



## **Pastor's Page**

### **“Food for Thought”**

It was around 11.30pm as Dave and I drove away from the church following the evening concert. Both of us were feeling extremely hungry having last eaten at 5.00pm and since then performed a concert, de-rigged all the PA equipment and loaded it and the instruments into the team van. “Shall we stop for some Fish & Chips?” Dave tentatively suggested. “Well” I said, “its not good to eat such a heavy meal at this time of night and it'll mean we'll be back late to our hosts and I'm not sure it's a justifiable use of our meagre money anyway” “So I take it that's a 'yes' then!” “Absolutely” I replied! So we indulged in a couple of hearty portions of fish and Chips. Dave found his portion so plentiful that he had to leave some for the local council workers to collect later from the litter bin (I had no such problems!) Extremely replenished we continued our journey back to our host's flat. Climbing the 6 floors up to the apartment we took much longer than usual due to our very full stomachs but eventually made it. It was now midnight as I quietly turned the key making sure that I didn't wake up our elderly hostess. Then as the door slowly opened we heard these immortal words from the kitchen “Hello boys, I hope you're hungry 'cause I've done you a big fry-up!!” Dave fainted!!

That was spring 1984 when I worked for Saltmine Trust and I'm sure you'll be pleased to know that I ate that huge fry-up that night on top of the fish and chips; and Dave, (after he regained consciousness) did his very best!

Last Monday our Prime Minister and other world leaders were heavily criticised for sitting down to an 18-course meal at the G8 summit in Japan which was focusing on the food crisis. Just two days earlier Gordon Brown was urging Britons to stop wasting food and combat rising prices and a global shortage of provisions. He called for prudence and thrift in our kitchens, after a Government report concluded that 4.1 million tonnes of food was being wasted by householders. The food policy study also says the average UK household throws away £8 of leftovers a week, yet spends 9% of its income on food. Mr Brown suggested we could save up to £8 a week by making our shopping go further. It was vital to reduce 'unnecessary demand' for food, he said. (A very challenging message.) But one observer, not happy about the lavish 16 course meal at the summit and the apparent hypocrisy of the participants, coined the phrase “Full stomachs and empty promises' to describe these world leaders. He believed that the conference achieved very little in terms of a commitment from the richer countries to help the developing countries facing serious food shortages and starvation and that more should be done. But it was the apparent hypocrisy that angered him most. (I think Jesus would approve!)

So what should our response be? Well Firstly, I think we should be grateful to the Lord that we have 'full stomachs' and more than enough to eat. Secondly I think we need to make a serious effort (as far as it depends on us) not to be wasteful with our food. Thirdly we need to recognise that we can make a difference in the world by both ethical shopping (ie buying Fair Trade goods etc.) and lobbying Parliament in terms of the plight of many people in developing countries. And fourthly recognise that feeding the hungry is something that Jesus would have us do. (Mark 8:1-10)

God hates gluttony but loves generosity - now there's food for thought

13<sup>th</sup> July 2008