

Steve 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008

### **Beyond my comfort zone**

I have been reading 'Mission-shaped and rural' by Sally Gaze (Church House publishing 2006). I think it is inspiring and challenging. It taught me to see in a new light, and more clearly, what it means to be called to grow into the likeness of Christ.

God sent Jesus to become a human being- 'one of us' –so this means I'm called to become like those to whom I'm sent. This means sharing in the everyday lives of those I live and work alongside. It does not need adopting the culture of those to whom I'm sent uncritically. Rather I'm asked to identify with it lovingly and at the same time where need be to stand against it. I'm not just an individual here but I'm also part of the church and the church needs to do this more also.

I'm challenged and reminded that the 'Great Commission,' 'Matthew 28:18-20, is about going. (The gospel begins with Go!). So we as churches need to go where people are and listen and engage.

In following Jesus' way of ministering I/we/churches must to be prepared to sacrifice and to die. Sally Gaze refers to churches 'dying to live' and sees one aspect of this as those mature in faith making sacrifices rather than sacrifices being made by those just beginning to explore the Christian faith.

For me this asks me to move out of my comfort zone.



Perhaps it means I need to be willing to give up some of the services I have always liked so others newer to faith may have what helps them find God. I'm sure it also means greater sacrifice too.

What might 'dying to live' mean to you and the church you attend?