



CHAINLINK

The Magazine of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association UK

SPRING 2022

**BUMPER ISSUE!
LOTS MORE TO CHECK
OUT IN THIS EDITION!**



**TWO WHEELS BECAME
THREE FOR BOB &
DAWN. SEE PAGE 26
FOR FULL STORY.**

spring 2022

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Photo by Ja Kubislav on Unsplash

From the Editor's Garage

THE MIRACLE OF SALVATION can *never* be underestimated. Every person on this planet—man, woman, boy and girl—must have the opportunity to hear the good news (the *Gospel*) that Jesus Christ can transform a broken life and give a hope that is out of this world!

In this issue of *Chainlink* you will read amazing stories of how some of our CMA family have encountered the living Saviour, Jesus the only Son of Almighty God, the Messiah, the King of kings. This editor has truly been touched, and led to tears, by the miraculous ways that our Father in heaven has wonderfully changed lives. You will find some of them a long read – for this I do not apologise. Several contributors gave me licence to cut short their stories to fit the magazine but I could not do so. I have also included as many of your photos as would fit to endorse the stories and add a bit of colour at the same time.

I have been very encouraged by the response of all who have taken the time to put pen to paper, or rather fingers to keys, to send me their stories. Every one of them returns glory to God, from where it came in the first place. I believe that our Father is glorified whenever His promises are outworked in His children.

Since I have received too many to include in our normal 28 pages plus covers I felt the only option was to increase the page count to include as many articles as was economically possible. For any that I have left out until the Summer issue, my sincere apologies.

A huge 'Thank You' to our new National Secretary for his e-mails sent to 'strongly encourage' you all to send in your articles. Adam, it worked!

Be blessed as you read, give praise to God for His outrageous love to us all and be encouraged to '*press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*'. Philippians 3:14

John

Articles for Chainlink are most welcome, and should preferably be submitted by e-mail to chainlink@bike.org.uk

All images should be high resolution (originals from your camera/smartphone) and **NOT** embedded in a text document. Vector graphics are also welcome. Text documents should be unformatted text or rich text format (RTF) files. MS Word, OpenOffice and WordPerfect documents are acceptable, **PDFs are not**.

The sender must have permission for the inclusion of ALL names, addresses and pictures, especially of children, prior to submission and be able to provide accreditation for all material that is not original. The sender takes all responsibility for all content and rights relating to all items that are submitted. If in doubt, please obtain verification from the National Chairman or the Executive Committee. The editor retains the right to correct spelling and grammar as appropriate.

The
gospel is
the power
of God
unto
salvation

Romans 1:16

Biker Bibles

Mike Fitton, National Chairman

Recently I swapped my bike for a long wheel-based Mercedes rental van to drive over the North Yorkshire moors in the snow to Grimsby and move our stock of Biker Bibles to a new storage location in Carlisle. This has been an incredible answer to prayer.

For many years we have been blessed by the Dibden family who provided us with space to store thousands of Biker Bibles in their haulage distribution warehouse. A past member, Russell Boyce, gave up his time to prepare boxes for couriers and on many occasions he met branch members at service stations to hand over their supply. We are very grateful for all he did.

Due to unforeseen circumstances caused by the Covid restrictions, we have had to find an alternative place to store the Bibles.

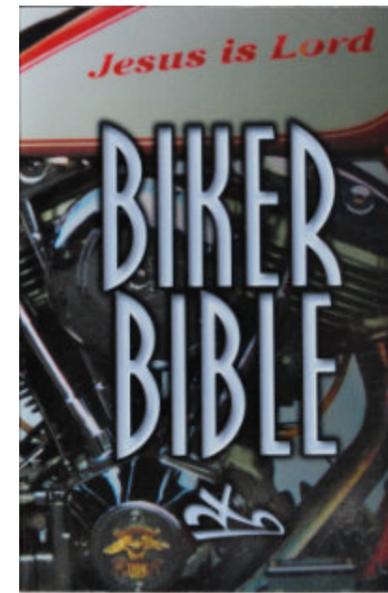
After weeks of prayer and making enquiries, National Executive member David Ball informed me that a Christian publishing company for which he is a trustee had moved to a new facility in Carlisle. They are called 'Langham Publishing' and could take our stock. I can't tell you what a blessing this was, if you had passed our house that day, you would have heard me repeatedly shouting, "HALLELUJAH!" Langham Publishing is a non-profit Christian international fellowship working with the vision of its founder, the theologian and preacher John Stott – his desire was to equip the growth of the global church in maturity and Christ-likeness by raising the standards of biblical preaching and teaching.

I arranged to meet up with branch representatives on Thursday 31st March on a freezing cold day at a building, ironically called 'The Ice House Christian Centre'. It



was originally built for the fishing industry to store huge blocks of ice used in the transportation of fish across the UK; the walls are three feet thick and in the day were lined with cork.

We had seven pallets of Bibles to move; around 240 boxes each containing 50 Bibles. My plan was that branches could take most of the Bibles and then Sandy and I would deliver the rest to Carlisle. At 10.30am members arrived from Thames Valley, East Midlands, South Lancashire, North Cheshire, Norfolk and North Lincolnshire. Then others came who would pass Bibles on to branches in Cornwall, North Wales, Staffs and Shropshire, Lakes'n'Lancs, Bikers Church, West Yorks, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk Borders, Bristol, Bedford, Knights of Antioch, Hants and Surrey Borders, Gloucester, Scotland, Tyne and Wear, Carlisle and Towcester. Through Sue Brown, I met 'Goose', a brilliant guy who ministers in prisons around Hull. The Bibles he took will be placed in the hands of broken lives that need to know there is a Saviour. Jonathan Dibden, who owns



the Ice House, also asked for some Bibles to be placed in their new Christian bookshop in Brigg, North Lincolnshire.

A big thank you to Rob Urand, who gathered the orders for distribution.

As I drove north, I thought about the load I was carrying in the van, boxes and boxes of Biker Bibles, the Word of Truth. Each has the potential to transform a biker's life and then affect the rest of his or her family. I think it is easy to hand out a Bible and sometimes forget that we are called to make disciples – not just put a Bible in someone's hand. If the situation allows, it needs some explanation, prayer and follow up. In John 8:31-32 Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

When the apostle Paul wrote his letters (epistles) to the believers in the early church, he would have given them to a trusted friend or co-worker to deliver them in person. Imagine the responsibility they must have felt as they made their way to Ephesus, Corinth, or Thessalonica. The group of believers were relying on them to arrive safely, and desperate to hear what Paul had to teach them. I felt that responsibility as I was delivering the Bibles to the new facility. And the same

goes for CMA; we have a tremendous responsibility as we pack Biker Bibles in our panniers and pray, 'God lead us to a broken life.'

As Sandy and I arrived at Carlisle we were welcomed by Libby and Wayne of Langham Publishing. The storage facility is superb, it's clear God is in the centre of all they do. Richard, Ken and Gill from the local branch were there to help us offload, then after a quick tour of the premises and a photo opportunity we headed home, excited and blessed to be part of this incredible ministry called the *Christian Motorcyclists' Association*.

Details about how to access Biker Bibles at Langham will be circulated to branch secretaries and each order will be authorised by the National Treasurer via treasurer@bike.org.uk

Thank you to everyone who was involved, especially Dave who bought me a coffee at McDonald's when I realised I'd left my wallet at home! ☺

Please send to *Chainlink* any stories you have about 'God encounters' as you share the Biker Bibles with your local motorcycle community – we all need encouraging.

God Bless you all, Mike 🙏

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CMA UK Branches

For a complete and up-to-date list of all UK branches please check out the CMA UK website – see the link in the footer of this page.

The views expressed in *Chainlink* cannot be taken as official CMA policy on any subject. The magazine is published up to four times a year, to provide information for CMA members and to encourage them in their personal walk with God. We pray that this magazine will also stimulate non-Christian readers into thinking more about Jesus Christ, and also seeking Him for themselves.

The Bible says: 'Seek and you will find'
St Matthew chapter 7, verse 7



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for submission
of items for the
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CMA Ladies Conference

Sandy Angel-Jones-Fitton

We are almost there! Well, nearly... Our CMA UK Ladies Conference for 2022 is just around the corner of this year and we really do hope you will be able to join us. To help you decide if this is for you, here is a whistle stop tour of our weekend:

Friday: you can arrive from 3pm onwards. Pauline and Janet will greet you with a beautiful smile and give you the keys to your ensuite bedroom. Settle in and relax in your own room or come and meet everyone else and catch up over tea/coffee and cake. Join everyone in the dining room for supper at 7pm and after that listen to, and sing, praise and worship in the first evening of the weekend.

Saturday begins with a hearty breakfast and then we head off into our workshops. These workshops are based on biblical teaching that allows you to have your voice and your choice of which you would like to join. There is something for everyone and it is a great time of ladies sharing and learning together. Tea/coffee breaks, lunch and supper are all part of this package and the evening is relaxed and entertaining!

Sunday, after breakfast, we are always delighted to welcome our National Chairman to speak at our morning service and we finish with raise-the-roof worship and thanks to all that made this weekend work – that includes you! After this we have lunch and you are usually on your way back home by 3pm.

This may sound like a full weekend, and it is! It's full of fun, laughter, sharing, caring, compassion and love, as well as learning through biblical teaching and each other's experiences. But it is important to know that in this there is time for you to wind down, take time out alone or with others, and breathe! You will come away feeling refreshed and revived and you will have met such a wonderful group of ladies that are friends for life – eternal life!

If this sounds like something that you and your friends, church ladies, family (anyone who is a lady) would like to join in, please get in touch with our lovely conference booking lady, Pauline Lowrey,

CMA(UK) Ladies Conference 2022

Friday 4th
to Sunday 6th
November 2022

Hayes Christian Conference Centre, Swanwick, Alfreton,
Derbyshire, DE55 1AU, UK

Cost: £185 (all inclusive of breakfast, lunch, supper and tea/coffee breaks, ensuite room, conference facilities)

Contact: Sandy Angel-Jones-Fitton
email: sandyfitton@icloud.com
or text/whatsapp (UKcode) 0777 8165694

LadiesConfBooking@bike.org.uk and book your place now. Rooms are limited but we still have space at this point and we would love to have you join us.

You are always welcome to contact me directly if you have any questions. My email address and phone number are below.

Sandy Angel-Jones-Fitton

Conference Leader/Coordinator

Mobile: 07778165694

LadiesConfOrg@bike.org.uk 📧

Face to Face with Mortality

Les Jones, East Midlands

I get knocked down...

At 3.15 on the afternoon of 3rd November 2021, while having coffee with Darek, a biker friend, I got a pain in my right thigh followed by weakness in my leg, blurred speech and the right side of my face drooping – this ‘action man’ was suffering a stroke!

We realised what was happening and Darek got me to Leicester A&E within the hour. This was the saving move—they call it the ‘golden hour’—and enabled the doctors to administer medication to dissolve the clot which was forming in my brain.

I had a few (sleepless) days in Leicester hospital and then into rehab for three weeks. Immediately after the stroke I had very little movement in my right leg and not much more in my right arm. Speech and arm were recovering within a few days. There was much rejoicing when I wiggled my big toe for the first time two weeks later!

...and I get up again!

After three weeks of ‘boot camp’ in rehab (the physios were marvellous, especially ‘Nick the Merciless’) I was released on ‘early parole’ for a six week program of daily physio visits at home, since when I have continued to make good progress. Praise God my brain is unaffected and He has kept my mood buoyant.

So where was God in all of this? To quote the song:

*‘I know who walks before me, I know who stands behind,
the God of Angel Armies is always by my side’*

As I see it, we live in a broken world and yes, bad things happen. But such is the grace of God, that I was with a good friend with a car sitting on his driveway! Consider that an hour before I was walking our dog on my own in local woods and the weekend before I was at the AGM in Chelmsford.



Coming face to face with my own mortality was a shock: when disaster strikes we either embrace our Saviour or reject Him – you don’t know which way you will turn until you’re on the edge.

I’ve made good progress and, please God, more strength and movement yet to come. Many of the other stroke patients on the ward were destined for permanent care. I don’t know whether I will regain sufficient strength in my right leg to support the weight of my bike. Days on two wheels may be drawing to a close – but praise God, I’ve had the joy of riding for most of 40 years.

I have always seen God’s call into His service as being for a season – It says in Isaiah 43:18-19

‘Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing...

I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wilderness.’

So, in my current ‘wilderness’ there may be things which I can no longer do and I must accept that. But He has not finished with me yet! There is more to do for His kingdom so I look to what I can do and where He is taking me next. I look back with joy and forwards with anticipation.

Thank you all for your prayers and love, both for me and Ross, over this difficult time; they have been a source of great encouragement and support to us both. CMA is an amazing family and I wish God’s blessing on you all. 🙏



Biker Bibles 2

Tom & Debra Anderson, Tyne & Wear

The NE Washington Wetlands twice-weekly bike meet got off to a good start in March with the bikers flooding back after two years of restrictions. Tom Anderson and Iain Overman from the Tyne and Wear branch have made many friends and contacts over the years, and they attend every Wetland meet when possible.

The last Sunday night in March, Iain was unable to get there and Tom debated with himself whether to go or not. Excuses included:

‘I am desperately tired and don’t feel like going out anywhere.’

‘I am 72 years old and a night in is a good thing.’

‘I have recently recovered from Covid and still feel a bit poorly.’

‘I have always gone in the past, come rain or shine. Surely a night off will be OK?’

‘My knee hurts.’

The list goes on...

None of these reasons could overcome a strong prompting from the Holy Spirit which eventually got him up out of his chair and on his way.

Soon after Tom arrived at the bike meet a couple that he has seen before, but doesn’t know, approached him and said they had been waiting for Iain as he has had quite a bit of contact with them at various bike events. They knew Tom was also a Christian and belonged to the same organisation as Iain.

The girl had recently started riding and someone had mentioned the Biker Bible to her and she was really keen to have one. Tom always carries a supply of them and it was wonderful to be sought out for one instead of having the internal struggle of ‘should I or shouldn’t I offer them a Bible’.

She wanted a Bible and God was making sure she got one. This could be where a new start begins for her. 🙏

The Story of Me

Fraser McDougall, Forth & Tay

See that picture of the long haired guy with the good looking blonde?

That's me and the wife, (Roberta, more than just 'The Wife') when we were going out together, back in 1983.

Yes, I'm a bit rubbered. Not as rubbered as I would be later. Those were days of mixed thoughts and philosophies. One, I wanted to be like a Pink Floyd song, all full of cynicism and disgust at the state of humanity and on the other hand, (usually when I straightened out for an hour or two) full of hope for the future, get married, have kids, all that stuff. That was before I got so out of it that I forgot how to get back.

Oh dear, another Syd Barrett in the making. Lost his soul, lost his centre, can't think for thinking, can't laugh for crying, or for fear, or for anything. Can't get off this stuff, can't get round this boulder at the front of my head. The one that keeps blocking my path with doubt and paranoia.

Split from the blonde. She caused it. Messed your head up, man. You can't be a stoned philosopher and a steady fella at the same time. She has to go. So, we split. She went and got saved. What's that like? Try going to a church. Nice happy folk, all lovey and cuddly. But no-one rides motorbikes or listens to rock music. That's all devil stuff, apparently.

Go on without the blonde, without the church, just me and my mate Jeebsy. He accepts me. Get into a few scrapes. Jeebsy gets me home safe, more than a few times. Thank God for Jeebsy. It's becoming apparent that I can't get the blonde off my mind. Or Jesus' mates either for that matter. Sitting with Jeebsy one night, watching 'The Wall', the thoughts in my head are louder than Dave Gilmour pouring his heart and soul into *Comfortably Numb* (which I'm not). "Phone Roberta", the loud, insistent voice in my head says. Daft. "Phone Roberta". Haven't spoken to her in months. "Phone Roberta". "Jeebs, have you got 10p? I need to make a phone call". "Hi, how you doin?" Silence... "Fraser?" "Aye, that's me". "Really?" "Well, even I'm not sure about that bit". Cut a long story short, she had been praying for guidance, seems she couldn't get me out of her mind either. She tells me that she wants to move to the town where I live. Well, I can't stop her, can I?

So it's kinda like I get the idea I'm being cornered. By God? Or by the blonde?

The blonde, she's not my mother. She's not as cunning as my mother. Mother has appeared back in town after leaving the family home when I was 16. I didn't do well with that, at all. That spelled



the end of trying to conform to parents/society's standards, you know, work for a living, pass your driving test, don't ever drink, don't do dope, don't get anyone pregnant, don't protest, it's a nuisance, deda deda...

Yes, I took that very badly. Petty crime, drugs (later), alcohol, threatening teachers, into a spiral of 'They don't care two hoots about me, so why should I care two hoots about them?' Poor me. I know, lots of folk are worse off. The point is, this was me back then, without hindsight or learned compassion. You can't feel others' pain for your own, when you're in it.

Sorry, Mother. She came back, all freed from her own addictions, all loved up by Jesus! What's going on here? She can't come back here, poking her nose into my life, trying to sort me out, it was her fault for leaving in the first place! I'm getting on just fine, Mother! Look, a girlfriend, a bike, mates, drink, dope, a messed up head, paranoia, no money, nowhere to live, a dysfunctional home life, no great relationship with my father... what more could a guy want?

Peace. Pride. Dignity. Self Respect.

Where was I? Oh, yes. Peace. Pride. Dignity. Self Respect. Without all that we are less than complete. I was without all of the above, except maybe pride, but not the pride we need to be complete. I'm talking foolish pride. 'I'll fix it myself' type of pride. 'I don't have a problem, it's everyone else's type of pride. 'Tomorrow I'll be OK' type of pride. Only, you can't fix what you can't put your finger on, you can't say there's no problem, when your head's so full of fear and contradictions that no answer fits any question, and tomorrow, I'm not ok. Not for a lot of tomorrows.

So, the blonde moves to Stewarton, the Mother moves to sort her wee boy out. The wee boy by this time is getting increasingly paranoid.

par·a·noi·a

- A psychotic disorder characterised by delusions of persecution with or without grandeur, often strenuously defended with apparent logic and reason.
- Extreme, irrational distrust of others.

Yes, I do know the meaning of the word. I was without the delusions of grandeur, though.

You have to realise, dear reader, what a pit I was getting into. The more stuff I fired into my system, the worse it got. The more I tried to rationalise my way out, the more lost I got. The more pain I caused myself, the more stuff I took to try to forget it all.

It. Would. Not. Go. Away.

It was bad, man. My mate Gary took a picture of me one day when I wasn't expecting it. He showed me it later. For the first time I saw what was going on, like looking into a mirror. Gary is a good photographer, he catches moments in time and lives that most don't see, 'cos we don't look for the details that fill the story like we should. Life's not like a movie, which we can watch over and over, we pass through each moment only once. A good photographer now, he can tell a tale from catching just one moment. And it was BAD.

My photo mirror told me that I wasn't able to hide this condition any more. So I'm caught. Everybody knows, the wee man cannae handle his stuff any more. He's lost it, blown it, he's a reject, he's not deep, he's just messed up. Oh yes, very. Time to hide. Only you can't hide from what's inside, can you? What to do?

By this time I was staying at my mother's flat. She was praying a lot. Roberta had been visiting, just friends, but for the most part she would spend time with my mother, talking about Jesus and the Bible and all that stuff. I listened sometimes, but none of it really moved me much. Until one night, when I had a mirror experience that got through to the very heart of me.

Standing having a shave, feeling down, the image in the mirror shifted slightly. Instead of seeing my usual reflection I saw myself differently. Instead of looking in the mirror trying to find something to feel good about, I saw through compassionate eyes. I did not know that feeling, hadn't experienced the sense of compassion before. And it was for ME. Now, you can go to church, pray, praise, preach, give your money, wear straight clothes all you want, but until Jesus TOUCHES your heart, identifies HIMSELF to you, you aint gonna KNOW Him. I knew then, and still acknowledge, that this was Jesus, showing me how He felt about me.

That experience led to my becoming more aware that there was a way out of my predicament, it gave me the faith to cry out to GOD for help. I did, one night, going to my bed, feeling like death again. He answered... Not with words or lightning, or death, or angels.

How does God speak to people? In lots of ways apparently. Like I said, I was kind of hoping for

angelic visitations, or fire and brimstone, or death. No. Instead I was invited to go back to a happy clappy meeting. Ok, I'll give it a go. I've nothing to lose, which is A Good Place To Be In, if you NEED God). Only this particular night, it wasn't so clappy. There was a visiting preacher, whose name escapes me, but whose message never has. He talked about Personal Prayer and a PERSONAL relationship with the Lord Jesus. Well, that got me to thinking. The more I listened to this guy, who was a Catholic priest by the way, the more convinced I became that I could try what he was recommending.

A few days later I tried it for myself. I went to the flat belonging to my mate Mark. He shared it with another guy, Stevie. They were going to the clappy meetings also, and they both have powerful testimonies as well. They had been going consistently for months and were beginning to get their stuff together. Anyway, I knocked on their door and asked if I could use a room to pray in. Struck dumb by this request, Mark nodded, wide-eyed.

Now, I had set myself a target. I was to pray for 30 minutes, no less. I was to pray for everybody except myself. I had to believe that what I was praying for would be answered but not to think I would necessarily see the answers. Oh, and you've got to kneel, apparently. So, I knelt and bowed my head and started to talk.

Round the block I went, praying for my parents, mates, Roberta, the local alcoholics and worthies, government, etc., etc. I looked at the clock. I had managed fifteen minutes... This is hard. Ok, keep at it. More blethering. Another five minutes gone. And again, another five. Puff, pant, talk, sing a song, talk some more... Finally! Thirty minutes gone! What to do now? Thank God! OK, so I began to thank God, saying, "Thank you Lord for seeing me through this far. I acknowledge that even though I don't feel anything, you love me, that you are my Father..." quiet. My heavy mind began to feel lighter. New thoughts trickled in, seeming to carry a lightness and truth. Thoughts of Fatherhood, what a Father is to a son. Thoughts of what Father God desired to be to me, His son! And, as I spoke these things out, saying again, "Thank you Lord, for being my Father, for desiring to Father me, in provision, wisdom, truth, discipline, protection..."

Unspeakable Joy! A rush, a mighty whoosh! came from somewhere inside me, blowing up from my heart to my face and I cracked into the widest grin I've ever felt! That grin seemed to come from my heart to my face, which felt as if it beamed with joy. I was still on my knees but was literally bouncing up and down with joy and happiness. I jumped to my feet and shouted at the top of my lungs thanking the Lord for being my Father! And for being ALL that a father should be to me.

I went through to the living room where Stevie and Mark looked up at me. Stevie said, "Wow! You've been talking to God!"

"Too right, mate. And He's been talking to me!" †

Mavis Towers

Sid O'Neill, North Cheshire

On the 13th of February, North Cheshire CMA and the wider CMA family lost a legend of a woman. Mavis Towers was a dear member of our branch and I had the privilege of being her Chairman. She went to glory aged 86. This is the story of how we met over 12 years ago. Like most things in the Kingdom of God it didn't make sense that Mavis, a lady with no history of owning a motorcycle or even riding as a pillion, would become one of our most active members and effective evangelists. Not only impacting everyone she met in CMA but also impacting most bikers she came into contact with.



Just over 12 years ago my phone rang, "Hello is that Sid O'Neill? My name is Mavis Towers and I'd like to buy some Biker Bibles". "What, who, why, eh???" "Mavis... I'm Mavis Towers!". "Yes, I heard. Mavis, we don't usually sell our Biker Bibles, they are for our members to give away to bikers they meet on the road."

Mavis went on to explain that bikers whizz past her house each weekend and she had discovered that they head up to Devil's Bridge [near Kirby Lonsdale - Ed.] and she and her mate Hetti wanted to go and try and reach them with the gospel. 'Hang on, I thought - that's our job; who on earth is this lady - is she crazy or crackers or both and who's Hetti, her 80 year old partner in this endeavour?'

Well after some time I gave in. "Ok I'll meet you at Lancaster Services and you can have a few Bibles to give away." What harm could it do, I pondered. I'll get her off my back and never see her again, I thought. I was heading north to a rally and we arranged to meet. I was on my own and it was pouring down. I parked up and a Honda Jazz pulled up. A little old lady jumped out in a blue rain mac. "Are you Sid?" "Yes. Are you Mavis?" This was feeling odder by the minute, like some OAP drug deal! "Can I give you a hug?" she asked. "Well you can if you want?" "Will your wife mind?" she asked. "Well she's not here so crack on!" And that was the start of an amazing friendship that sadly on this earth, ended in February.

We parted and the package was handed over. Off I went and off she went and I arrived at my event to discover I'd lost all the cash I had in my pocket for

the weekend. I must have dropped it in Lancaster when I was messing about in the rain handing five Bibles over to the little old lady! I was gutted and skint. A week later I received a lovely letter from Mavis thanking me for the five Bibles and that she had given them all away at Devil's Bridge to bikers. Oh, and thank you Sid for the lovely cash gift you gave me with the Bibles! Arrrrr, that's where my cash went. Oh well, all's well that ends well. No wonder she asked for more I thought, probably hoping this could be very profitable! Reluctant to send more I decided to go and pay her a visit and see what was going on.

After speaking to her in more detail we soon became firm friends and I invited her to become a supporter of CMA UK via our North Cheshire Branch. That way I could let her have a few more Bibles if she was going to insist on heading to biker meets and handing them out to bikers she met. Mavis insisted on buying the Bibles she took and we were happy for her to have a few. She and Hetti soon became regulars at local biker meets and she started to get me a few speaking appointments around the Lancaster area. She kind of became my booking agent for visiting churches and sharing testimony and the gospel. Mavis would always join me as I spoke around the area. It just didn't make sense that this friendship had bloomed. But you could just sense that God was in it. I became a regular visitor to her home and soon introduced her to everyone else in the branch and beyond. She attended the Biker Breakfasts at Knowle Green and soon established herself as a firm friend to many in CMA. Her circle of friends suddenly exploded and

she often had bikers pay her a visit. Mavis had never married and had no children. She had been very loyal to her parents and had looked after them in their latter years. When they had gone Mavis was alone and I'm convinced God brought us together to give her a new family.

In fact, I believe that when she was at Bible College someone had spoken over her life and she was told in later life she would have many sons! Little did she know that these would be middle aged bikers in leathers! I remember on one occasion I was in the car with Mavis and Tim, her driver, heading to another speaking event she had arranged. We passed some bikers parked in a layby. "Oh, bikers!" Mavis shouted. Timothy did a hand brake turn and as we pulled up in the layby, Mavis and Tim were out of the car like Starsky & Hutch - I'm certain Mavis slid over the bonnet in her eagerness to reach the bikers. I, on the other hand was a little reluctant and must admit I've never stopped in a car to hand Bibles to bikers, not in my car! But this was Mavis and she would not pass any bikers parked up. She always went to them, Bibles in hand. As I went to get out, I could see a bearded biker heading to the car. 'Oh dear,' I thought, thick ear coming. As I got out of the car he shook my hand and thanked me for stopping. Mavis shouted me over, "Sid, come and pray for this lady". I could see a young woman in her 40's resting and sat down against a stone wall. It turned out this was her last ride-out as pillion, she was dying of cancer and had just months to live. We prayed and gave her a Bible and showed her the testimonies and the prayer and encouraged her to read them.

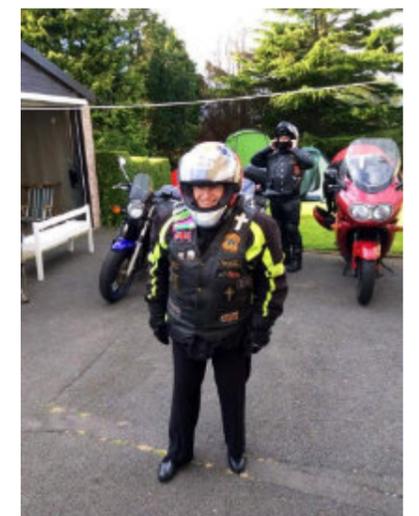
I was very quiet as we drove off. Mavis was excited and I just pondered the fact that I probably wouldn't have stopped in my car if I was going past alone. But then I wasn't alone - I was with Mavis and that changed everything. Mavis impacted everyone she met and soon became a dearly loved friend to many bikers. As the years passed and the friendship grew, I would ring her most days and pop up to help with DIY jobs. She would often tell me off, being an ex-teacher from a bygone generation. She had a firm telling-off tone and I often received a ticking off if I'd irritated her, but I'd tell her to stop moaning and we'd end up laughing.

She once mentioned she had never been to a bikers rally. Well, some of our members thought,



let's change that. 'Mav Fest' was born. A Biker Rally in her back garden. Complete with 'Mav Fest T Shirts' that we all wore. She was buzzing. Around ten of us turned up and camped in her garden, her drive full of bikes and bikers. Goodness knows what her next door neighbours thought. There was food and a ride-out and we even got Mavis on the back of Ian Frances' Triumph America, with the aid of a step ladder. I was terrified and wouldn't follow on my bike but was so relieved when she got back. She was absolutely made up. What a joy Mav Fest was. On the Sunday morning we held a service in her drive and two neighbours from next door joined us. Those were happy times.

As the years passed and Mavis got older, her days at Devil's Bridge sadly stopped and her lovely driver Timothy sadly had a stroke that left him bedridden. Her life started to slow down as the years took their toll. Her car was stuck in the garage and I suggested she gave the car away.



When All Else Fails Read The Instructions

Steve Wilds, West Yorks.



I just love technology, although I guess you would describe me as a 'silver surfer'. I just get a buzz out of the things we can do with our modern gizmos! On my motorbike my GPS device does all sorts of things; not only does it show me the way to and from destinations, it plays music, takes phone calls and probably a host of other things I haven't yet discovered. We can now easily talk bike to bike, make phone calls and speak through our helmet, all this whilst keeping the rubber on the ground and staying safe on two wheels. Modern bikes have ABS, cruise control, active suspension, a slipper clutch, twin cams and much more – powerful machines that give us great fun and increase our safety as well. How lovely it is to be just entering the warmer weather and although many of us ride year round, the sun on our backs when riding is just great.

So now, with all the modern gizmos, apps like 'What Three Words', quality and detailed GPS and all the comforts of home on the bike, we should never get lost again! I guess this is only true if we

use the equipment to its full advantage and get to know what it can and can't do. It's no good buying a swish GPS system without reading the instructions and really getting into its detail – it's the only way to use the equipment to its full advantage. Use it wrongly, especially GPS, and you will end up on a dirt track, just like I did recently in the middle of Spain. Then of course I get the 'recalculating' message and the lovely lady telling me to 'do a u-turn when possible!' Told you I am a silver surfer. It all adds to the fun, eh!

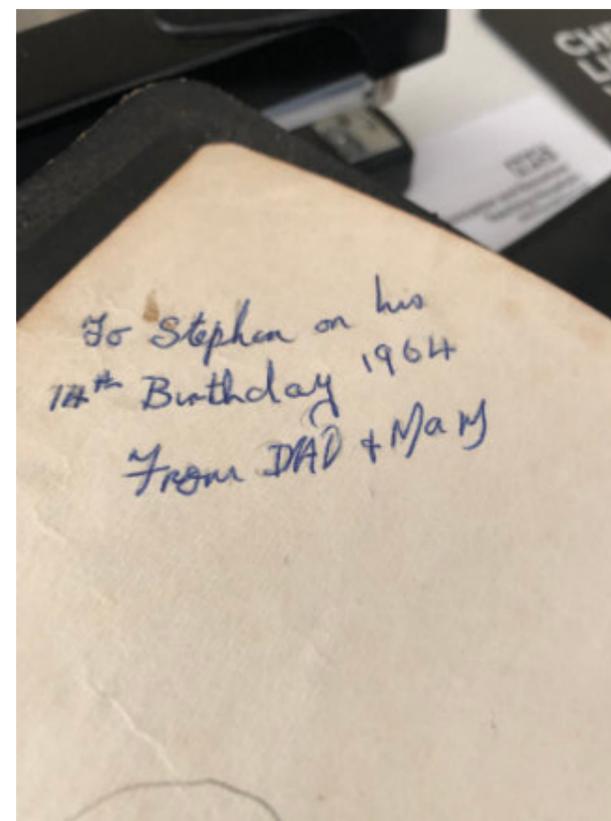
So why am I going on about this stuff? Well, it reminds me that as Christians, as disciples of Christ, we have a GPS system that we can use every day – our Bible. The one who designed the 'operating system' is non other than God himself. Our Bibles are the 'inspired word of God' and I would encourage you to read it every day – make it a habit to spend some time considering what your Bible says, it's the instruction book for your Christian life and if you follow its direction your destination is a heavenly home, a place where we will be forever with the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the best designer ever!

When I was fourteen, back in the day, I wanted a nice new, leather bound Bible. My mum and dad duly obliged and I had a new Bible that I used for several years. Now, if you are anything like me, you have numerous Bibles and this particular one seemed to disappear, go off the scene. Over the years I have moved home a few times, not too many, but I guess in the moving this Bible found its way into its almost permanent hiding place. It never crossed my mind that it would turn up, particularly as I have plenty of others. Well, as many of you know my lovely wife was promoted to heaven not too long ago and as a consequence I have had to empty a few cupboards and wardrobes, an emotional job, but it had to be done. In the process of cupboard clearing I found a box, it was tucked away in the back of the wardrobe and looked as if it hadn't been opened for quite a few years. I opened the box (which reminds me of an old TV quiz) and there I found my old Bible. I thought this was great. Yes, it's

sentimental, but it was a great touch stone to my past and a joy to thumb through it and see what verses I had marked as a boy. When I opened it I found something very special – the message was the same, the operating system was the same, there was no chip that needed updating, it was not obsolete, in fact the system it described was as new as ever, the same *yesterday, today and forever*. I didn't need to connect to Apple or Microsoft for any of those essential updates, it was all there and as fresh and as effective as ever.

One verse I had marked up, as a boy, was Psalm 27 verse 14—look it up—its a template for a victorious Christian life. It's one of the Bible's instructions for daily use to make sure you get to your destination.

God bless, enjoy your bikes, use the gizmos and ride safely. 🙏



STOP PRESS

New TWIG for South Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire

Your thoughts and prayers are requested for the formation of a new TWIG for South Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire. (SYNL). The TWIG is connected to the West Yorkshire branch (Chair Oliver Hamilton) and has 7 initial members. A number of early exploratory meetings have been held, with advice from CMA and now a chair, treasurer and secretary have been nominated to help move the TWIG into full swing. Of course it's early days but we are prayerfully and steadily moving forward. Steve Wilds has been nominated to Chair, and Kate Moore to act as both treasurer and secretary. Please pray for this new venture in extending the message of Salvation and for all the members who are coming together in fellowship and friendship in Jesus' name. If you know any Christian bikers in the area please inform them of the new TWIG and invite them to contact Steve on stevewilds@icloud.com or Kate on Katharine.moore@icloud.com so that the new group can grow and bring like-minded people together in the name of the Lord.

Steve Wilds

Adventures on The Isle of Man 1979-2019

Ken Lowe, Carlisle & Isle of Man

My name is Ken Lowe and I am the Secretary of the Carlisle and Isle of Man Branch of CMA. I first went across the Irish Sea to watch the Isle of Man Tourist Trophy, better known as the TT, in 1979 when I was 22 years old.

It was at the end of the final year of my degree course in Liverpool, so it was very handy for the ferry! Out of the blue one of my fellow students, who was from the Island, invited me to stay at his home in Douglas (the capital of the IOM) for a few days during TT race week. We both rode Honda 350K4s when we were students, so he knew I was a keen biker.

The Isle of Man TT has well over a century of fascinating history. Much better-informed people than me have documented it, countless times, so you will have to look elsewhere if you want to know more about its past. I can recommend the following website if you are interested: see www.iomtt.com/tt-database



My 1979 trip to the Isle of Man was very memorable and I took a few photographs of the action while I was over there. You might enjoy a bit of 'spot the old motorcycle' in this photograph I took that year near Creg-ny-baa.

For road racing fans it was a particularly poignant year for Mike 'The Bike' Hailwood. After an 11-year absence, he returned to the TT in winning form in 1978 which he then matched in his final race in 1979, with his 14th and final TT appearance. He retired from motorsport that year and then was killed, tragically, in a road traffic accident in 1981.

I had the privilege of watching Mike Hailwood and Alex George battle it out for the Schweppes Classic Race title. Alex George beat Mike Hailwood on that occasion. However, Mike went on to win the Blue Riband event (the Senior TT) that year on his 500cc four-cylinder Suzuki two-stroke.

I took these photographs after the Schweppes Classic race as the competitors were walking away from the podium:



Mike Hailwood, understandably looking a bit glum after being beaten by a mere 3.4 seconds over a distance of 226.38 miles in June 1979



Alex George, looking pleased with himself after his win. June 1979

My relationship with the IOM TT was revived in 2010, and in subsequent years, when I went over with my brother Richard (Carlisle and IOM Branch Chair), and other Members and Supporters from the Branch, to enjoy the racing, the unique atmosphere of the TT, and to help with the CMA outreach at the Ramsey



Sometimes the weather is a real blessing! Here we are setting up at the Ramsey Sprint. One of our Branch Members, Alan Smithson, with his rather delightful classic Triumph Thunderbird Sport 900 Triple, is standing in the foreground. Mike Fitton is standing at the table unpacking some Biker Bibles. Those familiar with the Isle of Man will spot one of the ubiquitous Davison's Ice Cream vans in the background. This is ice cream not to be missed!

Sprint. The Sprint is held every year during the TT. The event takes place on an eighth of a mile tarmac strip. Participants compete, against the clock, from a standing start, along the Mooragh Promenade in Ramsey. It is free to watch, attracts an eclectic mix of competitors, and is typically attended by thousands of bikers. It was on the Isle of Man, at the Ramsey Sprint, that the first Biker Bibles were handed out to the public. That long standing tradition continues to this day.



Alan Smithson outside the gazebo chatting to some passers-by. Typically, for many years, CMA has been giving away around 300 Biker Bibles during the Ramsey Sprint

Members and Supporters of CMA arrive early on the day of the Sprint. We put up a gazebo, just a short distance from the drag strip, along with a table for Biker Bibles, other literature, and some freebies. A few of our bikes are then placed strategically near the gazebo, as points of interest, and they provide a simple and effective way of engaging passers-by in conversation. This, in turn, may lead to them hearing some of our testimonies and taking a Biker Bible.



Steve Parker in the blue cap and T shirt, Suzuki aficionado, ex-racer and generally all-round good egg with his van and our CMA stand at the Jurby Festival in 2016.



L to R: Carlisle and IOM Branch Member Alan Smithson talking to Tara, who is one of our friends who lives in Ramsey, Richard Lowe (Branch Chair, Carlisle and IOM), Mike Fitton (National Chairman) and Ronald Simpson. Some of the fastest riders come past this house, located on the Sulby Straight, at over 200 mph and within touching distance of the spectators.

It isn't possible to talk about adventures on the Isle of Man without giving a huge thank you to a couple in our Branch, Steve Parker and his wife Dawn, who live in Ramsey. Year on year, they have provided a van with all the gear for our outreaches.



Branch Member Colin Mattinson, wearing his TT cap and with his programme in hand, taking it all very seriously and keeping us up to date with all the action!

As well as the work of evangelism on the Island, we have plenty of time to enjoy watching the racing which is always exciting and breath-taking at times.

Going to the TT is on the bucket list of many people from all over the world. In 2017 we had the pleasure the company of Michael Romkes, who is the National President of CMA New Zealand, together with their National Treasurer Stephen Matthews. They had travelled 12,000 miles to watch the greatest road



L to R: Michael Romkes and Stephen Matthews on the promenade at Peel.

race in the world. We ferried them around the Island and they took in the sights and sounds of the TT and the IOM with relish.

In 2019 the Carlisle and IOM Branch pioneered an outreach to the Southern 100 on the Isle of Man. The Southern 100 has been nicknamed 'The Friendly Races' and indeed they are. Two Supporters from the Branch, Revd. Steve and his wife the Revd. Bex Ingrouille, very kindly gave us the use of their 'Bus of



The Bus of Blessing loaned to us for the outreach at the Southern 100 by the Methodist Church on the Island. A big thank you to the Revs. Steve and Bex Ingrouille.



L to R: Ken Lowe and Richard Lowe at the Southern 100 races in 2019. Sunshine, bikers, motorbikes, racing, Biker Bibles and the Isle of Man. What's not to like!

Blessing' for the event. Steve and Bex are both Methodist Ministers who live and work on the Island. We were able to set up trackside and meet the spectators.

In 2015 we began to pioneer annual outreaches to the Classic TT and Manx Grand Prix which is held late August and early September, but that's a whole other, very exciting, story for another time!

Obviously, because of the pandemic, there has not been any racing on the Isle of Man for a couple of years. Hopefully things will be getting back to normal this year. We hope so as a few of us from the Branch have already booked our ferry crossings for the Classic TT 2022.

In conclusion, if you have never been to the Isle of Man it is really worth a visit. If you haven't been to a TT event then we heartily recommend you go at least once in your life. 🙏

In 2007 the Isle of Man TT celebrated its centenary, which coincided with the official launch of the UK Bikers Bible.

We booked a pitch on the Ramsey Sprint and our great friend Steve Parker lent us his gazebo and tables. We had a great team with us, including Liz Robertson who had just come out of hospital after a hip operation and Wendy Peek who was in the midst of chemo treatment for her cancer. Neither of these formidable ladies would let anything get in their way.

On the day of the Sprint I went down to the field before anyone else arrived and prayed over the ground asking God to consecrate it for His Glory and bring the bikers with hearts prepared to receive Bibles.

The weather was red hot and bikers poured into the car park (the Sprint is held on Tuesday of Race Week because it's a rest day from racing). I had 400 Biker Bibles on the stand and within six hours 397 were taken. It was incredible, we had a constant stream of people asking about the Bibles and opportunities to pray for them to know Jesus personally.

In the 24hrs that followed God led me to speak to bikers in the most unexpected places, who were really grateful to receive a Bible. Since then the Biker Bible stand has been my highlight of the TT.

The rest of my time is spent preaching in local churches, engaging with bikers as we watch the racing, meeting with local ministers, talking at the prison chapel, meeting up with CMA members, etc. 🙏

Nothing Makes Sense!

David Ball, Bristol

**Nothing makes sense!
Everything is nonsense.
I have seen it all—
nothing makes sense!**
(Ecclesiastes 1:2 CEV)

Last Tuesday, our second Grandson, Joseph Jesse Ball, was born. A time for rejoicing? In normal circumstances, yes. But 12 weeks into the pregnancy, just at the time that Joseph's parents were hoping to share their wonderful news with the world, the medics told them that something appeared to be wrong. As time went on, it was confirmed that little Joseph Jesse had Edward's syndrome, a rare condition which affected his chromosomes. His parents, along with family and many friends, have spent the last five months praying for Joseph, believing that somehow God would intervene. Unfortunately, Joseph couldn't cope with the outside world and he died at birth. So, the time for rejoicing has simultaneously become a time for mourning!

**Nothing makes sense!
Everything is nonsense.
I have seen it all—
nothing makes sense!**



As human beings we try to make sense of the world around us. As Christians, it is easy to say that Jesus is the answer. It is easy to offer our favourite, comforting verses about God's love and sovereignty and about His plan for our lives. As someone whose life is dedicated to helping people understand the Bible better, I know the 'right' answers and the 'right' verses to share with people at such times. However, I think our Scriptures are more realistic than this. It is not that there isn't hope. But hope that is too glibly offered is no hope at all. At the moment, I find myself turning to those passages and

books in the Bible which recognise that life doesn't make sense. Ecclesiastes was possibly written by King Solomon, the person that the Scriptures accredit as the wisest king of Israel. As he observes humanity, he sees the meaningless nature of life. Nothing makes sense! And this is sometimes the case even for us as Christians. In our case, the time that should be one of rejoicing at the birth of a new child is



instead a time for mourning. Even the mourning is abnormal, because it is one thing to mourn the life of someone who has lived well, who has had a good innings! But how can you mourn for someone who has had a first ball duck? There are no good memories. There are no memories except for a stressful pregnancy!

**Nothing makes sense!
Everything is nonsense.
I have seen it all—
nothing makes sense!**

The death of Joseph Jesse makes no sense. We cannot explain it. Everything is nonsense. And yet, even though everything is nonsense, even though the time for rejoicing has become a time for mourning, yet even the writer of Ecclesiastes gives us hope: God has made everything beautiful in his time (Ecc. 3:11). His time is not our time. His view of beauty is not our view of beauty.

Another book in our Scriptures that deals with the reality of suffering and confusion is Lamentations. Here we encounter a remarkable piece of literature: five chapters of incredibly carefully constructed poetry pouring out the grief of a nation that appears to be abandoned by God. It is easy for us to jump to our favourite verses in chapter 3 without working through the torment and tribulation of chapters 1 and 2.

***I tell myself, "I am finished!
I can't count on the LORD
to do anything for me."
Just thinking of my troubles
and my lonely wandering
makes me miserable.
That's all I ever think about,
and I am depressed.***

I tell myself, "I am finished! I can't count on the LORD to do anything for me." This reality of feeling abandoned by God is the context in which the writer actually finds hope:

***Then I remember something
that fills me with hope.
The LORD's kindness never fails!***

***If he had not been merciful,
we would have been destroyed.
The LORD can always be trusted
to show mercy each morning.
Deep in my heart I say,
"The LORD is all I need;
I can depend on him!"
(Lamentations 3:18-24)***

As we read these wonderful verses in Lamentations, it is easy for us to forget that chapters 4 and 5 are equally full of confusion and chaos. The hope of Lamentations comes right in the middle of utter desperation and chaos. Chaos and confusion come before these verses. Chaos and confusion follow these verses. The reality of the Christian faith is that our Christian faith must be real at those moments when everything seems to have fallen apart. Here is the hope of our faith, that at the point where there appears to be no hope, the Lord's kindness never fails. If he had not been merciful, we would have been destroyed. On the cross, when Jesus experiences the God-forsaken reality of humanity's hopelessness, we discover that God loves us, that God is with us. The LORD can always be trusted to show mercy each morning. It is not only that He is the answer to our suffering, it is that He is with us in our suffering. The LORD is all I need; I can depend on Him. And so we trust that when life is meaningless, when everything is nonsense, it is then that we can depend on God, whose mercy is new every morning. I cannot begin to imagine how, or even if, I would be able to cope without God in the last few days. †



You Never Know When...

Bob Hughes-Burton, North Wales

Recently I was admitted into hospital YSBYTY GWYNEDD (Bangor Hospital), suffering from a very bad ear infection. This, in time, was a cause of concern because of the sepsis infection I had a few years earlier.

On admission to the ward, once Dawn had left, I was called to by one of the other patients on the ward. "Dave, sorry, can't hear you, bad ear infection. I'll come over later." I said, as the gentleman was unable to get out of bed.

When I went over, we got to speaking about my waistcoat and the white cross on the back. After explaining what it was about, he said, "Wow, thank you Lord." He looked at me and said, "I am a Christian and I've been praying for some Christian company as no one is allowed to visit."

We spent a few hours talking and praying together in between doctors and nurses doing their jobs. At about 6pm a voice from the opposite corner of the ward said, "Do you really believe in that?" Well, for the first time in a long time I was beaten in replying – there was this very passionate answer, "Absolutely! Why, don't you?"

There was what might be termed as a pregnant pause which lasted what seemed like ten minutes before he answered, "NO, it's a lot of rubbish." Dave turned to me and said, "You any good at evangelising? Let's see what the Lord can do."

Dave and I prayed that the other guy, who did not give us his name, would hear the Lord as we spoke to him across the ward. We chatted with him and it became very evident he was angry with God as he had lost someone very close which caused him to turn from faith. We prayed for him and left it there.

After our evening meal and medication the ward was quiet. As the night staff were doing their rounds, I heard the guy speaking about what had happened earlier to the male nurse and he asked if he could come and sit by my bed, which he did. We had a very good conversation during which he asked me what my testimony was. I shared reasonably quickly, but not quietly, as I found out due to one other gentleman, Frank, who was also a patient, suddenly shouting out, "Will he help me please?"

I was taken by surprise as were Dave and this other guy because we all thought Frank was terminally ill and unable to talk. Well, Dave said, "Yes, and I'm sure Bob will pray for you." I did, and then we were asked to go to bed for the night. The next morning whilst waiting for the doctors to call, Frank called me over to his bed and very quietly asked how could he ask God to help him. I answered, "Just talk to him like you're talking to me – he will hear you and I'm sure he will help in whatever way he can." The doctors arrived and we had to leave it there.



Frank, it turned out, was a very unwell man and suffered with a personality disorder which had been wrongly treated for some years. He was taken off the ward for a scan of some sort and was gone for about two hours. By this time I had been officially discharged and was just waiting for meds from the pharmacy. Frank arrived back on the ward sitting up in his

bed a completely different person to that when he went. I said, "Well, you look better. What have they done?" He answered with this voice that was full of love, "They did nothing but my prayer has been answered." He went on to explain his prayer to us all, "Please God I'm not sure about you but Bob and Dave really believe, can you help, God? All I need is complete

clarity in my mind so that I can go home to my family.' After I had the scan things started making sense to me. I was able to recall so many things – what had happened, why I was in hospital and other things. I asked to see my consultant who was in the scan ward with me and I had a long chat with him. He said, "Well I've never seen anything like it. Three hours ago you

could not remember your name let alone what you have just shared, what's happened?"

Frank said he said one word to his consultant, "GOD". You never know when God is going to call on us to do his work.

Oh yes, the trike – see next page...

Two Became Three...

Bob & Dawn Hughes-Burton

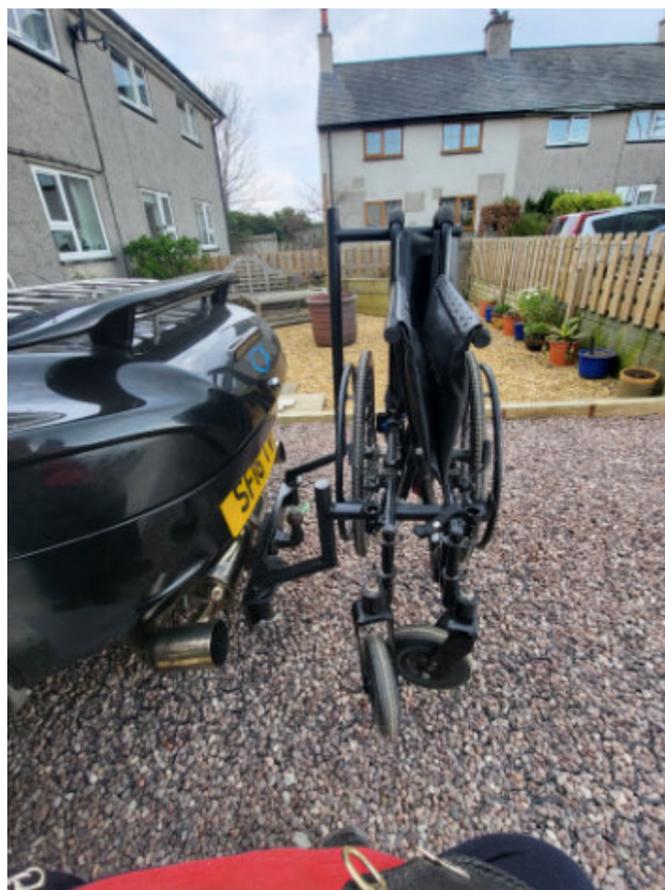
... wheels, that is.

So. Many of you will now know that I no longer ride a motorcycle due to problems holding the bike up at junctions with my left leg.

Dawn and I had been talking for many years about either getting a sidecar on the bike, or a trike. The final decision was made about eighteen months ago and we bought a Rewaco trike—it changed our world massively, I must say, for the better. Dawn and I now go out on ministry together—what an absolute blessing, praise God for everything.

We very quickly identified a particular challenge when arriving anywhere. I was very limited in my ability to walk around, so not able to engage with many people, just those who came to the trike mainly. So, the thought process started and the prayers were said. Eventually we decided that we needed a way of carrying my manual wheelchair with us so that when we arrive at a destination I have some mobility. After many months searching, we found NABD were very helpful but the engineering company they recommended was unable to help because of the Covid lockdown.

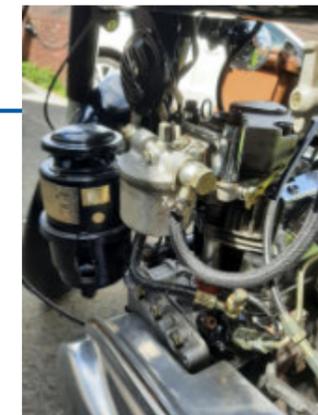
Recently, I was directed to a local fabrication firm who accepted the job and we booked the trike in for the 28th March. On the 29th we collected the finished product and you can see in the photos what we now have. We have yet to try it out properly as the weather has turned very cold and some snow has been seen locally but we look forward to giving it a full test prior to the National AGM where we hope to be on the trike. †



Flight of Folly?

Derry Bowman, Devon & Cornwall

Some years ago I was surfing eBay and came across a Royal Enfield Bullet Diesel for sale in India. It was up for offers so I put what I thought was a low offer never expecting to get it for that amount. Well, I went online a few days later to find that I had bought a motorcycle!



Enfield did produce a diesel machine in India, but this was a 1965 Bullet with an engine put in it that was very similar to the one originally used, it would be normally found in a generator or water pump!

Well, it was a bit of a shock and I did have to do quite a lot of detective work to make sure it was on its way to me. I was told it was on board a certain ship bound for Southampton and I tracked this ship into the China Sea where it dropped anchor and stayed and stayed! After more emails I found it was on a different boat altogether and I started to track its progress around the world. My wife was treated to a running commentary every morning, 'Oh its off India, it's coming through the Suez Canal, it's in the Med., now the Bay of Biscay'. The only problem was, it sailed straight past Plymouth where I live because this ship was bound for Felixstowe!

I arrived home one day to find a big crate in the middle of my driveway and with the help of a hammer and crowbar the bike was revealed.



Then began months of frustration as I tried to start the thing. The engine is very basic and has no electric start or glow plugs. The original petrol engine would have been 350cc (single) with a compression of 7.5-1. This engine is 420cc (single) with a compression ratio of 17-1! It is furnished with a decompression lever that enables you to find just after top dead centre and then it is a case of kicking it like a mule! Many unsuccessful attempts ensued. Sometimes it would tempt you with almost firing. I finally came to the conclusion that the clutch was slipping just at compression thus stopping it going. I fitted an extra friction plate in the clutch and heavier springs. Back to kicking it! I still could not get it over that first compression! It also did not help that you can go onto YouTube and see a rather slight Indian gentleman start one with ease wearing a pair of flip flops!

A good friend came to my rescue, he has had many years riding trails bikes and 'Mike the Bike Whisperer' soon had her going! What joy! At least I knew it was possible! He went with me as we put some miles down over Dartmoor and gradually the engine loosened up a bit and my technique got better! What's it like to ride? 'Slow' is the answer! On tickover it sounds like a blacksmith hitting an anvil with a hammer! Anything over 55mph it feels that you might just vaporise with the vibration! The clutch was very heavy to operate but as the engine loosened up some more I was able to put the old clutch back.

The advantage of this bike is that you get about 170mpg! Also, being registered as built in 1965 it is exempt from road tax and MOT test (I did have to get an MOT to start with to register it with DVLA).

Some of my Vintage Motorcycle Club friends turn their nose up at it but most people are quite intrigued! Well, yes, a bit of a folly but a great conversation starter! †

Although it's been a quiet season, things have still been happening in Devon and Cornwall, although not on the scale we might have hoped.

Ride Outs

We've enjoyed a few ride-outs, which have included:

- Buckfastleigh; Dartington Estate; Totnes; Kingsbridge; Plymouth.
- Callington's Engine House; Lifton's Strawberry Fields; Lewtrenchard; Challerton Cross; Gunnislake.
- The Southwest Riders' and Campers' breakfast at Winkleigh.
- A Branch brunch at the Dartmoor Diner.
- A ride-out to Dartmoor Diner; Strawberry Fields at Lifton; Bodmin.

Funeral Escorts

We have been part of two funeral escorts. We haven't known the deceased in either case, but by turning up and being part of the biker escorts we believe God is using us in practical ways, including of course being Christian witnesses at the heart of the biking community in the local area. These are the two we've participated in:

The first escort was from Buckfastleigh to Totnes Parish Church, to escort a lady biker aged 71 years at the time of her passing.

A further escort was from Wadebridge to the Bodmin Crematorium.

There is always the opportunity for conversation during the assembly time. Later on we are usually part of revving the bikes' engines and sounding the horns to make a terrific din – most bikers, especially Harley riders, love doing that!

Bikers' Service

We are carrying out a Bikers' Service at Philip's home church, ClearWay Community Church, on Sunday 15th May. The service will be followed by a 'Blessing of the Bikes'. Your prayer cover for that time would be very much appreciated. Thank you. 🙏



The Highway Code was updated on 29th January 2022. These advisory changes have been implemented to improve safety for people walking, cycling and horse riding. Every road user still has a responsibility to keep themselves and each other safe, and the changes mean being ready to give priority, leave space and be considerate of others.

The changes introduce new advisory measures that are not legal requirements but could be drawn upon in court proceedings.

In summary, irrespective of your method of transport, a new hierarchy of road users has been introduced to ensure those who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others.

Key changes:

- You should now give people crossing and waiting to cross and cyclists going straight ahead priority when turning in and out of junctions.
- You should now leave at least 1.5 metres when overtaking people cycling at speeds of up to 30mph and give them more space when overtaking at higher speeds.
- When driving, you should now pass horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 10mph and allow at least 2 metres of space.
- You should now allow at least 2 metres of space and keep to a low speed when passing a pedestrian who is walking in the road.
- Car users should now open their doors with the hand furthest from the door, to help them look over their shoulder to see cyclists or pedestrians nearby.
- People cycling may ride in the centre of the lane on narrow or quiet roads, in slow-moving traffic, or at junctions as this may be the safest position, allowing others to overtake when it is safe to do so.
- Two people can ride two abreast and it can be safer for them to do so.

The changes can be viewed in full by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>

The Parable of the Petrol Tap Lever

Brian Jenner, Gloucester

At a recent branch meeting someone referred to the Body of Christ and how diverse our branch was but all had an important part to play. This got me pondering about parts of my bike and much the same applies.

Some time ago I arrived home and put my hand down to turn off the fuel as I usually do but the tap lever was not there. Now if you are hammering down a dual carriage way (no jibes about my Enfield please) and suddenly need to switch to reserve tank you quickly realise just how important that insignificant bit of metal can be. I looked around my shed (it's not untidy, it's well-stocked) [just like my garage – Ed]. I found a bit of plastic that was originally designed to join bits of kitchen cupboards together. With a little bit of work with a square needle file and a small bolt and washer a replacement was made. Now we all have some sort of gift and generally feel comfortable using it. Now what happens when we have the opportunity to use a gift we are not familiar with and no one else is around? This is where I come back



to my fuel tap lever. It was never made to be a lever but with a little help from a maker it has found a new calling and is doing very well. What do you (or I) do when faced with a new challenge? Next time it might be worth asking God if He is looking round His shed for me to do a new task for a period of time. †

The Holidays of the Holy One

Mark Hodge, Liverpool

Have you ever wondered why you go on holiday? I mean it's pretty obvious really, everyone needs a holiday at some point during the year, right? Or, maybe not. What if you consider yourself to be a work-a-holic and don't have time to take one, or even can't afford one? After all, holidays aren't mandatory, are they? Well, I suppose that depends on a few things: what a 'holiday' is, where it came from, who declared it, the reason for it and ultimately, what you believe.

Today, there are many types of holidays: seasonal, national, bank, secular, religious, substitute, etc. In this article, I will examine the **biblical** holidays. I'll look at what they are, where they came from, when they occur, who they belong to and why they should be significant to someone who considers themselves to be in covenantal relationship with Yehovah, the God of the Bible.

Definition

According to *Wikipedia*, a holiday is a day set aside by custom or by law on which normal activities, especially business or work, including school, are suspended or reduced. Generally, holidays are intended to allow individuals to celebrate or commemorate an event or tradition of cultural or religious significance. They may be designated by governments, religious institutions, or other groups or organisations. The concept often originated in connection with religious observances and the intention was typically to allow individuals to tend to religious duties associated with important dates on the calendar. In most modern societies, however, holidays serve as much of a recreational function as any other weekend days or activities.

Etymology

The word 'holiday' comes from the Old English 'hāligdæg', meaning 'holy' + 'day'. It's clear then that this term originated with special religious or 'holy' days.

So, what then is the difference between a normal day and a **holy** day? The Hebrew word for holy is 'kodesh', which means 'sacred' or 'set apart'. Anything then can

be holy; quite simply, if I have a plate of chips and separate one by itself, moving it to the edge of the plate away from the others, to save it for say dipping in tomato ketchup, I have now '**sanctified**' this chip and made it holy. The action of separating something for a specific purpose is the idea here. Is this chip the same as the other chips? Well yes and no. It's made from the same potato and certainly looks the same as the others, but I have chosen it, for a special purpose, so it's different.

Usage

We see the first usage of this concept in Genesis 2, when God blessed the seventh day and **sanctified** it, because on it He **rested** from all the work He had performed on **normal** days one to six. Here, God was setting a principal for man to follow. It's not until we get to Exodus 16, when God's people are gathering food in the wilderness, that we see this principle in action. The people were instructed to gather manna for six days, then gather twice as much on the sixth day so they could have a holiday on the seventh. In fact, of all the days of creation, only the seventh day was special enough to be given its own name '**Shabbat**' (sabbath), the other days were simply numbered: day 1st to day 6th.

So now we know the origin of the very first holiday – **creation**; who declared it – **God**; who it was for – **us**; when it occurred – **every 7th day** and what it was for – **rest**.



God's Holidays

We see here that the first holiday repeated every week – it was designed to be cyclical. In light of this context, let's examine the rest of God's holidays and special times, which are all conveniently found in one chapter: Leviticus 23.

Holiday(s)	Hebrew	When
Sabbath	Shabbat	7 th day of every week
Passover (preparation)	Pesach	14 th day of 1 st month of every year
Feast of Unleavened Bread	Chag HaMatzot	15 th to 21 st of 1 st month of every year
Day of First Fruits	Yom HaBikkurim	Day after the weekly Sabbath during UB
Feast of Weeks	Chag Shavuot	Day after 7 sabbaths from First Fruits
Day of Trumpets	Yom Teruah	1 st day of 7 th month of every year
Day of Atonement	HaKippurim	10 th day of 7 th month of every year
Feast of Tabernacles	Chag Sukkot	15 th to 21 st of 7 th month of every year
The 8 th day of Assembly	Shemini Azteret	22 nd of 7 th month of every year

As can be seen above, the holidays can be categorised by 9 titles. Now strictly speaking, Passover and Unleavened Bread are really one holiday since the 14th is the preparation day for the 7-day feast starting on the 15th. First Fruits is also part of Unleavened Bread because it occurs during that week. Here is a biblical calendar illustrating the above table. You will notice that months have either 29 or 30 days and that there is a 13th month reserved for certain years. This is a topic for another time!



What's interesting here is, if we assume there are 52 Sabbaths in 1 solar year, adding up all these days would give us: 52+7+1+1+1+7+1 = 70, which is an interesting number! However, not all of these 70 days are actually **rest** days.

We can see that the first holiday is called '**Shabbat**', which comes from the root verb '**to cease**'. It's when normal business activity of the week stops for rest and celebration. However, there is another Hebrew word that's used in the context of these holidays and that word is '**shabbaton**', which means '**rest period**' or '**solemn sabbath**'. This word occurs 11 times in scripture, and is used to describe the weekly Sabbath, Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles and also an entire year – the 7th year of rest for the land.

It's not specifically used for the 2 rest days of Unleavened Bread, but we are told in Leviticus 23:7-8 not to do any laborious work on days 1 and 7. Now because these rest days are linked to the month and not the week, they can occur on any normal day, (i.e. Sunday to Friday) and when this happens they are often called '**high sabbaths**', as in John 19:31. What's interesting here is, if we add up all the high sabbath's in 1 year, we get 2+1+1+1+2 = 7, which is another interesting number!

Now one important point to note when reading through Leviticus 23, is that we discover these holidays are not temporary. In fact, we find the following sobering phrase declared four times:

'It is to be a permanent statute throughout your generations...'

This means they have not ceased, nor will cease in the future. The prophet Zechariah describes a future day when God will fight against the nations who have come against Jerusalem and He will be King over all the earth. He says that any nations who refuse to come and celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem with Him will be subject to punishment. We read a similar phrase in Exodus 12 regarding the Passover celebration:

'And you shall keep this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. When you enter the land which Yehovah will give you, as He has promised, you shall keep this rite. And when your children say to you, 'What does this rite mean to you?' then you shall say, 'It is a Passover sacrifice to Yehovah because He passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians, but spared our homes.'

It's clear then that God wants us to celebrate and teach these holidays to our kids so that each generation will never forget what He did in the past.

Appointed Times

You may be wondering at this point, why did God choose these particular days and set them apart forever to be special? And why would He enforce them in the future on pain of plague?

These holidays hold a wealth of lessons for us who belong to Him as they unlock important biblical truths. They are keys to understanding prophetic events as they illustrate the plan and purpose of the Messiah's coming and His role as our King.

Leviticus 23 starts with '*These are the appointed times of Yehovah...*'. The Hebrew word underneath 'appointed times' is the word '**moed**', which means '**an officially set time or place**'. So we see His holidays are fixed by Him alone and no human or angel has ever been given the authority to change them. We read in Daniel 7 that '*a king of the earth will come forth and wear down the saints of the Most High and he will seek to make changes in **set times** and in **law**.*' If the enemy can get God's people off God's timetable, then he has a better chance of distracting us. Sure, anyone can make up their own holidays (as many religious and secular groups have), but we must be careful to distinguish between those that belong to God and those that belong to man.

The Most High has a schedule of appointments with His people and He wants us to know and understand what His plans are. If you are married, think of these like 'date' nights with your spouse. If I said to my wife, "Next Thursday at 8pm I've booked a special restaurant for us to have an intimate meal together and to share my thoughts and plans with you", what would she say? Would it be "Oh, I can't make it, I'm washing my hair that night!", or would it be "Wow, you're taking me on

a date and wanting to spend quality time with me? I'd love to be there!". If a friend said to her "Oh, you don't have to bother with date nights, you're already married!", I think the friend would have missed the whole point.

Shadow Pictures

Another Hebrew word used alongside 'moed' is '**mikra**', which means '**a holy convocation or rehearsal**'. God set these holidays in place for us as rehearsals, so that we won't miss the final fulfilment when the time comes. The Messiah came and gave us the full understanding of the spring holidays—Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits—because his suffering, death, burial, resurrection and ascension were all perfectly timed to align with these appointed times. Paul the apostle says in 1 Corinthians, '*For Messiah our Passover has been sacrificed, therefore let's celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*'

When the disciples were asked to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father – the baptism of the Holy Spirit, this occurred on the Feast of Weeks, or Shavuot (which in Greek is called Pentecost). What better time to send the Holy Spirit than the very holiday when Jews from all over Israel would be congregated in Jerusalem on the Temple Mount celebrating their annual rehearsal? When Acts 2 says the disciples were '*all together in one place*', they would have been on the Temple Mount with all the other thousands of Jews '*from every nation under heaven*'. And when '*a violent wind came and filled the whole house where they were sitting*', this house was not some small apartment down a back street of the Old City, but rather the '**Beit HaMikdash**', the holy House of God, which is why so many foreign Jews were there and able to hear the disciples speaking in their own languages.

When the Messiah returns to the earth, He will fulfil the autumn holidays—Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles—as these are shadow pictures of events to come. Today we are in the End Times, so it's important that we begin to understand God's holidays and how they are the mechanism by which He tells us the end from the beginning. These are just as much a part of His law as the Ten Commandments, which are now written on our hearts, so it's fitting for us to have the heart of Paul, who said in Acts 18, '*I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem.*'

You may be wondering, 'Do we really **have** to celebrate His holidays?'

On the contrary, 'Why would we not want to? Rather, we **get** to!'

'Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' 1 John 2:15 🙏

The Prodigal Son

Paul Miller, *Lakes'n'Lancs*

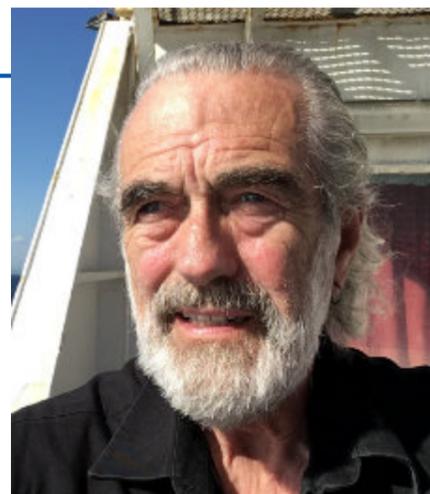
Mark 10:15 “Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it”

A couple of days ago, I received an email to ask if anyone had an article for Chainlink. That was not a surprise in itself, but I knew very quickly that it was written for me to read, and, in prayer, I realised that I had to share my heart with you. I am a reluctant missionary, a person who keeps things to himself, a person who had largely lost sight of God for years and who, despite lifelong encounters with Jesus through the Holy Spirit, was only able to ‘see through the glass darkly’. (1 Corinthians 13:12)

I have no excuses. Like the prodigal son, I was brought up in a good Christian home from an infant in the late '40's, with Baptist and Methodist parents and grandparents. I was taken to church with them every week, a morning service, an afternoon Sunday School and from my early teens, an evening service. I knew all the hymns, all the Bible stories, prayed at bedtime with parents and my siblings and was a keen member of the Methodist Church youth club. I was circumcised as an infant without my consent, baptised and christened as an infant, lead through training for church membership in my teens, was a Sunday School infant teacher, and like my parents, signed the 'White Ribbon Temperance League' promising never to drink alcohol, or smoke.

At 18, I applied for Medical School, but failed one of my A-Levels. I had wanted to be a doctor from the age of nine. I spent a year re-learning and re-taking it and started at 19 in a London Medical School. I was totally unprepared for the exposure to the sins and earthly delights of London in the early 1960's and very quickly immersed myself in the immoralities of the time. My studies and my emotions suffered and after failing an intermediate physiology examination I was thrown out on my 21st birthday. My church and faith upbringing was far gone. My family were devastated, as was I, and I was far to ashamed to give them any truthful explanations. I spent almost

two years working in a shipping agents in the City, and on Saturdays I ran a small, antiques stall on Bell Street Market. I was still desolate that I was not training as a doctor and knew somewhere inside that God had wanted me to do that. I could see no way back and drowned my sorrows in any type of consolation. Hopeless and helpless, I started to pray, probably selfishly for myself, and more as a habit than anything else. I'd never felt prayer worked and was really just crying out my pain. One Saturday, God answered me. A very grubby bag lady with an old push chair came to the stall with a cardboard box of junk and tried to sell it to stallholders. She was being refused by everyone including me. About two minutes after she left me, I felt an extraordinary feeling and heard a voice in my head saying “buy it”. There was no logic as to why I followed her, but I did and bought the box of rubbish. I took it back to my stall and sat down to look through it. The top part was old crockery but under that was a large blue covered book. I took it out and found that I knew it, and I shook. It was a classic textbook of Physiology. Underneath it was a broken old wooden cross with a battered white metal crucifix of our Lord. Signed, sealed, and delivered special delivery by the first angel I ever met I sat in the stall in floods of tears. After this, I eventually got back into Medical School, struggled and then qualified, married a girl from our church, settled down in



work and family life (which is a whole other story of stresses and God's work with us).

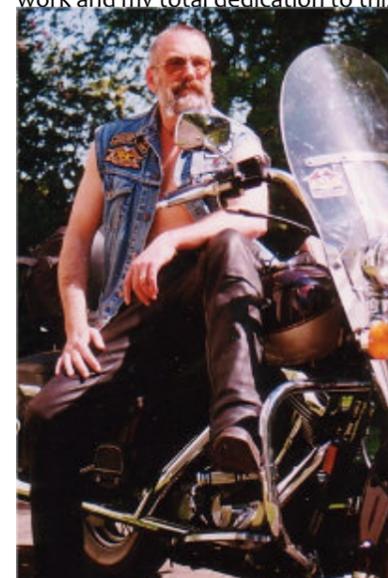
Sadly, although I was still entranced by what had happened and although we used to go to church with our children, and although many people and patients knew I was a church-going Christian, I was really only acting it out. Even with the fact that God had had such a presence and such an impact in my life, I found believing hard, and it was not helped by my own science education, intellectual friends, and a largely secular social life.

During my life as a local GP up to 1998, I became a very happy and successful GP, working enormous hours and loving to be able to make a real difference in people's lives.

I had 21 years of this when many people knew I was a church goer and many people and patients asked me to pray with them over difficult life events. Because it came out of habit, I often did it, believing that to some extent lifting people's spirits alone helped them to cope. I did not see it as God using me then as I can see in retrospect. I often felt spiritually empty and I was wandering, but Jesus was actually alongside me all that time and I still never looked.

Despite trying to keep the family together as church people, I was very sad to see both my children start to refuse to go as they became teenagers. Gradually my wife

stopped at home with the children and it was just me going, and then I too stopped and we found other things to do on a Sunday morning. I worked both in the practice and often went on to do a full night shift with an overnight medical service. I was worn out, lost close contact with my wife and children through work and pulling away from family life. Then calamity. There followed a period of almost 14 years when things went from bad to worse for me and in consequence, after I had a very distressing medico-legal case to attend, a deterioration in my relationship with my wife and a feeling of being inadequate as a man, a father and a doctor, I ran away, giving up my practice and my family and going to work for the Army in Germany. In actual fact, the only area I could manage well was work and my total dedication to this



Me in dark times

took me to responsible positions in the medical service. My personal life was in tatters. God was nowhere in my consciousness, and I went back to an amoral existence in self-serving agnosticism. Oddly though, I still prayed, but more out of habit than anything else, usually telling God what a rough life I had.

In 1999 I volunteered to sign up as an Army doctor to serve in Bosnia as they were short. I seriously had it in the back of my mind that I might get killed, and that would be an honourable death rather than self-

harm, and it might absolve me from the sins I had included in my everyday life and which had brought me this low. However, guess Who used me! In Bosnia, despite the risks, which turned out to be less to me than I had anticipated, and even though I was constantly armed with a pistol and able to do self harm as well as protect myself, I very quickly felt the need to use my medics and myself to assist refugees who were returning to their smashed dwellings. When we were not needed for the sick parades, we went out to villages and took water pumps and building equipment and emptied infested fresh water storage tanks, helped build up walls and roofs, and treated local people. I had a very strong feeling that even though I was not talking with God, He was leading me. He introduced me to both orthodox Christians and Catholics and also to Muslim families who we helped. Yes, I often hypocritically prayed with them and for them across all faiths too. In particular he introduced me to a 12 year old Bosnian girl refugee, an only child of a broken marriage who could speak very fair English. She joined us in many of our visits to interpret for us and became a well loved friend. I continued to travel every year to Bosnia after this for eleven years, taking trailer loads of household necessities, which were collected in the barracks, to many homes. I bonded especially with this girl's family and usually stayed with them on these trips when she came with me to deliver the stuff. I financially supported her eventually through a law degree in Bosnia. She is now 34 and married.

During all my period away from home and despite my behaviour, I always stayed in easy contact with my wife and kept the family supported. I am sure they were often at the end of their tether with me. However, it just felt right and I was aware that this was not stuff I would have planned.

My Father and Christian sister were always concerned, always prayed and always supported me and encouraged me through the stresses and sin around me when I

could not pray myself during this time in the wilderness of life.

Eventually after a few false starts, I came back home and we rebuilt relationships, not perhaps as wonderful as they might have been if things had not gone so wrong but at least lovingly. I was grateful to be back home and continued work with the Army in the UK until I retired in 2014 at the age of 68.

God was way in the background as far as I was concerned. In 2013, my sister's husband, the same age as me, died very rapidly of cancer and after his death she moved from Cumbria to live nearer to me. We had always been extremely close since childhood and she called me to ask about where I went to church. I told her I didn't, but nonetheless she insisted I help her to find a local church that would suit her and I had to go to services with her out of brotherly love.

God had a plan! I reluctantly started to go with her to Skipton Baptist Church, a bit too 'happy clappy' for my traditional upbringing, but the pastor there really preached the Word and it really starting getting to me. I realised that I had really never accepted Jesus in the way he offered. What I had always just repeated by rote concerning his incarnation, his example, his teaching and his genuine death and resurrection just started to feel vaguely possible. My science made no sense of it at all, but I felt strongly that I had to try to find the deep spiritual truth and life that seemed to really exist alongside our own biological lives.

I had a private talk with a pastor who gave me the E100 Bible study course book to read. I prayed somewhat vacuously alongside this and started to feel very different. I started to see God in a straight-forward fashion, as a child – my Father, always there, always loving, always concerned for me, always wanting me to see Him for who he is. I felt convinced this was the only way I could find Jesus and even begin to understand his sacrifice and promises.

As a biker, I also suddenly remembered that deep in the degradation and destruction of my life away from home, I had attended The Bulldog Bash in Stratford-upon-Avon and been handed a special Bible for bikers by some pushy 'religious maniac' who wanted me to know Jesus! I stuffed it on a shelf in the garage soon after but now went to hunt it down. Still unopened but with a dirty cover, I looked at who had given it to me – Christian Motorcyclists' Association. I phoned the number and was told, 'It's not a bike club, it's a Christian Mission'. I said, 'that's too heavy for me, I just need to find Christian friends who enjoy biking'. Next day I had a call from the local branch secretary who said, 'just rock up!' I was feeling much stronger in my faith, but still did not really understand people saying that you need to be 'born again'. I thought this was over-sanctimonious stuff and still didn't understand but prayed then to be able to know what this really was. They seemed to be on a different level from what I had experienced, although the messengers and messages God had seemed to send me still rather freaked me out, to be honest, as they always had done. I started riding with them and felt I was in the right place with them and my sister at church. Lakes 'n' Lancs were going to a National Rally in 2014 in Evesham near where I had lived and practised for a while. We had René Changuian, the National Chairman of South Africa as guest minister. On the last day he preached on David facing the evil of Goliath. He showed how this might also represent us facing the Devil and he said how, with God's strength, he was able to fell the evil giant, but more than that, God said to take Goliath's sword and cut his head off, killing the evil. He likened this to Jesus, conquering all our sins with him in his death and being resurrected to a new life with God, leaving our sins for him to take away. So, this was being re-born, without the weight we drag around with us. This is the moment that our chains fall off. This is the God who says, 'Come to me and I will give you rest, Give me your burdens and I will make them light. Jesus my son will

do this for you.' I was almost dumbstruck. Was this actually real? Does it actually happen? Can I have it? At the end of the service, there was a call to come forward if you wanted to give your life to Christ. I felt strongly that I will try this one day, but not here, not now, not in public. People walked up and prayed. The crowd was singing. I couldn't speak. Something in my head kept saying 'don't do it, don't show yourself up, you don't need this happy clappy emotional stuff, you're OK where you're at'. It was getting near the end of the hymn, I was in tears, I couldn't stop myself despite the inner voices saying 'don't go up'. Then it happened. I don't remember going forward but I found myself flat on my face, at the front of the stage, in floods of tears and I was almost blind from crying and an immense white light dazzling me. I couldn't see or hear anything specific. I simply knew, at that moment, that I was lying at the foot of the cross of Jesus. It was warm, it was restful and I didn't want to move. I knew that the Holy Spirit was with me. I felt the hands of 'God's angel for the day' on my shoulders and a lightness, complete relief, total 'agony and ecstasy' and my entire life of sin was offloaded and left with Jesus to dispose of. I don't know how long I was there or what others actually saw in this, but what I saw and what happened was definitely on a dimension that I could never have imagined and which to this day I cannot adequately describe. Time stopped. I actually rose to my feet as if I was weightless and was then helped by my personal supporter who took me to a quiet place and sat and prayed with me while I cried over the immense sins that I had just offloaded. Forgiven through Jesus Christ, our true Lord and true Saviour, I was at last 'born again'.

Sins being lifted from us by Jesus means that we are forgiven as if they had never happened. It is a constant process as we are all human and all sinners, but when we know we can truly repent and know that God will still love us, it really is a much easier yoke as He promised. In His strength we must continue to

fight the Devil but in His strength we shall overcome.

Living a new life, committing to God and embracing the Lord and the Holy Spirit enables a much easier and closer conversation, truly as though we talk to our Father or brother. Always with us, always for us, always helping us and ultimately bringing us back to Himself. This has ties attached. We are servants of the Living God. We need to listen and do as he asks. Sometimes we wait for ages and nothing much seems to happen and yet in retrospect we can sometimes see how a pattern has been formed and the right people put in place to enable something that God wants. The more we know these times the easier it to feel, see, understand, and recognise when God is talking to us. If you make a mistake or don't understand He will let you know and help you get it right. God never asks us to do something that He will not help us to do.

Where do I stand now?

I have stopped asking questions about God, about creation, about suffering, about illness and accidents and war. Unlike some accounts we read in the Old Testament where some of these things have arisen from God, we note too that it has been to protect or save, or encourage, His faithful people. When the evil of the world seems overwhelming, God sometimes takes people back to Him to protect them. He is not ignoring their struggle, but His struggle is with the Devil inside the people that created the problems and in that He will always be Victor.

So yes, I believe with the simplicity of a little child because I cannot comprehend God in any form of human understanding; I only know Him as Jesus shows Him to us. As children we frequently say "shan't" or "why" and our fathers give us a simple straightforward, if not totally understandable or rational reason. God, our heavenly Father has given us as much information as we can grasp in His scriptures. When we become adults we question God again, or refuse again, but the



World Horizons undercover to Morocco

answers God has given us are as much as we can comprehend in a human form. When we question, we try to make ourselves equal with God, which we can never achieve.

I am now 75 and only opened the door to Jesus 8 years ago. Don't



Me and Cliff 'blending in' with locals!

ignore him when He knocks. Listen and test that still small voice that you hear. Pay attention to the messages He sends you. (note: God's angel messengers don't always realise that they are sent by Him to you. Take it to God in prayer for clarity if in any doubt)

Yes, I am a reluctant Missionary because I do not believe in myself alone to be able to do whatever I used to with prayer and others' lives and souls whenever I just put myself in assumed Christian mode. Now I wait for the Lord to move me to speak or act. And yes, I am now a 'born again' Christian. I am still an isolated Christian in my family, which is often hard as it means setting aside specific times for my

work and relationship with God and giving of myself to my family. I realise that either they don't understand it or have patience with it for which I am very sorry and concerned, but I know now what God can do and wants me to do, and accept that it may be others He sends to minister to my family in His time.

Finally, I urge those of you who still hold back, not to mess around as long as I did! I spent almost as long in my spiritual desert before I saw the promised land as Moses did!

Hymns of praise that will always say exactly what 'born again' means:

Sing them with joy, sing them with tears, sing them with all your heart!

What a friend we have in Jesus!

Amazing Grace. †

Steph's Sister Poem

Stephanie Thomas, Hants & Dorset



The most beautiful gift (my sister)

She is a joy that can't be taken away
Once she entered my life that first day
I was overwhelmed it was plain to see
To find out I had a sister was so crazy

I thank the Lord for bringing you to me
My beautiful sister forever you will be
58 years I didn't know the sister I had
How's that possible how very sad

But I didn't know the secret about you
That was kept from me and all I knew
So many long years had gone past
But then something happened at last

For you tried so very hard to find out
If you did have any blood family about
You searched for ages that's for sure
Then came knocking upon my door

I was shocked – how could this be true
To find I have a sister that I never knew
A secret that was kept long long ago
A baby our parents didn't get to know

When I was younger how I needed you
Looking for a friend to help me through
The dark nights of chaos and despair
To hold my hand someone to care

Then you came into my world that day
Changing my life in an awesome way
We met and bounded from the start
Now you fill that space inside my heart

Like the warm sunshine upon my face
Like the shining stars floating in space
Like waves breaking upon the shore
I found a love I had not known before

Sister you're witty and so full of fun
Today a new chapter for us has begun
You are beautiful and so very wise
I thank Jesus for this precious surprise

But the very best thing I've not told yet
Something you won't guess I bet
An overwhelming miracle for sure
The most precious gift of all

My sisters knows Father God up above
His mercy, His undying faithful love
Truly a miracle for everyone to see
A sister firmly set in God's family

You will probably remember from the last issue of Chainlink how Steph discovered she had a biological sister and the story of when they met. She continues the journey of discovery in this poem. Ed.

Rally & Events Diary for 2022

Rally/Event	When	Where	CMA Contact
Into the Valley Rally	Friday 29 th April to Sunday 1 st May	Driffeld Showground Kelleythorpe, Driffeld, YO25 9DN	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
You've been NABDed	Friday 6 th to Sunday 8 th May	The Royal Cheshire Showground Knutsford, Cheshire	Sid O'Neill sid.oneill@ntlworld.com
Farmyard Party Rally	Friday 17 th to Sunday 19 th June	Duncombe Park Estate, Helmsley, North Yorkshire, YO62 5EB	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
Yorkshire Pudding Rally	Friday 5 th to Sunday 7 th August	Escrick Park Estate, Escrick, North Yorkshire, YO19 6EA	Oliver Hamilton chair.westyorks@bike.org.uk
Hoggin' the Bridge	August, dates TBC	Caldicot, Monmouthshire, Wales	Tony Williams cma.bristol.treasurer@gmail.com
Thunder in the Glens	Friday 26 th to Sunday 28 th August	Aviemore, Scotland	Amy Stalker secretary.forthandtay@bike.org.uk
Stormin' the Castle Rally	Friday 2 nd to Sunday 4 th September	Witton Castle, Co Durham, DL14 0DE	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
Dolau Afon Camping Weekend	Thursday 8 th to Sunday 11 th September	Dolau Afon, Pont, Llanafan, Aberystwyth, SY23 4BQ	Penny Cavill cma.bristol.chair@gmail.com
North West 200 Road Races	Thursday 12 th to Saturday 14 th May	Coleraine/Portstewart/Portrush N.I	Roy McGarvey roy_ermentrude@msn.com
Isle of Man TT Races	Wednesday 1 st to Monday 13 th June	Isle of Man TT circuit	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
Brighton Burn-Up	Sunday 4 th September	Ace Cafe, London and Madeira Drive, Brighton	Stephan Powell chair.sussex@bike.org.uk

Please send any revisions and/or additions to the Editor at chainlink@bike.org.uk in time for the next issue.



Photo by Revolt on Unsplash