

Voice

MAGAZINE



New horizons

In this issue:
four true-life stories
to inspire you

More about your Voice magazine

For more than 50 years, this pocket-sized magazine has been distributed around the world in many languages. In each issue, there are inspirational stories of ordinary people who share their own story in their own words.

Each story also tells how the writer came to a living faith in Jesus Christ, who promised peace and an abundant life to all who trust in Him. Jesus asked his followers: "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life.

"I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it . . . I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn how to live freely and lightly."

- from Matthew 11:28 in the 'Message' Bible translation.

Cover picture by Christoffer Engstrom, Unsplash Photos.

Road crash led to my greatest discovery

How a world-class athlete found peace despite a serious road crash and family sickness

By Stuart Braye

Paraplegic Olympic
Medal Winner

I've always loved sport but my life nearly ended at the age of 27 in a road crash which completely crushed my right leg.

In hospital in 1985, my leg was amputated below the knee. What followed was a decade of ups and downs as I struggled badly to cope with life as a disabled person. Physically, however, I did well. I was quickly lifting weights and getting into athletics with other amputees.

By 1991, I was the fourth fastest 'below-knee' amputee



Stuart Braye: outwardly successful, 'but inside, a total mess'

in the world and the fastest European over 100, 200 and 400 metres. In 1992, I won a Bronze medal in the 400 metres at the Barcelona Paralympic Games. By then I had gained a masters degree in Sports Management and a secure job working in sports development.

My family was great - and my wife, Marion and I had a really nice house. I seemed to have everything, but inside I was a total mess - I was depressed, lonely, unhappy and unloving, not scoring very highly as a husband or dad and not liking myself very much. But a

wonderful change was very near - it came in a very unlikely way soon after the shock of hearing that my brother, Charles, was diagnosed with cancer in January, 1996. Incidentally, he was a man of faith, a convinced Christian who remained peaceful and grateful for his life - but in contrast I must admit that I was really a mess.

We brothers weren't born into a Christian family - we never had prayers, Bible stories or church attendance. It was a 'normal' family - and in my early years I'd joined the Army. In my final year in the Forces I was attached to the Special Air Service in the 264 (SAS) Signal Squadron.

During that time, Charles and his family had become Christians. One evening in 1981, I was bragging to Charles about how fit I was - *and he was telling me about Jesus!* Charles had said to me that the only way



to get to Heaven was to “ask Jesus to come into your life.”

What could I say? I told him I’d do that “just before I die,” but in reality I forgot about it all - until that fateful moment in March, 1985 when on a busy road the brakes failed on a lorry I was driving. In a split second I thought, “This is it! I’m dead.”

Now, years later, after my first visit to see my sick brother, I suddenly remembered what Charles had said to me long ago - “*to become a Christian, you simply ask Jesus into your life.*”

So that evening, that is what I did - quietly but audibly. I woke up the next day feeling a totally different person. My wife, Marion says that I was unrecognisable - once I was “like a cross between Arnold Schwarzenegger and Rambo” - and now I was “a cross between John the Baptist and Cliff Richard!”

It’s very hard to describe the huge change in me. Now, in my heart I *knew* God, I *knew* I was forgiven for my sins. I *knew*

Jesus - and I was filled with the Holy Spirit. I knew for sure that I was a new person - I was still ‘me’ but a much better ‘me’. I felt God tell me not to worry about my family or even say too much: a year after this, Marion became a Christian, too, and then our boys, then aged 11 and 13, made their first commitment.

Today they are strong Christians. Mike is a worship leader and Andy is a preacher.

I can honestly say that God has never let us down. Marion has survived breast cancer; Andy survived a tour in Iraq with the Parachute Regiment. I now work as a Senior Lecturer in Sports Sociology at Teeside University.

Life has been tough at times, but the last 16 years with Jesus have been the best. When things seem to go wrong, Jesus just gets closer. I hope you do as I did - and ask Jesus to come into your life.

You won’t regret it.

The writer Stuart Braye can be contacted via email at: stuartbraye@aol.com

How a nuclear scientist discovered the reality of God

Stuart Cripps studied the wonders of the universe - and became a new man of faith

I was born in Manchester, the son of a policeman, and had a loving family upbringing, although attacks of asthma made me miss school all too often. Despite this, I managed to pass the 11-plus exam, did well in science at grammar school and finished up with a first class honours degree in physics from Manchester University.

I went on to start a career in the UK nuclear industry with The Nuclear Power Group, where I became the manager of the Physics Department and corporate specialist in radiological safety.

At the age of 21, having picked out the prettiest girl in the dance hall, I married Anne, and we have been happily married for more than 40 years. We have been blessed with three sons



Stuart Cripps

and a daughter and now have five lovely grandchildren.

There was a time in my 20s when I had no room or desire for God in my life, being more concerned with supporting Manchester United and keeping tropical fish. However, studying science at university brought me face-to-face with the inescapable evidence of an all-powerful, creator God.

It was my nuclear physics Professor who explained the amazing balance and ordered sub-atomic structure of matter. This started me thinking of the same order and balance throughout the universe and the complexity of genetic information in all life forms.

information in all life forms.

So I became convinced that a random process could not be the answer. There had to be an infinite all-powerful intelligence behind such order and balance, but I had no idea that I could meet Him personally.

I was 23 when one of Anne's close friends - who had just become a Christian - seemed to have a personal relationship with God. She was a normal, mentally stable person, but I just did not believe that a creator God would want a relationship with mere earthlings. However, our friend's gentle persistence drove me to my first prayer: *"God, I know you exist, but if you can hear me, please show me the truth!"*

The next Monday evening, the Vicar called! We had for some unprecedented reason gone to church the day before - and politely told the Vicar we hadn't understood a word of his sermon. So he had come round to answer some questions.

As quickly as I fired questions, he found satisfactory answers from the Bible. At the end of his visit, he put a question to us: "Is there any reason why you shouldn't become Christians?"

We had no answer. He had clearly revealed from the Bible

that Jesus is the only Saviour of the world. So, Anne and I prayed for forgiveness for leaving Jesus out of our lives. We then asked Him to come into our lives as Lord and Saviour and take away our sins - *and He came*. Although we didn't feel any different that night, we knew in our hearts we really were 'born again.'

Six months later we were prayed for in our living room to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit - an experience that had also happened to the disciples in the Bible at Pentecost. I found myself having the same sort of experience as I breathed in the presence of God: love, mercy, joy, power and peace all mingled together.

I immediately started to pray in an unknown language supernaturally given by the Holy Spirit - a spiritual gift that I later learned is also experienced by millions of Christians in the world today.

After that, I learned from the Bible that the Holy Spirit is our daily guide, as we trust Him - and, sure enough, I began to hear God speak into my heart in many ways to guide and encourage me through every circumstance of life. There were also specific answers to prayer that convinced me that the God of this universe really *does* speak to all his children - even scientists. I was also amazed to discover that His disciples



them, we also saw many answers to prayer: for example, in Southport, someone with an artificial hip found that they did not need a replacement; arthritic pain left after prayer for a lady in Standish; hearing was restored for a man in Wetherby; damaged tendons were healed for a man from Manchester . . . and so on.

today can do many of the things that Jesus did, such as healing the sick, through the supernatural gifts and power of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the Bible.

This began an amazing adventure in faith which we shared with others, particularly the local Full Gospel Businessmen (FGB) who invite not-yet-Christian friends and colleagues to informal dinners - usually at a hotel or restaurant - where, in a relaxed social environment, they share their personal stories of what God has been doing in their lives. (*Details about the FGB Fellowship can be found on the back cover*).

I discovered that there are similar fellowship groups all over the world where people can be 'naturally supernatural' and see lives radically changed for the better! So, when people at these dinners asked us to pray for

Later, in my office every Friday lunchtime, I met to pray with work colleagues who had recently become Christians. We saw the power of God working in our group in the nuclear industry. I now knew that the power of God is infinitely greater than the power of nuclear reactors I had helped to design.

Anne and I live in Warrington where the Golden Gates have the Latin inscription, '*Deus dat incrementum,*' which means '*God gives the increase.*'

I have found through scientific logic and personal experience that God is the creator of all Life, including the gift of a personal relationship with the Living God - ***what an 'increase'!***

The writer, Stuart Cripps is the National Executive Officer of the Full Gospel Businessmen in the UK and Ireland. (He can be contacted through the FGB National Office).

The secret of happiness isn't hard to find

- says the author of the book, *'There Must Be More to Life Than This.'*

By Dr Barrie Lawrence

While I was training at the London Hospital, a medical student said to me, almost in casual conversation, "Jesus has changed my life."

"*What?*" I thought. "You poor lad. You're training to be a doctor, but really you need to go and *see* one!"

But strangely, a few weeks later someone else said their life had been changed by Jesus - then another and another. They were medical students, a trainee nurse, a trainee physio-therapist, and so on.

Now I realise today there are seasons when God reaches out to us, and He was certainly reaching out to me then. So bear with me for saying that He may



Barrie and Wendy Lawrence

just be reaching out to you as you read this story?

As a student I started seeking the truth, because surely these people couldn't *all* be so mistaken? I questioned them, then started reading parts of the Bible, and sent up the occasional prayer such as: "*Are you there?*"

After a couple of months, I realised that the God of the Bible was probably real. This surprised me, but shouldn't have done, since Jesus had said that those who really seek the truth *will* find it.

I felt I had now 'arrived', but after a month, I realised that I hadn't really responded to that truth. So, alone in my room, in the early hours of one October morning, (I used to study into

the early hours), I knelt down and gave my life to the Lord Jesus. I thanked Him for dying in my place on the Cross, and asked forgiveness for my sins. I also asked Him to help me live for Him.

The next morning, I felt quite different. Now I realise that this isn't everyone's experience, but it was for me. In essence, I felt changed, renewed, and clean, with a sense of the presence of God with me and a fulfilment in living. Can I add here that if he did it for me, *he can do it for you!*

Two years later, I was reading in the New Testament about the early Christians in the Book of Acts, and I saw how courageous and dynamic they were. It was said that they were baptised in the Holy Spirit and "they turned the whole world upside down."

But my life in comparison seemed so shallow and powerless. *They were filled with the Holy Spirit*, who empowered them to stand strong in their faith, to live effectively for Jesus Christ, even seeing miracles.

I asked God to baptise me with the same Holy Spirit, I would ask Him for this power, nothing happened and in the end I gave up asking until I read in the Bible that God has clearly promised to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.*

That Bible promise rekindled my own desire and I took Him at His word - and it happened: one night I lay for a long time in the awesome presence of God, and I got up a changed person. For example, after I was empowered by the Holy Spirit, I was able to pray for people with health problems. Many people were healed after we laid hands on them, just as the Bible promised.

Was life after that a bed of roses? Not at all! There was a time when I found myself in a domestic crisis, through my own fault, and I drifted a million miles from God, or so it felt. But God intervened and

** Editor's note: the baptism of the Holy Spirit was the promise of Jesus to his followers to empower them to be effective Christians. This was the experience of the disciples at Pentecost and is available for every believer today.*

brought me back to himself.

Today, my wonderful wife Wendy and I serve God together. I hope our story will encourage anyone reading this story to realise that God can do the same for him or her. There are those who will read this personal story who realise that they, too, have wandered away from God, and maybe feel they can never get back to him.

If that is you, please realise that it is no accident that you are reading this, because God wants to repeatedly remind each of that Jesus died on the Cross to bring us back to God - and he longs for you to trust him afresh.

Yes, the love of God drew me right back to him - and if he did it for me, *he can do it for you!*

Although I am now retired, I have had two strings to my bow during my days of employment. I was a Christian bookseller and a dental surgeon, so I told people that I was a man who sold holy books and who filled holy teeth! I have written five books about the various things that God has done in my life - including physical healing.



Barrie: 'I hope our story will encourage you'

Living in daily fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ has proved to be the most wonderful adventure.

The writer Dr Barrie Lawrence can be contacted on 01603 898 289 and via his website at: www.barrielawrence.com

A free booklet for you

Discover new life as a Christian - simply send off the reply coupon on Page 15 of this Voice magazine to receive a free copy of



'Finding God' which tells more about life as a true follower of Jesus.

My journey from conflict to peace

Civil engineer **Daniel Nquot** shares his remarkable story

More than a million people died in the three-year Civil War in Nigeria. I was a child when my family fled from our remote village and we became refugees.

Up to that point I was a happy-go-lucky 10-year-old who loved playing football in our village of Mbiabong in south-east Nigeria.

My father died of sickness during the conflict. After the war, we moved back to our village. I was so fortunate to prosper after the terrible war: I was a keen student and became the only one in my immediate family who eventu-

ally went to University where I studied civil engineering and also gained a master's degree in structural engineering. I later became Chief Engineer with the Highways Department.

Looking back to those early days, it seemed that God was looking after me, though I had no idea why. I wasn't religious, although our family was nominally Methodist. You might say I was a 'gentle sinner' – perhaps rather self-righteous because I didn't live a wild or excessive life-style.

Then in 1988, two friends invited me to a New Generation Church where the speaker clearly presented the radical



Daniel and his wife, Kate: 'We've been blessed'

message that ‘God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone – *including me* - who believes in Jesus will not perish but have eternal life,’ (*John 3: 16*).

The speaker said that Jesus had opened the way for me to have an exchanged life – a new life, lovingly empowered by my Father in Heaven, in exchange for my old self-centred, self-righteous life.

I realized that this was my moment of decision, but I had an academic mindset, always trying to analyse everything. Now God was speaking to my heart – so in simple trust I responded to the ‘altar call’ to go forward as an outward sign that I truly accepted the salvation offered by Jesus, who had paid a great price for me by dying publicly on a cruel Cross.

As I stepped out in faith that day, I was ‘born again’ – and I became spiritually alive. It was a landmark moment as a Christian counsellor led me in a simple prayer to accept Christ as my personal Saviour. I also welcomed the Holy Spirit into my life as my Helper, Guide and Friend, just as Jesus promised, (*see John 14:16*).



This was all very new to me, but as the months passed by I experienced a new freedom as the ‘gentle craving for sin’ subsided. Prayer became real, the Bible came alive – and I was living a daily spiritual adventure as the Holy Spirit equipped me for service. I discovered I could even pray with people and see their lives changed, too. Some who were sick were healed!

On two occasions, we appeared to see the dead return to life. The first instance was a neighbour, a lawyer, who collapsed at home after an epileptic fit. I heard shouts and rushed in to find him on the floor. A doctor said it was a ‘hopeless’ situation. Suddenly, I felt the urge to pray for the lawyer. I put my hands on his head, and as I prayed, his eyes opened. People were shocked,

then the family broke into celebration as the lawyer, now alive, was taken to hospital for a confirmation check-up.

Two years later, when Kate, my English-born wife and I were visiting relatives, we heard a tremendous commotion as a six-year-old boy lay still after choking on something. His family were crying helplessly, as others ran around in a panic. So my wife and I laid hands on the boy and, as we prayed, he suddenly sneezed and opened his eyes! I was amazed.

Many times we have seen God answer a prayer for healing. In Nigeria, I became a member of FGB – the Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship – where I became president of a local FGB ‘chapter.’ We have more than 3,100 of these chapters across Nigeria, where our national conventions can attract over 20,000 people.

In my journey of faith, I have been inspired by many Christians, especially the life of the Mary Slessor, (1848- 1915). She was a hard working Scottish mill girl and an unorthodox Sunday School teacher, who, inspired by David Livingstone, became a missionary in

Calabar, Nigeria, an area where no European had set foot before.

In 2002 I came to the UK to do a doctorate degree in Civil Engineering, and also saw FGB groups set up at Liverpool University and in the city, where Kate and I and our three children were happily settled for 14 years. I loved reaching out to our neighbours with the Gospel message, and gave away thousands of **Voice** magazines, like the one you are reading today. Nowadays I teach civil engineering at a college in Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire; my wife Kate is a health visitor.

We attend an FGB Fellowship in the city of St Albans. I thank God for the day I first heard the Good News about New Life with Jesus. I’d like to leave you with the words of the Apostle Paul, in the Bible. He wrote: “I’m glad in God . . . I am just as happy with as little as much . . . whatever I have, wherever I am, **I can make it through anything in the power of Jesus who makes me who I am,**” (*a verse from the modern ‘Message’ Bible translation*).

Daniel Nquot is on email at: dperfecter@yahoo.co.uk

In conclusion . . .

A key question

You may have read the true stories in this issue of Voice magazine - and wonder now whether God could make a difference in *your* life, too?

The answer is a definite 'YES'.

Someone has said that there is a God-shaped hole in everyone's life - "some people use alcohol, or sex, or their children, or food, or money, or music, or heroin to try and fill a sense of emptiness."

The Bible says that God Himself has put a longing in our hearts for something outside of ourselves, to fill that vacuum. He has "put eternity into every person's heart," (*Ecclesiastes 3:11*).

One reason people don't know God is they have not wholeheartedly looked for Him. God says, "You will find me when you seek me with all your heart," (*Jeremiah 29:13*).

The unique and remarkable message of the Bible is that God loves each of us personally and He wants us to have peace and an abundant life - that's why the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth.

Trust in God is the foundation of true happiness. But how do we begin this journey of faith? Simply through trusting Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. Jesus said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No-one comes to the Father except through me." (*John 14:6*).

To discover more, read "first steps" on the facing page.

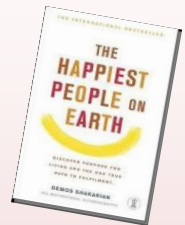
Online information

- To explore the meaning of life, visit the website: lookingforGod.com
- A good (free) introduction to the Christian life can also be found with the Alpha Course - see details at: www.uk.alpha.org
- You can read popular versions of the Bible at: BibleGateway.com
- There are short video interviews called 'Brief Encounters' on the FGB website: www.fgbuk.org

This website also tells you about the remarkable story of how the worldwide FGB

fellowship began - the story is told in the best-selling book, *The Happiest*

People on Earth, available from the FGB National Office for £6. The address is on the coupon on the facing page.



Your response?

As you have read the true-life stories in this magazine, you may also want to ask God into your life. There are three simple steps to do this:

A real Christian is someone who has a personal relationship with God by inviting Jesus to become their Lord and personal Saviour.

STEP 1: Admit that you have sinned by falling short of God's standard - admit that you need a Saviour to deal with your past and assure your future.

STEP 2: Believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died on the Cross to pay the penalty for your sins.

STEP 3: Receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord of your life by personal invitation and ask His forgiveness for your sins.

Your decision to receive Christ as Saviour and Lord is the most important decision you will ever make. Here is a prayer you can

pray - if you can find a quiet place to quietly pray this aloud:

“Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God. I believe you died on the Cross for me. I am sorry for my sins and I truly want to turn away from them. I ask you to forgive me and cleanse my heart.” *(Pause here to mention anything on your conscience. Then continue . . .)* I want to trust you with my life, starting right now. Please be my Lord and Saviour. I invite you into my life. Please help me to live by the power of the Holy Spirit, to guide and to teach me.

“I now believe your promise in the Bible that I am born again. I am a true child of God. Help me to trust you with all my heart. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.”

Contact us: *post the coupon below, right away, and we will send you a free guide on how to grow as a Christian.*



My personal response

Tick here to request a **free booklet called 'Finding God'**

Today I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour

Please send me details about the FGB Fellowship

My name _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Post to: FGB Voice, PO Box 11, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6QP

True stories in this issue . . .



**Paralympic
star**

Stuart Braye



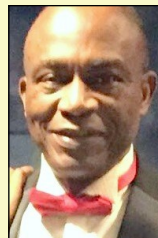
**Nuclear
scientist**

Stuart Cripps



**Dental
surgeon**

Barrie Lawrence



**Civil
engineer**

Daniel Nquot

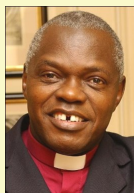
This magazine is produced by the Full Gospel Businessmen in the UK and Ireland — or **FGB** for short.

Today, thousands of Local Chapters meet in more than 100 countries. The Fellowship is represented in many parts of the UK and we welcome newcomers to our regular events, usually dinner evenings with a guest speaker.

Men of all backgrounds are welcome, whether working, retired or unemployed, no-one is excluded. Women are also

encouraged to support the work through membership of 'Women of the Fellowship'. FGB is an 'arm

of the church' endorsed by many Christian leaders, including the Archbishop of York, **Dr John Sentamu**, *left*, who says: "We need more men like



them!" To contact FGB, email: office@fgbuk.org or telephone 01565 632 667

Website: www.fgbuk.org



Space here for local contact details - see also National Office address, above.