

MACEDONIA - NOV 2008

14th November 2008



These men had intended to go fishing - missed their destination or so they thought!

The third visit to Macedonia in 2008 'Macedonia for Jesus'!

By Alan G Heavey

I travelled to Macedonia in November with John Grant, the Mission Director for the Luis Palau Association, Europe. This was our third evangelistic mission to this nation this year, working with the General Mission co-ordinator Jimmy Polycarp Simon (pictured above), a Nigerian born Macedonian.

We held 12 meal event meetings in, Skopje, Kumanova, Palikura, Lozovo, Novo Konjarevo and a Combined Church services in Grasko. 459 guests were in attendance during our visit. Out of these, in just 5 days, 234 recorded their decision to invite Jesus Christ into their lives as Lord and Saviour - that's 51%! 148 requested a 'home

visit'; 140 requested more information about the gospel and 151 have signed up for the 'Next Step' meetings, where the 1st step of coming to Christ is unpacked further.

Since July 2007 the statistics show that God is doing something amazing here; just look at these stats:

Over 3000 men, women and children heard the gospel - over 2000 were guests, out of over 1000 recorded their decision to come to Jesus in repentance - that's incredible! Lives have been miraculously transformed; many have received physical healing. On top of this new churches have been birthed. Some of Jimmy's workers have only been 'born

again' in this last 12 month period - what a joy to meet them and work with them!

I will keep you updated with news from the Next Step meetings as they unfold.

For me there were some special stories:

One senior man who made a decision to come to Jesus in the Police Dinner in Skopje wrote, *"I have been waiting for something like this."*

The healing touch - I met up with Tomo; first time in 4 years. Such a nice guy, he was in pain all through the Police Dinner meeting. I laid hands on him and prayed for healing in his body. He came up to me 10 minutes later and jumping up

and down explained that all the pain had gone and he now had full movement throughout his body - God is just so good!



In Rosoman at a breakfast meeting 24 out of 34 guests of audibly prayed to ask forgiveness of Jesus and to receive fullness of life. Two men came up to me afterwards and asked if I would sign their New Testaments they had just been given. I had a good conversation with one of them called Tony and explained how it is good to give something away when we have received it - the need to be 'like a river, not a lake' (ref Bill Johnson). He will meet with one of Jimmy's team very soon; maybe I will meet



him again next year as a co-labourer in the harvest!

Then there was the lunchtime meeting in Negotino - for me it will always be remembered as the, 'Fisherman's Lunch' (see main picture on page 1). Jimmy drove John and I to Negotino after collecting us from the hotel. On arrival we get out of the car and Jimmy motioned to 4 men sat some distance away. As they came

over, I asked Jimmy, "Who are these men", to which Jimmy shrugged and said, "I don't know"! These men came over with big smiles on their faces and joined the lunch meeting. I asked the Holy Spirit to show me what to speak about and I was directed to John 21 where Jesus had appeared to his disciples for the 3rd time following his resurrection. The disciples did not recognise him initially as He called to them enquiring of them how much fish they had caught. When they said, none, Jesus suggested they cast their nets on the other side of the boat; the right side. Of course they caught so many this time they couldn't get them into the boat and they realised it was the Lord.

Well I spoke to the guests and asked of the fishermen what did they catch today? This caused great laughter as they replied, "Nothing." They were so pleased to be part of this story. I then suggested to all present that we could spend our life fishing from the wrong side of the boat and catch nothing; to live a life of emptiness and

separation from God or go to the right side and catch plenty; forgiveness of sin, fullness of life now and eternity with Jesus - the love of God. No surprises to what happened next! After the meeting, Sasha one of the fishermen, came to speak with me and said with a big smile and hand on his heart, "Tomorrow I will be different." He said that they were supposed to have gone to Grasko for fishing, but got off the bus in

Negotino by mistake and were wondering how to resolve the situation when Jimmy beckoned them over for lunch. This day they caught much more than they bargained for! You could never have planned this - God is just so amazing. 58% of the guests made a decision to follow Jesus, including 3 ladies who came late as the meeting was closing. I sat down with them and through a lady interpreter gave them an abridged version of the same message. All 3 repented before the Lord and received Him as their Lord and Saviour. What a lunch - always good to fish on the right side of life!

The Sunday morning Combined Church Service was phenomenal. We hired buses to transport people in from many different areas, some as far away as the Bulgarian border. These people are from church plants that Jimmy's team have been working with. I can't do this justice, but to see over 300 people gathered together and watch as they stand in turn to represent their community was so moving. During this meeting we cast the vision, 'Macedonia for Jesus'. The vision is to see all of Macedonia won for Jesus. This service was part of the process; we wanted to see how many would come and worship together; bringing unsaved friends with them. The result was good; many came; it was a very tight squeeze in the Grasko Cultural Hall. Next year we are wanting to host a mini-festival in Grasko, so it was important to use this meeting as a measure of who would come. The meeting was an encouraging and motivational meeting, however it was also evangelistic and 11 people gave their lives to the Lord; 7 came up onto the stage and publicly confessed Jesus as Lord and Saviour. It was so good to explain to them how much God loves them.

But God didn't leave it there; I felt led to pray for the sick to be healed. I asked if

there were any sick amongst them to just position their hands on their own bodies. I prayed and watched as God moved. After we sang Amazing Grace several came up onto the stage to give testimony to a God who heals. One lady's story in particular touched me. She couldn't walk properly when she came into the hall and found it difficult to stand when it was the time for prayer. Then the Holy Spirit moved on her and her back pain went; her knees which were difficult to move became free! This as just one of many testimonies to the goodness of God.

There will be many stories that we will never get to hear about this side of Jesus coming back, but here are two that I heard about this trip which came out of my first visit to Skopje back in 2004:

The, 'Life change' story - Our new evangelist friend Zoran told me of the time I was in the Alexandria Palace in Skopje and following my message, 200 people came forward to receive Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.



Whilst this was taking place, i.e. the people were moving out of their seats, Zoran overheard one 16 year old girl talking to her well educated parents, saying, "Can I go; I need to go up there and respond; something is happening inside of me!"

The, 'Sound of Music' story - It was great to meet Toshe; a professional musician now working with Campus Crusades. At the time we first met in 2004



he was a student and playing music during the mission events. He said there was fruit from that time; he had invited a young keyboard player to one of the meetings. She made a decision to follow Jesus and is still walking with the Lord, married and now in the USA.

So that's Macedonia for now in 2008. For 2009 we are looking to go back in the spring for a few more events; a time of planning for a Summer Festival with Jimmy and planning meetings for a visionary, 'Macedonia for Jesus' mission throughout the nation in 2010.

I am in awe of God for His goodness and love for each one of us. I'm amazed that He chooses to use us to forward the Kingdom. I am so privileged to see transformation of lives as people come to Jesus; to see people physically and emotionally healed and set free. I give Him all the praise and glory for what I'm allowed to be part of.

This is just a small part of the story being told here. If you would like me to come and share more in your fellowship, please get in touch.

Thank you for your interest and support.

In His love - Alan
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