

GOD SPEAKS

Acts 13:1-12

INTRO ILLN Chris and Rebecca Mercer climbed Kilimanjaro

“Medics reach roof of Africa”

Chris and Rebecca Mercer – 2 local doctors – have raised £4000 for charity by scaling Kilimanjaro, Africa’s highest mountain. This has been a tremendous achievement. Kilimanjaro is nearly 6,000m high – 4.5 times the height of Ben Nevis and seven of the people that went with them did not make it to the top.

Chris and Rebecca were the leaders of the trek. They were responsible for the welfare of the 20 other participants as well as over 40 local Tanzanians who were guides, porters and chefs.

It was extremely tiring and without each other they could not have done it. But they would do it again given the chance. It was a truly amazing experience and they have come back leaner, fitter and with some wonderful new friends and memories.

Why did Chris and Rebecca climb Kilimanjaro?

Rebecca has a disabled sister who was born deaf and blind with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour due to Rubella.

They wanted to raise money for a charity called Sense which provides 24 hour care for Rebecca’s sister.

Both of them are keen hill walkers, often contributing to the web site Munro Magic. They are experienced leaders and have medical skills.

So there was a combination of reasons that led them to do this.

First the fact that Rebecca has a disabled sister. They saw the need and had a desire to raise money for the charity because they had a personal interest.

Then there was the fact that they enjoy climbing mountains and had years of experience and training in leading groups.

Then the fact that they were doctors opened up the door of opportunity to lead this trek.

BARNABAS AND SAUL Acts 13:1-12

Why did Barnabas and Saul set off on their missionary journey? How did they decide where to go and who to speak to?

The simple answer is they were led by the Lord. But we see in this story that the Lord used various ways to speak to them and to lead them and also to speak to other people.

v.2 THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Christians in Antioch were praying – group decision – important in a church – confirms God's will

v.4 PERSONAL INTEREST

Barnabas was from Cyprus – friends and family there – the logical place to start

v.5 SCRIPTURE

They preached in the synagogues – went to Jews first – used the OT

v.7 OPPORTUNITY

Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor, invited them to come and speak to him.

v.11 SUFFERING

Elymas opposed the gospel and was blind for a time – the Lord wanted him to realize what he was doing, to repent and believe.

v.12 JESUS

The governor was greatly amazed at the teaching about the Lord Jesus.

ILLN Adrian Plass

In September Adrian Plass and his wife Bridget will be coming to Alford and we will have a chance to go and hear them speak.

Neither of them set out to be Christian speakers. So how did God lead them into this work?

Adrian Plass worked as a residential child care worker with disadvantaged children for several years before suffering a breakdown and then embarking on a career as a writer. The first thing he wrote was "The Visit", a short novel in which a fictional local Church in England is visited by Jesus.

Over the last twenty years he has written more than thirty books. The best known of these is probably The Sacred Diary of Adrian Plass, a gentle satire on the modern church, which has sold hundreds of thousands of copies worldwide. This and other books have travelled to other countries and are now translated into a number of foreign languages.

His writing opened up opportunities to start speaking to groups in venues as varied as prisons, schools, churches, festivals, literary dinners and theatrical settings, and that in turn lead to radio and television broadcasting.

Nowadays Adrian is in great demand as a speaker. His presentations combine humour, poetry, and story-telling, largely revolving around his own inadequacies and struggles as a Christian and a human being.

CONC

The Lord speaks and leads in a variety of ways - RECAP

There is no doubt that he is speaking to each one of us every day. We need to be open to what he is saying and where he is leading and then to be willing to go forward in faith, believing that he will continue to be with us and continue to guide us each and every day.