

ST SILAS NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 – September 2004

A very warm welcome to the long-awaited Issue 2 of the St Silas Newsletter. This issue features more info on recent and forthcoming events, such as the Listening Course weekend away, the recently-formed St Silas Social Justice group, and the arrival of a brand new church football team. We also hear what one family got up to during their summer holidays, and feature another profile of one of our St Silas regulars.

You may notice that the name of the newsletter has not yet changed. Fear not, the title competition is still open. Answers on an e-postcard to Gill Wilson (gill_wilson@hotmail.com). Also, if you feel you would like to contribute any articles or ideas for the newsletter, your articles would be more than welcome, please get in touch with Cathy Brodie (cathy@stsilas.org.uk). Enjoy . . .

Life After

After Life

By Ros Borland

Being a film producer is not as glamorous as it sounds. As I write this, I am sitting in an old disused college that we have converted into production offices for my next film, WILD COUNTRY.

I started out 'making the tea' and worked my way up the painful hill to producing. Along the way I have faced barages of criticism for my Christian faith as it appears to be an easy target in this largely secular industry. I remember one awful moment in the STV newsroom when I was pinned to the wall by a bevvy of journalists and interrogated about my pro-life views on abortion and embryology. I left shaking but determined not to let that sway my ethical stance.

So - from 'making the tea' and researching documentaries, I moved on to producing documentaries and amongst others, made a film for the BBC in 1990 about Glasgow City Mission, an organisation I am still involved with.

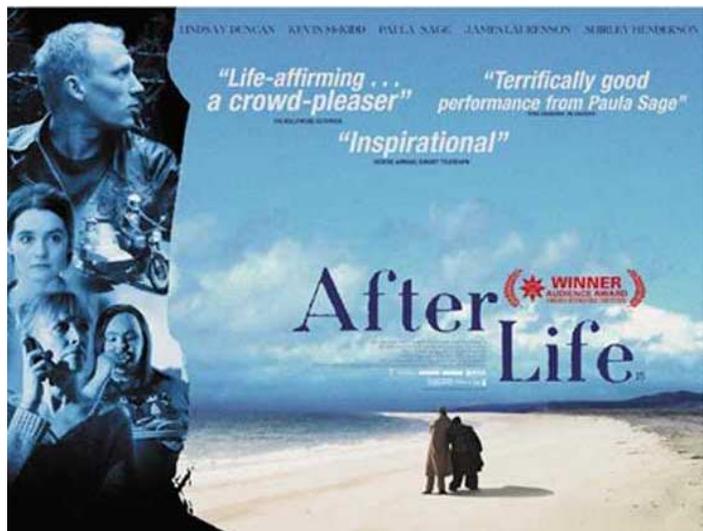
I knew that I wanted to be a film producer way back then so managed to get a scholarship for a European Producers' Course under the heady title of EAVE (European Audio Visual Entrepreneurs) - enough to scare anyone off! This equipped me for dealing with international financiers and I quickly moved on to working for the BBC raising additional international finance for children's programmes, documentaries and drama. But 6 years of wearing a suit and flying around the world made me even hungrier to get back into production at a grass-roots level.

Gabriel Films was conceived one day when I was reading a book in my living room. I had been trying to come up with a name for a film production company for ages and this one perfectly fit the bill.

My business partner and I spent 5 years making short films, documentaries and developing feature film scripts. It was a very difficult period and my family still don't understand why I invested all of my life's savings into the company to keep it afloat. But now we have made AfterLife, a low-budget film that I hope touches people's hearts and gives them more of an insight of special needs and the trials and triumphs of family responsibilities. It strikes a very deep chord for me as I cared for my father when he was dying of Alzheimer's so know what the main characters are going through.

Now it's on to my next film and werewolves. Many people ask me why I am so fascinated by horror films and my answer is "As a Christian, I am continually faced with the struggle of good and evil and it is incumbent upon me to produce stories that address those issues".

So here we go! We start shooting WILD COUNTRY on 4th October in Mugdock Country Park.



Here to Hear – the Importance of Christian Listening

by John McCutcheon

The Learning to Listen course took place on the weekend of 7th-9th of November 2003 and consisted of four sessions over Friday night, Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and Sunday afternoon. About fifteen people attended the course from St. Silas, who all wanted to become better Christian listeners. One of the key aspects of this weekend and the subsequent 'Called to Listen' course was group confidentiality because a lot of individuals were sharing intimate secrets and information about themselves and it was important that this did not become the subject of tittle tattle among the group or lead to wider gossip within the church. It is also a key requirement of being a good listener that the person who is being listened to knows that whatever is shared remains strictly between the listener and themselves.

On each occasion, whether at Learning to Listen or the Called to Listen course the group was split into groups of three (initially it was groups of two), a listener, a speaker and an observer. The purpose of the listener was not to share their own opinions with the speaker but to listen to what was said and reflect back to the speaker what they had just said (not as easy as it sounds), this consequently led to debate within the group as to how effective and relevant a tool this was. Once the speaker had finished sharing their "story" the listener was expected to ask three key questions: The most important thing that had been shared, what action the speaker wanted to take and how they were feeling now. At all times once these questions were answered the listener was expected to reflect back what had been said. The listener would then be expected to bring the 'session' to a conclusion by offering a prayer for the speaker. The Learning to Listen course started with the basics of who formed our listening patterns and how this came about and moved onto helping us develop our own listening patterns.

This was then followed by a 12 part "Called to Listen" course which took place between April and June. The highlight (for me) was the weekend away at the Bield in Blackruthven, Perth. Anyone unfamiliar with the Bield should make a point of spending some time there as God's presence definitely surrounds this place. This was further confirmed when Robin shared the story of how he came to acquire the Bield; God's hand was definitely at work in this. Anyway, the twelve part course consisted of studies on "Listening to

Feelings", "Listening to Stress" and "Listening to Loss" amongst other things. The formula for this was similar to that of the Learning to Listen course, only this time the listener was expected to summarise the main points of what the speaker had been saying. The meetings took place between St. Silas and on two occasions St. Ninians in Prestwick. On one of these visits to Prestwick Myra and I had the pleasure of Jill and Kate accompanying us to St. Ninians though this did not seem to be reciprocated as both passengers very quickly found alternative lifts home! When Alan was told he was coming home with us the colour seemed to drain from him and he begged everybody for a spare seat in their cars for one more.

Among some of the bits of course work that we were expected to carry out included writing our own personal psalm that we could make as long or short as we wanted. What has that to do with listening you may be asking? The main purpose of this was that sometimes our own feelings are so strong that it makes it hard to hear God's voice. By writing a psalm this would create some inner space that would allow us to listen to God. By the end of the course the one thing that everybody was agreed on was that there was an awesome fellowship within the group and that a strong bond had emerged between everybody. To that end further meetings have been arranged for fellowship time with one another. Christian listeners in St. Silas has been a prayer request of a few folk from St. Silas for many years and now that prayer has been answered with over a dozen listeners now properly trained to carry this out. It is something that will hopefully be used not just within St. Silas but also be used as an outreach resource to the wider community. The course was provided by the Acorn Christian Foundation and was ably led by Maureen Doyle with help from Robin and Marianne from the Bield. Since 1985 Acorn has been introducing listening training to churches of all denominations and has over 500 trained tutors. It is also relevant to note that this course that was being provided in St. Silas was a new one and we were either the pilot programme for something invigorating and far reaching or else we were guinea pigs for something different. After the duration of this course I think that we are on the brink of providing a significant service within and outwith the church.



PROFILE: JEAN JOHNSTON

Described by some as a dare-devil rock chick and by others as a mighty-fine chiroprapist, we went to meet this international woman of mystery . . .

Where do you live, and who do you live with? I live in a lovely cottage in Fenwick with my husband Allan and our dog Julz.

Where were you born? I was born in a military hospital, and grew up in Dumfries.

Where else have you lived? I lived in Glasgow for three years when I trained to be a chiroprapist, then I lived in Scarborough for a few years before spending a year backpacking around Australia.

What brought you to Glasgow and St Silas? After Australia I missed Glasgow and had a real hankering to be back there, then a chiroprapist job came up with the NHS. God brought me to St Silas via David McCarthy eight years ago. I wasn't a Christian at the time, and I hadn't gone to church for about 15 years, but I suddenly felt this strong desire to go to church. My mum thought an Alpha course would be good for me and gave me a list of churches that ran it. I phoned St Silas and spoke to David who told me he was currently stripping (wallpaper of course!). I liked his sense of humour and he seemed very down to earth. He invited me to an evening service and made me feel very welcome, he introduced me to Ian and Catriona Futter who were about to start leading an Alpha course. I loved the Alpha course, felt very able to ask questions without being judged and really enjoyed the fellowship and learning about the Christian life. Half way through the course I became a Christian.

What jobs have you had? When I was at school I worked weekends in a sweet shop, great 'cause I got to eat sweets as well as sell them! Then I worked in a shoe shop, and then in a photographers. When I was a student I worked as a cleaner in a maternity hospital during the summer. While in Australia I worked as a waitress, a housemaid, and a grape picker. Grape picking was really hard work, but gave me the money to travel around so I wasn't complaining. Most of my working life has been as a chiroprapist, initially for the NHS, and then for the past eight years I've had my own practice. This has probably been the most interesting job as I meet lots of people.

Favourite childhood memory? Canoeing down rapids with my dad and brother, great fun. My dad ran a canoe club, so we went canoeing for several years, between the ages of about 8 and 14.

Most embarrassing moment? As a teenager I was in my room drying my hair, scantily clad, and I heard a funny squeaking sound outside, I turned round to see the window cleaner. I was absolutely mortified!

Hobbies? Walking, traveling, listening to music, going to concerts, the occasional extreme sport.

Any annoying habits? Ask Allan, it's all relative, isn't it?

"Soapbox" issues? One thing I find really annoying is people throwing litter on the ground when there are plenty of bins around.

Highlights of your life so far? Becoming a Christian, marrying Allan, and doing a bungee jump in New Zealand, which was terrifying and amazing.

Most difficult times? Filling out this questionnaire!! Seriously though, before I was a Christian I was a mad mountain biker. One summer I was racing in the Scottish Mountain Bike Series, I was about halfway through and in fourth place. I pushed myself too hard and hurt my leg. Not only could I not ride my bike but I could hardly walk. I went to physiotherapists, sports injury clinics and osteopaths, but no-one knew what was wrong with me. My mountain bike friends didn't want to know me. It was a real low point in my life but God used that time to bring me to Him. It took a couple of year for my leg to get better, I gave up mountain biking and had to rest.

How did you come to know God? As I said before, during an Alpha course. I found it quite difficult, as I didn't want to give up control of my life, worried about not meeting a husband because I didn't fancy anyone at St Silas! I wanted to be with mum who'd been praying for me for years. I told her I did want to become a Christian but I found it really hard to say the words. Mum told me that a friend of mine (who she'd been praying with for me) had had a vision about angels with swords and as soon as she said that I started crying and the barriers were broken down, I was able to give my life to God.

What is it like being a Christian in your world? I have to be sure to conduct my business practice with integrity. I find that working with people I often have opportunity to share my faith with them in different ways and also I often have compassion for my clients. My parents are Christians, which is great, I really love having fellowship with them. I once worked with someone who gave me a really hard time, I guess it was persecution. I tried to stay true to my faith and didn't fight back, though there was that temptation to get revenge, but I didn't.

In what ways have you felt God working in your life? When I became a Christian I felt Him immediately start to transform me and my priorities changed, I just was desperate to go to church and know more about him and I no longer wanted to go out drinking at weekends, etc. Over the years He has brought me deeper into him, I've recently gone through a painful time of refinement that has brought me closer to him. He helped me to take a step of faith when I left the NHS to start my own business, which He has richly blessed. He's brought me into fellowship with other Christians, and provided me with a business and happy home.

On the ball.

Has St Silas gone football crazy?

And what does football have to do with God anyway?

Ally Morrow gives us the pre-season analysis of the new St Silas FC.

Twenty-two men, large muddy field, torrential rain and one football, a great reason to get up early on a Saturday morning. After having broken my legs three times, and since I'm fast approaching 30, one would think I would be ready for retirement from all contact sports. (Indeed even as I write this I'm nursing a rather swollen ankle from a recent dodgy tackle.) However, my passion for football is such that all common sense seems to leave me at the sight of any spherical leather object.

I've been involved in football ministry for over 6 years now, as a student with Navigators, and with two other church football teams the Strathclyde Evangelical Churches' Football League. This has helped me to see first hand the potential that playing sport has to reach the unchurched. Football, and sport in general for that matter, is a great tool for evangelism as it allows you to develop friendships with people that you might not otherwise meet or become friends with. The common interest in football forms a crucial basis for these friendships, which creates amazing opportunities for honest and open discussion about life and God.

Last year I started to think through the possibility of starting a team at St Silas. Interestingly, Darren Darlow, who is already involved in running a St Silas football team for the under 16s, was also thinking the same. Darren knew quite a few guys from the local area that were becoming too old for the youth team that he was running, and so saw this as a great opportunity to keep the contact with them. So, we got together

and put in an application to join the Churches' League. Thankfully we were accepted, and the work of forging a team began. The initial excitement caused by being accepted into the league soon changed to apprehension as we had visions of only being able to scrape together a handful of players. Not only that, past experience has taught me the importance of having a balanced team with a good proportion of Christians and non-Christians. Often when only one or two Christian are in the team, the opportunities for evangelism become scarce and the overall ministry vision becomes watered down. However, thankfully we have had a number of church members, maybe nine or so, join the team alongside around 14 young guys from Woodlands and the surrounding areas.

With new strips, kindly donated by a church member, and a home pitch allocated by the council (it is Peterson Park in Yoker, for those of you who would like to pop down and enjoy 90 minutes of comedy on a Saturday morning), we are all set for promotion to the second division within a year (so Darren keeps telling me!). Whatever happens league-wise, I hope that we at St. Silas will use the opportunity we have to witness to guys who have had no connection with the church (and would normally never dream of coming near it) through our conversations with them and through the way we conduct ourselves on and off the pitch (that of course means no swearing, throwing temper tantrums or threatening to punch the ref!).

We also hope that as the season progresses, we can organise a couple of events within the church that the guys will come to, and maybe even try to encourage them to come along to a couple of Sunday services.

It would be great therefore if you will join with us in praying for the team: for safety as we travel together and play on a Saturday; for a real sense of God's enabling as we try to witness and demonstrate God's love for them; and for God to bring those that he wants into the team.



Pre-season training in Scotstoun last month.



How drinking coffee can change the world: The St. Silas Social Justice Group

By Emily Ballard, Fiona Pashley, Maggie McTernan (foreword by Lorna Morrow)

In February of this year, we had an evening in our house group looking at the awesome world that God made. After musing on this for a while, our conversation turned to our responsibility to be caretakers of God's creation. This involved things that we can do in our everyday lives, like recycling, using ecofriendly detergents, buying toiletries that aren't tested on animals, etc. Naturally, we then discussed being ethical consumers, in terms of whether or not we should buy products from companies that are known to employ people to work in sweat-shops, or those that involve themselves in other profit-before-people, unethical business practises. I shared that although I feel very strongly about this issue, I feel somewhat helpless about it too, since I am just one person, with so much to do, so many companies to boycott, so many letters to write to people with the power to change things. It can also sometimes be quite hard to know what to write, or how to find the time to research the issues and actually sign the petitions, write the letters. Someone mentioned that there had recently been a few of people from St Silas who has formed some writing-letters-to-people-about-such-issues kind of group, that they just got on and quietly did this kind of stuff on a regular basis. So I made it my business to find out more about them. And here it is (see below).

Because the Social Justice Group meets for an hour or so in Offshore every month, I can write the letters there and then, discuss the issues with other people and benefit from the shared knowledge. After having been to a few of the recent meetings, I have written to US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, about executing under 16s (a violation of the Geneva Convention of Human Rights), Patricia Hewitt, MP, about Trade Justice, and been part of a so-far successful mini-campaign to encourage Offshore to supply Fair Trade goods. Have we managed to change the world? Not yet, but it's a start. And when we have the democratic right to speak up, why shouldn't we do so, persistently, for the sake of those who have no voice?

To All Frequenters of Offshore Coffee Shop!!
**Don't forget to ask for Fair Trade coffee, tea etc., to show them
there is a demand and hopefully encourage them to supply more!**

*Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the
cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Isaiah 58 v. 6*

In the Christian Aid tent at the Greenbelt Festival 2003, we were invited to commit to supporting the Trade Justice Movement - to rewrite the unfair trade rules which lock developing countries into poverty. We committed ourselves before God and on our return to Glasgow, we established the Social Justice Group.

We meet on the first Saturday of each month at 10.30am in the Offshore coffee shop (on Gibson Street, opposite the church). Once the caffeine has kicked in (particularly welcome on a Saturday morning) the group learns about campaigns from organisations such as Christian Aid, Tearfund, Amnesty International, Open Doors and others. Actions include letter-writing, petitions, information for prayer, fundraising and so on. We tend to focus on a particular issue each week (as the volume of possible issues can be overwhelming!) such as HIV/AIDS, the crisis in Sudan, children's rights and persecuted Christians.

Speak up for those who cannot speak up for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Proverbs 31 v.8

Some may feel that such campaigning is very remote. It is true that sometimes it can feel that letters are disappearing into the ether. However, very often we do receive replies and these are not just letters from politicians fobbing us off. We have received acknowledgements of our concerns and updates from MEPs, MPs, MSPs, The Scottish Executive, The Department for International Development (DFID), The Ministry of Defence, Nestle and others. (Continued on next page.)

These replies are part of an on-going dialogue. For example, the Trade Justice Campaign, run by various organisations such as Christian Aid and Oxfam, is a long-term struggle of which we must continue to be a part. Similarly, the DFID informed us recently of their current strategy to respond to the needs of orphaned and vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS across the world. We must continue to hold our elected representatives responsible for implementing and developing such strategies. This also involves encouraging them!!

The group has been growing steadily – at the last meeting we were 12! It is really encouraging to see the group developing and we very much hope and pray that it will continue to do so and that others will feel a sense of ownership and begin to drive the agenda each month. The more people who can get involved in the campaigns the better – if only to give weight to our current campaign to encourage Offshore to sell fairly traded goods! So far we've persuaded them to stock fair trade coffee, so don't forget to ask if you are in! We also hope that demand from customers will encourage them to offer fair trade tea and other products. As the group develops we aim to bring more of our activities into the church. There is also always great potential to move out into the community and build a larger presence there. For example, we hope soon to begin a dialogue with our supermarkets and local business to encourage them to trade more ethically. There are many avenues yet to be explored by the group such as peaceful demonstrations, fundraising events and so on. The future is exciting!

In conclusion then, the whole point of this is that we meet as commanded by our Lord Jesus to bring His Kingdom on Earth as co-workers with God. However vital a goal this is, we all know that it is much easier to achieve when there is regular time set aside and there are others to encourage us! The group is open to absolutely anyone, within or outwith St. Silas, Christian or otherwise! Please feel free to come along and bring your friends - it would be fantastic to see you!

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Matthew 5 v.6

What We Did On Our Summer Holidays

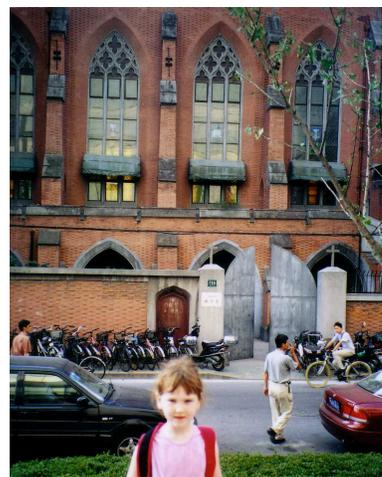
By Kate Pearce

Pudong International Airport was impressive: brand new, full of plate glass and spanking clean. The immigration officials were polite and not wearing the military-style uniform I remember; the taxi queue was well-organised and the highway into the city was at least four lanes wide. The taxi driver weaved in and out of the swiftly moving traffic as taxi drivers do the world over, and there were no seat-belts in the back seat (strangely unsettling for us), but this could have been almost any Asian city: Kuala Lumpur, for example, or Taipei. What's more, we suddenly saw a train on a monorail above us flash by: this was a Maglev, one of the first in the world in commercial operation, going at 430 kilometres an hour.

As we got closer to the city centre we saw more and more sky-scrappers, and not the rectangular boxes we are used to, but each with some quirky design which differentiated it from its neighbour. After we arrived at our hotel we wandered around the area and discovered a multi-storey shopping mall across the street with locals and foreigners eating and drinking in the likes of Starbucks and Haagen Daz, and shops full of designer gear.

Just next to our hotel was a Protestant church, a large missionary-built red brick structure that would have looked at home in Glasgow. As we walked by it on

our exploration of the neighbourhood that first evening we noticed that a service was about to start; later in the week we went in and spoke to a lady who was greeting parishioners arriving for an evening Bible study, and she very graciously let us look around. She wanted to know if we had been baptised, and was happy to know we were fellow Christians. There was quite a large crowd for the Bible study, and a blackboard near the entrance had other mid-week meeting chalked on in: it looked as if there were some church activity going on every day. Apart from a rather gruff doorkeeper on the Sunday evening the church appeared very open and active. (Continued on next page. ...)



The next day we wandered down to the Bund, the waterfront looking out on the Yangtze river.



Sara having her picture taken with an unknown Chinese man. The background is the newest area of Shanghai, called Pudong, which is all skyscrapers. It is across the Yangtze from the Bund, where we were standing.

Here large Western-style offices built a hundred years ago by traders and banks such as the HSBC (Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation) had been restored to their former glory: their classical or rococo exteriors well-maintained, acres of marble inside polished, and leather sofas reinstated. Across the river, what had been paddy fields now sprouted world-class

hotels, offices of multinational companies, even a very creditable aquarium.

This was Shanghai, changed almost beyond belief. Twenty five years earlier, just as China started opening to the West, I had stood on the Bund, and I and my companions had been surrounded by a huge crowd of local Chinese, all wearing blue or green Mao suits. They had seen very few of us before, these barbarians with light hair and skin, blue eyes and 'tall' noses, and they watched us as if we were on television (which very few of them had access to.) The crumbling Western-style buildings behind us had huge red banners hanging across them extolling the proletariat to work hard for the socialist cause, to unite to 'serve the people'. The formerly glamorous Peace Hotel on the Bund was rat-infested. The street behind us was full of bicycles. And out on the Yangtze I saw a Chinese junk, sailing its wares down from the Chinese interior.

On this trip, however, there were still some echoes of the past. Our daughter Sara, as a foreign girl, was a star in China. Small, blond and very pale-skinned, she quickly got used to having her picture taken with local Chinese. Sometimes we said no, but Sara would tell us she didn't mind. We gave up counting photos; Sara even took part in one couple's wedding photo shoot.

Buying a train ticket was almost as exasperating as it used to be: going from queue to queue in the heat until you were in the proper one. And although the train we took to Beijing was super deluxe by Chinese standards, a sleeper with clean toilets and comfortable bunks, the food was a throwback to the past. While most of the meals we had in China were delicious and extraordinarily inexpensive, the 'free' train food was inedible. And when we went to the dining car for something better, we heard the old refrain of 'meiyou' (we don't have it) for the first time in a long time.

And some of the crowds were the same. We had to practically fight our way out of Beijing train station, and then wait in an enormous, badly-organised taxi

queue. Ian and I, truly British, took it upon ourselves to stop people from joining the queue surreptitiously; Ian shouted in English and I in Chinese. Even the couple from Shanghai in front of us started telling queue-jumpers off.

But the most telling adventure we had, in terms of the new China still being the old China, occurred at the Forbidden City, the imperial palace at the heart of Beijing. It was mid-afternoon on Saturday and we had just started our trek through the huge courtyards joined by grand halls that make up the palace. It is no longer possible to enter the halls, but one can stand at the entrance and peer in, listening to a commentary on your audio guide. We were walking alongside hordes of local tourists, Chinese from the provinces in the capital to see the sights, when Ian noticed some guards goose-stepping in our direction. We thought this was rather interesting, seeing the Liberation Army in action.

However, our interest turned to dismay when these guards barred entry to the palace's grand halls, creating a central pathway which excluded all of us tourists. When I asked what was happening the guards told me that there was a foreign dignitary coming through so all of us *hoi polloi* had to be cleared out of the way. I argued for our rights as having bought expensive tickets to see the palace, and Ian, feigning lack of understanding, wandered as far as he could towards the halls. I was rather worried one of the guards was going to pull out a weapon.

And so it went all the length of the Forbidden City. All of us tourists wandered through the courtyards, and Ian and I argued (me in words and Ian in actions) with the guards at each hall. Finally, we arrived at the garden at the back of the palace, and sat down. I began a conversation with a woman from the provinces who was visiting Beijing for the first time with her son. She was not surprised by the lack of respect for our rights, or by the lack of any way to appeal. This was China, after all.

Just then a guard told us to move even further away from the route the dignitary was going to take. I refused and argued the illogic of his position. And in what I felt was a small victory, the woman from the provinces refused as well. The guard, non-plussed, let us be, and we continued our conversation as we and hundreds of other tourists watched a couple of Middle Eastern dignitaries make their way out of the Forbidden City, seat for thousands of years of a culture of power, privilege and exclusion.

So has China changed? Yes, China has changed beyond recognition in the last twenty five years, economically, socially and even to some extent politically. There are hugely more freedoms than there were, including the freedom to worship. Yet those freedoms have distinct boundaries and costs. Back in Glasgow, I spoke to a Chinese person who wants to follow Jesus when they return home, but is fearful of doing so because of the impact it will have on their family. We need to pray for China, for this part of the suffering church.

Road Safety to Heaven

By Alan Davidson



Recently I took part of the morning family service in St Silas. I wrote a piece of comedy drama about a disastrous “driving school” and preached on a bible passage, making some relevant links with the theme for that day including the idea of how our actions and the way we live our life has consequences. I thought I was finished with this concept but after prayer God said ‘no’, so I have been thinking of what next?

I am a former ADI driving and motorcycle instructor and I notice the consequences of bad driving on the roads. I have been using the Glasgow M8 motorway to travel to a temporary teaching job in Easterhouse. The section of the motorway that I use has speed limits of 50 mph for 3 miles and then 60 mph for a further stretch on the eastbound M8. I try to drive at no more than these relevant limits at all times but almost every driver passes me doing 10-20 mph more than the legal limit. Unlike instructors and traffic police most are not trained to deal with an emergency situation at higher speeds. Several thousand each year are killed on UK roads and ten times more than this are seriously crippled and injured for life. All these people are made by God and precious to Him.

How does this relate to the Bible, God’s word to mankind? Well, if you have been a Christian for a few years and you get to know your way around the Bible, then you will know that it speaks in a relevant way into every possible human situations (2Tim 3:16) including :

- His love for you
- His gift to you of freedom to choose right or wrong.
- Society and justice for all.
- Your identity and purpose in life.
- Family life, singleness and children.
- Harmful behaviour which causes emotional, spiritual and physical damage to the human person.
- Human disobedience and sin which strongly displeases God.
- Worship and love towards God delights Him
- God promises to protect those who love Him (this does not always mean short term easy solutions from life’s problems but does mean ‘ultimate eternal protection to those who love Jesus’.)

I have a couple of the small ‘Gideons’ Bibles with the little guidance section at the start. God’s word will help, guide or comfort you in ANY situation. Ask me for a copy. The Bible is exciting, amazing, divine wisdom. Read it often and I promise you will be built up in faith. God has given us His word, the Bible to use as a tool and you could say that it is like a ‘highway code’ for life. ‘Your word is a lamp to my feet and light for my path.’ (Ps 119: 105).

Have faith in God’s holy and flawless word. Read Colossians 1:15-20 and ponder just how amazing Jesus is.

Walking Exercise by Kathleen S Kirkpatrick

Your blue and holy mounts
The birds sing a gently happy praise song
There are leaves and stalks and buds
Of your growth everywhere

Players of golf enjoying their leisure
On an ironed out green carpet
Your stringent yellow gorse
In the clear air of children’s voices

Fresh sea breeze through my nostrils and hair
Calm, cool and clear on my face
As I walk, birds dive in the sky
And the golf bags stand in wait

Sea salt, sea salt and cabbage butterfly
Bright yachts of sea-faring wonder
Rocks and wood and sand and shore
Will show God’s love for evermore