

If we act in faith then God provides us with the means and strength in order to meet these challenges head-on, and to come out the other side both stronger and wiser.

On a practical level, we have often found that the first 2 to 3 days of a Faith Outreach can be the hardest, during which time we may be most likely to think about giving up. Challenges can range from going through caffeine withdrawals... to struggling to get a clear sense of how God may be leading us... to coldness at night... and the list goes on. However, before throwing in the towel, we would encourage people to at least think twice about doing so. Very little in life is worth having if it comes too easily, and on the other side of challenges are rewards which we usually find are well worth going through the challenges for. Changing our circumstances, our diet, our normal routine, or whatever, can be challenging... but it can also help us to develop more resourcefulness while enabling us to get a more balanced view of our lives. It is important to be aware of our limits, but it is equally important not to place limits on ourselves which are not helpful. God knows our limits a lot more than we do, and being stretched is usually the way we find out just what we're capable of... with God's help, of course!

Something we commonly find on Faith Outreaches is how thankful we are for any little kindness shown to us, or form of provision that comes our way. The other side of the coin of letting go and forsaking something, is immense gratitude when something lands on our plate. Gandhi said that we appreciate our food when we are hungry ("Hunger is the best sauce!"). How very true. We also develop more empathy for those people in the world who go without on a more regular basis.

We are happy to accompany people on Faith Outreaches if this works in with what we're doing, which is one of the reasons for writing this article - to make people aware that this opportunity and support exists.

For people who have never tried something like this before, having the experience and fellowship of others who have can be both practically helpful and spiritually reassuring. However, while this is the case, it is not a 'must'. There are scores of people throughout history who have left everything behind to head out on a God-led adventure of faith by themselves, either for a stint or permanently. It all depends on our level of faith and whether God is leading us to do this. That's the most important aspect to work out - the faith part - as the rest naturally follows on from there.

In working out what to take, who to take, where to go etc., it is helpful to take some time to discuss what the needs of the situation are, including any factors that may influence where we go and how long to go for. In addition to counseling there are other means of finding God's will which can provide guidance and direction (like circumstances, or a direct revelation we may receive through listening and prayer).

On most Faith Outreaches we head out without any money or food on our persons. During some Faith Outreaches, we have started out by applying a particular approach but ended up relaxing this. In other situations, the reverse has been true - i.e. we have ended up taking a harder line on ourselves.