

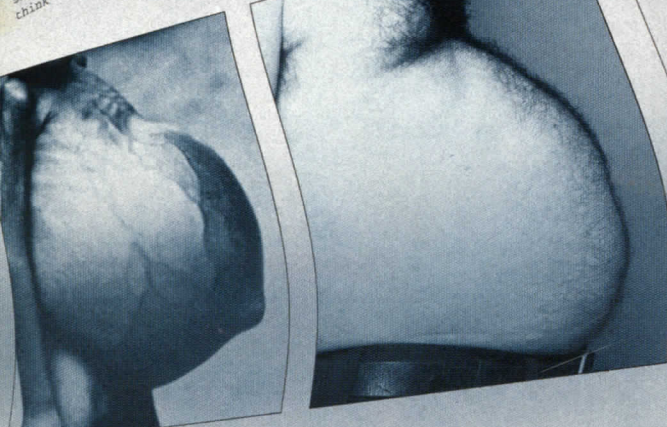
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COMPASS

*The Quarterly Journal of
Non-Religious Christianity*

*Pointing the way to revival
and transformation*

Jesus, Kono, you got me with this. I guess it 'is' still possible to shock people. Big green light on this one. Poster, billboard? Do you think People or Cosmo would run it?



NO CONNECTION

...billion people are dying of starvation. Another billion dying of excess. One group is the victim of its own reaping its earned reward – the lion's share of the earth's bounty. We are not our brother's keeper. We live and die by our choices. This is the meaning of freedom.

NEW WORLD ORDER

GOD AND GLOBALISATION



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Jesus is just alright

At the beginning of this third millennium, Christianity has become the most extensive, global religion in history. In his recently released *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, Dr David Barratt confirms the pre-eminence of Christianity across the world – as well as the huge decline of biblical faith in the west.

Nationally, Christianity has become a money-spinner in the USA, with a recent report that films with a Christian content earn more than those with offensive material. According to the Christian Film and Television Commission, there were 59 pro-Christian films in 1997 – but that number had doubled by last year. And films with a strong Christian element earn on average 42.9 million dollars. 'I think these awards are very important,' said screen legend Jane Russell, a presenter at the awards event in Los Angeles. 'I'd like to see more Christian content in the movies' (www.movieguide.org).

The Coign, a charismatic evangelical church in Surrey, strategically visited 5,500 homes in their area, offering free copies of the Jesus video. Almost 1,000 households accepted the film, and talked to church members. Apart from the goodwill created, and getting the basic gospel story into 1,000 households, a number have started Alpha or similar courses.

On a broader front, thousands of volunteers have visited more than 1.6 million homes in the UK and over 400,000 have accepted the Jesus video, which retells the story of Jesus, as recorded by Luke. Currently available in 500 languages, it's been seen by over 1.5 billion people worldwide. Titanic was viewed by 250 million.

Last year saw hundreds of thousands of people prefer to see Jesus Christ, his life and ministry than Tracey Emin's bed! Most visited art show in the UK throughout 2000 and fourth most popular in the world was *Seeing Salvation – The Image Of Christ* at the National Gallery. 'We were very nervous about putting it on,' said Director Neil McGregor. 'We really didn't know whether anyone would come.' *Seeing Salvation* drew 5,002 visitors a day – compared with the Royal Academy attracting 1,647 for *Apocalypse*. The Turner Prize exhibition with Tracey Emin, drew 1,201 visitors a day.

We have become guardians of the most incredible message in the world. One British theologian said the Church has become the condom in the re-evangelisation of the nations. If so, the Holy Spirit will take the Church out of the exclusive hands of pastors, shepherds and administrators and place it in the hands of those to whom communicating gospel is the most important thing in their lives and they will make it the most important thing in Christ's Church. Pastors, shepherds and administrators will be needed all the more as people make a positive response to Christ and need to be shown, helped and built into a lifestyle of discipleship. Without that, these three ministries will be dealing with the same people, quite literally growing old together.

How important is the gospel to you and the church you are a part of? And will you step forward and take responsibility for a family, a road, a geographic or demographic sphere? Without you and the gospel, transformation will remain a mere dream. But with them, it becomes reality.

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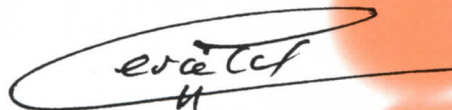
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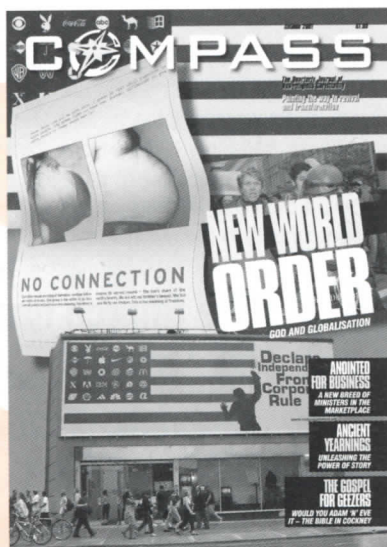


Gerald Coates, Editor

The Church has become the condom in the re-evangelisation of the nations

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Art for God's sake – bringing Christ into culture
Is revival really coming? – Clifford Hill's prophetic call
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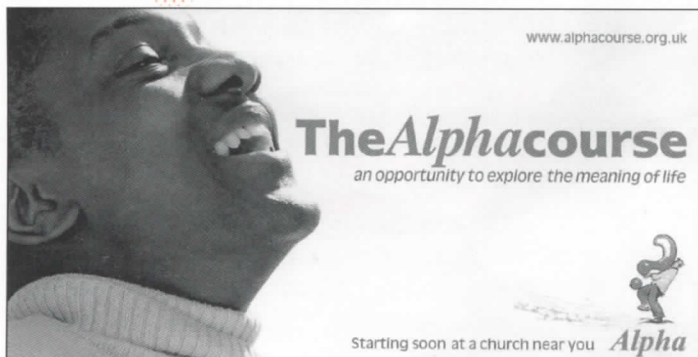
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HOMEnews



SMILE – YOU'RE ON ALPHA!

THE LAUGHING face of 33-year-old Nigerian Ade Adebajo is to adorn 1,500 billboards, 75 tube stations, 3,000 buses, and hundreds of thousands of leaflets and posters at churches and homes across the UK – all in a bid to promote Alpha.

Supported by 7,000 churches of all denominations, this September's campaign will be one of the largest religious advertising initiatives ever seen in Britain.

Ade Adebajo has been a leader on Alpha courses at Holy Trinity Brompton, home of the world famous initiative. 'These poster designs brilliantly convey the fun and relaxed nature of Alpha,' said HTB vicar, Rev Sandy Millar.

CAPITAL TALK WITH GOD

LONDON leaders – including Joel Edwards, Lyndon Bowring, Gerald Coates and Lynn Green – have called for a major prayer event on Tuesday 25th September at Westminster Chapel (7pm).

New chief commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Force Sir John Stevens will be a main speaker and will be requesting prayer for himself, his officers and issues relating to crime.

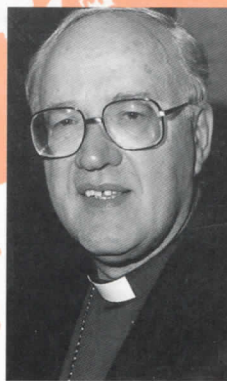
'I was sensing we needed to call a large prayer gathering for the capital some time next year,' said Joel Edwards, 'but I believe the Lord has impressed on me the urgency of gathering to pray now' (For tickets, phone 0207 2072100).

ARCHBISHOP BACKS PRAYER DAY

ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury Dr George Carey voiced his support for a recent initiative that drew more than 2,000 Christian leaders from across Britain to Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham – to pray for the nation.

'I shall be one with you in praying for those who are in authority,' he said, 'and for the witness of all churches to the gospel of Christ who, alone can make "all things new".'

Methodists stood beside Anglicans – and evangelicals prayed alongside Catholics, Baptists and charismatics. They heard from Christian farmers whose communities were devastated from the foot and mouth epidemic, and prayed with a leader from Oldham, whose church was amid the recent race riots.



Archbishop George Carey

70,000 SIGN FAITHWORKS PETITION

COMPASS Editor Gerald Coates accompanied TV presenter Steve Chalke when he handed in a 70,000-signature petition to No. 10 Downing Street. The Faithworks Campaign Declaration presses for partnerships between Government and faith-based organisations to mount social action and education initiatives.

The delegation – which also included Evangelical Alliance chief Joel Edwards and Bishop Of London Richard Chartres – spent



Steve Chalke meets Tony Blair

30 minutes inside No. 10 talking to the Prime Minister's Appointment Secretary, outlining what churches are doing alongside the young, elderly, homeless and physically impaired.

'The one thing we can be sure of,' Steve Chalke told *Compass*, 'is that the Government are now listening to us. We're not asking for special privileges – simply a level playing field. Our request is that we are treated on the same basis as everybody else and are not penalised for being Christian.'

CZECH IT OUT

BRITISH donors paid for more than 110,000 Czech schoolchildren to receive scriptures through an International Bible Society initiative known as the *Mana Mini-Bible* project.

They helped make possible the recent distribution in the Czech Republic's fifth largest city of Olomouc. Hundreds of schoolchildren and their teachers gathered in the former Communist Party Congress Hall for a ceremony covered by press, radio and TV.

Said one observer, '13,000 children are receiving scriptures in this school district alone and, when they take them home, many of their families will get their first glimpse of God's words. Those who built this place for Communist Party meetings never envisaged it being used for this purpose.'

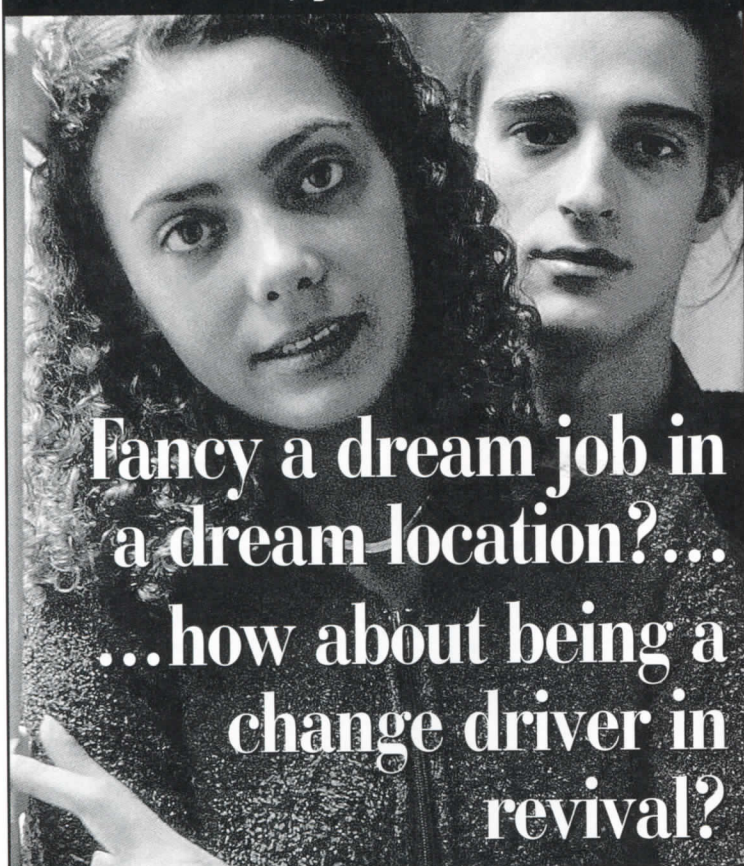
PRAYER FOR A FAIR COP

POLICE chief Sir John Stevens has requested prayer support as he takes on his challenging new role as Commissioner of the Metropolitan force.

When lunching with evangelical leaders in London recently, he was asked what are the three things he needs from the Church. 'Pray, pray, pray!' was the response of the law enforcer, who is known to be a committed Christian.

London's Christian *Premier Radio* are launching a massive recruitment drive for the force. Sir John believes that the sort of people who listen to Premier would share his vision and values for the Metropolitan Police.

If you've involved in the world of arts, media, business, politics, education or medicine, you could be one of the keys for revival in this nation.



Fancy a dream job in
a dream location?...
...how about being a
change driver in
revival?

After researching 18th and 19th century revivals, Bible Society's Martin Robinson found these areas of influence were 'change drivers' in those awakenings.

He believes there have been a number of fresh moves of the Holy Spirit in the UK over the last 30 years – and we need to recognise what is emerging.

Martin will be speaking at the special day event Making Goodness Fashionable – hosted by Gerald Coates at Waverley Conference Centre, Farnham, on Saturday 1st December 10am-5pm.

The day of lectures, group work and prayer is designed with the arts, education, politics and media in mind. Cost is £30, which covers coffee, lunch and tea.

Places are limited. But you can reserve yours by sending your name, address, church name and phone number – plus £10 deposit – to the following address:

Making Goodness Fashionable, Waverley Abbey House, Waverley Lane, Farnham, Surrey GU9 8EP. Make cheques payable to KLM.

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IT DOESN'T RAIN – IT POURS

OFFICIALS in a US North Carolina county have asked people to pray for rain to end a three-year drought. Amazingly, areas of Cabarrus County then received up to two inches of rain after county commissioners adopted the resolution during a meeting in Concord.

Now they plan to send a copy of the proclamation to every town and city asking for more help. But residents may need to pray for a long time. The county needs above average rainfall for the rest of the year to replenish its water supplies. Agriculture and textiles are the major industries in the region which has a 300-year-old Presbyterian and Lutheran history (**ananova**).

AIDS UNITES CHURCHES

A DOCTOR on the front lines of Africa's AIDS epidemic says Christians need to stop being judgemental over the disease that has 'no barriers'.

Attending the United Nations General Assembly's special session on AIDS in New York recently, Dr Hector Jalipa who works with World Vision in Nairobi, Kenya said, 'It's not just a disease of homosexuals'.

Across Africa, more than 8,000 die daily of AIDS. 'It's a disease that affects everybody – children, men and women. It looks to me that AIDS is drawing the Church – from the radical left to the conservatives – together because we have a common enemy. It's a very positive movement.'

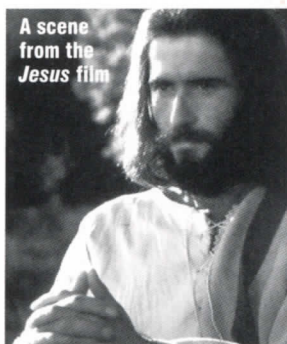
Although more than half of 1,500 multid denominational churches that partner with World Vision in Africa are 'preaching AIDS from the pulpit', Jalipa said some congregations are still judgemental and resistant to the disease. 'A majority has really opened their eyes, arms and funding to AIDS' (**Charisma News Service**).

WORSHIP AT THE GALLOWS

A MURDERER who became a Christian through a prison outreach sang God's praises as he climbed the steps to the gallows, according to Paul Eshleman, director of the *Jesus* film project.

The man's peace and joy stunned inmates and prison guards, Eshleman said. 'They were accustomed to the condemned panicking, yelling or becoming violent. Instead, as the rope was placed over his head, and with a smile on his face, he told his executioner, "The moment you pull the lever, I will be with Christ!"'

Eshleman said that a few days before his execution, the condemned man spoke of his conversion to fellow inmates in one of the toughest prisons in an Asian country, unidentified for security reasons. Since then a thriving church has been started behind the bars. The *Jesus* movie was shown in the prison after a film team went to the warden and asked to give a screening to help change prisoners' hearts. (**Charisma News Service**)



A scene from the *Jesus* film

WORLD NEWS



FAITH AND FORTUNE MIX

FORTUNE Magazine – the 'Bible' of the business world – has uncovered a counterculture emerging amid corporate America 'who want to bridge the traditional divide between spirituality and work'.

'Bringing spirituality into the workplace violates the old idea that faith and fortune don't mix,' said a major report in the publication. 'But a groundswell of believers is breaching the last taboo in corporate America.'

'Why would we want to look for God in our work?' said Gregory Pierce, author of the new book *Spirituality@Work*. 'The simple answer is most of us spend so much time working, it would be a shame if we couldn't find God there.'

'A more complex answer is that there is a creative energy in work that is somehow tied to God's creative energy. If we can understand that connection, perhaps we can use it to transform the workplace into something remarkable.' (**Charisma News Service**)



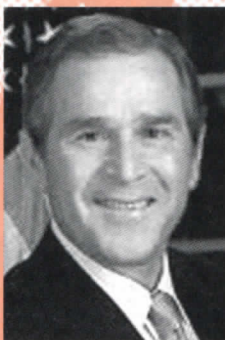
BLESSITT BROUGHT BUSH TO CHRIST

GLOBE-TROTTING evangelist Arthur Blessitt – who's carried a 12-foot wooden cross to every country in the world – has revealed that it was he who led US President Bush to Christ almost 20 years ago. The preacher has disclosed for the first time how he prayed with George W Bush during a private meeting at Midland, Texas, in 1984.

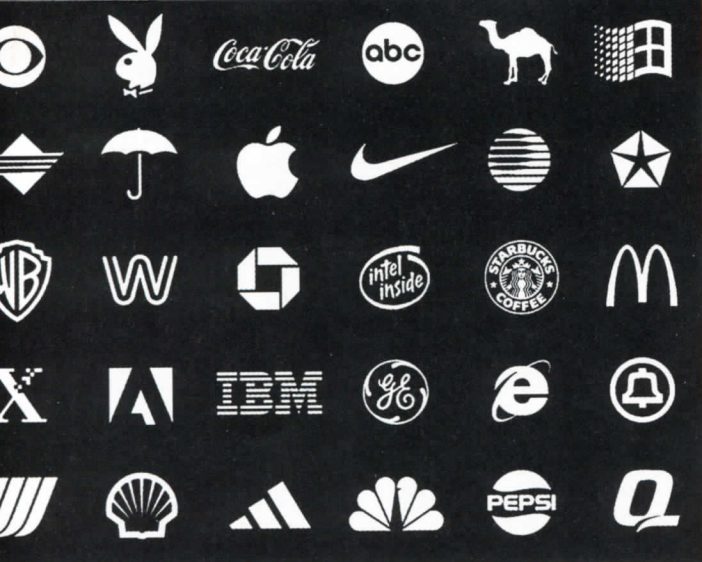
In his autobiography published during the presidential election campaign, Bush told how an encounter with evangelist Billy Graham had planted the seeds of faith in his life, but did not detail precisely how he later came to salvation. But now Blessitt is telling the rest of the story, to inspire Christians to personal evangelism.

'I have always heard it said, "The person you lead to Jesus may someday be president of the United States,"' he said, 'well, it's true.' Through extracts from his personal diaries, Blessitt recounts how Bush – then a businessman – requested a private meeting while the evangelist was in Texas. 'I prayed for him and nothing else – that he might become a true follower of Jesus from this day forth.'

Blessitt said that during 30 years of cross-walking – clocking up almost 35,000 miles on foot – he has prayed with 'thousands, even millions of people. Many are household names and others unknown outside their own family and friends or area. To me it matters not...There are many important decisions one makes in life...but the most important decision you will ever make is where you will spend eternity.' (**Charisma News Service**)



George W Bush: blest by Blessitt



DON'T ADVERTISE subvertise

New world order

A corporate mindset has swept the globe. Need we be concerned? Gary Pritchard analyses the warnings of the 'no logo' movement

Naomi Klein's book *No Logo* has caused a sensation – not only by topping the best seller lists but also by being adopted as the manifesto of the global anti-corporate movement. Its critique of global capitalism and its exploitation of much of the planet's resources and peoples, has hit a nerve.

Its massive success gained initial momentum from its word-of-mouth credibility, with people sending loop e-mails to their friends telling them how it had changed their life, how something they had felt but not understood had suddenly become clear.

DAMAGING CONDITIONS

Klein is careful to avoid being marginalised from the mainstream – being written off as a kooky lefty dinosaur. She argues that the emerging anti-global generation should not see themselves as anti-trade – only as against the damaging conditions and strings attached to trade.

Klein claims that logos are the closest thing we have to an international language. In other words, most of the world's six billion people could identify the *McDonald's* sign, or the *Coca-Cola* symbol. We are it seems, united by what we are sold.

Advertising creeps into all areas of our lives, selling us an ideal. *Nike's* aim is to sell trainers and clothes so that they 'enhance our lives through

Logos are the closest thing we have to an international language

Gary Pritchard explores the off-beat world of Adbusters. Be warned: their subversive messages could affect not only your shopping — but also your spirituality

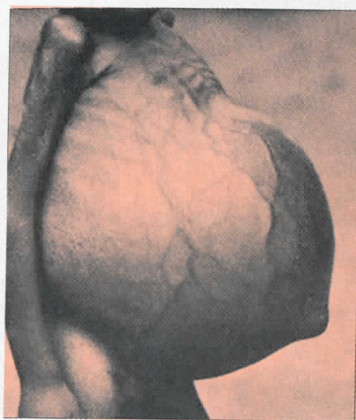
Kalle Lasn is the editor of radical anti-corporate publication *Adbusters* magazine, and the launcher of campaigns like *Buy Nothing Day* and *TV Turnoff Week*. His stunning, funny and provocative mock advertisements subvert well known ads and companies, in an attempt to undermine the massive influence of global marketing.

He argues that America is no longer a country, but a multitrillion-dollar brand — *America(TM)*, and is no different from *McDonald's*, *Marlboro* or *General Motors*. It's an image 'sold' not only to the citizens of the USA, but to consumers worldwide.

His anti-corporate manifesto states that the American brand is associated with catchwords such as 'democracy,' 'opportunity' and 'freedom', but amount to little more than global imperialism.

Like Naomi Klein, Lasn suggests that recent anti-capitalist demonstrations around the

Jesus, Kono, you got me with this. I guess it *is* still possible to shock people. Big green light on this one. Poster, billboard? Do you think People or Cosmo would run it?



NO CONNECTION

One billion people are dying of starvation. Another billion are dying of excess. One group is the victim of its own corrupt politics and poor economic planning. The other is reaping its earned reward — the lion's share of the earth's bounty. We are not our brother's keeper. We live and die by our choices. This is the meaning of freedom.



Advertising creeps into all areas of our lives, selling us an ideal

product and seeps into our lifestyle. As Richard Branson said, 'You build brands not around products but around reputation'.

Klein highlights the fact that *Nike* paid Michael Jordan \$20 million in 1992 for his advertising endorsements — more than the company paid its whole 30,000 Indonesian work force for working with them. This, she cites, is an example of where globalisation effects and exploits the poor the most.

GLOBAL ICON

Heroes to emerge from the No Logo movement include farmer Jose Bove — the Frenchman who dismantled a half-built *McDonald's* and became a global icon. *McDonald's* seem to bear the brunt of many of the anti-corporate protests.

Apart from the now infamous Bove legal case, they have run a 26-year court battle with a farmer called Ronald McDonald from Illinois who operates

fitness and sport'. *IBM* doesn't sell us computers, it sells 'solutions'.

Polaroid is not a camera — it's a 'social lubricant'. Thus the brand becomes more important than the

Klein has become the public face of a disparate but focused global protest against big business

a local family restaurant — all because he shares the same name as a multinational global corporation.

Not that *McDonald's* are the only ones to feel the force of the *No Logo* anger, and in some cases violence. In 1999 the *Nike Town* store in Seattle had to be heavily guarded when the temperature went through the roof as the World Trade Organisation held its high profile gathering.

Klein has become the public face of a disparate but focused global protest against big business. Only time will reveal how vulnerable these massive companies are to the guerrilla tactics of the anti-corporate movement.

In the short term however, a momentum seems to be gathering — with David sizing up the big lad Goliath. He'd be advised to quickly employ a sturdy hard hat.

ANTI-CORPORATE MCNUGGETS

(FOUR THINGS THE MOVEMENT IS AGAINST)

- 1** The conquest of cool by big business (Richard Branson, Bill Gates and other rock 'n' roll billionaires).
- 2** Branding, advertising and marketing (the triumph of concept over product).
- 3** Charles Handy, Tom Peters and all other business school gurus who preach downsizing and outsourcing.
- 4** The exploitation of Third World labour by groovy capitalists who pretend they're 'concerned'.



DON'T ADVERTISE — subvertise

world represent a collective sense of powerlessness and disillusionment. His reading of the current trend is far from pessimistic, however.

'A deeply felt sense of betrayal is brewing,' he said. 'Spontaneity can only be won back by demarketing your life in order to escape the consumerist script.'

CULTURE JAMMERS

His remedy for such an escape – 'Culture Jamming' – is what Lasn hopes will constitute America's second revolution. He argues that the colonies broke off from England's corporate control, only to enslave themselves in the McDonaldisation of America (the label less of a country than of a brand name).

Culture jamming has become a movement supported by graphic artists, visual communicators and illustrators around the globe. They produce wickedly effective subversions of well known adverts – such as the sketch of a bald cigarette icon Joe Camel on a hospital bed under the caption 'Joe Chemo'.

Anti-capitalist demonstrations around the world represent a collective sense of powerlessness and disillusionment

Lasn isn't afraid to speak out his gospel in controversial terms, and doesn't underestimate the challenge ahead. 'It took slick marketing and TV spots to beat the corporations at their own game, to make smoking "uncool",' he said.

'While the challenge of making the polluting BMW, fatty fast food, or porno-hyped Calvin Klein garments uncool will require a cultural awakening comparable to a hooker's breaking away from her pimp.'

Amazingly, none of the global corporations have ever successfully sued their hostile agitators. 'Absolut Vodka came after us with a horde of lawyers, but we beat them back quite handsomely,' said Lasn. 'They got scared and ran away with their tail between their legs. We have consciously provoked people like Nike and McDonald's – they haven't sued us – but they do subscribe to the magazine!'

Lasn finally suggests specific ways to participate in the joy of jamming. 'If you get junk mail on the fax, send back a toner-breaking black piece of paper. When telemarketers call, say you'll call back at THEIR home.'



Think Different



Angry messiah

Peter Gardner offers his own personal perspective on the violence in Gothenburg and asks, would Jesus throw a brick through a bank window...?

Many of us will have seen the violence on TV by those termed 'anti-capitalism' or 'de-globalisation' protesters. To many people, the violence is not surprising or condonable, and yet such action ensures that the significant economic changes being proposed are kept in the public view.

Centralisation of power by its very nature discourages engagement with others. Our political history teaches us that in extreme times, violence is the only action that causes the powers that be to listen.

DEN OF ROBBERS

In considering the mayhem caused through the recent protests in Gothenburg and Genoa, I thought of Jesus when he challenged the moneychangers in the temple. An act, that if carried out today, would draw accusations from the authorities of anti-social behaviour, even of violence – punishable under law.

Jesus was angry that the temple designed as a house of prayer for all nations, had been turned into a den of robbers. In his anger, he turned over the tables of those he saw as responsible.

The temple was to represent a place for the peoples of the world to find freedom and deliverance from oppression and bondage.

Centralisation of power by its very nature discourages engagement with others

RETAIL THERAPY

Those of us who shied away from the shameless corporate elements of the prosperity movement, cheer ourselves in our own people-centred church structures. Not for us the crass one-man showtime spectacle, with the endless tape series boxsets and video conferences. Surely our flat leadership, cell-shaped, organic, city-wide envisioned congregations, have avoided such a vulgar fate – haven't they?

We need to ask ourselves, beneath our enlightened shells, are we so very different? Our product or brand may be seasoned with a social conscience and a non-hierarchical leadership, but it is often product all the same. Not too many of our local church

'Spontaneity can only be won back by demarketing your life in order to escape the consumerist script'



models break the meeting-led service sector of idealised lifestyle improvement.

Even when pushed out away from the 'me' focus of cruder laity expressions, the genuine and sincere desire to see our culture transformed, revived and touched, is often packaged in the 'breakthrough' narrative that pervades our church culture.

I am personally grateful to be connected to a local body of believers that exists out of a sense of togetherness, mission and a common journey. Most of us just about survived the supermarket days of choosing church on the basis of its 'strong word', 'ecstatic worship' and seven-days-a-week social life (can't be accused of any of those now – ask the members!).

But if you pressed me, hand on heart, to declare our congregation free of the corporate virus, then I'd keep my hands in my pockets. For while we've endeavoured to shift the balance of Christian life away from the Dyson-like church centered vision, into exploring ways to serve the saints where they already connect to their culture, it's a slow process.

Some of us miss the security of being led by the nose into a good prayer life, personal walk with pastor and the weekly encounter with the worship leader. It's jolly hard work thinking for yourself.

Many of us are yet to truly find ourselves flowing into

Someone somewhere has to break the mould away from corporate church to the church beyond the congregation

what we have seen vaguely in our hearts – believers expressing all that we have been created to be, engaging with the creation and connecting to its groan for redemption. It's still a bit of a dream at the moment, but one we feel worth living for.

Not having a coherent centre around which we scurry from week to week, does leave us feeling vulnerable. Yet a shape of church that originates and develops from the desire and creativity of the saints – rather than a pastor or super-leader – is both logical and good sense:

- it switches the energy of local church from meeting-based to people-based;

- it has the potential to rescue burnt-out leaders from having to produce an all-singing, all-dancing programme for their congregation 52 weeks a year.

Sure, this road could end up in some interesting but irrelevant sandy cul-de-sac, or maybe endless coffee bar deliberations. But someone somewhere has to break the mould away from corporate church to the church beyond the congregation. If only I could come up with the book or tape set that would sell the idea to Spring Harvest!

- Gary Pritchard is Editorial Manager of Compass, and a freelance writer based in South Wales.

Here however, of all places, power and profit had exploited this opportunity and in fact had turned it into a place where the people were being robbed and cheated more than ever.

Could the anger of many of the anti-globalisation protesters be seen in the same vein? Those who have been given the responsibility to further the well being of all the peoples that they represent, are arguably in fact building a system that draws unto itself greater power and wealth.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

For example, the people of Ireland have recently voted to reject the Nice Treaty. According to the voting rules of the system, their rejection meant the Treaty was now dead.

However, one of the first comments from among the European leaders was that this democratic expression of the voice of the people should not be allowed to stop the progress of the treaty. Small wonder anger erupts into violence.

What would be the equivalent today of Jesus overturning the tables of the money changes? Perhaps he'd be the first to throw a brick through a bank window. Makes you think, doesn't it?

What would be the equivalent today of Jesus overturning the tables of the money changes?



- Pete Gardner heads up Global Focus – a ministry that is working to develop the ambassadorial role of the global church into global governmental institutions. He lives in Llanelli, South Wales and is part of Antioch Church.

WEBSITES RELATING TO THE ABOVE INCLUDE:

www.adbusters.com www.nologo.com

An oil painting at a young offenders' institution in Bristol has become a prophetic motif for the chaplaincy work there. Greg Downes explains how the prodigals have been coming home...

God is a God of surprises. If someone had told me in 1980 that, as an 11 year-old when I knelt on the cold floor of a public school in Suffolk and surrendered my life to Christ, I would end up as a prison chaplain 21 years later, then I would have run a mile!

After receiving a 'call' at 15, I eventually ended up training for the Anglican ministry at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. I served a curacy in the Home Counties and moved on to be Senior Chaplain at HM Prison and Young Offenders Institution Ashfield, near Bristol.

Ashfield is a new prison that opened its doors on 1 November 1999. Built at a cost of £50m, it occupies the site of what was formerly Pucklechurch Remand Centre that was burned down by the over enthusiastic inmates in 1990. The establishment houses 400 young persons, 300 of which are juveniles (15-17 year-olds) and 100 young offenders (18-21 year-olds).

It has been exciting to build a chaplaincy from scratch and we are very blessed in being a like-minded and unified team. The chaplaincy operates from the Chapel of the Prodigal Son, the centrepiece of which is a 5' x 5' oil on canvas of *The Return Of The Prodigal Son* by Charlie Mackesy. Not only is this a profound work of art that has moved some of its onlookers to tears, but also it's the prophetic motif of our ministry.

LEARNING CURVE

When we opened back in 1999, it was a steep learning curve for me. I recall those early days of getting 'butterflies' in my stomach on a Saturday night in anticipation of leading Sunday morning Church in Ashfield.

Expletives abounded. One particularly bad episode was when

Prison for

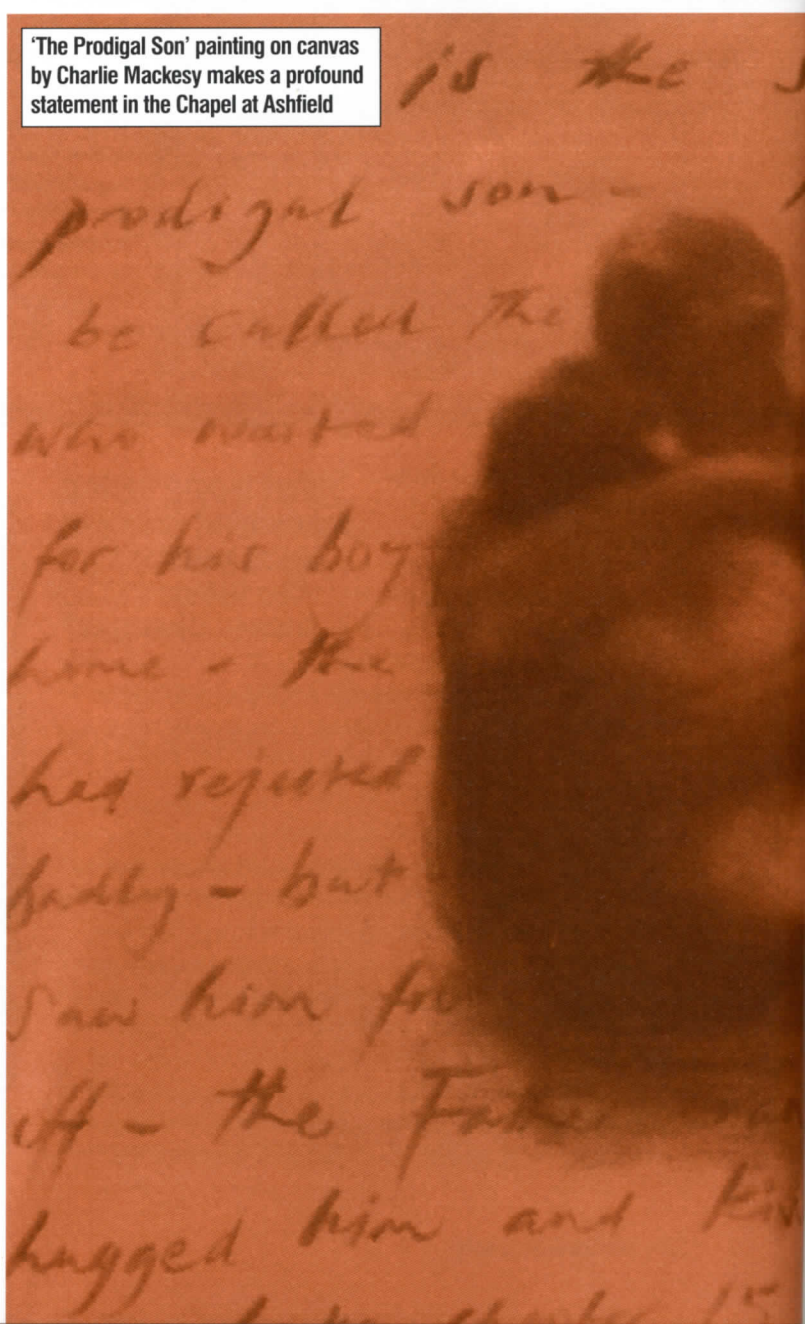


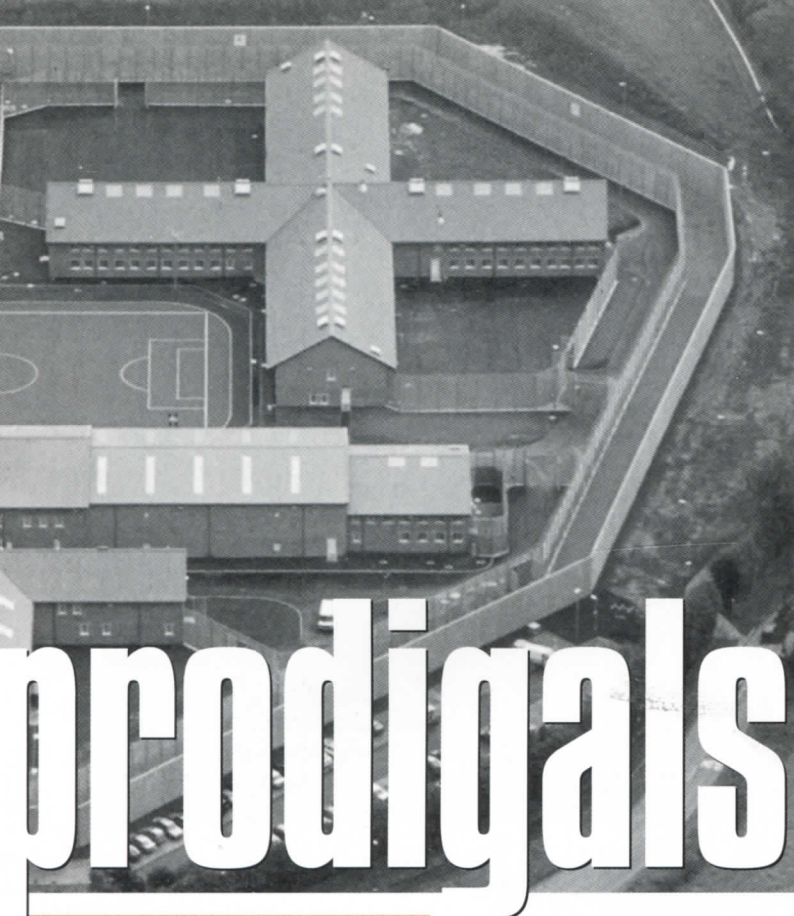
Greg Downes

We had a full-on fight that broke out between the Welsh and the English after I'd preached on love!

I wondered if I was doing something wrong – perhaps I was guilty of preaching 'easy believism'

'The Prodigal Son' painting on canvas by Charlie Mackesy makes a profound statement in the Chapel at Ashfield





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I played them Cliff's Millennium Prayer. Once a boy threw a hymn-book at me and we even had a full-on fight that broke out between the Welsh and the English after I had preached on the text 'love one another as I have loved you!'

In terms of seeing fruit, I anticipated that I was in for the long haul. In the first week, a boy told me that he had frightened some elderly people during an attempted house burglary. 'I really feel shame – how can I get rid of it?' he asked me. 'I know a very good way,' I replied and proceeded to tell him about Jesus. 'OK,' he said, 'I want to become a Christian.'

When situations like this began to happen regularly, I wondered if I was doing something wrong – perhaps I was guilty of preaching 'easy believism'. I explained clearly the cost of commitment and that to become a Christian was 'not a magic prayer...not the end but the beginning'. But still a whole string of young guys didn't seem deterred!

As many young people have come to faith in Christ, the attitude of the prison authorities has gone from indifference to positively favourable. There was an incident one night when I was about to leave and the assistant director came to my office and asked me to visit a young man who was suicidal. ►



HE WALKS THROUGH WALLS

How Jesus is transforming the lives of convicted terrorists in a Peruvian prison

With fear and trepidation I spoke of how Jesus met Mary after the resurrection. I'd been asked to speak at one of the fellowship meetings in 'Castro Castro' top security prison, Lima, Peru.

As I finished, a man walked in wearing a smart cream-coloured suit, accompanied by another man wearing a smart shirt and tie. He came to the front and read from 2 Corinthians – 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' – and then proceeded to lead the worship.

Assuming he was the local Pentecostal pastor come for a visit, my thoughts were, 'It's all right for you to say that. You'll be going home after the meeting finishes – unlike these men who'll be in for life'.

I know the apostle Paul was able to rejoice in his imprisonment and see the gospel spreading as a result. But somehow this was where reality and truth needed to be connected. I had much to learn that day.

PISTOLS FOR EPISTLES

In fact the man, Santos Salvatierra, was a convicted terrorist imprisoned for life. But now he'd 'exchanged pistols for epistles'. Two years ago, without anyone speaking directly to him – though having heard others preaching from their cells – he had an encounter with God.

He'd been suffering from a severe stomach complaint that required a limited diet. God healed him of the sickness and transformed his life. He's now become 'resident pastor' for the whole prison.

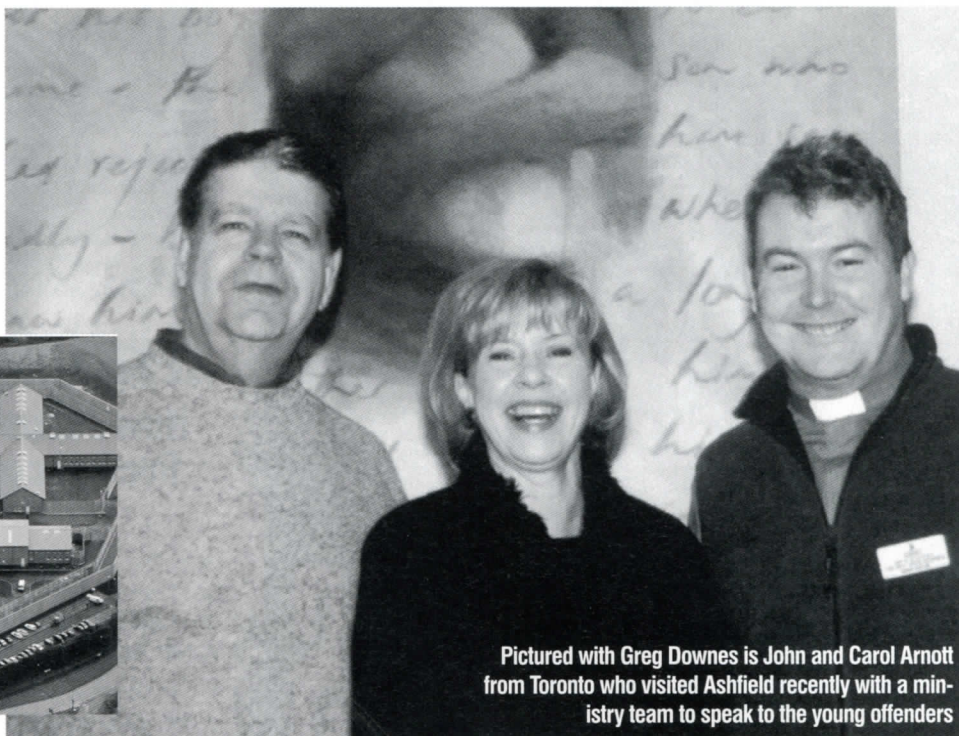
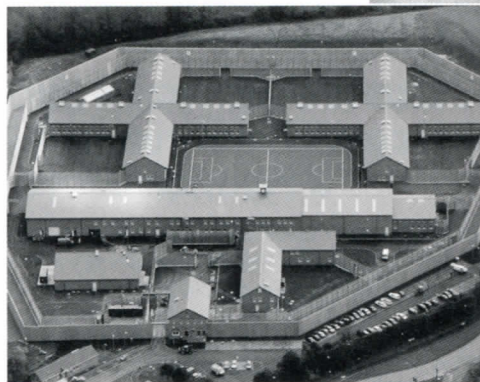
Also convicted of terrorist offences, Darwin Aquino was in for life. He too had dramatically met with Christ in his cell. One day, during the 30 minutes he'd been let out of his cell, he was playing football in the courtyard when his foot slipped down a grating. He broke his ankle in three places.

Surgeons had repaired the damage, but he was left with a severe limp and in constant pain. While lying in his bunk one night, he felt 'something strange' happening to his leg. When he stood up, the pain was gone and he was able to walk normally.

I went to the prison in fear. I came away with a confidence that God is at work.

● **Philip Bamber is Midlands Regional Manager for Christian relief agency Tearfund, who work with prisoners and their families through Paz y Esperanza (Peace And Hope) in Peru.**

He was very depressed and had not been eating or mixing with his peers. I spoke to him in his cell and, he was so down, that he was speaking in monosyllables. He shared with me that he'd made repeated attempts on his life and that, since age 14, had been troubled with 'voices' telling him to kill himself.



Pictured with Greg Downes is John and Carol Arnott from Toronto who visited Ashfield recently with a ministry team to speak to the young offenders

Prison for prodigals

After some investigation, it turned out that he had dabbled with ouija boards and – surprise surprise – he had first done this at age 14. After sharing the Gospel with him, this young man gave his life to Jesus. Instantly his depression left him and he was laughing and speaking fluently.

A nurse from the prison visited him straight after me and commented, 'In my opinion, this young person is no longer at risk'. The following day, he was playing football with his mates and the same assistant director said to me, 'I don't understand what you say to them, but keep it up because it works'.

Another factor of the move of God here is that we have sometimes stepped into power evangelism – where the prophetic, words of knowledge and even healing, have precipitated someone giving their life to Jesus Christ.

I recall one instance when I visited a young person in the segregation block who was there for his own protection as he had been bullied by two boys on the wing. I asked him, 'Who's at home for you?' – to which he told me that there was no one as

'I don't understand what you say to them, but keep it up because it works'

They know what it's like to experience the bankruptcy of life

his parents had left him and his grandfather had brought him up, but was now dead.

At this point, I sensed the Lord drop a word of knowledge into my spirit and spoke it out, 'Yes, your grandfather died when you were 13, didn't he?' Amazed, the boy asked how I knew this fact, as his grandfather had died on his 13th birthday. This was significant for him since that was when he went off the rails – his grandfather was the only person who was there for him and had shown him love.

REAL CHALLENGE

After telling him about Jesus, this young man gave his life to Christ and experienced physical heat in his chest. He said to me, 'God spoke to me!' When I enquired further, he told me that God had told him to forgive the two boys that had beaten him up. As I was leaving, I said, 'Just out of interest, why did you become a Christian?' He replied, 'Well, if God spoke to you like that, that proves what you have said is true'.

So far, over 400 young men have given their lives to Christ. A question often asked is, 'What happens when they leave?'

Indeed, this a good and right question and there is no doubt in my mind that we face a real challenge to disciple these young men and see them integrated into the life of the local church once they are released.

As a chaplaincy, we are committed to doing all we can. We have sent young people to Christian rehab centres and, by the end of this year, hope to have a rehabilitation and discipleship house opened in Bristol, specifically for Christian ex-offenders who are released from Ashfield.

Clearly God is at work in our prisons. The statement of Jesus – '*The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few*' – could not be truer than in this area of much neglected evangelical concern. I often say that, regarding the parable of the prodigal son, the young men in Ashfield know half the story.

They know what it's like to be in the far country. They know what it's like to experience the bankruptcy of life. Now all they need to know is that there is a God in Heaven who loves them with an everlasting love and who longs to enfold them in his divine embrace.

● **Greg Downes is leaving his post at Ashfield to become Director of Evangelism at London Bible College.**

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Psalm 121

A song of ascents.

My eyes to the hills—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not
slumber;

He who watches over Israel
neither slumber nor sleep.

He watches over you

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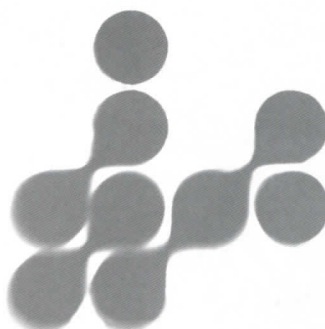
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"equipping the church to be effective with the gospel"

Would you Adam 'n' Eve it? When was the last time the Bible made newspaper headlines? Well, it did after copies of *The Bible In Cockney* landed on journalists' desks. The result was an unprecedented flood of media inquiries that forced scripture into the limelight. Karen Laister describes the fuss that was made of such classic stories as *Noah And 'is Big Nanny Goat* and *Joseph, Currant Of Jacob And Rachel!*

Travelling through central Oxford to work on Monday 26 February was one of those frustrating journeys when a normal 15-minute drive took 40 minutes. I can remember thinking it was going to be one of those days. Little did I know what was going to happen in the next few hours.

Just before 9am we had a phone call telling us that *The Daily Telegraph* had run a story on *The Bible In Cockney*. A few minutes later we learnt that *BBC Radio 4* had mentioned the book twice on the *Today* programme, at 6.20 and then just before *Thought For The Day* – and one of our sales team rang to tell us he had just heard Mike Reid (aka Frank Butcher from *EastEnders*) reading extracts on *Jazz FM*.

For the rest of the day, phone calls just poured in, with the press wanting to get hold of author Mike Coles. This initial media reaction to a book is a publisher's dream.

But we had one major problem – the book wasn't publishing until 18 May. During the course of that morning we realised that the media interest wasn't going to go away and we needed to bring forward the publication date – which we were eventually able to do by six weeks.

Most of the initial phone calls from the press went through to the secretary at Sir John Cass's Church of England school, in East London, where Mike Coles teaches RE. Both *The Mirror* and *The Daily Mail* contacted us, wanting to run exclusives on the book the following day. Calls also came in from Reuters and the National News Agency, which was the launching pad for international interest.

During the next few days, Mike was giving interviews for national and regional radio programmes including *Radio 4's You And Yours*. Nine weeks later, he was still being sought for radio interviews, taking

Gospel for geezers



This initial media reaction to a book is a publisher's dream

**Jesus ain't dead no more; he comes back to life
(the Resurrection)**

(MATTHEW 28:1-8; LUKE 24:1-12; JOHN 20:1-10)

16 After the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, James' mum, and Salome bought some spices to go and rub on and anoint the body of Jesus, which is what they did in them days. ¹ Nice and early on the Sunday morning, when the ol' Bath bun was comin' up, they went to the tomb. ² As they were goin' along, they were sayin' to each other, 'Who's gonna roll away that bloomin' big stone at the entrance of the tomb?' ³ But would you Adam-and-Eve it, when they got there, the bloomin' stone had already been moved. ⁴ So they went inside, and they saw a young geezer sitting on the right, and 'e was dressed in a nice white robe. The women, as you can imagine, were bloomin' amazed, yer know what I mean? ⁵ 'Don't get yourselves in a two-and-eight. I know that you're lookin' for Jesus of Nazareth, who was killed on the cross the other day. Well, 'e ain't 'ere. He's risen to life, ya know what I mean? Have a butcher's 'ere. This is where they put 'is body. ⁷ Now, off ya go, and give this message to 'is disciples: "He is goin' on to Galilee in front of ya, and there you will see 'im, just like 'e told ya." ⁸ The women shot out of that bloomin' tomb in a right ol' two-and-eight. They were really scared, and who can blame 'em? They didn't say a dicky bird to anyone, 'cos they was so scared.

part in as many as four or five a week. On the international front, Mike did interviews with radio stations in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Germany. 'Newsweek' covered the story in both its UK and US editions, and the story was even picked up by newspapers in Malta and Finland!

PUBLIC IMAGINATION

BBC News televised the story a couple of weeks later when the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had written a foreword for the book, was available for comment. The interview included Mike using *The Bible In Cockney* during a lesson. It showed the children dramatising the story of Jesus healing a man with an unclean spirit.

Its down-to-earth style seems to appeal not only in the East End of London but also throughout this country and beyond!

Looking back, we have been amazed that so much of the reporting was so positive and supportive of the book. *The Bible In Cockney* really caught the public imagination and its down-to-earth style seems to appeal not only in the East End of London but also throughout this country and beyond!

What we have seen in the secular media is interest in the Bible, and we made sure we drew people's attention to passages that would be familiar to them – the Old Testament story of Joseph, for example, or the Lord's Prayer.

POPULAR QUESTION

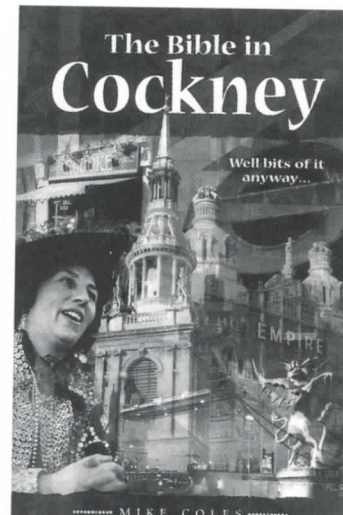
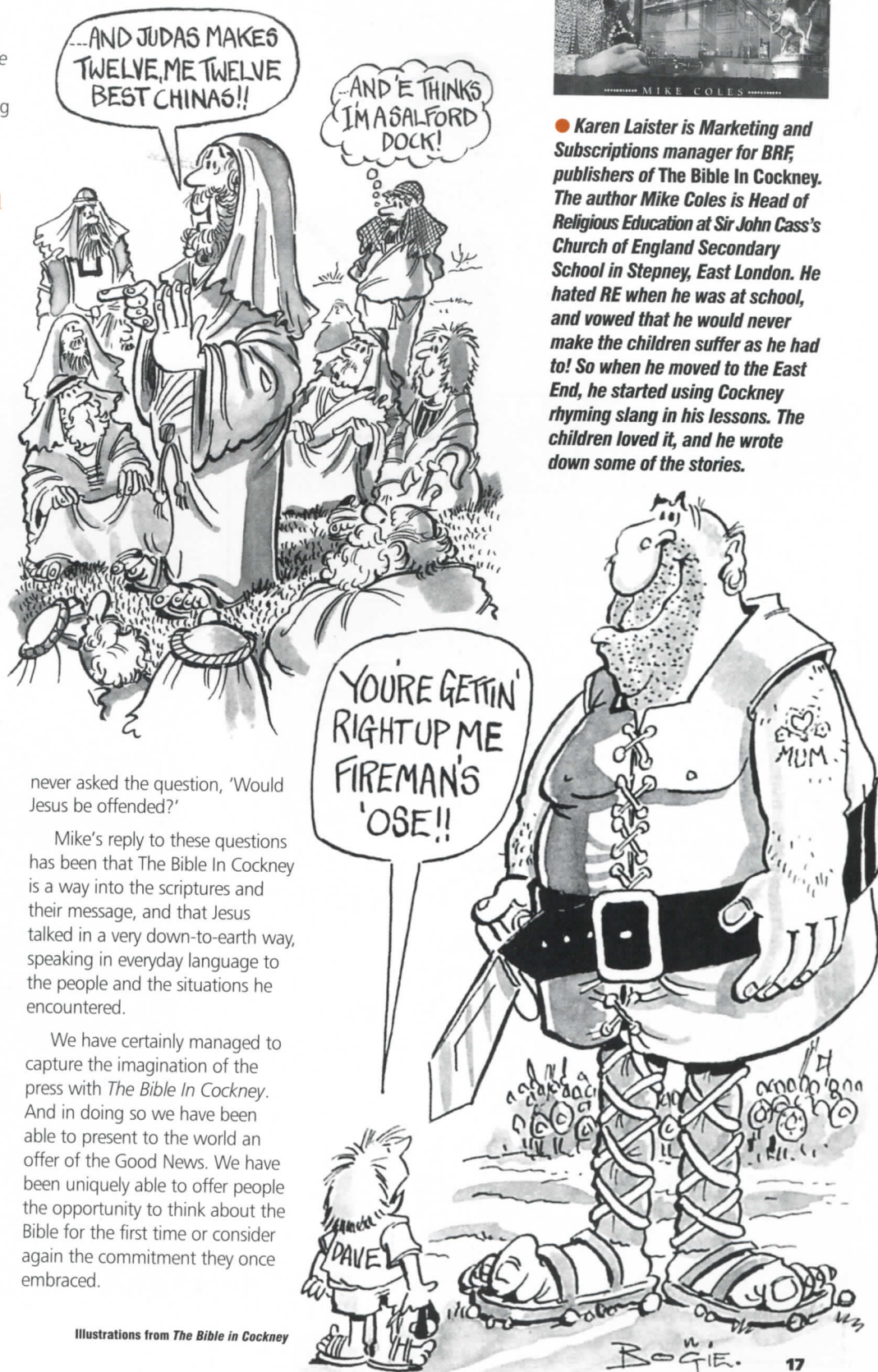
It brought home to us just how many people – even those right outside the Church – are interested in the Bible, but we have to present it to them in a way which brings its message alive. And although Mike's book is written in Cockney rhyming slang, he took great care not to change the message of Mark's Gospel or the seven Old Testament stories that he 'translated'.

As far as Christian publishing is concerned, this level of secular media interest is relatively rare. When the press do report on the Bible

or Christianity, they are normally looking for stories which will show Christians and Christianity in compromising or conflictive situations. A number of interviewers have tried to find the controversial angles with *The Bible In Cockney*.

'Is it right to teach young people Cockney rhyming slang?' has been a popular question. Another has been about offending the traditionalists within the church. Interestingly, interviewers have

Jesus talked in a very down-to-earth way, speaking in everyday language to the people



● Karen Laister is Marketing and Subscriptions manager for BRF, publishers of *The Bible In Cockney*. The author Mike Coles is Head of Religious Education at Sir John Cass's Church of England Secondary School in Stepney, East London. He hated RE when he was at school, and vowed that he would never make the children suffer as he had to! So when he moved to the East End, he started using Cockney rhyming slang in his lessons. The children loved it, and he wrote down some of the stories.

never asked the question, 'Would Jesus be offended?'

Mike's reply to these questions has been that *The Bible In Cockney* is a way into the scriptures and their message, and that Jesus talked in a very down-to-earth way, speaking in everyday language to the people and the situations he encountered.

We have certainly managed to capture the imagination of the press with *The Bible In Cockney*. And in doing so we have been able to present to the world an offer of the Good News. We have been uniquely able to offer people the opportunity to think about the Bible for the first time or consider again the commitment they once embraced.

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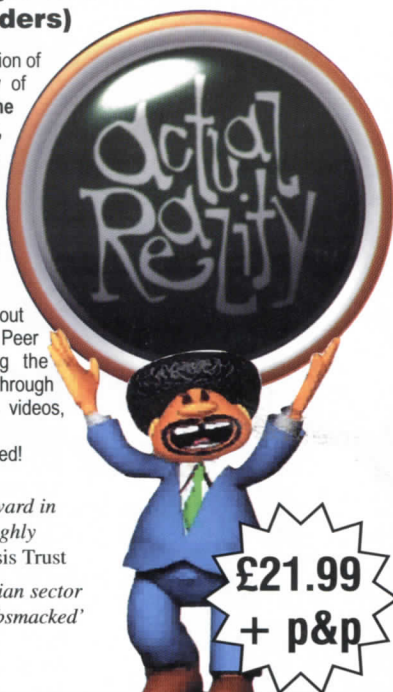
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Engaging with today's culture means
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Price explains why an ancient practice
must be restored in the 21st century





ient yearnings

The shape of the church to come. My chosen subject. It was all my own fault. I shouldn't have been so bold, spouting off my opinions. 'That sounds interesting,' said a friend, 'come and speak to our cell group'.

Time flashed by. I set to researching my subject. I would have to be prepared for any wannabe futurists to challenge my home-spun ideas. So I sought help from that 21st century 'shaman' – the search engine. I tapped in 'future church'.

There was 'forecasting the future'; 'ten global trends in religion'; 'covenant eschatology'; 'future-proof your ministry'; '21st century church' and – work this one out for yourself – 'the power of Mu'.

I sought help from that 21st century 'shaman' – the search engine

It was all vital. Important. Worthy. But despite my enthusiasm, I got bogged down in it all and lost interest.

I wanted to convey the sense of things coming to an end, and a fresh wind blowing through the church. A sense of the old giving way to the new. The feeling of it being a monumental time for us all.

I decided to tell a story.

Occasionally I visit our local junior school and do some storytelling there. So I've seen the power of story grip hundreds of kids packed into an assembly hall. The effect can be stunning.

Sometimes an eerie silence descends on us. One staff member didn't dare enter the room for fear of disturbing the atmosphere. I'd even gone so far as to invest in my own 'cottage industry' – a series of storytapes called *Dreamtime*.

For cell group, I chose a story from Irish mythology. It's among the best known – *The Children Of Lir*. Like all stories, there are several versions around. My research switched from academic documents to fairy tales.

From the different settings, I wrote my own treatment. Having finished the script, the next challenge: how was I going to make this relevant to 'the shape of the church to come'?

There were several points swimming around my mind. But I didn't have a structured 'message'. I wanted the tale to speak for itself. I wanted to move from mind to heart, from intellect to imagination, from word to wonder.

Pleasant surprise mixed with puzzlement as I announced my intentions. I think I was more bewildered than my audience! Why had I chosen this route? Oh well, it was a hot night and there were cold beers in the fridge. Things could be worse.

So I told the story of *The Children Of Lir*. It's an archetypal fairy tale, concerning a loving father who dotes on his kids – and a wicked stepmother who's intensely jealous for his affection.

Using druidic magic, she turns his four children into swans, and condemns them

to a 900-year sojourn on the seas and lakes of Ireland. Their deliverance comes when a holy man rings a bell and prays for them, breaking the spell.

Storytime over, I asked the cell group what they felt. How had the story affected them? They were clearly saddened by the fate of the children of Lir. We talked about the power of stories to move us in ways that sermons couldn't.

I've seen the power of story grip hundreds of kids packed into an assembly hall

We noted that Jesus used parables in his teaching. We spoke of how good it would be to use stories in the adults' talk on a Sunday morning. After all, children enjoy a good story – why not let the grown-ups indulge, too?

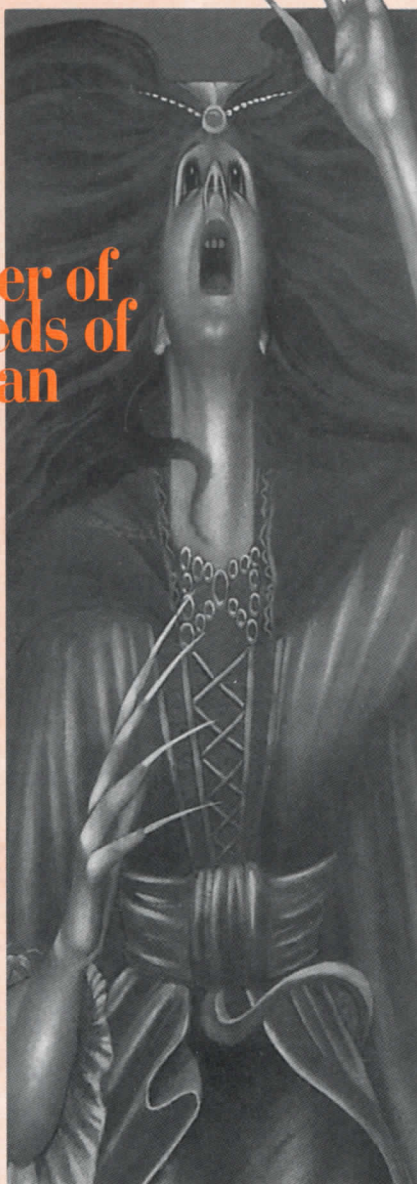
Then someone asked me, 'What's all this Celtic stuff about?' I warned them that I could be on that subject for days! Then I explained how the great saints of Britain and Ireland had won the hearts of the people.

We looked at how the coming of Christianity completely transformed these islands. It wasn't an overnight success. It was probably happening across a good expanse of time. But the Celtic awakening shifted the balance of power.

'With the Irish – even with the kings – he succeeded beyond measure,' Thomas Cahill said of Saint Patrick. 'Within his lifetime or soon after his death, the Irish slave trade came to a halt, and other forms of violence, such as murder and intertribal warfare, decreased' (*How The Irish Saved Civilisation*, Sceptre).

Our forefathers of faith merged the cross with the circle, engaging with the pagan culture around them. To this day, magnificent Celtic crosses rise bold and stark above the mist of the British and Irish countryside – reminding us that the gospel story must blend with the land before it can mend the land.

We talked about the power of stories to move us in ways that sermons couldn't



The Children Of Lir speaks to our times. This epic saga from old Ireland depicts a ruling supernatural elite coming to an end. There is a sense of a mighty empire crumbling, an ages-old curse being broken – and of a new dawn breaking.

'The challenge to Christianity is to find the appropriate way of communicating the gospel to a new culture as it forms,' says Lindsfarne-based writer Ray Simpson, 'and to respond to the longing for a return to a holistic approach to life that does not put the natural and the supernatural, the sacred and the secular, into separate compartments' (*Exploring Celtic Spirituality*, Hodder & Stoughton).

Although The Children Of Lir is indeed a sad tale, it has a strong redemptive thread. It echoes ancient yearnings for a greater reality. There is an ancestral cry for dreams to be realised, wishes to come true – and for the dead to be raised.

There has always been a greater incantation to come. To reclaim one of Prince Charles' official titles, Jesus Christ is the true 'Lord of the isles'. He has come to break some ancient curses over this land. He alone is our happy ending.

The spell over the children of Lir was broken by the sound of a bell. Handbells were treasured possessions in the early days of the Church on these islands. Still today, a bell is rung during mass at Catholic churches.

Curious about this, I once asked my Catholic stepfather what the bell meant. He told me that it's rung at the point where Christ descends on the 'host', the bread consecrated for communion.

The signal for revival may not be, as Elijah realised, in the earthquake, wind or fire. The living word is simple and delicate: a gentle whisper, the telling of a story, the singing of a song, the sigh of a prayer, the sound of a bell.





'The thing about stories,' Adrian Plass – who's written a new story called *Ghosts* – said, 'is that they entertain from the front door, while the truth slips in through a side window. People take it to themselves and the truth grows in them.'

There has always been a greater incantation to come

So ring those bells. Let Christ descend. And as he rests upon us, the base elements of our land are transformed into something celestial. Ancestral cries are heard. Old spells are broken. Ancient yearnings are fulfilled.

● **Clive Price is Consultant Editor of Compass. He is also writer and narrator of the Dreamtime series of storytapes. Volume One was launched earlier this year on a nationwide tour with CARE for Education (e-mail: clive@dreamtime.ndo.co.uk).**

The Children Of Lir

A fresh retelling of an old story, by Clive Price

The evening mist was descending on the Tuatha De Danann (Too-ha Day Dan-in), the ruling elite of Ireland. These supernatural beings were indeed powerful. But in the face of even stronger foes, their reign was coming to an end.

Lir was one of their kings. He had built himself an underground hideaway, to escape from the advancing hordes. On the surface it was just another grassy mound. But underneath it was a sparkling subterranean court.

He married a beautiful noble woman called Eve. She gave birth to twins – a son and a daughter – Fionnuala (Fin-noo-la) and Aodh (Ee). They were followed by another set of twins – Fiachra (Fee-kra) and Conn. But in the process of giving birth a second time, Eve died.

There was much sorrow in the household of Lir. In fact, if it wasn't for the deep love he felt for his children – and the wonderful songs they'd sing for him – Lir would have surely died of his grief. However, comfort soon came in the form of Eve's sister, Aoife (Ee-fa).

Lir took Aoife to be his wife. She seemed to love his kids. But as time passed, a bitter root of jealousy grew in her heart as she saw how Lir doted on his children. They were his life.

Aoife felt bitter about it. And, as folk often did those days, she sought help from a druid. He gave her a wand with the power to cast spells. She used it to transform the children into swans.

Fionnuala pleaded before her wicked stepmother. 'If you wanted to show real mercy,' she said, 'then you would make this spell last for only a season, so that at last we can be free.'

'Very well,' Aoife responded. 'I grant you nine hundred years of sailing on the wild waters amid the sound of the crying of the birds.'

Fionnuala and the others were shocked. 'If you ever called yourself a mother,' she cried, 'then you would give your stepchildren the key to release themselves from their fate.'

'Of course,' Aoife said. 'Do you think I am some kind of monster? The spell will be broken at the sound of a holy man's bell.'

Lir discovered his wife's treachery. He used his own magic to reduce her to vapours that soared away on the north

wind. Then he tried to undo her dark deed. But the spell could not be broken, even by the might of the Tuatha De Danann.

Lashed by storms, the youngsters endured their 900-year sentence. Then they were able to go home to be with their father. But the glittering grotto had darkened. The passage of time had stripped all life from the household of Lir.

Heartbroken, they flew away. They stopped at a small island in the middle of a lake. On the shore was a humble stone hut, the home of a holy man.

Each morning he'd chant an ancient psalm over the still waters. One day he heard the sweetest, saddest sound coming from the lake. Approaching the water's edge to listen, he met the children of Lir, who told him of their plight.

Lir took Aoife to be his wife. She seemed to love his kids. But as time passed, a bitter root of jealousy grew in her heart

The man went back to his hut and brought out a small handbell. He rang it over each of them, and laid his hands upon their snowy white feathers.

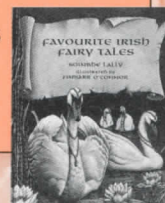
Amid dramatic rays of pure starlight, the four white swans were completely restored to human form. However, 900 years of ageing crept across their hands and feet. Their shape remained – but without the flesh and blood cloak of youth.

'Quickly, holy man,' cried Fionnuala, 'share with us your message of love and peace for this land – and baptise us before we die. Then we shall at last be at rest.'

The man carried the children to his hut, sheltering their wrinkled bodies from the sun and rain. He fed them and cared for them as the strength ebbed from their bones. And he told them the story about a new king of love who had come to reign over the land of the Tuatha De Danann.

With some water from the lake, he baptised them. They breathed their last in his arms. Fionnuala, Aodh, Fiachra and Conn were buried in each other's embrace, as brothers and sister, in the light of a new day over Ireland.

Illustrations by Finbar O'Connor, taken from *Favourite Irish Fairy Tales* by Soinbe Lally and published by Poolbeg Press (www.poolbeg.com). Used with permission.





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Rev Clive Doubleday with gypsy children in Macedonia

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CAPITAL TALK

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Tuesday 25th September at 7pm

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Lynn Green

Noel Robinson and Noel Richards will be leading worship.

New chief commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Force Sir John Stevens will be a main speaker and will be requesting prayer for himself, his officers and issues relating to crime.

NO TICKETS REQUIRED

Soundbites



BIOGRAPHY

REVELATION WAREHOUSE

Seems like the world often has a preference for the manufactured, the enhanced and the virtual. So when something real and transparent comes along, it's surely time to break out into screams of relief. Enter:

Biography!

A voyage of discovery perhaps – music to stir the mind and soul as well as entertain the ear. New songs, new names sit comfortably with familiar friends, and together they tell the life story so far of a collective of creatives in touch with their humanity and the divinity – and more importantly, their planetary purpose.

To stay neutral is the sickest of conditions – their war cry is to invade their generation for Jesus: 'come on' instead of 'stay still'. Musically, the temperature changes are quite considerable between the more progressive, guitar-driven *Gloria*, *Mother*, and *Have A Simple Prayer*, to the sparse scenery of *Kiss*, *Sufficiency*, and *For Every Tear You Cry*.

(www.revelation.org.uk/warehouse) **SR**

HEAVENBOUND

PHATFISH (WORD)

An energetic entrance with a very 'live' sounding title track leads us to a weaving, tuneful *Good To Me*. The rest of the journey reveals more of the true and evolving sound of *Phatfish*, with emphasis on the strengths of the drums, bass and vocal.

Highlight tracks are *Come To Me* – a good vibe with a great chorus that brings out the best of Lou Fellingham's voice, and *The Cross*, which delivers some tasteful instrumentation. On the whole these are the tracks where the vocal seems to find its natural home, where sufficient space allows the voice room and tonal width to breathe.

This is the first album that drummer Nathan has had a hand in producing and along with the rest of the production team, creates some interesting arrangements and ideas. He also shines as a songwriter with some memorable melodies – for example on *There Is A Day* which looks forward to 'that day the Lord will come to meet his bride' (www.phatfish.net).

SR

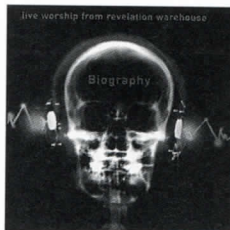
SPECTRUM

DBA

For the last few years, Robbie Bronniman and Shaz Sparks have focussed their musical energies on the dance scene, a genre as natural to them as breathing. After listening to *Spectrum*, they're most definitely experienced in the art of club!

Chunky beats, multi-textured, hypnotic rhythms provide a colourful and creative landscape for Shaz's spacey, ambient, silky-toned vocals. The title track is explosive; *When The Light Has Gone* is a club anthem; *Bunsen Burner* is a hit; and a Howard Jones song *Will You Still Be There* is beautifully understated and modern-acoustic.

The programming and production throughout is



excellent, featured particularly on *Cup Of Tea* which is an interesting sonic-soundscape and *Smiling Girl* – a more progressive dance track. (www.dba.web.com) **SR**

THE DREAMLIFE OF ANGELS

SARAH MASEN (WORD)

I met her some years ago at *Greenbelt*. She was young, chatty and friendly. And there was a mark of maturity and depth to her songs – even though she'd only just started out.

Now Sarah Masen has brought out a new album, complete with an intriguing title and attractive packaging. It's beautifully tender, sensitive and enchanting. And its sentiments stick to you like glue – with titles like *We Are A Beginning*, *Girl On Fire* and *Love Is Breathing*. The style is similar to the contemporary folk-pop of mainstream artist Jewel.

For the ageing hippies among us (who will really like Sarah's sound), the inclusion of *Supertramp's* chart hit *Give A Little Bit* will be a welcome bonus. She interprets the track well. The word on the street is that this girl could cross over into the wider world. **CP**

AUDIO LESSONOVER

DELIRIOUS (FURIOUS RECORDS)

The metamorphosis continues. Littlehampton's Fab Five once again aim at the mainstream market. So there's no corporate worship material. This is no singalongaMartin. This is adult rock, with *Delirious* written all the way through.

Understating is much more effective than overstating. And there are several examples of that. *Waiting For The Summer* – the first track to make a single release – hints at someone with higher goals: 'you're not living for this life'. The mp3 single from this album *Take Me Away* says, 'show me the way to a higher place'.

Expertly crafted by Chuck Zwicky – who's produced Madonna and Prince – *Audio Lessonover* could easily shine alongside most other rock albums this summer. Whether it's awarded the airplay it deserves is another matter. **CP**

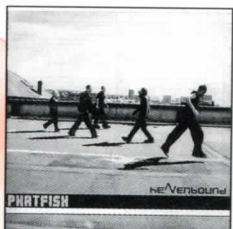
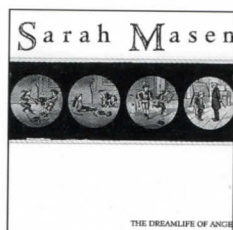
ONE DAY

KATE SIMMONDS (ARROW/INTEGRITY)

Kate, who has often been featured as a *Stoneleigh* worship leader, reveals her songwriting gift and vocal beauty on this, her first solo album. Working closely with ace programmer Mark Edwards, this is indeed a musical feast of intimacy and creativity.

Burn Like A Flame expresses a deep desire for Jesus as Kate sings 'Place me like a seal on your heart,' and the title track has a simply contagious chorus – 'I will follow you wherever you lead/And I will answer you whenever you call'.

Glory Day reflects Kate's obvious enjoyment of gospel/jazz and *Re-creation* is an inspiring acoustic mix. A great introduction to Kate as a solo artist – although she does have a great team around her – and will leave you wanting more. **SR**



● Music reviewers:
Clive Price and
Sue Rinaldi

A new breed of ministers is emerging, says Rich Marshall. They're called of God, but not in the traditional sense of preaching, teaching, or evangelism. They serve God in the marketplace.

Anointed for business

He'd cried himself to sleep almost every night since he had become a Christian a few years earlier. Why? He said that he very strongly desired to be in the ministry, and had asked God to release him from his job as a computer programmer. But God had not. His job in computers was greatly blessed, and there were no opportunities for him in what he considered 'ministry' areas.

As he listened to my talk that afternoon in Argentina, God gently spoke to him about the fact that he was in the ministry – the ministry of business. 'Thank you so much,' he said, closing our conversation, 'because tonight, for the first time in years, I will go to sleep in peace knowing that God has allowed me to be in the ministry.' He'd travelled to Argentina looking for a touch from God – and found it in ways he hadn't expected.

In 1988 my wife and I had our lives dramatically impacted and changed forever in the nation of Argentina. The nation was – and still is – experiencing a time of revival. In that revival atmosphere our hearts were very open to God, and he filled us with a new love for him, a desire for greater intimacy with him. We developed a burning desire to see a nation-transforming move of God come to our city and nation as well.

When I began studying and praying about the ministry of business and professional people, I was doing it with a revival mindset. Still, I was quite surprised to see how so many of the revivals throughout the Bible were led by 'kings' (those who were not priests, but held positions of influence outside the community of faith).

Some of these, such as Nehemiah, had another profession. Nehemiah was a cupbearer to the king. He was used of the Lord to usher in a revival that's recorded in Nehemiah chapters 8-10.

Even though I'd been more than a casual observer of the revivals in the Bible, it had not caught my attention that, throughout history, many of these great moves of the Lord were led by men and women who were

Many of the great moves of the Lord were led by men and women who were not in the professional ministry





not in the professional ministry. Consider this partial list of Old Testament revivals:

- *Moses in Exodus chapters 32-33*
- *David in II Samuel chapter 6*
- *Jehoshaphat in II Chronicles chapter 20*
- *Hezekiah in II Chronicles chapters 29-31*
- *Josiah in II Chronicles chapters 34-35*
- *Nehemiah in Nehemiah chapters 8-10*

In light of this initial observation, the idea of 'ordaining' some of the kings in our local church was born out of a desire to honour the calling in the kings and to set them apart to fulfil their calling.

As I started to study about ordination, I was surprised again by what I discovered. What I found made me even more convinced that the Lord was revealing something very special about his plan for business and professional people.

My study on ordination took me to the Book of Acts, especially to chapter 6. It was in the context of that chapter that we developed a process for ordaining the business and professional people in our congregation.

VIOLENT PERSECUTION

The Church was growing rapidly in Jerusalem during those days. Before violent persecution broke out against the Christians, there were internal problems. Because Jews who accepted Jesus as Messiah were sometimes cut off from their families, the believers had to learn how to work together and, out of necessity, depended on each other for support.

When we read in Acts 2:44 that they 'had all things in common', this was not only a reality, but a reality born of deep need. The sharing of homes, food, and resources became a mark of the early church partly because there was no other way for them to survive.

As the Church continued to grow, it became necessary to organise the sharing. However, some were being overlooked, which created a situation that had all the hallmarks of racial discrimination. There were complaints. The problem needed to be solved.

Out on the streets, out in the marketplace, the power of God broke through

The apostles came up with a plan developed out of their own understanding that they should not leave their major calling. They were to continue to preach and pray, rather than spending precious time resolving the issue. So they determined to find a group of seven men who would be chosen for their integrity, faith, wisdom, and Spirit-filled life.

These men would take on the task of administering the food programme. I think it is safe to say that these men would be entrusted not only with the programme, but also with the administration of the money to operate

it. It is interesting to me that the wording in the Bible is that they chose these seven to 'appoint over this business'.

The words 'appoint' or 'ordain' and 'business' are connected in this text.

When they had found suitable men, they laid hands on them and appointed, or ordained them for the task. There is no reference to how the seven men resolved the problem, but there is also no further reference to the problem. That's what happens when businesspeople get involved – they're able to solve what appear to be insurmountable problems very simply. It is a part of their gifting.

Soon after the apostles laid their hands on them, a new wave of revival broke out. I want to make sure that you see what happened here.

One day the apostles called for a special meeting of the Church. Stephen, along with many others, responded and attended this meeting. The apostles informed the congregation of a problem – they needed some help with the food distribution programme.

Stephen was selected as one of those to assist in the project. They called him forward along with six others, and the apostles laid hands on them. As we follow the text, the next thing that happened was more growth in the Church. The number of disciples multiplied and even a number of priests were obedient.

Without reference to the passing of time, the text next indicates that Stephen was doing signs and wonders. I do not know how much later it was, but it was not long. The same day? Very likely. ►

I believe the day is coming when God will move with power in businesses, schools, shopping malls, and neighbourhoods

Anointed for business



Stephen had been a good church member, faithful and of good reputation. Suddenly, he was pushed to the front lines. Not only did the Church grow, but also Stephen experienced the manifestation of miracles through his ministry. Out on the streets, out in the marketplace, the power of God broke through.

Stephen was not appointed to do wonders and signs. He was appointed as an administrator of the food programme. The Bible never informs us of what even happened with the food ministry.

What went on? The reality is that as soon as the early church called forth the Spirit-filled business leader, things started to happen. I can't help but wonder what will happen in our churches today when we recognise the gifts and callings on these kings that God is raising up. When you release a businessman, a king, into his anointing, you can never tell what might happen.

In Argentina, a revival broke out when a businessman named Carlos Annacondia started preaching. Even though he has been preaching for more than a dozen years, Annacondia still derives his income from his business. That doesn't mean you must become a preacher. I am just pointing out what may happen when a businessperson is released to fulfil the call of God.

It was Wesley who said, 'The world is my parish'. He was being criticised for taking the gospel outside the Church, but he recognised the need to impact all sectors of society.

Today, men like Chuck Colson are illustrating the effectiveness of kingly ministry in prisons, and business leaders like

Paul Cain has stated on numerous occasions that he believes the coming revival will be led by a team of 'nameless, faceless leaders'



John Beckett are setting the pace in the marketplace. Beckett's book *Loving Monday* is helping business leaders to succeed in business without selling their souls.

He himself is very successful in business, and he has continued to operate in that setting without compromising his Christian principles. But he is also successful in ministry, for the marketplace provides great opportunities to impact communities and even nations for Christ. On a recent visit to Beckett's companies in Ohio, I observed that his faith and his work are integrated, and those who work for him know it.

In New York City in 1857, a revival broke out when a businessman named Jeremiah Lanphier started a noon-time prayer meeting. His church had appointed him as a 'city missionary', and not knowing what to do, he prayed a simple prayer: 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?'

The answer to that prayer led him to start a prayer meeting that would ultimately see one million souls brought to Jesus. Led by a businessman, it was a prayer revival that impacted cities across America, Canada, England, Scotland and Wales. It sounds like Stephen all over again.

Where did this man Stephen learn how to preach? And why did he preach? As soon as I mention that Stephen preached, there is an assumption by some that he left the business world and entered the ministry to become a preacher. But that is not the case with Stephen, and it need not be the case today.

SHOPPING MALLS

Acts 6:8 tells us that Stephen '*did great wonders and signs*'. Where did he do these wonders and signs? The answer is 'among the people'. This was a miraculous ministry that broke out on the streets – perhaps it might have occurred in the context of Stephen's work. The Bible does not tell us that, and I do not want to try to make it say something it does

not, but I believe the day is coming when God will move with power in businesses, schools, shopping malls, and neighbourhoods.

So why did Stephen preach? He probably didn't set out to preach. He was simply operating in the new anointing that came on him through the laying on of hands. Suddenly he was operating in the miraculous – wonders and signs. In the daily activities of his life, he began to see the power of God in new and awesome ways.

If God starts using you to perform the miraculous, there will be some opposition. When the opposition came for Stephen, he responded with such wisdom that it could not be resisted (see Acts 6:10). His preaching was simply a by-product of the power of God that came into his life.

As a result of performing the miraculous, the forces of religious tradition were immediately threatened and began to debate and dispute over what he had done. Yet they were not able to resist the intelligence, wisdom, and inspiration imparted to Stephen, a man of good and attested character.



When the religious spirit of 'the law' was powerless to resist the flow of the Holy Spirit through Stephen, the fallback position was to slander and otherwise incite others against this power. A battle ensued that threatened the institutional church of the day, and it was in response to the resultant outcry that Stephen preached.

His message was not one that was studied or outlined in advance. There was no time for that. Instead, out of the fullness of his heart, he proclaimed the truth. His message was basically, 'It is not surprising that God would work in my life in this way; he has always had a people'. Stephen goes on to preach what will be the longest message recorded in the Book of Acts, and by the time we reach the end of chapter seven, he has become the first martyr for the Christian faith.

As we move into chapter eight, Stephen is buried. Nevertheless, the gospel moves out of Jerusalem and into Samaria. As the Church is scattered, we notice that the apostles stay in Jerusalem. So it was the kings God raised up to lead the next wave of missionary movement.

One of the leaders is another of these Spirit-filled businessmen, Philip. Philip began in Samaria where he likewise experienced the manifestation of the miraculous in his ministry.

He is led by an angel to minister to another leader from the 'kingly' ranks, a man holding great authority under the queen of Ethiopia, and in charge of her treasury. Suddenly, the potential for widespread revival becomes a reality through only one day in the ministry' of one of God's most anointed businessman preachers ever.

How did it all start? Well, according to the scripture, Stephen was simply one of the multitude. Paul Cain has stated on numerous occasions that he believes that the coming revival will be led by a team of 'nameless, faceless leaders'. That is exactly what Stephen had been. He was an unknown. Even though we may say Stephen was an unknown, it is obvious that the Lord knew him and that he knew the Lord. It is also obvious that when given the opportunity to speak about one of their own, the Church knew him.

How many 'Stephens' are there in our churches today - just members of the church, just one of the crowd, just a businessperson?

I can imagine one of the new Christians in the Jerusalem church saying something like this to the apostles: 'You need help? Stephen is your man! He is full of the Holy Ghost, honest in every business practice; he is a man you can trust'.

How many 'Stephens' are there in our churches today - just members of the church, just one of the crowd, just a businessperson - that is, until we look closer? On closer examination, we find a group of wise and respected, Spirit-filled individuals just waiting for a release - a release that brings the understanding that you can minister under the anointing of the Holy Spirit in the marketplace.

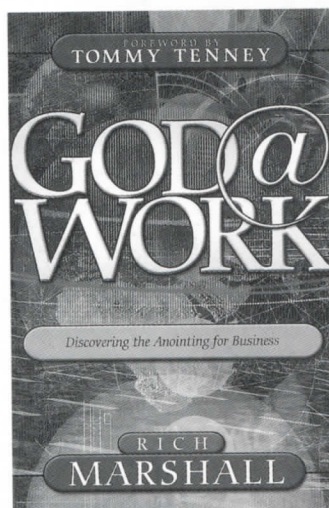
You need to begin to see your workplace as a place to honour and serve the Lord. Start by doing all of your tasks as 'unto the Lord':

● *'And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him' (Colossians 3:17)*

● *'Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God' (1 Corinthians 10:31b).*

There is an anointing for creativity, productivity, and prosperity. There is also a time and an anointing to proclaim the Word with boldness. Remain sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

There is an anointing for creativity, productivity, and prosperity



● **Rich Marshall has been a pastor for over 30 years. He and wife Wilma are founding pastors of Springs of Life Fellowship in Sunnyvale, California. The Marshalls founded ROI, an inspirational and equipping ministry to the business community. Rich ministers full time with ROI and conducts 'Anointed For Business' seminars. He is also a founding member of Nehemiah Partners, a group of business and ministry leaders committed to rebuilding the biblical walls of commerce. Rich and Wilma live in San Jose, California, and his article is taken, with permission, from his book God@Work, published by Destiny Image.**

landscape of love

Compassionate action is part of the 'new landscape' sweeping across this nation. Roger Allen explains how the power of mercy can change our world

Over the last 18 months, I have visited and chatted individually with over 80 Charismatic and Pentecostal church leaders. Most of them agree that, to use Jim Thwaites' expression, there is now a 'new landscape'. There is a much fuller understanding of the breadth of the gospel and of mission.

Largely as a result of the Jubilee 2000 movement, now called 'Drop the Debt', there is a renewed awareness that the gospel and mission includes taking action on issues of global injustice – such as international debt or unfair trade. God requires us to 'act justly' (Micah 6:8) and to 'loose the chains of injustice' (Isaiah 58:6). Verses like Amos 5: 23 and 24 show that part of being a non-religious Christian is to 'let justice roll on like a river...'

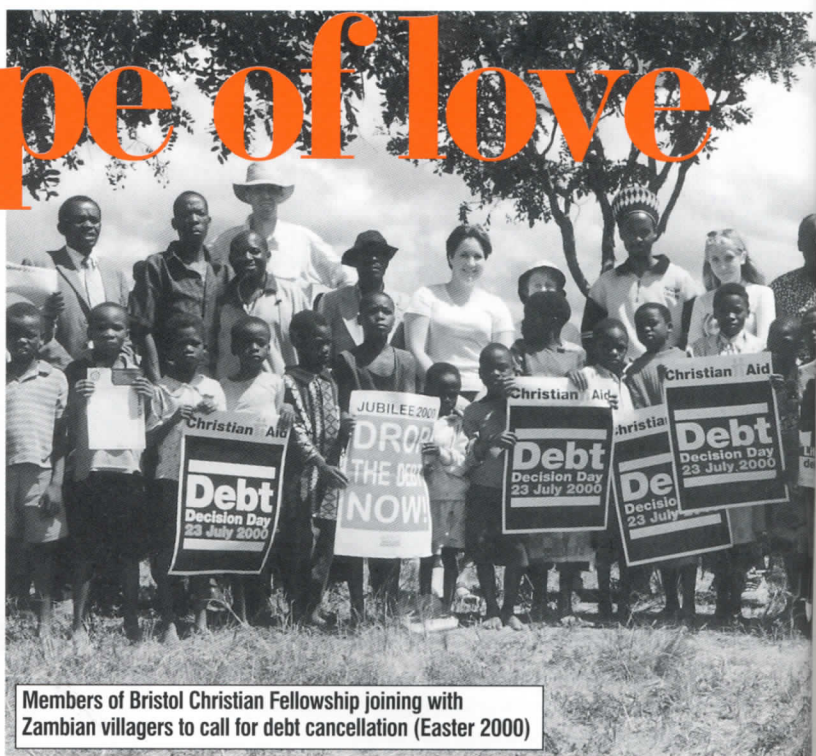
Part of our mission is to 'speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy' (Proverbs 31:8 and 9).

Our mission is to help release the 'poor' from all forms of oppression – economic as well as spiritual



Campaigners in central London

We were appalled by the inequality and injustice we saw



Members of Bristol Christian Fellowship joining with Zambian villagers to call for debt cancellation (Easter 2000)

Many New Church leaders now recognise the Jubilee terminology in Jesus' mission statement: 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour'.

As followers of Jesus, our mission is to help release the 'poor' from all forms of oppression – economic as well as spiritual.

ANTIOCH VISION

As one of the leaders of Bristol Christian Fellowship (BCF, part of Pioneer), I have been greatly impacted by the 'Antioch vision' God has given the church. The church at Antioch, described in the book of Acts, has been a model and inspiration to us. For example, many of our members have travelled in teams on overseas mission trips – and have returned with a greater awareness of global injustices and a more holistic understanding of the gospel.

My first trip was as part of BCF's Evangelism Team a dozen years ago. As white people, we needed special permission to stay for three weeks in a black township in apartheid-ridden South Africa. We were appalled by the inequality and injustice we saw. The changing room for a white Christian's swimming pool was bigger than the shanty shack lived

in, just five miles away, by a black Christian's family of seven.

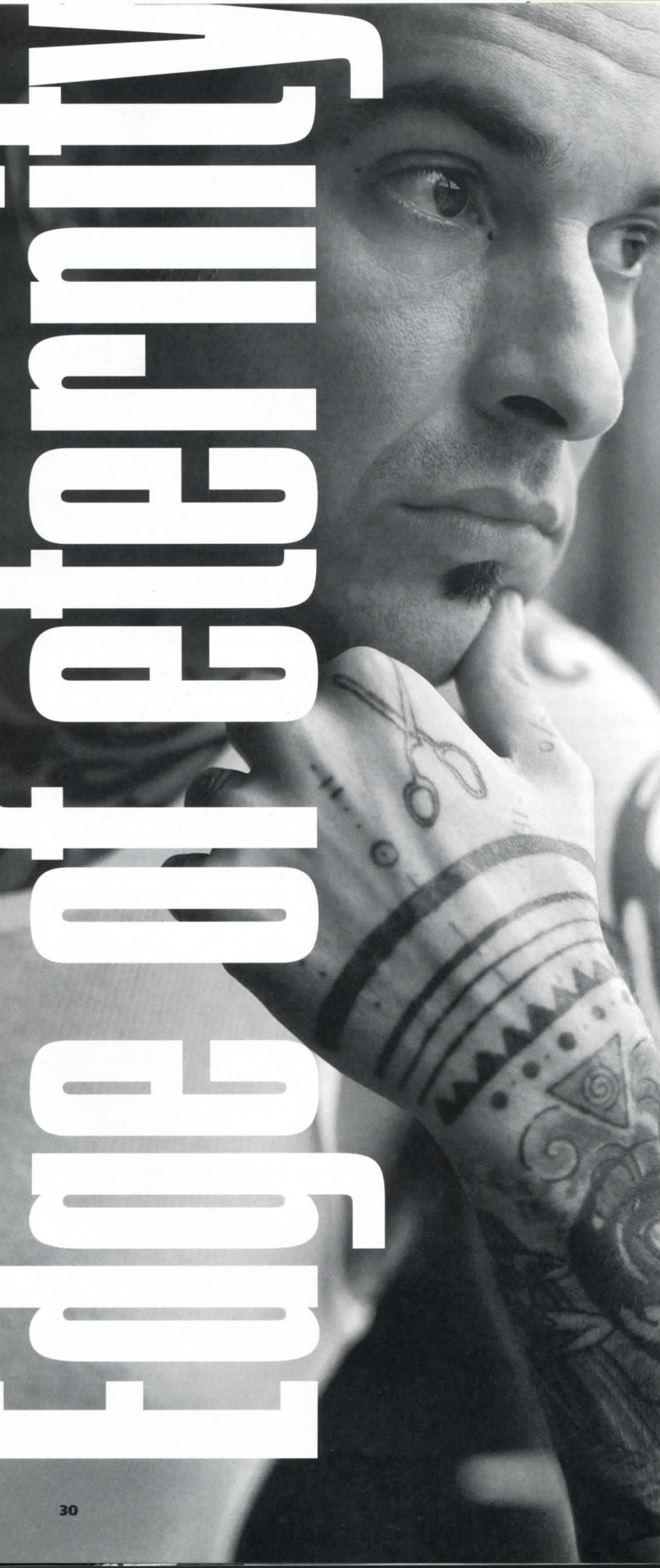
And yet, I did nothing to fight apartheid when I came home. I did not believe that any small action I took could help get rid of so large an injustice. I was wrong! Today, apartheid no longer exists. I have been back to the township after the end of apartheid and seen it transformed in many ways. I now know that God is bigger than the greatest injustice and believe that every little action we take does make a difference.

That first overseas mission trip gave me a heart for Africa and Africans. So, three years later, I went with my wife to teach in a Christian school in Zambia for six years. I also helped train leaders from several local churches and made some close friendships with Zambian Christians. One friend in particular – a church leader with a growing church-farm which is helping transform his community – opened my eyes to the world of absolute poverty in rural Zambian villages.

I found out that one in five Zambian children die by age five – largely as a result of the debt crisis. Zambia pays three times as much paying interest on a debt it has already repaid than it does on healthcare for all Zambians. As a result, there is hardly any money to spend on children's health.

Injustices like this can only be tackled by going to the root cause

Herbert is one of two million children in Uganda going to school free for the first time as a result of debt cancellation



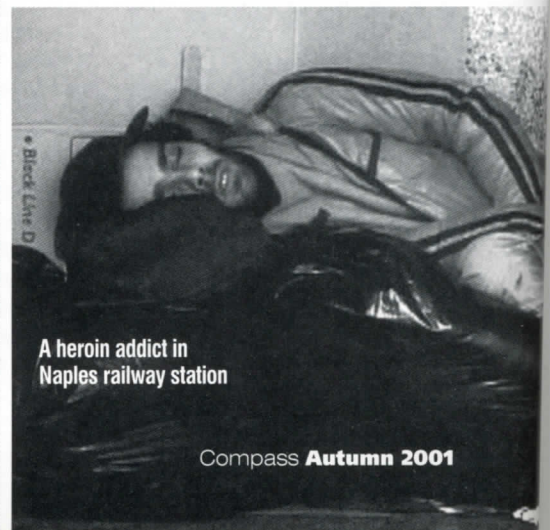
Spain's largest Protestant church is a 1,000-strong community of ex-drug addicts and former gangland members. Guy Chevreau left his familiar surroundings at Toronto to experience Betel for himself — and ended up writing a book about it. He shares the story behind the story...

Since 20 January 1994 the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (formerly the Toronto Airport Vineyard) has been hosting renewal meetings six nights a week. Gerald Coates, the leader of *Pioneer People*, was one of the guest speakers at the third anniversary services.

On the Saturday night, 17 January 1997, he began to prophesy in the course of his sermon. I was seated in the second row.

'Guy, I saw your next book: *Fire in the Church*. *Fire in the Church*, *fire in the Church*. You are going to write things that you've never seen before but they're in your heart and they are in your mind. It's a new sort of church, Guy...

This book is going to go around the world. Different models of church. Models for deaf people, models for elderly people, models for sick people, models for black, models for brown, models for multi-ethnic communities, models for the rich, models for the poor, models of music, models of theology...



A heroin addict in Naples railway station



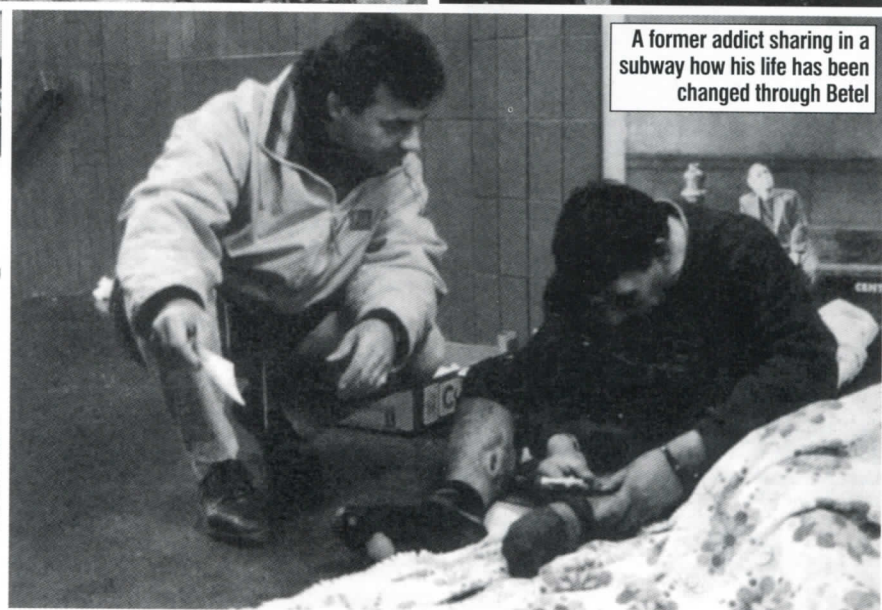
Shooting up in Casal Ventoso, Lisbon



An addict in a heroin-induced stupor in Vertedero, Madrid



The men's house in Madrid



A former addict sharing in a subway how his life has been changed through Betel

'People are going to read this book and they are going to feel they've come home. They've come to this great lake where they can drink.

'Fire in the Church – what God is doing with this thing – this fire that has taken a hold of us. Some of us can't go to bed at night because of this fire. We wake up early in the morning because of this fire; we feel so shallow and limited and fraudulent, but we long for what only God can do. The revival fire of God...

'Revival is on the heart of God. It's not for us, church. It's for the millions dying of AIDS, and the broken-hearted mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters of criminals in prison. Of blacks, browns and yellows ostracised for the pigmentation of their skin. It's for the millions of broken lives and families...

'Fire in the church, fire in the church, fire in the church...

'This lot may look informal and undisciplined, but they are going to be the most disciplined army that the world has ever seen. Not with legalism but with love. Not with rules but with grace. Not with fear but

with kindness. That's the sort of discipline that God is looking for...'

Several months later, I was invited to preach at Betel, a Madrid-based caring Christian community that is seeing thousands of broken lives mended through

The radiant glory of God on their scarred faces was unlike anything I'd ever seen

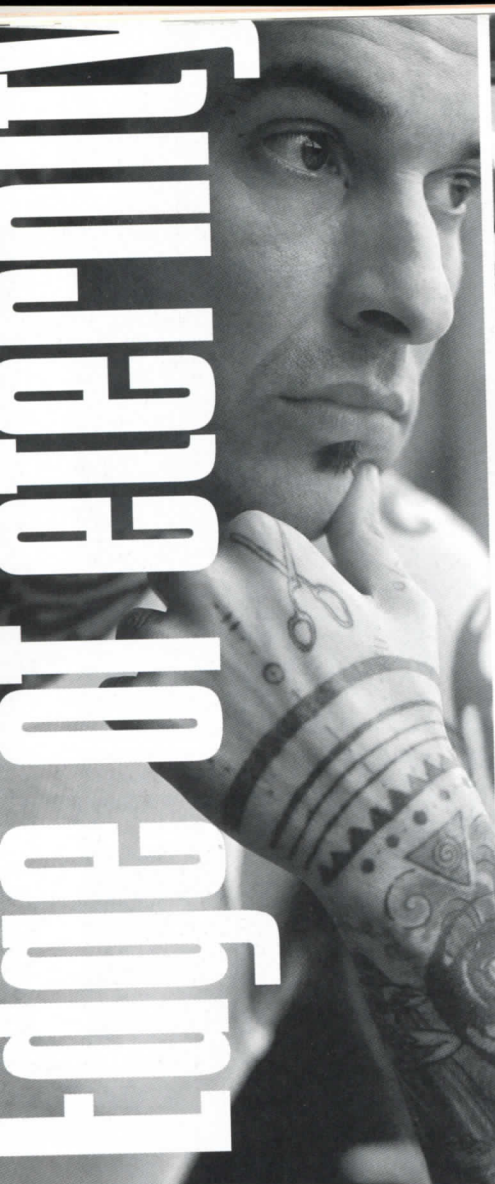
the power of love. The International Director Elliott Tepper had heard of my involvement with the renewal at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship and had read my first book, *Catch The Fire: The Toronto Blessing*.

He asked if I would come to speak at the cumbre – their regular leadership summit – from 7-10 November 1997. Though the invitation unsettled me a little, I had a very clear sense that the Lord wanted me to accept the request.

As I prepared for the conference, I spent considerable time praying, and asked over and over, 'What do you want me to say to recovered drug addicts?' I didn't feel that I received a great deal of revelation, but there was a growing sense

that I wasn't just responding to Elliott's invitation. Rather, I felt that the Lord was sending me to Madrid and to this church called Betel.

Mid-Atlantic, I was staring out of the aeroplane window, praying. A verse of scripture echoed in the recesses of my jet-lagged brain: *'Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to possess the Kingdom he has promised to those who love him?'* ►



After a bit of a concordance search, I found the reference, James 2:5. As I meditated on the text, I had a clear sense of the Spirit saying, 'I am sending you to Betel, not so much for you to teach them, but for them to teach you'.

The second night of the cumbre, I met with some of Betel's leadership in an upstairs office. We prayed together until the congregation began worshipping. As we left the office to join them, I paused on the open balcony and looked down over the 750 passionate worshippers who had gathered. Tears filled my eyes and streamed down my face.

Here were such broken lives, redeemed by the grace of God. The radiant glory of God on their scarred faces was unlike anything I'd ever seen. The sense of their commitment and abandon to God and his Kingdom was almost tangible.

DOCTORS ASTOUNDED

Through the tears, I said out loud, 'They do not belong to this world. They're living on the edge of eternity'. It felt that this Betel fellowship drew me closer to that edge than I'd ever been before. I wasn't just having a 'warm, fuzzy charismatic moment alone with God'.

A month later, Elliott sent me an e-mail report on the cumbre:

'Over 50 unsaved gave their lives to Jesus. We know these men and women, and we are not counting the many commitments in this number.

'Nikki, an aggressively militant, angry Muslim, and a heroin addict, has been in Betel for five months. He had been extremely antagonistic to the gospel, but is one of those who gave their lives to Jesus. He is now a gentle man, and is showing remarkable kindnesses to others. His doctors are also astounded – they expected him to be dead by now. They can find no trace of his terminal TB or AIDS.

'Loli and Miguel, our pastors in Galicia, told us that Loli's unsaved brother from Madrid stopped by the church to see them.

He has had no interest in the gospel and was not seeking God. But during the meeting he was overcome, weeping and trembling in the presence of God. He was one of the last to leave the meeting.

'The Almeria leader, Fernando, says that most of the hardest, resistant men have been converted. He himself left the Sunday meeting and sat weeping in the van for a long time. When he tried to explain what was happening he said, "I felt God hugging me". Fernando never knew his father.

'In the Mostoles house, a new addict just off the street was converted. His comment: "This high is better than drugs!"

'The Mejorada house leader said of his detoxing addicts: "Every single one of them has given his life to Christ and our house has been transformed! One cried with joy for four days".

'The men from Mariblanca returned to their farm after the Sunday night meeting. Some were staggering as if drunk. A number went walking around saying over and over again, "Here am I Lord, send me". They are functionally illiterate and only newly disciplined.

'A young Italian recently confessed his life's secret. He had been involved in a drug murder, and lived as he put it, "a hell of guilt". Sunday, watching everyone else drawing near God and finding God, he cried out. His testimony: "The Spirit of love cleansed me and now I know God loves me". The church is astounded by his

Again and again, ex-addicts explain why they're off the streets: 'Love's grip was stronger than heroin's'

Relaxing with a game of ping pong in Betel, Naples



The senior pastors and spouses of Betel, Madrid, many of whom are HIV-positive or have had sclerosis of the liver



More than any other church I've been associated with, they understand that the Church is a supernatural enterprise



Betel cumbre worship, 26 February 2000, Madrid

brokenness and humility. His honesty has impacted the whole house community.

'Eduardo testified that during the first few days of the conference, he was like the prodigal's elder brother (Luke 15:11-32, especially verses 25-9), and refused to attend the feast. He was jealous of everyone else's joy. He confessed that he was eaten up with bitterness for life's injustices.

'On Saturday after the leaders' meeting, he began to laugh at everything and could not stop. The knot of bitterness disappeared from his heart and he feels like a new man. His house leader commented: "His sour expression is gone and even the fixed lines in his face have changed".

'Our Betel lawyer could not sleep for the joy and peace of God. His home has been revolutionised. Our mid-day intercession hour after lunch has doubled, and many of the new converts are attending.'

Elliott concluded the e-mail, 'It has been that kind of week – grace and love from heaven, more than we dreamed possible'.

SACRED SOURCE

Five months later, April 1998, I was with Mike Bickle of the Kansas City Fellowship. We were speaking at a conference in Melbourne, Florida. Over an extended meal together, I told him about my aeroplane reflections on James 2:5, and my experiences at Betel.

Mike has a huge heart for the poor, and a greater passion to know more of the glory of God than anyone I know. At the end of the afternoon, Mike looked at me and said, 'It sure seems that the Lord is calling you to know so much more of his splendour, his beauty, and his glory'. Mike affectionately called it 'Project Glory'.

Two years have passed. I have been privileged to be with the Betel Association of Churches five further times, and I have been studying, meditating, praying, and reading around the theme of 'glory'.

I have devoted my adult life to studying the work of the Spirit in the Church of Jesus Christ. It has been a wonderful opportunity and privilege to have preached in over 150 different churches. So far, Betel has no equals.

More than any other church I've been associated with, they understand that the Church is a supernatural enterprise. Ministry cannot be reduced to a programme or a structure, but must continuously attend to the call, direction and intervention of the Spirit.

Betel understands that the Church does not have a mission. Rather, the Mission has a church. Betel's raison d'être is clearly defined and lived. They exist to reach substance-dependent and marginalised people with the love of Jesus Christ. Their worship comes from a deep, sacred source that is rooted in a gratitude greater than any I've ever experienced – personally or corporately.

Betel's peer care is also most remarkable – again and again, ex-addicts explain why they're off the streets: 'Love's grip was stronger than heroin's'. More than any church I know of, Betel disciples new believers more quickly, and more thoroughly. The same can be said of their leadership development, and their ability to plant new churches.

Betel's exercise of faith and prayer is extraordinary, as is the ongoing sanctification of the believers. Their mystical understanding of ministry is also most uncommon – there is a strong sense that what counts is not what they do for Jesus, but rather, the life that he lives in them. Lastly, the power of grace, mercy and forgiveness is truly life-changing in Betel.

To reduce Betel to 'Ten



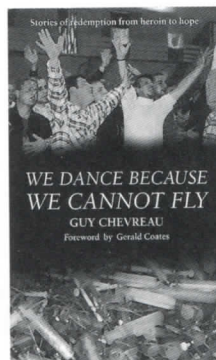
A new life in Lisbon – looking forward to lunch at Betel

The power of grace, mercy and forgiveness is truly life-changing

transferable principles', or 'five keys', however, is to miss that which sets Betel apart. What makes Betel so dynamic is relationship – not reproducible structure.

These brothers and sisters had captured my heart. Theirs is the most redemptive and transformative community of faith I know of.

To be with them is like stepping into the book of Acts – only in colour.



● Dr Guy Chevreau is an internationally known author and speaker. His article is taken, with permission, from his book *We Dance Because We Cannot Fly*, published by HarperCollins.

A sex change operation? A job with Colombian drug barons? Don't worry — Jeff is just off to Tenerife...

The power of reputation

Oh my goodness, you're not, are you?' I sighed as yet another friend's eyebrows shot into vertical take-off, their mouth agape in horror. What was the reason for their stunned reaction?

Had I announced a transsexual trip into women's ministry as a sister called Mandy? Had I just revealed that I have used my life of Christian leadership as a cover for my real employment as a member of a Colombian drug cartel?

No. The shocked response was ignited because I revealed that Kay and I were planning to take a holiday in Tenerife. Based on the comments that I have heard over the last few weeks, our air flight and brief sojourn on Tenerife would surely be a nightmare.

CATTLE PROD

I anticipated boarding a winged cow shed supervised by flight attendants who would help passengers into their seats with the assistance of a high voltage cattle prod.

In fact, when we boarded the plane this morning, it was to a smiling welcome with classical music playing in the background. I was expecting them to pump 'ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go,' at high volume through the PA system.

It's true that the seats are a little snug. Actually, they were designed to haul teams of limbo-dancing leprechauns around the world. And the Addams family is seated behind me.

A junior Addams (whose first name is surely Damien) keeps pulling the seat back and then allowing it to cannon forward into the back of my head. I am now suffering from whiplash, and Damien is about to become an infant skydiver.

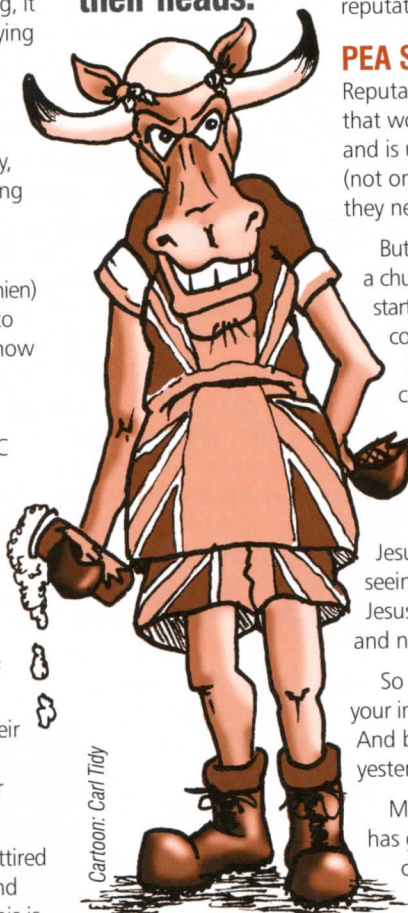
But this JMC flight is really quite pleasant (JMC apparently doesn't stand for Just Might Crash), and the food is far superior to the transatlantic swill I've been served lately. The reputation of charter flights is undeserved.

BEER BELLIES

As for Tenerife itself, I have been led to believe that I will surely bump into rampaging hordes of lager-assisted gentlemen, all bedecked in union jack shorts, grubby, knotted handkerchiefs on their heads. They will all surely be sporting lobster-coloured beer bellies seven times the size of their heads. All females will wear 'Kiss me quick' hats.

Again, this is not so. I have spotted one lady attired in a t-shirt that advises us that 'Some girls do, and some girls don't, and I just might'; admittedly, this is not likely to be a quote from the book of Proverbs, and was almost certainly not purchased from a Christian bookshop, but it's the only naff uniform currently in sight. And Tenerife has its beauty spots as well as the fish-and-chip promenades.

I have been led to believe that I will surely bump into rampaging hordes of lager-assisted gentlemen, all bedecked in union jack shorts, grubby, knotted handkerchiefs on their heads.



I have met a few chaps wandering around with gold hoops the size of juggling rings inserted in their voluminous abdomens, but they really are a minority.

The truth is that Tenerife (and budget airlines) tend to suffer because of image and reputation. And often, the reality doesn't correspond to the reputation at all. But locations, businesses and individuals suffer because they have at some time been tarred with the brush of generalisation.

This often happens in the Church, where we of all people should believe in the possibility that a person can grow and change — quite simply because of God. But instead, we can box people up in a coffin of stereotype, chaining them to their history, dooming them to be victims of negative reputation.

A positive reputation also carries its own dangers. I have come to believe that one of the worst things a church can gain is profile and attention — and the reputation that comes as a result.

PEA SOUP

Reputation is usually based on history (so by the time that word gets out, everything may have changed) and is usually fuelled by rumour and exaggeration (not only are some reputations wide of the truth — they never were accurate).

But the true power of reputation is its ability to take a church into the pea soup fog of self-deception. We start to believe our own press releases. Prophets come among us, and sniff a sense of what used to be, and tell us that we are wonderful. Thus we continue to believe the fairy tale. Surely, if everyone else thinks we're doing so well — God included — then we cannot fail?

The church at Laodicea had a reputation — and with a few well-chosen, acerbic words, Jesus drove a truck right through it. 'Rich, all seeing, having need of nothing' was the spin. Jesus had another view. They were poor, blind, and naked.

So let's beware the power of reputation. Whatever your image, ask the God of 20/20 vision for his verdict. And be careful about writing people off because of yesterday's mistakes.

Meanwhile, Damien, the demonised toddler who has gifted me with whiplash, might really be a nice child at heart. And he might be in need of a parachute...

● **Jeff Lucas is a well-travelled regular writer for Compass magazine. An author and speaker, he is a member of the Spring Harvest leadership team and Vice President of the Evangelical Alliance. He is also part of the leadership team of the 7,000-strong Timberline Church in Fort Collins, Colorado. He and wife Kay live in Chichester and Fort Collins.**

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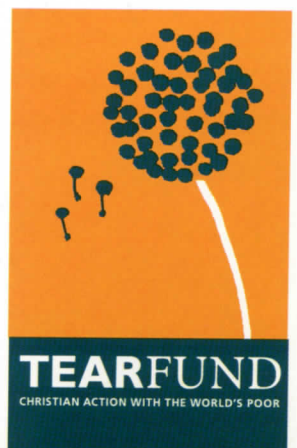
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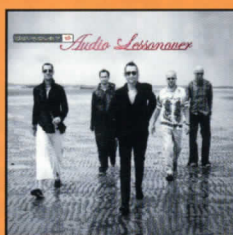
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