ill health, a marked joy of salvation can be seen in his countenance.



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Then after the meeting on the Thursday night of that final week, another man who had been the subject of much prayer throughout the mission, indicated his desire to be saved and Ronnie had the joy of leading him to Christ in the church. On the last Friday evening, the church was packed to capacity. The mission ended the following Lord's day with good attendance. Throughout the mission, it is estimated that some 40 unsaved people had attended and many of these have shown concern about their souls. On the Tuesday night after the mission while visiting in the home of the young couple who had been saved, their three eldest children indicated their need of salvation and that evening I had the great privilege of leading all three of them to Christ. Pray that God will complete that whole family in Christ.

I would ask every reader of this article to pray on for further blessing for God has promised that His Word will not return unto Him void, and also pray that the new believers will grow in grace. On behalf of the little congregation in Convoy I wish to say a sincere thank you to Mr. McLean who faithfully preached the Gospel night by night. Also I wish to say a special thank you to all who prayed for this mission. God has heard and answered your prayers. Please pray on for "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16.

"The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Psalms 126:3, Yours in Christ's name and service,

*Rev. James Porter .*

**The mission in Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church had a Reformation theme, starting as it did on "Reformation Sunday", 29th October. The preacher was Rev. John Gray of nearby Bethel Free Presbyterian Church in Enniskillen. Preparation for the mission had included a special week of prayer for the congregation, two weeks prior to its commencement. That had been a very encouraging and spiritually refreshing time. The area was notified of the mission by the distribution of leaflets and the erection of posters. Large notices had also been placed in the two local newspapers. We were able also to announce the mission on our two weekly "Let The Bible Speak" programmes on Radio Star Country. The church was filled to slightly overflowing for the first meeting and there was an expectation of God's blessing during the mission.**

A feature of the mission was a number of guest testimonies. The first was on Wednesday, 1st November with Pastor Bertie Johnston of the Lifeboat Mission in Dungannon. The church was packed and there were over fifty in the church annex with a total attendance of some 150 people. Mr. Johnston's story is truly that of a modern prodigal. On Monday 6th, Mrs Pat Johnston told of her conversion from Roman Catholicism. Remarkably, she and her husband (they were only engaged to be married at the time) were converted on the same night, unbeknownst to each other. There was an even larger crowd gathered in to hear her testimony, some 170 in total. On Friday 10th, Tony Cafferkey, who was born on Achill Island off the coast of Co. Mayo, told of how he moved to Wales with his family as a boy, joined the British Army and was posted to Northern Ireland where he stayed after his tour



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of duty was done. It was in the Province that he heard the gospel and was saved.

Miss Kerry O'Rourke, whose family hailed from Dublin before moving to England where she was born, told a similarly thrilling story of God's sovereign grace on Monday 13th. She too was delivered from the darkness of Rome as a result of her visit to the Province as a member of the British Army.

On the other nights of the mission, the preaching of Rev. John Gray was very much enjoyed. During some of the nights in particular, there was a wonderful sense of God's presence and power. One man who was restored to faithfulness and fellowship with Christ spoke of how the moment the meeting began, he came under conviction regarding his spiritual coldness. Another lady was so moved and broken during the meeting that she had to leave and go to a separate room and seek the Lord for mercy and restoration. Before the first Monday evening meeting a young man, long prayed for, sought the Lord in his home. He came along to the meeting and told the minister of his seeking of Christ. Another lady sought the Lord on her way home from a mission meeting, asking her son to stop the car in order that she might call upon the name of the Lord.

During the mission, there was a number of neighbours in attendance amongst the large number of unconverted that attended. Of course, there is always a sense of disappointment when loved ones or friends who were fervently invited did not come along, or when they did, refused to obey the gospel message. It but gives us greater reason to pray on.

It was the conclusion of the elders of the congregation that it was one of the best times of mission we have known for some time and special appreciation was expressed for the ministry of Rev. Gray. The mission is seen, not as an end in itself, but as a fresh beginning of our witness in the area.

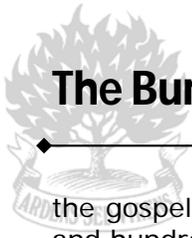
We praise God for His mercy in these days of failure and unbelief and our prayer is: "Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine," Psalms 80: 14.

The messages and testimonies during the mission are all available on tape. A list of the titles are available from our church upon request.

***Rev. Ivan Foster.***

**The recently renovated Annyart Meeting House near Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, in The Irish Republic, was the venue for a special effort to reach that area with the gospel, when a mission was conducted by Rev Raymond McLernon and Rev. Gordon Dane. The Tullyvallen congregation had purchased the hall, which was a former Orange Hall a few years ago. It had lain derelict for forty years and a lot of work was needed to bring it back into use but a magnificent job has been done and the building is now a credit to them and will be a centre for reaching out with the gospel into that area.**

Despite a number of attacks, the latest just before the mission when a toilet window and the electric meter were damaged, the hall has now been put into use for the preaching of



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the gospel. Before the mission the Tullyvallen congregation held special seasons of prayer and hundreds of invitations were distributed around the Castleblayney area.

Originally the mission had been planned to last from Sunday 29th October to Sunday 12th November, but such was the interest and attendance that it was felt another week should be added. From the very first meeting there were sinners in the meetings, including Roman Catholics.

Castleblayney to many people would be known as a heartland of republicanism but it is also a centre for refugees who have come to the Republic of Ireland. Some of these refugees began to attend the meetings and it was not long before the congregation took on a cosmopolitan flavour with Nigerians and Russians and Romanians. Many of these came on a number of occasions and there was a group of Nigerian women and children that missed very few nights. These Nigerians are Roman Catholics but some of them seemed to be showing great interest in what was being preached. The attendances at the meetings never went below fifty and the high point was when over ninety people packed the place out.

During the meetings the Spirit of the Lord moved and many people were blessed and encouraged. The mission ended on Monday, 20 November with a special praise service. Once again the hall was filled and many of those from the area who had been attending were in again. There were no outward signs of professions having been made but we would be grateful if God's people would pray that the seed sown may bring forth much fruit.

***Rev. Gordon Dane.***