

On the occasions where we have felt led to take a hard line on ourselves this was to create a scenario where waiting on God for his provision was made a lot clearer. This has taken the form of not using money at all (even if we find it, or someone offers it to us) or not asking people for help etc.. There have been other occasions where we have felt that God has wanted us to apply a softer approach. On a recent Faith Outreach we received the words "open formula" in a prayer time, after we had started out with a more hard-line approach. This prompted us to relax our approach which led to us experimenting with things like hitch-hiking. Which approach to take may depend on the level of faith and experience of the people taking part, but not always. It is important to remember that God has a much clearer idea than us about what we are able to handle... and what we are not!

To explain more about the listening and prayer aspect that's mentioned above... usually this involves trying to calm and quieten our minds in order to hear what God wants to say to us, similar to meditation. At the start of a particular Faith Outreach involving four of us, we had one of these listening times together during which we asked God for 'leadings' in order to help us decide what our first moves should be (N.B. a 'leading' refers to what we receive in a listening time, whether it be some words, a vision, Bible verse etc.). One of us received a vision of a turtle; one of us received an image of a spiral; and one of us received the word "Fortitude". We were quite close to a river at the time, so we took the turtle vision to mean that we should walk along the river in the direction of the city centre.

Around an hour later, after walking a few miles, we saw a road sign to "Fortitude Valley" (it was the first time any of us had been to the city so we didn't know this place existed)... which, as you may have guessed, led us to conclude that the "Fortitude" leading was a prompt for us to go to Fortitude Valley! When we arrived in the centre of this suburb we wandered down the main pedestrian street. Amazingly, right in the middle of the shopping precinct was a large mosaic spiral! As it happens, we sat down on a bench close by and got talking to a guy whom we later found out owned a Turkish restaurant... and he invited us to have some free food and coffee there! We remained in and around this area for the rest of our week, during which time we had many inspiring interactions with people, and positive things happen, as a result of our decision to follow these leadings in faith.

There may be more clarity from God in certain situations than in others, and for various reasons. There have been many times when we have not received such clear leadings as we did in the Faith Outreach mentioned above, or we have misinterpreted leadings, which is just part and parcel of experimenting with Faith Outreaches. Every Faith Outreach is different and it is important to not worry when things don't seemingly work out, as often they end up doing so if we just trust.

Challenges and Expectations

It is hard to prepare people for all the challenges they are likely to face during a Faith Outreach. However, just knowing that we will be challenged is part of the preparation.