

Compass

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF NON-RELIGIOUS CHRISTIANITY

£1.95

VOL.3 NO.1



**WILL THE LOST
BE SAVED?**

**HOUSE GROUPS
ARE OUT!
NOW WHAT?**

**IS YOUR CHURCH
HISTORY?**

**GERALD COATES
& CLIFFORD HILL**

COMPASS — POINTING THE WAY TO REVIVAL



Editorial

The safest road to hell is the gradual one, said CS Lewis – 'without milestones, without sign posts'. A solemn warning. So will the lost be saved? Or will those who've never heard or understood the Gospel be found in heaven?

If the answer is an evangelical and therefore quite understandable 'No', what implications are there for you and me? Do we actually see neighbours, student friends, work colleagues and relatives as lost and destined for judgement and hell?

Of course, nothing we subjectively believe, will make the slightest difference to the reality. Whatever God's intentions are for the lost (whether they've heard the Gospel or not), our desires and opinions, sentimental bias or theological weaknesses are completely irrelevant.

With talk of revival in the air, this issue is going to affect our evangelisation and our preaching. A young leader confided in me recently, 'Having studied revival, we're seeing all the manifestations and reactions to the Spirit's presence, just as happened in previous revivals in North America and the British Isles. The only thing we're finding difficult is to go out and preach the Gospel to the lost'.

Is that because we live in a highly privatised and secularised culture? Or is it because we're not yet convinced that people are lost and need a saviour?

Billy Graham reminds us that hell, in fact, was never prepared for man. 'God never meant that men would ever go to hell. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. But man rebelled against God and followed the devil.'

Are we ready to offer people an alternative destiny?

Pioneer Team Leader and Director of Pioneer Trust

PIONEER

Ground LEVEL
MINISTRY TEAM



COVER FROM A PHOTOGRAPH
BY HANNAH JOHNSTON

PUBLISHING DETAILS:

Compass is published by Pioneer Direct Ltd on behalf of the Pioneer team and network of churches and in association with Ground Level. Pioneer and Ground Level are dedicated to promoting dynamic and effective Christianity, and are members of the Evangelical Alliance.

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Compass is published quarterly
(March, June, September,
December), and is available on
annual subscription. £8.00 UK,
£10.00 overseas (inc. p&p)
Bulk and trade prices on request.

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ALIEN CULTU

If we're to reach today's fractured and fragmented society, says Erica Youngman, we must make sure church communicates with the other beings on planet earth...

WHO WAS TALKIN' 'bout your generation? Was it Glen Miller, Pete Townsend or the Prodigy?

Do you recall the Depression or World War II – the unity in hardship and triumph of victory? Did you grow up with 60s student activism, Vietnam and the sexual revolution? Or does the AIDS scare and family breakdown talk more about your sub-culture?

Each generation faces different challenges and is asking different questions. But most have little contact with the Church. So how can the message of Christ become real to them?

Swing

The swing generation is nearing retirement. They may have good health, much energy and a wealth of experience to offer. They may have lived with long term unemployment and face poverty in the years ahead. They may be in residential care.

They're likely to have in common some knowledge of the gospel through church attendance. Yet while respecting the Judeo-Christian ethic, they've probably lost touch with its source.

Somehow church hasn't seemed relevant or necessary. They respect that institution on the street corner – rather than a life-changing God.

Alf became a Christian in his 80s. He'd always believed, but now it was time to do business with God. That was made

easier when a boxer and a footballer of his generation came to share their faith at his wife's church. They were people he could identify with.

Brenda leads Alpha courses for the elderly. Committed friendship earned her team the right to speak. Although many of her new friends were churchgoers, they didn't know Christ could be so personal and able to meet their needs. It's important to find ways to reactivate a knowledge of the gospel, and then to bring home the reality of friendship with God – as opposed to conventional belief. Friendship and appropriate role models help open those doors.

Rock

The rock 'n' roll generation faces a challenging mid-life. Many are in two-career households juggling mortgage, children's needs, and incredible time pressure. Many have been divorced, are now single parents, or entering a new relationship.

They're the generation that deserted tradition in droves in search of personal fulfilment and freedom. Non-traditional spirituality has attracted many, both into New Age mysticism – and at times into charismatic Christianity. Wherever the answer is, it's not likely to be within church walls.

Bill connected with Christianity – to his great surprise as a 'card carrying' atheist – when he found himself praying as he faced a second marriage breakdown. His

wife returned, but wanted to go to church. He decided it was best to go along to keep an eye on things. They found a session on relationships so relevant to their situation, they accepted Christ and were baptised the next week.

Peter and Mary have lived on a wealthy private estate for six years. They found the residents' association was a great help in making contact and went on to give themselves in friendship. Gradually the doorways to tangled lives have opened.

Over the years a number have attended Alpha courses or business forums, and a handful have become Christians. A remaining challenge is to build strong fellowship within their culture and lifestyles.

Whether well-off or struggling to make ends meet, the rock 'n' roll generation needs to see the gospel 'works' amid their life challenges. That's most likely to happen when they have close contact with Christians who are making it work.

Special interest groups around business, relationships or parenting can help. But these people don't like time-wasters. Nor do they have the patience with authority or tradition to help them stick with poor presentation just because it's from the front.

Rave

A recent MTV survey reports that 58 per cent of British young people say

RES

religion has no relevance to their lives, though 46 per cent believe in 'God' – whatever that may be. Only four per cent have any church contact. Nearly half are growing up in non-traditional households. Social commentators have labelled them Generation X – for whom relationships don't last and people don't communicate.

They often feel 'sold out' by their elders. Authority is distrusted or spurned. There are feelings of emptiness, loneliness and a search for meaning, but no single right way to live.

Often, with both parents working or in single parent households, they've carried domestic responsibility young and spent much time alone with TVs and computers. There's a great hunger for community and a sense of belonging – yet a difficulty connecting with others. Some trace the appeal of rave culture to this.

Rick said his friends at college became interested in Christianity once they encountered the quality of relationships the Christians had. Sally became a believer through long contact with Christian friends who cared about her.

Laura has found it's important to be a good friend at school and not to come on too strong. Eventually, her friends have asked her questions.

Karen is working with high school students. She's found the key has been to build trust through hanging in there and showing love and acceptance.

Young people need contact with those they can identify with and enjoy. It's important for them to see that

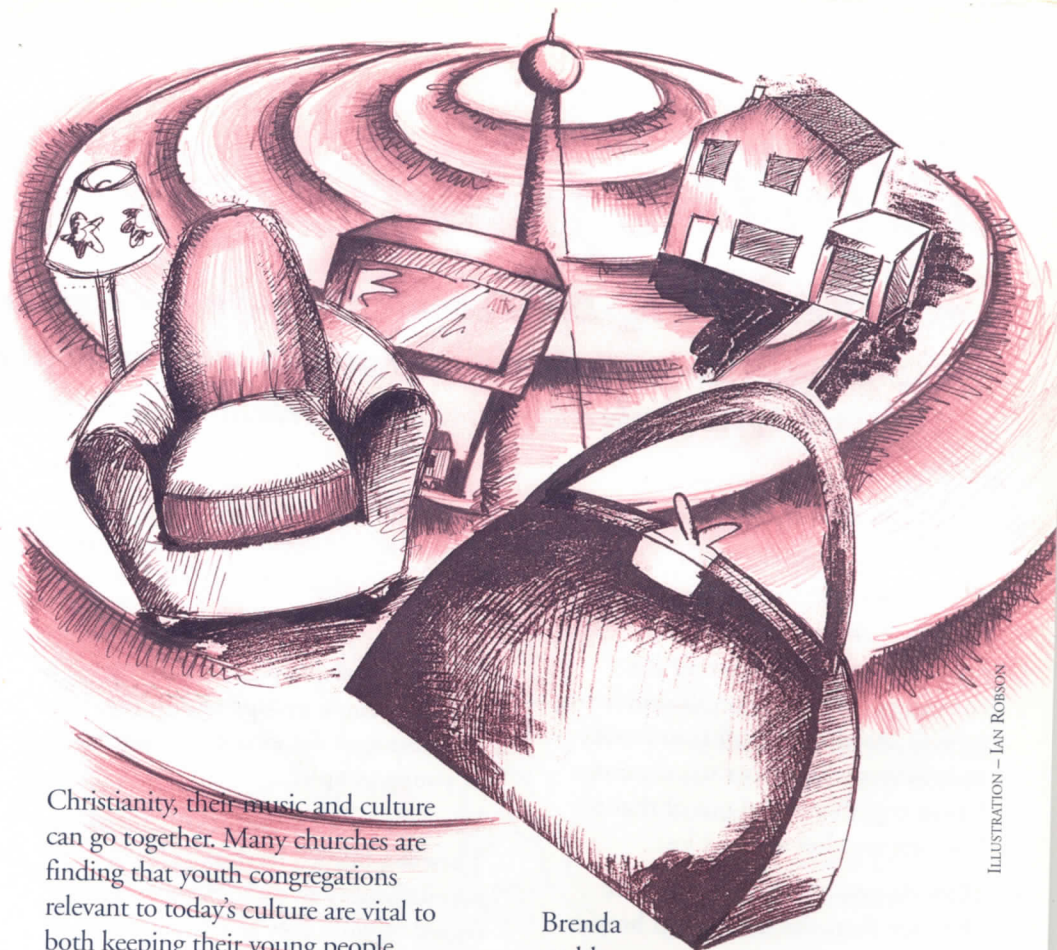


ILLUSTRATION – IAN ROBINSON

Christianity, their music and culture can go together. Many churches are finding that youth congregations relevant to today's culture are vital to both keeping their young people interested – and providing a relevant connection with their friends.

But Sally warns as well as using the media they're used to, it's important for the people and the message to be genuine. The rave generation senses hype a mile off.

Friends


Most people today haven't had any experience of the Gospel which even faintly signals its relevance to their lives. They lack contact with people who'd be attractive Christian role models.

Our case studies point to the importance of friendship. Where such friendships aren't growing naturally, Christians need to seek them out – and give themselves and their time in a way relevant to the culture.

A student church in the Midlands deliberately attends disco night at the Union each week. In another student town, the young people of the church make sure they build friendships in the local pub scene.

Brenda and her friends held social events for the elderly in their area long before the Alpha courses started. Peter and Mary have given time to their neighbours. Karen and her team in the high school have seen fruit as they've proved their commitment by sticking with it – even amid little response.

They've been discovering how important it is to have people that particular generation finds attractive, who are real, and are willing to build friendship. The new believers then need to be helped to live out their new life among their friends and in their culture.

If instead they're drawn away into an alien church culture, that vital friendship connection will wither. 

Erica Youngman has worked with March for Jesus in planning and resource development since 1988 and is now International Co-ordinator and Team Leader. She's played a key role in developing the Generations Together challenge, at the heart of the 1997 marches. Erica lives in Leatherhead and is part of Pioneer People.

House groups are out...

...cell church is in. This dynamic movement has provoked much interest among Christians across the denominational spectrum. But what is it all about?

Eleanor Spence asked Portsmouth Revelation leader Adam Ashworth to explain

Could you start by telling me what is a cell?

A cell is the building block of the church. As in the human body, healthy church cells have all the constituents to produce life and hence growth. A cell is a small community of believers who gather to encounter Christ together – and out of that to love one another and the lost.

How do you think cells are more effective than the traditional house group system?

Cells differ from house groups in a number of ways. It's not about administratively dividing the church into small groups, but rather building around the dynamic of 'Christ in our midst'.

Leaders serve to facilitate the cell. They're there not primarily to lead Bible studies but to lead the group into ministering to one another and to the lost

The vision for cells is that they have a reproducing dynamic. So growth comes by multiplication. Cells have a clear framework which is easily reproduced but also ensures that the activities of the cell are in keeping with the vision – ie loving God, loving one another and loving the lost. Leaders serve to facilitate the cell. They're there not primarily to lead Bible studies but to

lead the group into ministering to one another and to the lost. They oversee the pastoral aspect of the cell, but don't do it all themselves

How will cells help reach different specific people groups within the community – for example, students or young people?

The cells have an evangelistic focus. They can bring a level of accountability to each member with regard to what they're actually doing to reach out to those outside of the church. Most people become Christians through friendships, and more importantly stay in the church if there are strong relationships. If the cell builds a positive experience of community, it can make it easier for unbelievers to be added into the community – and the discipleship occurs in that context. As someone who has a strong evangelistic gift in my own cell recently said, having had a positive experience of cell life, 'I'd bring any of my friends to this group'. What was encouraging was that she did. Where there is real life, growth will come.

Cells can meet at flexible times. That means a student cell or a youth cell can meet at times convenient to them and the culture they're trying to reach.

What is your vision for cells?

We're all praying for revival. I believe it's going to come. But clearly the lesson from Scripture and church history is that the new wine needs

new wine skin. We recognise that the structure we've had has worked well up until now, but it's not going to take us forward. The wine skin that will facilitate a growth dynamic needs both the large

corporate gatherings as well as healthy living cells which can be easily reproduced and therefore cope with an influx of new believers.

My vision of cells is to hit a growth dynamic of multiplication. In the cells people will be trained at every level. So when the cell reaches

an appropriate number the cell will divide and multiply. I think it's a wonderful wineskin for revival which puts a structure in place that's not only able to hold people, but is also able to effectively reproduce.

We're all praying for revival. I believe it's going to come. But clearly the lesson from Scripture and church history is that the new wine needs new wine skin

Having already completed a degree in Modern Languages and a long term TIE Team at Revelation Church in Chichester, Eleanor is currently undertaking a PGCE course.



Secret society

Are you turning people on to Jesus - or just switching them off? Paul Dakin urges us to let the world into church, even if it means spoiling our sacred order...

IT'S MEANT TO BE THE ONLY club that exists for the benefit of non-members.

But when outsiders come to church, do they feel like welcome friends, or unwanted aliens? Is church a vehicle of outreach - or a roadblock to evangelism?

The truth is, many non-Christians believe the Church is largely irrelevant.

And that includes new churches - not just the historic denominations. If we stand back and look at ourselves, we find that the structure of most of our congregations is designed to fulfil our needs, aspirations and comfort.

Teaching, nurturing, and discipling are essential. But should pastoral care be the be-all and end-all?



Perhaps we find outreach threatening. Priorities change. An influx of new people may be unsettling. Pastors, usually the decision-makers, find their gifts challenged and their people restless unless the status quo is maintained.

There are meetings to attend. And often the best equipped are focused on internal pastoral problems. Yet by concentrating on internal relationships, we may lose friendships with non-Christians - along with our focus on the world.

Every church develops its own culture. Some outsiders will feel comfortable with it, others won't. That's inevitable.


It simply isn't possible for our meetings to be 'all things to all men'.

The problem is, whether our local church culture can be truly accessible.

Do people have to adapt their language, customs and dress before they feel at ease - let alone listen to the message?

We expect people to share our values, and come onto our territory. Much of what goes on in our meetings makes so many assumptions of shared knowledge and experience, even other Christians feel like outsiders!

What passes for 'radical' and 'creative' just isn't understood by many who aren't already familiar with our ideas. Many Christians would rather hang onto meetings that please them and fulfil their own needs, than curtail worship, give explanations, or compromise for the sake of outsiders.

The question is, would we limit the quantity of the new wine rather than risk tearing the familiar wine skin? For our structures may not be helping the Holy Spirit. He doesn't come to safeguard a secret society. He urges us to meet the lost. 

Paul Dakin is Managing Editor of Compass. He works in cross-cultural mission as well as being a part-time GP. He is the author of 'Crossing Cultures' and has recently established 'Acts 13' to facilitate cross-cultural mission. Paul is on the leadership of Unity Church in North London.

Tear down those walls!

How to change your church from obstacle to opportunity

- pray for a passion for people
- see the needs of outsiders as greater than your own
- identify the groups God is calling you to reach
- encourage people to spend more time outside church circles
- make genuine friendships with non-believers
- go where people are
- make meetings flexible and accessible
- get evangelists into decision-making
- practise 'body ministry'
- transform pastoral house groups into community cells
- release evangelists full-time before pastors

From maintenance

Should church be for the comfort of the saints - at the expense of the lost?

Pete Gilbert explains

AS THE NHS LIMPS towards the millennium, the need to prioritise resources looms ever larger. The Church faces a similar challenge.

Amid a lost world, non-urgent operations deserve delay or cancellation. Our emphasis must be firmly off maintenance and on to mission. Maintenance deals with the cosmetic; mission with life-or-death situations. Many internal church adjustments are for the comfort of the saints – at the expense of the lost.

We like to maintain the status quo. Only the Spirit of Jesus frees us from inertia and mere existence and provokes us into fullness of life – towards our destiny and mission. The recent outpouring of this same Spirit raises crucial questions:

- what is the nature of Church;
- what is the nature of mission;
- how can mission incorporate relational and non-confrontational social action, servanthood evangelism and friendship networking? Could it be the privilege of the whole church – and its *raison d'être*?

Historically, evangelists have been pushed to the edge of church life. Activists engaged in a vision for

community, they've been relegated over the centuries to monasteries, mission fields and parachurch organisations – because the Church has focused on maintenance.

The last 30 years have seen a fundamental change. Evangelists have been increasingly welcomed back. Mission has come to the fore of many of our agendas. It's as fundamental a change for church and mission as was the Reformation of the 17th century.

Yet many churches become victims of their own success. We started by seeking the kingdom (mission) – but we can end up doing Jesus' job which is building the church (maintenance).

Our focus can get locked through past successful projects onto internal meetings about meetings – teams to run wider teams; money to resource administration and plant – before releasing saved people to reach lost people.

Biblical accountability can become a misnomer for maintaining spiritual immaturity and relationship with Jesus can become second-hand, vision can become someone else's and we disappear into our own spiritual navels!

Our ever present temptation is to become church builders not kingdom seekers; maintainers instead of missionaries. So how can we move from maintenance to mission?



Without a sense of calling, purpose and direction, the church will drift aimlessly (Proverbs 29:18). Such vision comes by revelation from God to people, and must be at the heart of the church's team leadership, then known and owned corporately, even if birthed individually. Vision finds its best roots in the compost of team! Church is built on the foundations of apostles and prophets. But apostolic team must also include the evangelist to avoid internal-only focus (eg on issues of teaching, morality, relationships, doctrine, etc.).

What has God said for your church and the lost? Does your church know and own that? When did the evangelist last sit with your elders and ask the awkward questions about meetings, money, growth, strategy? How often does she have such access?

to mission



A thorough look at the 'why' of mission must precede the 'who' and the 'how'. A hard look at why we do the things we do, and how we do them, is as vital as why we don't do the things we should. A church moving from maintenance to mission would do well to pause here until, through repeated communication, preaching and prayer, compassion engenders frustration with the status quo.

People move on when they catch God's heart, get constructively fed up with the present and excited about the possibilities of the future. Have you preached and prayed that as a church?

TEACHING

this roots our subjective response to mission into the realistic objectivity of scripture

Teaching helps us understand what we believe and why we believe it. That's vital. According to James 2, what we really believe is what we do. I've known churches opt out of preaching on evangelism because they've heard it all before.



But if we're not doing it, I question whether we've ever really heard it at all. Certainly we haven't believed it.

The Jewish idea that what you believe is what you do challenges our need for understanding (Hosea 4:6). The reverse – what you do is what you really believe – challenges our lifestyle, which is our spiritual act of worship (Romans 12:1-2)

TRAINING

this is the next step in practical application

Mere information will produce frustration. We need the 'how to's' applied by practitioners. Many such practitioners should be found in the workplace.

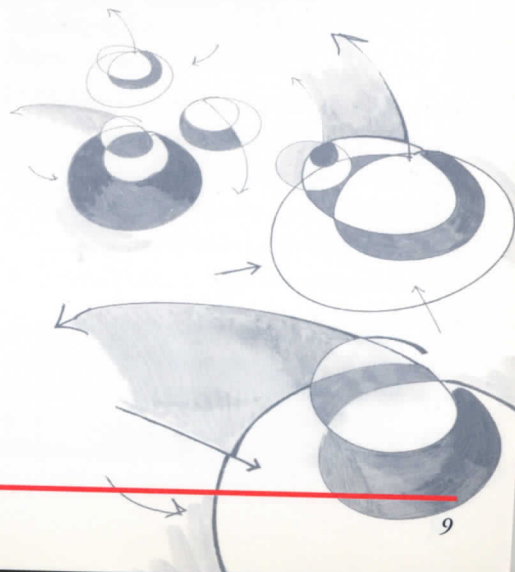
Their communication skills will sometimes require them to share experience and training in smaller groups than our congregational meetings. In smaller groups they can experiment and facilitate involvement with their trainees. Training empowers and releases. It enables skills development. When did your church last embark on a thorough whole church training experiment – where life, confidence and ability was taught from your trainers in mission?

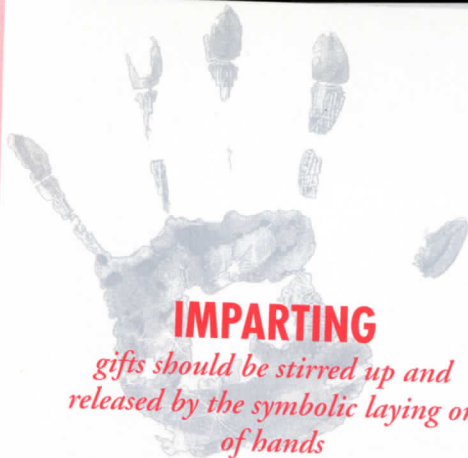
RECOGNITION

a mission minded church is a mobilised church which practises the priesthood of all believers

Real frontline workers are in the workplace facing more demons in tougher warfare than most 'full-time' church workers. Much of church life has disempowered and devalued church members who are gardeners, teachers, bankers, businesspeople, decorators, etc. Many have been content for that.

Mission must recognise and mobilise the whole body. The New Testament word for evangelist only occurs three times in your Bible, but the word witness appears 67 times. That's because when it comes to evangelism, the most important person is the witness – ie every believer.





IMPARTING

gifts should be stirred up and released by the symbolic laying on of hands

Many are caught, not taught. A mission-minded church should invest time, money and training into its recognised 'keenies' and key individuals – as well as training the whole church.

Yes people – those saying 'yes' to God, 'yes' to change, 'yes' to mission – need to be around leadership and Ephesians 4 ministries to catch their heart as well as skills. There is little we do that cannot have a training/impartation/discipling element to it.

So a mission-minded church member/leader asks the questions: who am I mentoring; who am I imparting heart to; who am I praying/working toward doing myself out of this job?



STRATEGY

emphasis is shifting from old programmes to flexible new wineskins

Maintenance churches are pyramid-shaped, with the few at the apex maintaining the much for the many. Mission churches are cell-shaped – non-hierarchical, all-involved, all-responsible for mission, multi-faceted, reaching society in many ways.

Yet in all of that change, leaders must lead – even when the direction of the strategy isn't clear. God remains a

strategist throughout human history. Mission-orientated churches can't afford to fight shy of careful, prayerful strategy and research as well as revelation. To turn a church from maintenance to mission will demand strategy that effects changes in church structures, church leadership and finances.

DOING

all our prayers, training, teaching and strategies need to have an opportunity for outworking

We could lapse into phantom revival – God will do it all and we just need to sit back and enjoy it. Phantom revival is like phantom pregnancy – all the feelings, some of the symptoms and none of the fruit.

The current Holy Spirit activity is teaching us (particularly leaders) to take our hands off church, to receive from God, to get in position and get ready, to believe in prayer, and not to plan it all out too quickly.

The tension is to pray as though it all depends on God and to act as though it all depends on us. Revival touches people who are readied for God outside the Church.

ASSESSING

constant honest monitoring needs to be a hallmark of mission-orientated churches

It's not uncommon to find that churches who shy away from assessment are often those with most to fear from the results. But our effectiveness in turning vision into reality must be assessable, and assessed. Have we actually grown by conversion, for instance? Those are the kind of hard questions we need to ask. Feedback is another means of encouraging ownership and empowerment. It requires humility, security and a desire for communication and listening on the part of leaders and church alike.



DEVELOPING

effective mission means constant adapting and change

Everything has its season, and strategies that worked two years ago won't work now. Everything has a shelf life, and left to itself everything tends to rot!

It's the law of entropy. The cycle of motivation-teaching-training will need repeating every couple of years or so. Anointed ministries need to be encouraged to develop. Evangelists may start with schools work or public preaching or streetwork, but need to develop roundedness in ministry to fulfil the Ephesians 4 mandate. For the role of the evangelist is to work in harness with apostle, prophet, pastor, and teacher.

Getting mission into the heart of church is different to a church bolting on a few cells, or doing a few evangelistic events. There's a new breed of church coming that will breathe a breath of fresh air to mission/evangelism.

If our existing churches work relationally with anointed Ephesians 4 evangelistic ministries and perhaps experiment with the kind of steps outlined above, then our goals may come within our sights.

Moving from maintenance to mission is neither easy or quick. But it's vital we invest now for a lost world that includes our families, friends, neighbours and work colleagues.

Born in Lancashire, Pete became a Christian while studying English at Hull University in 1979. He worked for seven years with BYFC in East London, then joined Revelation Church in 1985, since which time he's served on the Pioneer Team. Pete was the initiator of Pioneer's Hit Squads and is Team Leader of TIE Teams. He's an evangelist, author and often involved in teaching, training and consultancy with churches.

l e t t e r s

HIGH PRAISES

This is an excellent issue (Vol 2 No 3). I trust it will help people to think through the issues and stimulate them to positive action. I have already distributed copies to our network.

Philip Mohabir

Connections, Brixton, South London

COMPASS HEALS THE SICK!

Laid aside as I was on a bed of sickness (most unusual for me), I had a little more time than usual to study the latest issue of your journal (Vol 2 No 4). Let me congratulate you on what you produced in this issue.

A number of articles I loved, an equal number I hated. I agreed with much of it. I strongly disagreed with other parts. People are searching, challenging, questioning. They are allowed to, and not marginalised. You even find room for people who want to keep things much as they are!

So often when the prophets speak out, it is with great courage. But that can fail them when they are asked to write things down. We can end up with bland statements with no cutting edge. Your journal gives people freedom to be outspoken and take risks.

You have allowed one article to contradict another, leaving us gentle readers to work out where we stand. There is no party line here to be followed.

I have heard similar comments from other people, 'Some of it made me really angry'. It must be an editor's dream to generate strong emotions — not just to wind them up, but to get them thinking.

It's healthy and good, and long may it continue. Well done. Well done Pioneer and Ground Level for being prepared to take such risks. God will honour such faith and confidence. I almost feel like getting off my bed and walking.

Daryl Martin

Romford, Essex

JOHN NOBLE WORRIES SHEEP (PT II)

We would like to comment on John Noble's phrase 'Wounding is at the heart of a true shepherd — who'll break the leg of a wayward sheep until it learns to shun danger' (Vol 2 No 3).

We are puzzled by this statement. Are you being provocative? We spoke to Alan Price, librarian at Jews College, London. He quoted two Jewish laws which make it virtually impossible for a Jewish shepherd to injure a sheep.

ISA/AR BA/ALEI CHAIM — you may not cause any unnecessary harm to any living creature.

EIVER MIN HA-CHAI — you shall not take/break a limb from a living animal.

Alan asked whether it would be simpler to build a fence? The 'fence' representing God's love and security.

*Ian and Julia Pomeroy
Kidderminster, Worcestershire*

(The information was given me from one who has worked in the Middle East. However, it was not my intention to defend manipulative leaders. My meaning is scriptural — as with Job, God will go to great and painful lengths to draw me close — John Noble)

GENDER DILEMMA

I would like to know whether Chris Seaton's reference to the Spirit as 'her' was a misprint (Vol 2 No 3).

If it was deliberate then perhaps he could explain his reasoning for why 'her' and not 'he'? I'm curious to know whether this is a new teaching or just a genuine misprint.

*Trevor Stanesby
Harlow, Essex*

HERALDIC HOO-HAA

Chris Seaton's article 'State of the Union' (Vol 2 No 3) was well written and pertinent.

However, our national ensign is only the 'Union Jack' when hoisted and flying on board ship. Otherwise it is the 'Union flag'.

Simon Jon-Paul, Egham, Surrey

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION

Thank you for permission to reproduce the article. Two years ago, we had the vision to use our newspaper to inform people of what God is doing around the world.

Unfortunately this country is behind others in having Christian books, magazines, and music. So we have to translate articles from other countries.

I like your magazine very much, and encourage you even when time is difficult. People don't understand how much work goes into a publication.

*Fabio Speri
Italy*

TIMELESS CLASSICS?

As a regular reader of Compass, is there a reason why the year and month of publication does not appear on the magazine?

As everything we do, say, and write is influenced by the events happening around us, how can we place the articles in their contemporary context?

*Caroline Elvin
Garforth, Leeds*

(Each issue is theme-based, and aims to be a resource which does not quickly date. However, the articles are inevitably linked to what is relevant at the time of preparation and publication. — Ed)

THE TROUBLE WITH LABELS...

With reference to the article 'The trouble with labels' (Vol 2 No 4), I would like to apologise to the readership of Compass for giving the misleading statement that I am a non-evangelical.

I prefer not to go by the label 'evangelical', but rather choose the simple term 'follower of Jesus'. Strictly speaking I am an evangelical, technically within the so-called 'progressive' camp.

*Martin Scott
Cobham, Surrey*

The Editor would be pleased to receive contributions to future issues of Compass. Future themes include Frontiers in Arts, Gender and Lifestyle. Articles, poetry or illustrations should be discussed in advance. Please send a brief synopsis in the first instance.
Paul Dakin, Compass, Pioneer Direct Ltd, PO Box 39, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx TW16 6PP.
How does your church use Compass? We would be interested to hear from you



Worker

Since coming to faith in 1975, J John has become one of today's key communicators of Christian

He's also among a number of Christian leaders who've been hit by renewal. And although caring about the unchurched isn't just part of the evangelist's job – but a requirement of every believer – there's a new depth about

'God is really touching hearts about the issue of the lost,' J John explained. He's noticed a marked 'passion and compassion' to reach the nation. That's part of the difference the Holy Spirit is making in churches today, he believes.

Tears are flowing. Lessons are being learned.

Christians are starting to 'feel what the father feels'. Renewal has rocked the Church, and thrown it into a new direction.

Toronto times

It was in 1993 that Toronto church leader John Arnott went to a conference for North American pastors convened by their equivalent in Argentina. That South American nation has been basking in the bright rays of revival for the past 13 years.

That same year, Randy Clark, a Vineyard pastor from St Louis, attended a Rodney Howard-Browne meeting. On 20 January 1994, Clark spearheaded a series of meetings at Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship. The Spirit fell on a sparse crowd.

News of the outpouring spread fast. The church became a top tourist venue. Christians came from across the globe to be 'refreshed', and were criticised for it. But most of those surveyed about their Toronto experience said, 'Talking about Jesus to my family and friends is more important to me now than it has ever been before'.

The latest book from the Toronto stable is 'Share The Fire' – subtitled, 'The Toronto Blessing And Grace-Based Evangelism'. Author Guy Chevreau claims not just believers have been revived – 8,000 'prodigals' and 6,000 new converts have received prayer. Gerald Coates, a frequent visitor to Toronto, believes Britain's spiritual landscape

For many of those affected by the Toronto Blessing, 'carpet time' is turning into harvest time.

Equipped with a renewed concern for the unchurched, they're moving on from refreshing to reaping. Clive Price reports...

A STEWARDESS ON THE FLIGHT TO AMERICA was concerned. One of her passengers seemed to be troubled. She went up to the man to see if he was okay. It turned out to be leading evangelist J John.

He'd been engrossed in the popular movie 'Apollo 13', being screened on the plane. 'The next thing I knew, the stewardess shook me,' he recalled, 'and I was crying.' Something about the film had moved him.

'It's about millions of people concerned that three men are lost in space,' said J John. 'But millions of people are lost in the world – and no-one's concerned.' He believes the message is getting through, however.

unite for harvest

has 'totally changed' in the wake of the Blessing. It's been a time of joy and restoration, he told Pioneer leaders. 'There's this catching up of what God is doing,' he said.

'Over the next two or three years, we're going to see change all over again. We have to be ready for whatever God is going to do.'

Brompton boom

Amid talk of revival, an evangelistic study programme has become a hit. In the early 90s – before the Blessing broke – there were fewer than ten Alpha courses across Britain. Now there are more than 4,500. Dozens more register every month.

Home of Alpha is Holy Trinity, Brompton – a key channel for the renewal in Britain and beyond. Many will remember the route it took, after Ellie Mumford from South London Vineyard Church visited Toronto and then told HTB. As she recounted those experiences in May 1994, church staff were rendered helpless with 'holy laughter'.

Since the fire fell, crowds have descended on HTB from all over the country. Countless individuals and churches have found God in new ways – including Assemblies of God pastor Ken Gott and Pensacola preacher Steve Hill.

Pensacola outpouring

Pensacola is the latest revival sensation. Tens of thousands have reportedly become Christians at Brownsville Assembly of God. It's even made the pop charts. Mainstream rock artists Sheryl Crow and Joan Osborne have written songs about it.

For some of the visitors who've queued up for hours to get a seat, just to witness a church in full-blown revival has been reward in itself. New Frontiers evangelist Mike Sprenger went there – and was captured on video enthusing about 'a time of favour' for Britain. The tape has had a deep impact on Pioneer leaders.

Queues start forming outside Brownsville's main hall at 2pm for meetings that begin at 7, Wednesday through Saturday. According to Charisma magazine, the revival is a daily topic of conversation among the locals in this city of 58,000 population.

'A fear of God is developing in the city,' evangelist Steve Hill told *Charisma*. 'The local people know that God is moving here. It sort of gives (unbelievers) the creeps.' It was Father's Day 1995 when Hill got up to preach, giving pastor John Kilpatrick a break. But when he issued an appeal – as evangelists do – a wave of the Spirit hit the place. It's been striking the Brownsville 'sanctuary' ever since.

Sunderland refreshing

Renewed church leaders in the UK have found themselves gripped by a fresh interest in the Ephesians 4 ministry of the evangelist. Sunderland Christian Centre – the 'Toronto of England' – enlisted J John's assistance for their own mission.


'Before the worship could begin at the start of the first meeting,' the evangelist's newsletter reported, 'members of the church were asked to give up their seats for the queue of visitors in the entrance hall... nearly 800 packed inside the main hall.'

Many made re-commitments, 'drawn back like prodigals'. Over 100 were counselled following the appeal. And according to the church, that was just the beginning. Attendances have grown, with coachloads converging on the city.

Not surprisingly, Sunderland is in the 'cradle of Christianity'. Eighty years ago, Smith Wigglesworth was baptised in the Spirit there. Even then, some people were overcome by what the revivalist called 'laughter in the Holy Ghost'.

In August 1994, worshippers at SCC began to laugh, cry and shake as the Spirit fell on the place near where Wigglesworth preached. Leader Ken Gott traces the current Sunderland refreshing to his HTB visit. The story of this Pentecostal pastor, rolling around in fits of laughter by the church's baptismal font, is legendary.

Stories continue to pour in from various revival zones around the world. Internet sites are filled with them. Visitors to booming church situations in South America, Asia and Africa return home changed by the experience.

It's inspiring to reflect on the first evangelistic takeover of these islands by the early Celtic saints. And who can fail to be captivated by accounts of the Welsh revival, when seekers felt the tangible 'presence' on the train? But surely now we can hear fresh rumblings – as the rock of ages starts to roll across this land once again. 

Clive Price is Editorial Consultant to 'Compass' and UK correspondent for the US-based 'Charisma' magazine. He also contributes to a number of other Christian magazines.

the world where you live

If a baby cried, you'd be there at its
side.

But in the world where you live it's work
at nine,
meetings at ten,
and lunch at twelve.
You can switch on the news,
with it's worldly views,
the World at One,
the world in your living room

Armchair tears for a world so near.

But in the world where you live it's tea at
two,
coffee at four,
and kids at five;
open the newspaper and the world
comes alive.

The Pompey News, with it's parochial
views.

but you've aroused all the concern you
can possibly give,
so I'm asking you now
'is this the world where you live?'
But the world where you live is 'The Bill'
at eight
and your bed at eleven,

Personal prayers to your Father in
heaven.

Is this the world where you live,
the world that you breathe,
a world set apart from your neighbours –
your street?
When Jesus came to save your world,
He chatted with a woman
collecting water from a well.

He befriended some fishermen down by
the lake,
a tax collector,
a leper,
the woman on the make.

All ordinary people with ordinary lives.

He touched them as individuals,
he met their needs,
he felt the heartbeat of God,
the rhythm He breathes.
But the heartbeat of God is for your nine
to eleven
your working day,
the people you meet,
the ordinary people,
the kids in your street.
A burden to heal
and save the lost,
but all of this now will come at a cost

If a baby cried, you'd be there at its
side

...but in the world where you live,
they're crying out to be saved,
it's often our lives that get in the way.
but feel the fire of God,
and the passion it gives,
and then we'll see a change...

...in the world where you live.

Simon Marshall

Your church could be history

*Tim Brawn warns us to wake up to the power of parables
– before we lose the plot*

THE PARABLES OF JESUS are more powerful and persuasive than his miracles. That comment from African writer Ben Okri challenges so much of our evangelical charismatic thinking.

Surely, we argue, it's Jesus' life-changing and healing power which still has impact today. Yes, and no.

Jesus' stories are powerful today whether you believe or don't believe.

They set his miracles in context. He spent more time telling stories than healing people.

Yet, the Church has lost its story-telling powers. Cast adrift by the culture, we revert to type, falling back on to dogma and extreme positions.

We confront rather than encounter, we 'speak at' rather than 'engage with'.

Our singing is full of certainties and contains little, if any, biblical references to give it a context. That leaves people only two choices – to agree or to disagree. Yet the real world is made up of infinitely wondrous people. And they're all travelling their own journeys at their own pace, with their own stories.

The Bible is often used by evangelicals as a textbook of behaviour and belief. Yet doesn't it presents its own problems which we rarely grapple with in our hunt to find the perfect text for evangelism?

Through our drama, songs, liturgies, hospitality, testimonies – and our lives – we're acting out some of what we know from God's past story. We're making it live today, and uniquely bringing about a certain ending which we've been privileged to glimpse.

Why not look at your church's meetings and ask the question, 'What story are we seeking to tell? Are we simply replaying some recent charismatic history – or are we seriously re-enacting, re-telling and re-shaping the powerful stories of God which really will engage with the culture around us?

In our search to be 'culturally relevant' we could just be cutting ourselves off from the very tool which provoked the question, 'How can I join in your story' or to quote the Bible,

'What must I do to be saved?'



Tim Brawn is married with four children, and is part of Molesey Community Church. He runs a marketing and fund-raising consultancy. Tim is currently working with Bible Society on The Open Book, a project of Churches Together in England which will make the Bible relevant to the culture by presenting five key Bible stories through media, debate, the arts and music. It will start in 1998. He's also a member of the Millennium Communications Advisory Group, which is seeking to shape and promote a tangible and unifying message around the Millennium.



Stories are at the heart of this great book. Primarily the Bible tells God's story as viewed by a myriad of different people over many centuries.

Our role as a radical church is to engage with those stories for ourselves, grow up in our thinking and face some very challenging issues.

Our role, of course, is also to tell the stories to those around us.

Casting the net

*Streams of light are breaking through the darkness of our land.
Linda Harding explains how local churches are reaching out to the lost tribes
of Britain...*

Poor, marginalised and forgotten people have always found a friend in Jesus. Through compassion demonstrated in acts of kindness, Christ proclaimed the presence of the kingdom.

Then he promised his disciples would do even greater things. And that was to be through his 'Spirit on all people', regardless of age, gender, marital status, employment – or ability to attend Sunday meetings. The thrust of New Testament mission is sending believers from the church – rather than drawing the lost to the church.

In the early church, reaching the lost took place on the streets, in the marketplace, in lecture halls and from house to house. If we're committed to reaching the lost tribes of post-Christian Britain, we need to reverse some of our evangelistic strategies, rediscover the biblical missionary mandate – and take the good news to where the tribes are. 'Church people think about how to get people into the church,' said Howard Snyder, 'kingdom people think about how to get the church into the world.' Some are doing just that – going out

and meeting people on their territory, discovering their real needs and being 'Jesus-style' good news.

Supermarket of souls

Burton Community Church have invaded the shopping precinct. Starting with offering free face painting for children while parents shopped (supermarket shopping with children is a good example of desperate need!), their outreach has progressed to a band playing Delirious? songs in the car park, distributing free tapes of stories and music.

One of the team began to sing prophetically while an onlooker stood motionless in the presence of God. The personnel manager of Tesco's has invited them inside the store.

That same church take a caravan round to a poor housing estate, giving out free drinks and talking with children and young people. One day they had up to 50 children trying to get in the caravan. Many of those children and young people are also attending lunchtime and after-school clubs run by the church.

Newmarket Community Church are casting the net to those who shop at

Tesco's on Sundays! With the co-operation of the personnel manager, they moved their Sunday meeting to the store's car park, and worshipped God there – not in protest against Sabbath shoppers – but out of a desire to share God's love.

People stop, they listen, some join in. The church offers a 'chaplaincy' service to the store staff, and has a vision to see a children's club and regular worship inside the store.

Another church actively involved in reaching modern tribes by being God's mobile messengers is Generation, based in Ewell, Surrey. They've converted an old library bus and drive it onto the local travellers' site.

Going onto their territory and offering to wash the travellers' cars is a 20th century response to Jesus' challenge when he sent out the 72 to 'go eat what is set before you' – to earn the right to speak. Said project manager Hayley Roberts, 'The bus is an outworking of a passion to see young people informed, empowered – and to understand they're important.'

Generation regularly take church into a forgotten tribe of adults with learning disabilities in a hospital

community. Children as young as four participate in an event with up to 100 residents. One team member was heard to say, 'All these forgotten people worshipping God – seems like a taste of heaven on earth'.

Addicted to Jesus

Karen Lowe leads Antioch Church in Llanelli. She explained the cost of commitment in reaching out to poor and marginalised people. Dramatic encounters and consistent care go hand in hand to catch the harvest God is giving. But when one person discovers that Jesus makes a difference, a whole network is impacted.

Alan had been in and out of prison for 15 years, and an addict for ten. He was described as a no-hoper. His friends told him Jesus can set prisoners free – and he had a dramatic encounter with Christ while literally behind bars. Five years on, he's leading an innovative daytime rehabilitation programme called Choose Life, and he's now a carrier of good news to others who battle with life-controlling problems.

Antioch are discovering the challenge of providing long-term care to see such power encounters translated into sustainable new lifestyles. Karen and her husband Mark are willing to have ex-prisoners stay in their home, to experience stable, committed, family relationships.

A heroin addict for three years, 'D' had been in and out of prison. Through friendships with church people, God delivered him instantly. He experienced no side effects of withdrawal. Later on, deep issues began to surface, he fell back into addictive behaviour, and had a further time in prison. Now he's back on the Choose Life programme. Karen also

tells the story of 'B' and 'T' who were introduced to Jesus by friends. They'd been working illegally. Following their

'The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor'

LUKE 4:18

encounter with Christ, they found themselves unemployed. Through discipleship they gradually regained self respect and now run a furniture restoration business, encouraging others back into real jobs.

Champions for church

Sports people are often forgotten and unreached by church because their lifestyle doesn't fit our church 'wineskin'. For them, the traditional 'church together day' – Sunday – is often the busiest working day. Their work can take them away for long periods.

Bryan Mason of Dayspring Church, Leeds, is national co-ordinator of church sports ministry with Christians in Sport. Dayspring run outdoors pursuits weekends and encourage people to use their particular sporting interest – be that aerobics, golf, football or bowling – to reach their communities.

Last summer the church hosted the sports roadshow, 'Night of Champions'. More than 400 young people participated in a wealth of sporting activities and enjoyed a lively gospel presentation. That was part of a special sports weekend, where a Ladies' Soccer Team from North Carolina presented the gospel in song, drama and stories.


Petersfield Christian Fellowship hold a weekly 'bumps and babies club' for first-time mothers and

househusbands who are facing changes of lifestyle. They have a 50:50 mix of church and unchurched. One woman has met Jesus. A couple who attended Alpha are now helping with the next course. Cornerstone Church, Swansea, are reaching women by asking and answering questions that women in Wales are facing today. One of their members, a beauty therapist, has opened a shop. A Winter Fashion and Beauty Extravaganza was attended by 250 locals, providing opportunities to be good news right in the heart of the community.

Cornerstone also ran a Toy Story alternative party at Hallowe'en. The hall was full of totally unchurched kids. Said one parent, 'We've given up celebrating Hallowe'en and send our kids to you instead'.

A Swansea headteacher asked the children's team to take the whole school's Christmas parties instead of the usual disco and darkness. 'Your kids' events seem to offer a much more wholesome alternative,' he said.

'Many people need to experience acceptance, love and compassion,' observed Anabaptism Today writer Walfred Fahrner, 'and to see the life of Jesus in others – before they're ready to hear about faith.'

'Jesus taught his disciples to pray that the kingdom of God would come to earth,' he said, 'not that the church would be taken up to heaven from earth'. That's happening on the estates and streets of Britain today, as some communities taste a little of heaven on earth. 

Linda Harding is Director of Communications and Development for Pioneer, and part of the leadership team of Pioneer People in Cobham, Surrey.

Access denied

It's not so much a lack of ramps – but a lack of understanding – that can prevent disabled people from coming to Jesus. Paul Dicken calls for a new attitude...

YOU'D GET A COOL RECEPTION if you removed tiles from the church roof to lower a disabled person into the service. Luke's account of how some enterprising people literally broke into the first recorded inaccessible teaching meeting is a lesson for us all.

Modern buildings don't always present such problems. But still we can make life difficult for some.

One person in six has a disability – or experiences the disabling effect of ageing. People are aware of obvious barriers like flights of steps and narrow doorways for wheelchair users. We create other problems as well.

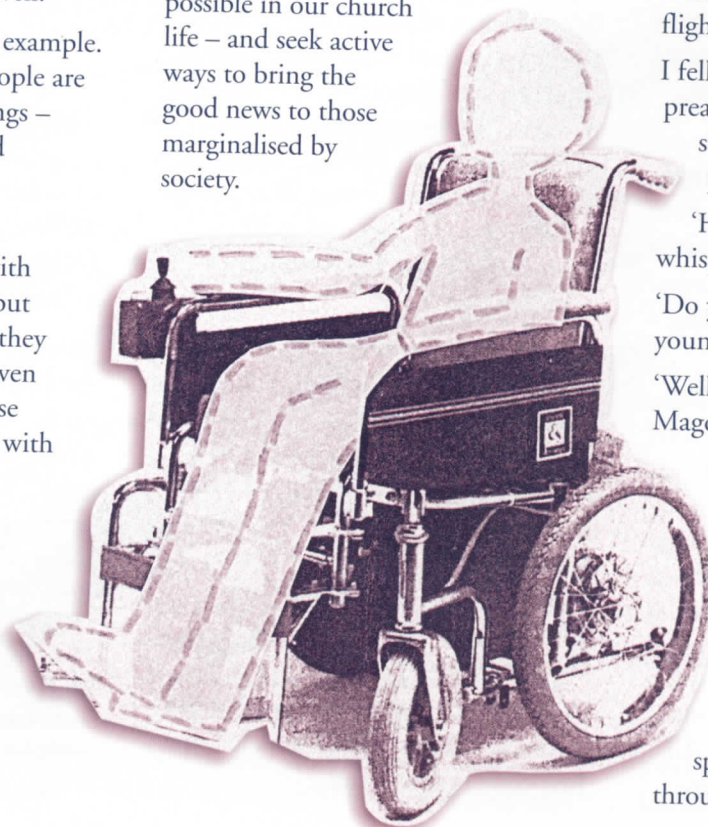
Take overhead projectors, for example. Partially sighted and blind people are unable to see the words of songs – with seated elderly people and wheelchair users similarly disadvantaged.

We usually see a few people with disabilities in our churches – but nowhere near the 17 per cent they represent in the population. Even within your own family or close circle of friends will be people with disabling conditions.

How many of us have grandparents who are hard-of-hearing? How many people with disabilities are in our leadership teams, worship bands or, indeed, any function or office in our local church?

Luke reflected Jesus' heart for disabled and disadvantaged people-groups at several points in his gospel. Nowhere is that more vivid than in the account of the banquet in chapter 14. *'But when you give a banquet,' says verse 13, 'invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.'*

And later the writer says, *'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame... go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.'* God's heart is that his house may be full. We need to remove barriers to make that possible in our church life – and seek active ways to bring the good news to those marginalised by society.



When asked what single factor is the most common hurdle for a disabled person, people usually say, 'steps or stairs', or perhaps 'heavy doors' or even 'public transport'. In almost every case when that same question is put to a disabled person, their reply is, 'attitudes towards my disability'.

We see a wheelchair and not Jim in the chair; we greet Adam the guide dog but don't say hello to Mary who Adam is leading. We assume that Patrick, with learning disabilities, won't have the skills to be in the church welcome team.

Assumptions, prejudices, stereotypes and patronising attitudes are as much – or even more of – a barrier as a flight of steps to a wheelchair user.

I fell into that trap many years ago. A preacher made the dramatic statement, 'Jesus never met a prostitute'.

'He doesn't know his Bible,' I whispered to the person next to me.

'Do you have a problem with that, young man?' asked the preacher.

'Well, yes,' I said, 'He met Mary Magdalene.'

'Exactly, and that's the person he saw – Mary Magdalene. Not a prostitute but a person.' All of us need to see people through Jesus' eyes.

Why are we 'blessed' when disabled people are in our churches? Joni Eareckson Tada speaks of the lessons that we learn through the lives of disabled people.

Many of them face major hurdles in everyday life. But they'd be horrified if they thought our response was sentimental, cloying sympathy. Most of my disabled friends

would say there's nothing special about their being disabled. They just walk using wheels, or speak with their hands, read through their fingertips or see through the eyes of a dog.

'Perhaps the greatest good that suffering can work for believers,' says Joni, 'is to increase the capacity of his soul for God. The greater the need, the greater the capacity we have.'

Somehow our grumbles about office colleagues or malfunctioning dishwashers don't compare with having to be got up in the morning, washed, dressed, teeth cleaned and helped onto the toilet by a different carer each day.

If God's grace can sustain that disabled person, we can all *'boast in our afflictions and glory in our weaknesses'*. It's the way the church is strengthened and built up.

We can do much to facilitate full participation in the life of the church by everyone – including people with disabilities. Provision of level access and lightweight doors means parents with pushchairs and elderly people benefit, too.



A loop system means people with hearing aids have far greater opportunity to hear the spoken words. Good lighting benefits deaf people (particularly lip-readers), partially sighted people and elderly people.

Ultimately, we all benefit from a friendly environment with changes of level, weight of doors, levels of lighting, provision of signs and information. If you have disabled people in your church, ask them what would help them to take a fuller part in church life. Local disability groups will be pleased to advise you – or you can contact 'Through the Roof' for practical advice and resources.

Often provision can be made inexpensively. Large print song-sheets can be photocopies of acetates; chairs with arms can be provided for people with arthritis or other mobility limitations; induction loops cost about £100.

Our churches need to reflect our society. And disabled people represent a large part of that society. We need to be welcoming and accessible for disabled friends.

I wonder what we'd reply if Jesus asked us at the final judgement, 'Where were you when I was

A mission field just outside your church

- there are 9.7 million people with disabling conditions
- one in four households is affected by disability
- only five per cent of disabled people are wheelchair users – about 450,000
- one million are registered blind; another 750,000 cannot see well enough to read a newspaper or recognise someone across a street
- eight million are estimated to have appreciable hearing loss, 2.5 million use hearing aids and there are 50,000 profoundly deaf people
- there are 1.25 million people with learning disabilities
- one person in three will have mental illness at some time in their life

profoundly disabled in my wheelchair, with no speech, dribbling and grunting?'

I hope we'd be able to answer, 'I was alongside you, so aware of your presence that I was unaware of your disability'.



Paul Dicken (pictured here with Joni Eareckson Tada) and his wife Christine are part of Pioneer People, where they lead the work of integrating people with disabilities. They have two sons. Paul has many years of experience working with disabled people and was recently appointed director of 'Through the Roof', the UK disability outreach of Joni Eareckson Tada. He can be contacted at PO Box 178, Cobham, KT11 1YN. Email: throughtheroof@jafministries.com

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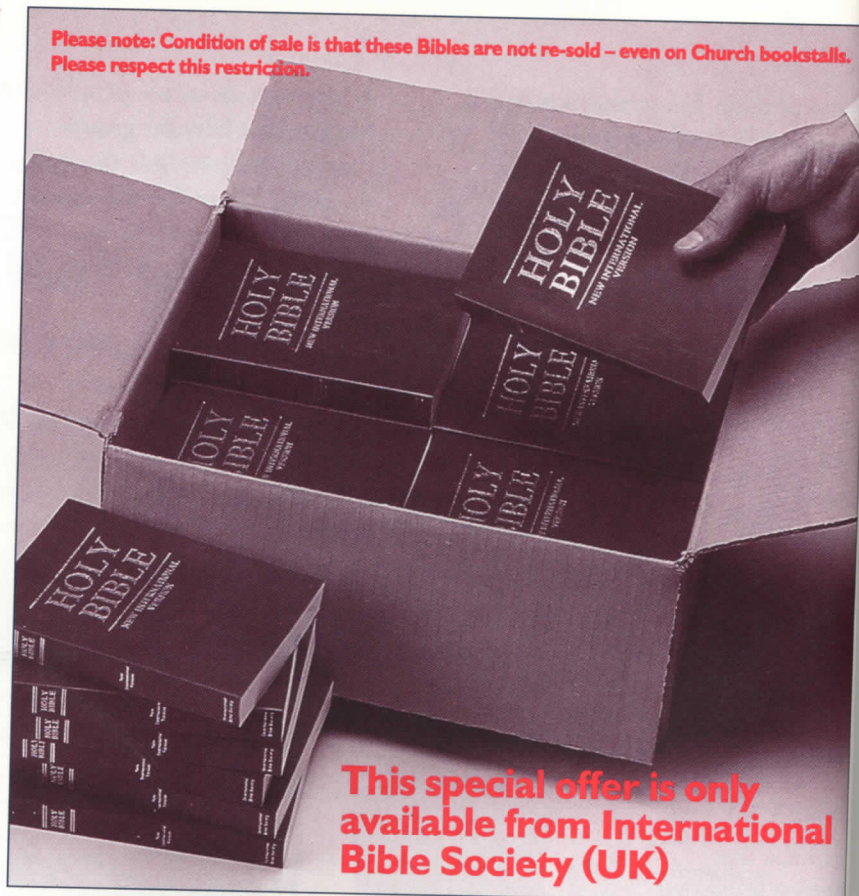
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Saintly Dilemmas

By Stuart Smith

Perhaps, on reflection,
Colin had been a little eager
to lift up his local
community to the Lord...



Until the end of the world

Everyone's turning apocalyptic as we approach the 21st century.

But is there a biblical basis for end-time evangelism? Roger Mitchell thinks so

GOD often works in seasons. We must spot the signs – like the first flowers of spring, or the changing colours of autumn. But can we discern a wave of end-time evangelism? Four key strands will help us – history, justice, prayer and the current renewal.

History

Peter confirmed at Pentecost we're in the last days (Acts 2:16-17) – leaving a long 2000-year season! Jesus encouraged the disciples to think of their generation as the final one (Luke 9:27, Matthew 21:14). Contemporary prophetic teachers note a biblical defining of a generation as three micro generations. God is God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; of Moses, Joshua, the Judges; of Elijah, Elisha and the King of Israel. From that perspective are triple generational movements – none of which made it through the end-time phase. Throughout the Old Testament the third generation is the point of pressure – would Jacob's sons make it into the land; would the King of Israel strike the arrows of intercession enough times? So this century – with revivals in Wales and Los Angeles, progressing through the charismatic movement – we're poised once again at a third generation, with the possibility and pressure of birthing the end-time harvest.

Justice

The Bible anticipates national repentance and justice for the poor in the end times. *'It will come about in*

the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains... nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war' (Micah 4:1,3). That's part of the work of the cross. The Christ would 'rise

We stand at an extraordinary moment in world history. It's not enough for the Church to carry on business as usual

again from the dead the third day: and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all the nations' (Luke 24:46-47).

Evangelicals rightly emphasise the priesthood of all believers. An end-time breakthrough in evangelism requires the Church to take up its priestly role and repent for the corporate sins of our nation.

Prayer

Biblically the end-time harvest is birthed in prayer. In Revelation the unsealing of God's purpose was accompanied by a build-up of prayer. Today's unprecedented scale of worldwide prayer encourages us to expect the end-time harvest. That will require a partnership between Christ and his Church which Paul describes: *'The whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now... the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words'* (Romans 8:22). Such a travailing determination in prayer is beyond the norm for most British churches in

style and intensity. But we must be ready for it.

Renewal

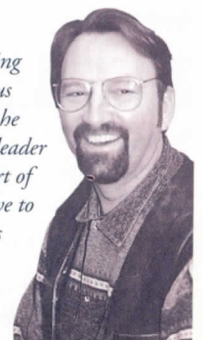
Amid the current move of God are phenomena of great biblical importance. They're like those which introduced major harvesting revivals in the days of Wesley and Whitfield, and early this century in Wales and Los Angeles. More significantly, they're the same phenomena which characterise the biblical record whenever humans are confronted with angels –

Daniel lost his physical strength (Daniel 10); Sarah laughed (Genesis 18:12); Joshua fell (Joshua 5:14); John the Apostle fell as if dead (Revelation 1:17). Angels invariably introduce new seasons of God's activity. Their current presence could signify another opportunity for the end times to begin. We stand at an extraordinary moment in world history. It's not enough for the Church to carry on business as usual. We must rise up as priests and deal with the sins of our nations in order for the power of the cross to bring justice to the poor. And we must travail in prayer as never before.

This can be the generation!



Roger Mitchell and wife Sue lead Passion, a church planting resource birthed out of Ichthus Christian Fellowship, where he was a founder member and leader for 20 years. Roger is also part of the Remix Team, an initiative to reach unchurched youth. He's involved in planting a new local church in Camden Town, North London.



Barbarians or bure

In the race to be culturally relevant, have we lost something of the raw edge of our faith? Gerald Coates calls for a radical shift to put it right

BARBARIANS OR BUREAUCRATS? What shall we be? That's the choice that stands before the Church. Barbarians are 'rough, wild and uncultured', according to the Oxford Dictionary. Originally it simply referred to those who were 'different in custom or language'.

In the rush to be culturally relevant, is it possible we've become so like the lost, that we've actually become culturally irrelevant because we're virtually indistinguishable? Are our values, language and addictions that 'different' or barbarous to our neighbours, work colleagues and fellow students?

Christ was different. But he wasn't continually rude, offensive and difficult to work with. And neither did he fit in to such a degree that people thought he was the same as everyone else. Yet he was a frequent guest at parties and social events of the cultured – and indeed the elite.

Yet he spat on the dust, made clay and smothered the eyes of the soon-to-be-healed blind. He called religious leaders stinking graves, Herod a fox, and religious bureaucrats called him a glutton and a drunkard. The truth is, to get anything done these days, you have to break with bureaucratic

convention, rules and peer pressure. You have to become a barbarian. And that's not the way of the bureaucrat!

Bureaucracy equals 'centralisation' or 'a body of officials'. When it comes to reaching 'the least, the last and the lost', it's done by those who have a heart for such people – irrespective of centralised approval or indeed disapproval.

Sadly, even God-appointed, Holy Spirit-anointed leaders can become unintentional officials who hinder rather than help the lost. But revival rarely breaks out from among the bureaucrats. And it's not even on the radar screens of many leaders.

We reflect what we focus on. So how do we make the change?

For bureaucrats to become barbarians, resources will need to be shifted to those outside the Church. It's no longer time for us merely to be looking after ourselves. We must repent of our people looking after our children, our people looking after our teenagers and our people looking after our adults.

While we look after the young and the vulnerable, we need to be helping them to reach out to their friends at school and their neighbours so that they care one for the other. And as for adults who've been Christians for years, the last thing they need at the moment is

another little Bible study at home!

The issue is no longer, what do we believe? Rather in these latter years of the 20th century it is, what are we going to do with what we believe? For it's highly questionable whether we actually believe what we say we believe about the least, the last and the lost.

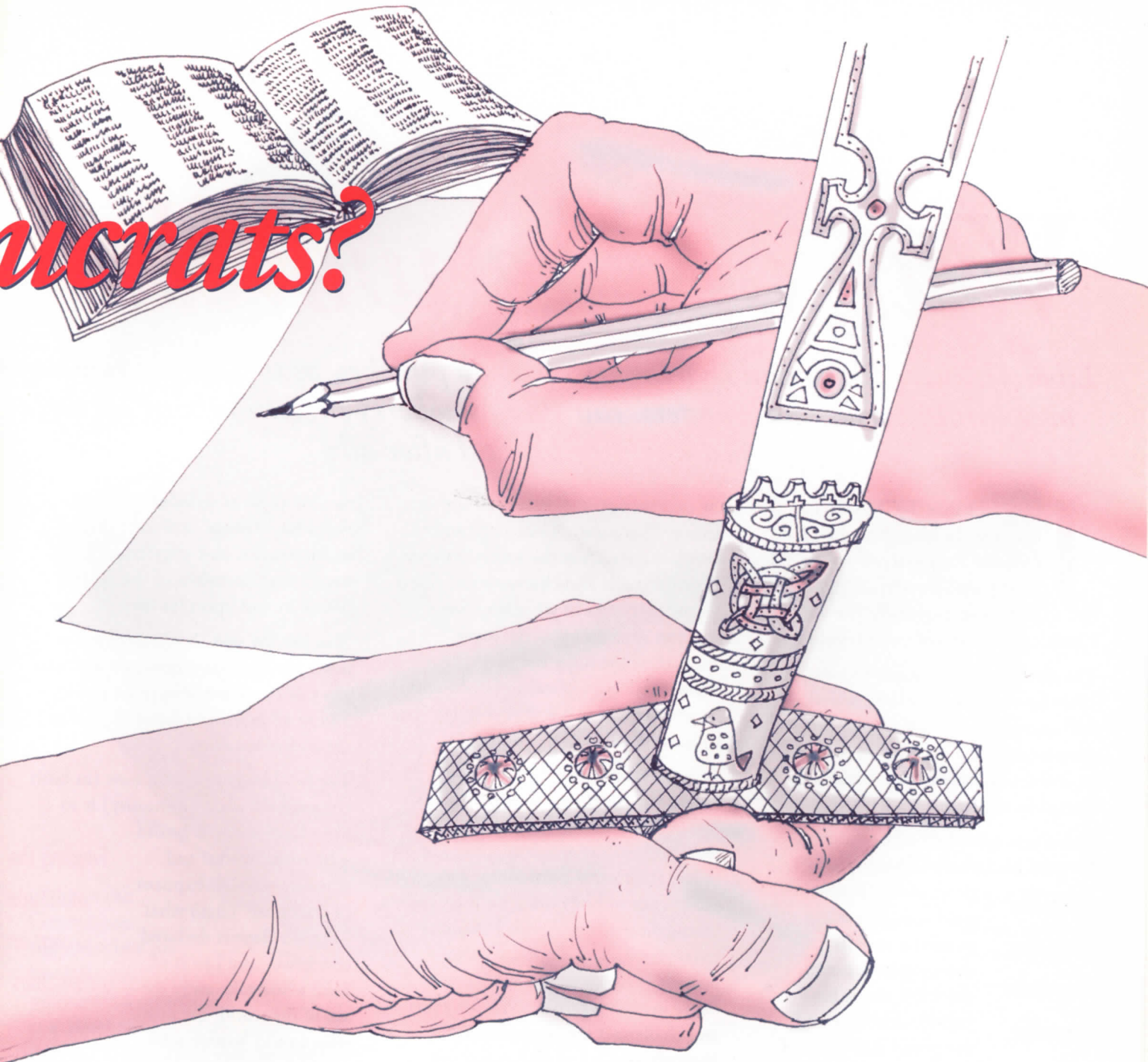
Jesus Christ is the DNA of the Church. In the words of Peter Lyne, the Church is Jesus Christ with skin on.

Let the prophets of gloom and doom say all they want about the judgement of God upon the nation. Our role is not to point out what the world has done – but what Jesus Christ by his Spirit is doing. And at the moment he's reaching out to the lost in prisons, schools, police forces, business houses, to the movers and the shakers through a church which is consumed with a passion for the gospel.

There's been much emphasis of late on the 'anointing'. Anointed ministers and ministries are important and care for the Church. But God wants to show us not merely his 'anointing' – but also his 'glory'.


As it was with Moses, so it could be with us. He wants to cause his goodness to pass before us. And what are we most grateful for? For the Christ child, for Calvary, for blood spilled for our sins, for resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Could we be grateful

uocrats?



for anyone or for anything more than Jesus Christ and Calvary?

If that's true for us, it will be true for hundreds of thousands who are currently 'the least, the last and the lost' that are going to come to faith and become a part of churches whose passion is for those outside their boundaries, ministries, organisations and anointing. If the uninitiated asked your church

members why you exist, would the response be 'for the least, the last and the lost' – or would it be for something else? If it's for something else, I doubt whether it has much of a future. 

Gerald Coates is Leader of the Pioneer Team and Director of the Pioneer Trust. He is pictured here with his sons Simon and Paul, wife Anona and youngest son Jonathan



War of the words

Liberals, evangelicals and charismatics pull no punches, as the age-old row rages over words, works and wonders. But Paul Newberry suggests mixing all three just might be biblical after all

JESUS HASN'T CHANGED his tune. In his earthly body, he pursued a ministry of words, works, and wonders. Here now in his spiritual body, the Church, that same mission continues.

The disciples were baptised in the Holy Spirit – incorporated, sealed, and energised – for the astounding purpose of allowing Jesus to continue in and through them the work he'd started in the flesh.

In his new spiritual body he carries forward his father's kingdom

In Jesus' life and ministry, words, works, and wonders weren't separate categories of action

programme. His words, works, and wonders continue to establish throughout the earth the truth about his father's character and the power and glory of his kingdom.

Debate about the balance between word ministry, works ministry, or wonders ministry (or any combination of all

three) can descend rapidly into religious theorising – and posturing.

In current discussions word ministry is perceived to be the strength of evangelicals (teaching, preaching, doctrine and books); works ministry

the province of liberals (social action, justice, liberation); while signs and wonders are seen as the special interest of pentecostals and charismatics. The posturing comes in when any one position is taken up as the most important, the most necessary. To characterise evangelicals, liberals, and pentecostals in this way is popular. It's a neat division.

To some degree Roy Clements did that in his address to the National Assembly of Evangelicals at Bournemouth in autumn 1996. He called, with some passion, for an acceptance of both word ministry (evangelicals) and wonders ministry (charismatics), and for a working balance between the two. That appeal, made in such a forum, carries weight and challenges die-hard positions. Nevertheless, it can all become yet more discussion-fodder and statement material, useful perhaps, but...

In Jesus' life and ministry, words, works, and wonders weren't separate categories of action. They were all of a piece. His evangelical words were 'spirit and life'. Christ's preaching and teaching, so accessible and scriptural, was a 'word' of power, affirmed by supernatural signs. So what about social action? Feeding the multitude was an 'unconscious'

combination of wonder and work. From his baptism onwards, the words, works, and wonders of Jesus were a manifestation of the Spirit's power in and upon his life.

'And you,' he said, 'will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

The local body of Christ now (in both communion and community) is to meet local needs as he did – by word, works, and wonders through baptism in the Spirit. That's what John the Baptist declared of Christ – the Lamb of God who'd take away the sin of the world; the one who would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit'.

It was for this baptism, this promised gift of the Father, that the disciples were told to wait. There'd be no continuation of Christ's words, works, and wonders, without a new body filled and 'clothed with power from on high'.

The book of Acts records the early career of Christ's new body, a career that demonstrates a ministry of words, works, and wonders. The apostle Paul

Feeding the multitude was an 'unconscious' combination of words and works

wrote to the Corinthians and described his word ministry ('my message and preaching') as a 'demonstration of the Spirit's power'. He was saying that his word ministry was also a wonders ministry.

Too often our evangelical word ministry is nothing but words. And, to be fair, our pentecostal wonders ministry is sometimes short on both words and works! To be fair again, liberal works ministry has often seen little need for word, and has often appeared to completely discount any wonders at all! The answer to all of that, it seems to me, isn't just discussion between those who've

already taken up positions, however tolerant and useful that might be. The answer, surely, is in that incredible promise of the Father – the baptism in the Spirit that incorporates the body of Christ, immersing and unifying us

Useful references

John 6:63 Acts 1:8 John 1:33 Luke 24:49
1 Corinthians 2:4 Acts 2:39

for the sake of his ministry in the world.

The same Spirit that filled Christ filled the disciples and their followers – and must fill us: 'The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call'.



Paul serves Manna Christian Fellowship, Maidstone, with Andrew Parfitt. They head up a team of 15 elders. Manna Christian Fellowship is made up of five congregations totalling about 400 people. Paul also leads Manna Bible School, and has been a regular speaker at Spring Harvest for 11 years. A member of the GroundLevel Team, he's currently involved in raising up a team of younger leaders.

ILLUSTRATION – TED & JUEY O

Human so

TIMES HAVE CHANGED on the mission field. Today's missionary is no longer a pith-helmeted gentleman struggling manfully through jungles waving a sharpened machete, stopping for tea with the Mem sahib at the end of a tiring day.

In fact, missionary work in the late 20th century can only be successful if it takes into account such issues as cultural values, national heritage and the dignity of the individual. Now it's more about empowering people to reach into their society and be salt and light - as opposed to telling them how their society should be.

It also needs to take into account the tremendous suffering in many situations. The gospel is about care and compassion - as well as salvation. My wife Helen, our children Sarah and Chris, and our friend Amanda, moved with me to live in Croatia at the height of the war that was raging in the former Yugoslavia. We hadn't had a life-long desire to move there, or particularly a 'missionary calling'.

We were simply moved to tears by the TV pictures we saw. And when the chance came for us to do something about it, we felt we had to. We lived there for nearly two years, working with young people in both Croatia and Bosnia. We

saw ourselves as much aid workers as gospel bringers.

One day we could be working in a stinking refugee camp watching Chris give his toys away. The next we could be under an artillery barrage in Mostar with the local Christians, showing we cared by our presence. Still another we could be preaching the gospel in the open air or working with our local youth group.

Our goal was to live the gospel by example and empower Croatia's youth to reach into their own culture and make a difference. In a country that has just 4,000 Christians, the best type of missionary work is to develop the leaders.

Our job was to get alongside traumatised young people and to train up a new generation of youth workers who'd be able to minister both physically and spiritually to those in need.

Some of the things we experienced were horrific and haunt us to this day, while other times we saw the power of God move in ways that are hard to explain even to Christians. We experienced a rawness of the presence of God that we find ourselves mourning for now we've returned to the UK. But as a result there are now full-time workers established in youth ministry and reaching out to the young people of Croatia.

Ordinary people are paying the price as they promote an extraordinary message in the trouble spots of the world, as Andy Harrington explains...

sacrifice

elsewhere, members of New Life Christian fellowship in Morpeth have recognised the need for the British church to be involved in missionary work and also seek to empower nationals. They support the work of our evangelists in Estonia.

I recently spoke to Malcolm Thomas, Morpeth church leader and regular visitor to Estonia. 'We see our role as one of enabling the workers in Estonia to reach people we can't with the gospel,' he said. 'It's a foreign language and a foreign culture. Better they do it than we mess it up!'

Perhaps one of the best works I have seen is in Ethiopia. Christian Partners in Africa, a Lincoln-based charity, is partnering with a national church network to develop projects in needy areas of the world's second poorest country.

The ethos is that the gospel of Christ and ministry to the poor and

oppressed are indivisible and that one complements the other. Thus child sponsorship schemes, clinic building programmes, shelters for street children and clean water projects promote an environment for people to hear the gospel - as well as saving lives.

Four years ago, CPA director Chris Shelbourne felt called by God to start the ball rolling. He had no experience, no African contacts or any clue where to begin. The whole thing just came out of the blue. So he and his wife Rosey took a deep breath and asked God where to start.

Chris talks of the ideals behind the work. 'We want to work in partnership with people,' he said, 'and to help them regain their dignity without dictating our own terms. This is an integral part of the gospel. Helping the poor and needy enables the church to build the kingdom of God, while showing that it cares.'

I recently stood with Chris around a camp fire in the middle of an African wilderness, joining with a people I'd never before met in wonderful joyous celebration of life and salvation. After having watched him organise the village's first source of clean water and launch a project to build a clinic where there is no health care, I could see what he meant.



PHOTO - PENNY RALPH/TEAR FUND

In a poor and hurting world, the British church must look outside of its own comfort zones to realise that the gospel is for all nations. It doesn't take an expert - believe me, I speak from experience. It just takes a willing heart, a desire to serve God and the guts to take risks.

God isn't looking for qualifications. He's looking for people who care enough to put themselves on the line for others and who are willing to pay the price that makes a difference.



Having now returned from Croatia, Andy Harrington leads SYNERGY, the Ground Level national youth and student network. He's involved in a number of UK and overseas projects that are geared to seeing revival come into areas of injustice and oppression.





r e v i

MUSIC — COMPILED BY SUE RINALDI

GOING GLOBAL!

Supermarkets know... restaurants know... wine merchants know... record shops know... they know that the world has gone global! The introduction of food, drink and music from other countries and cultures has been educational and enjoyable but also creatively stimulating. The musical map is changing — there are some exciting sounds and styles, voices and instruments from all around the world that when cross-fertilised produce a soundscape that is undeniably fresh and exciting. So give your ears a feast... go global!

AFRO CELT SOUND SYSTEM

Real World (Real World Records)

The musical landscape is forever changing. One of the most exciting developments is the awareness of 'world music' resulting in experiments of fusion — merging one style with another and creating something entirely new and wonderful! The Real World label — initiated by Peter Gabriel — has released a wide-ranging catalogue of music from the traditional to the very modern from all corners of the world.

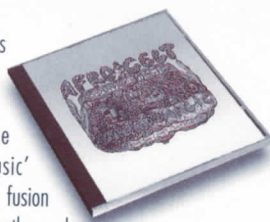
Afro Celt Sound System is amazingly fresh, and with integrity mixes together the versatility of the Celtic instruments with the beating of the African drums. The lilting tunes weave happily within a rhythmic framework that includes some great drum programming loops. The whole album is inspiring, enabling me to forgive the slightly out-of-tune uilleann pipes on the opening track.

POP

U2 (Island Records)

With serious grooves and atmospheric experimentation, U2 have successfully taken 'rock music' into the new millennium! *Pop* begins with the fast-paced hit single 'Discotheque' and by the time the third track 'Mofo' hits your ears, you could be forgiven for feeling you've just run the marathon! Fat bass, vocal trickery and driving rhythms characterise the first stage of the U2 journey. The pace changes with 'If God Will Send His Angels' — an excellently crafted song soaked in atmosphere with lyrics crying out for God to send some angels... 'I could sure use them here right now... the High Street never looked so low'.

Heavy rhythm, clever drum loops, imaginative lyrics continue to draw you in — although you do need to listen a few times before the tunes become 'singer-friendly'. The countless



references to God, the cry of 'Jesus, Jesus help me' in 'Wake Up Dead Man' and the search to 'fill that God shaped hole' suggests that they still haven't found what they're looking for! But musically speaking, innovation has triumphed and U2 have produced an exciting experience of sound.

THE FRIENDSHIP AND THE FEAR

Matt Redman (Survivor Records — Kingsway)

Matt Redman is one of the younger stars in the traditional-style worship leading firmament, a fact that this album goes a long way towards concealing. The good side of this is in the maturity of some of the lyrics. In keeping with the economic climate, the 80s gave us a lot of confident worship songs about proclaiming things, calling down things and generally doing things 'in the nation'. This album brings a refreshing touch of humility before God in songs delivered with an intimate voice.

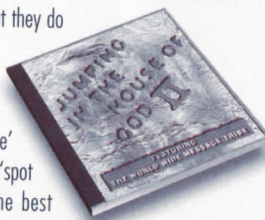
Sadly there is a down side... the album's big and cluttered mid-80s sound which ranges from 'Simple Minds stadium bombast' to 'sub-Sting jazz'.

Andy Cross

JUMPING IN THE HOUSE OF GOD II

World Wide Message Tribe (Alliance Music)

This lot aren't The Prodigy but they do seem to have got a grip on commercial dance music which means we're spared another badly produced 'dance' record where we can all play 'spot the second-hand beats'! The best songs are the band's own — the 'Sanctified Segue' in particular pushes the right buttons. Less successful are the covers of well-trodden worship songs, which aren't radical enough to overcome their over familiarity. A



notable exception however is the re-working of Taizé's 'O Lord Hear My Prayer' — a sublime combination of blissful harmonies and a slippery groove. Thoroughly excellent!

Andy Cross

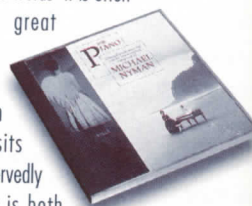
Guest reviewer Andy Cross is a musician and producer who runs the Zoo Audio studio and record label in Cambridge. Production credits include Elements by Maggi Dawn and Songs Of Taizé volumes 1 and 2.

CLASSICAL ZONE

THE PIANO

Michael Nyman (Virgin Records)

In this heady 'world of words' it is often difficult to find great instrumental music. However the original music from the film 'The Piano' sits comfortably and deservedly in this category. It is both beautiful and poignant, and highlights the unique style of one of today's best living composers.



Nyman's music is intense, inventive and original and often contains surprising twists and turns. Nearly a million sales and rising, Nyman's *Piano* score has succeeded in merging Scottish folk with popular songs, thus catapulting classical music into the wider world.

Also check out his soundtrack for the film *Carrington* and the more obscure but equally brilliant *Michael Nyman Live*.

COMPASS RATINGS

★ disappointing
★★ average
★★★ good
★★★★ delivers
★★★★★ distinction

RADICAL EVANGELISM**Pete Gilbert**

Evangelism is in the minds of most churches today and being radical is in our hearts.

This Pioneer Perspective brings the two together, giving a good theological base for evangelism which takes us beyond some of our traditional views.

The challenge of this book comes in two chapters on 'The Why' of evangelism and the importance of seeing it in the context of church and not as an end in itself.

For me I would have preferred much more on the 'How' to give ideas and direction. But as this is essentially a 'Perspective', it is certainly a book which will challenge the reader hopefully into looking further and possibly into new areas of action.

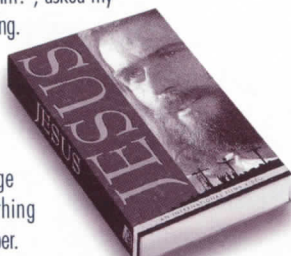
Dave Kitchen**JESUS**

International Films

'Can we watch the Jesus film?', asked my friend at a seekers' meeting. He had already seen it twice that day! Now he has brought many within hearing of the gospel. Like many village Turks, he had read nothing other than the newspaper.

This video has been used all over the world in many languages. In a Turkish context, perhaps as in others, it suits the mindset; — giving all the subject at one sitting — a person on whom to focus, rather than religious practices — acceptable viewing for visiting family.

It is not 'in your face' evangelism. Turks don't want more religion! In good language, it shows Luke's saviour who speaks up for the disadvantaged.

Colin Meads**MOSES**

S4C/Christmas films

Awe, fear and horror are some of the reactions you may experience as the story of Moses unfolds before your eyes. The video gives a brief resume of Moses' early life, then concentrates on his calling, the plagues and the exodus from Egypt.

The sound effects and atmospheric music create a fast-moving and exciting animated story. The accompanying notes and questions are carefully thought out to appeal to a range of situations and age groups and are user friendly. This is an excellent and thought provoking video which demands a response from the viewer. Beware — not a video for the faint-hearted or sensitive. Parents may want to vet it first. 'PG' rather than 'U' may have been a more appropriate classification.

Anne Lyons

Most of the items reviewed in *Compass* are available from Pioneer Direct on: 01932 789681

*'You are all a lost generation'*

GERTRUDE STEIN

'Many Christians are too self-centred, too indoctrinated with secular values, too anxious for the world's approval to be much use as gospel revolutionaries.'

WES RICHARDS

'I always claim the mission workers came out too early to catch any sinners on this part of Broadway. At such an hour the sinners are still in bed resting up from their sinning of the night before, so they will be in good shape for more sinning a little later on.'

DAMON RUNYON

'The evangelical Church has often emphasised the event at Calvary and the theology of the Cross at the expense of the event at Bethlehem and the theology of Incarnation. But incarnation always precedes redemption - chronologically as well as theologically. Therefore any mission or evangelism the Church engages in which ignores this truth is sub-Christian and doomed to failure.'

STEVE CHALKE

'The Gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness.'

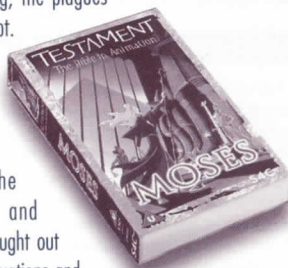
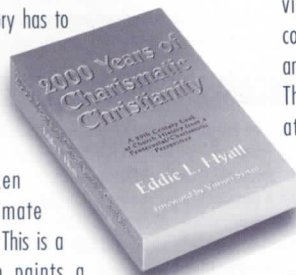
JOHN WESLEY

2000 YEARS OF CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY**Eddie Hyatt**

Someone has said that history has to repeat itself because no-one listens the first time.

We are now rediscovering the importance of telling the stories of God's unbroken faithfulness and intimate involvement with his people. This is a faith-building book which paints a breathtaking panorama of Christian experience of the Holy Spirit since Pentecost. Its thoroughly researched and gripping narrative reveals that spiritual power is always quenched by strife, ritual, moral laxity and institutionalism.

Conversely, revival isn't the occasional result of Christians twisting God's arm, but the irrepressible Holy Spirit breaking out wherever and whenever Christians turn to Jesus in sacrificial prayer and repentance. It is often said that it is the traditional church which has preserved Christian truth. Now Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians can claim a rich historical heritage going back to biblical roots.

David Stanley

Compass

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"TIE Teams offer... a genuine opportunity for training which helps to build and develop local church. I warmly encourage you to make use of TIE Teams."
Clive Calver
(Evangelical Alliance)

NEW FOR 1997 - CHANGING SHAPE FOR THE FUTURE

Since the mid 1980s TIE (Training in Evangelism) Teams have trained hundreds of people of various ages and backgrounds. They have been equipped, developed and released in their giftings in order to reach this nation and beyond with the Good News of Jesus. As we move towards a new decade, TIE Teams has been responding to change, re-shaping its' training opportunities within a changing world.

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Are you committed to growth and evangelism? Can you give 9 days or longer in July or August? If the answer to these questions in 'Yes', then Summer School of Evangelism may well be for you!

Each 9 day programme includes 7 days of training, action and team building at various centres around the country. Training is given by members of the TIE leadership team including Steve Philips whose ministry in prophetic evangelism has seen 1,000's come to Christ in the last few years. After the 7 days of action and training, teams assist in the running of a wide range of evangelistic projects.

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Operating from regional centres around the country, Long Term Teams offers various access points to both intensive study and practical experience.

Track 1 trainees are seconded to local churches within regions and access all of the TIE training. Track 2 allows trainees to access residential training, overseas trip, summer school of evangelism as required and available. Track 3 gives access to regional training only. Those at work or those who require great flexibility could benefit from both tracks 2 and 3. All training is delivered across modules. If you're willing to learn and to work hard, this could be for you. **Minimum age 18yrs**

PIONEER

Please forward more details on Pioneer TIE Teams (please tick appropriate boxes)

☐ Summer School of Evangelism

☐ Long Term Teams

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The last word

There's nothing like a bit of bus stop ministry to start your day. This involves giving out hot drinks and biscuits at bus stops. No-one wants a drink, but they think the church is wonderful.

When asked why we're doing it, our standard reply is: 'We reckon Jesus wants his church to be serving the community, and I bet if he was here in the flesh he'd offer you a nice cup of tea.'

This is followed by a stunned look as the punter accepts a leaflet. By midday we've given out one tea, two coffees, 100 leaflets, prayed with one bloke and eaten most of the biscuits ourselves.

I settle down to some study at home in the afternoon. This starts by making a cup of tea in the kitchen. My landlady has an unchurched friend round. Between them there are five screaming, yet beautiful, children. I offer the ladies a hot drink and retire to the kitchen to make it.

Suddenly I'm thinking about all the sickness that's hitting the church. I'm getting angry. I've hit the interface between frustration and prayer. Before long I'm elsewhere in the Spirit, praying in tongues. I slip into frenzy mode. I suddenly exclaim, 'Out in Jesus' name!' I open my eyes and realise the only noise I can hear is the soft whistle of the kettle, and that my violent rebuke has silenced everyone in the adjacent room. My landlady responds,

'Are you alright in there?'

'I'm fine, thank-you.'

The rest of the afternoon is spent playing

football on the estate. Chris, one of my TiE teamers, is a keen player – so keen he almost removes a kid's ankle with a humdinger of a volley. Otherwise the whole thing runs without incident. Hopefully they'll recover from their injuries by the following week.

The day ends with a visit to Leicester Square. The group is sent off to prayerwalk the area. I'm left standing with only my sports bag for company. Two Asian youths approach, mistaking me for a drug dealer. It gets worse as they realise I'm there to offer them something else.

'What are you – a Christian or something?'

'Yeah!'

'What colour are you?'

At this I look at my hands and slowly follow a path up my arms ending at my face. I look up and say, 'Well actually, I'm black'.

'Yeah, right...You should be Muslim or Hindu or something. All Christians are white.'

'No, they're not. I've been a...'

'No! You listen to me, mate! Repeat after me – ALL CHRISTIANS ARE WHITE.'

'No, I'm not going to say that.'

'I'm getting angry now!' Making out to hit me, he's restrained by his friend and sort of punches me on his way off.

I catch a night bus at 2am. I end my day trying to witness to a complete stranger who's fallen asleep on my shoulder.



If Jesus was here in the flesh he'd offer you a nice cup of tea...

Alan Celine is a former maths teacher on a second year TiE* Team at Breakthrough Church, Wandsworth. He's co-ordinating two long term TiE teamers, as they work on a local estate trying to plant a cell group.

*Training in Evangelism – a Pioneer course. 01243 531898 for details.

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