

**voice**  
to empower  
men for life

***RESCUED FROM THE  
SHETLAND ROCKS***

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International





## Delivered from **DRUGS**

**Peter Jamieson**

In May 2006, at the age of 38, I found myself in a drugs rehab on a small island called Papa Stour up in the Shetland Islands. I had been a drug abuser for well over 20 years of my life, as well as an alcoholic. I got there after a failed suicide attempt in my then home town of Aberdeen. I had simply had enough of life, especially the life of a drug addict/alcoholic.

### **Something I had never done before**

After being released from hospital in Aberdeen I did something that I've never really done before. I prayed. I prayed for God to help me because if He didn't I wasn't going to fail the next time. I then had a thought to do something that I hadn't done in 20 years. I decided I would go up to Shetland and see my sister. I thought the idea was perhaps to say goodbye. I now know there was someone else behind that thought.

I turned up at her door a day or two later and she invited me in. I more or less broke down and she wasn't really sure what to do with me. But thankfully she didn't heed the advice given by other members of the family. She decided to try and help her 'baby brother' who had been lost.

### **Drugs programmes had never worked**

A few days later, she called her doctor and within a week they had me starting on a detox programme which was to last ten days. After the ten days were over a lady from the drugs programme told my sister of a Christian rehab in Shetland called 'The Papa Stour project' and so they arranged for me to go there.

Well, I can't say that I was particularly thrilled with the idea. I had been on various drugs programmes before, and nothing had ever worked. My dear sister,

however, was desperate for me to go. For the first time in my adult life I had managed to go ten days without alcohol or drugs and she just wanted me to have every chance of finally overcoming my problems.

### **I wouldn't see Christmas**

She seemed to know that if I didn't do it then I was never going to do it because her doctor told us that if I didn't change my habits I wouldn't see Christmas of that year. My liver was severely damaged through all the years of drugs and alcohol. I was also at that point diagnosed as being Hep-C positive from years of sharing needles. So I really had no choice.

While I was there, they gave me a Bible and encouraged me to read about the life of Jesus. I didn't know much about him other than what I'd seen in the movies as a child at Christmas. So I began by reading the gospel of John. I had been there just over a week and was half way through the gospel when one of my 'Key workers' talked with me about Jesus. He asked if I would like to give my life to Christ. I thought about it a bit and replied, "OK then". He then prayed for me and encouraged me to pray too, and so I did. I gave my life to Christ.

### **I had hurt so many people**

A few days later I was alone in my room, late at night, reading my Bible before bed. I was reading

Chapter 20 of John's Gospel about the resurrection of Christ. I began to think about my life. I thought about all the pain I had caused my parents, my father was dead and my mother didn't know me anymore due to Alzheimer's disease. I suddenly began crying. I had hurt so many people, I had stolen from and lied to my family and had more or less been disowned by them. I had been a drug dealer since I was sixteen and a thief. I had been so full of hate and I had cursed God on many occasions. All of a sudden I was so, so sorry for the things I had done. I cried out "If you can raise Jesus from the dead then please will you help me? I can't leave here and go back to being the person I have been because if I do I will lose my sister and I will have no one left." I then went to bed and fell asleep.

That night I had a dream. An angel came to me, he took me from the bar where I used to do my drugs and took me to heaven where I met Jesus. Jesus sung a 'new song' to me. Then He sat down with me and talked with me. He asked me a very simple question. "What is the story

of your life?" I hung my head in shame at this question and confessed who and what I had been. He smiled at me and said, "Not any more." I burst awake from that dream knowing that my life would never be the same again. All the hurt and pain from years of torment had been lifted from me.

**"I burst awake from that dream knowing that my life would never be the same again."**

### **My liver was restored**

I left the project some weeks later and I have been a new person ever since. I was healed of Hep-C as well as having my liver completely restored to health. I was at a prayer meeting one night shortly after my dream. I prayed for God to show me a sign that what happened to me in the rehab was real. Then I opened my eyes to see that my arms had been completely cleaned of scars and lumps from years of injecting. This was the biggest miracle as far as my sister was concerned.

This is how I came to open my heart to Christ and he filled me with his glorious light. My life was a wreck but Jesus has lifted me off the rocks.

I am free at last and living life to the full.

**Peter Jamieson now works for The Walter and Joan Gray Home for the Elderly at Scalloway in the Shetlands.**

# From Despair to Delight in God

## **Nigel Baldwin**



**L**ike so many children, I was born into a family where love and affection were scarce. When I was 13, my parent's marriage failed. I was devastated but just tried to get on with life as best I could.

My mother remarried but I fought with my stepfather regularly as I rebelled against life. I left school with a basic education and decided to join the Army. To my surprise, I completed the training and was on my way to Northern Ireland on the eve of my 18th birthday – just a kid, really.

### **Standing on a booby trap**

In the army, there were scary times. No more so than when I stumbled across IRA weapons that were booby trapped with a buried pressure release mat, just below the surface of the turf I was standing on. But because of my army training, my reaction was to freeze on the spot – and this is where I stayed until the bomb was defused. In the pressure

of that moment, I called out in my heart to the God who I had once heard about. "Please help me, if You can, I need You to get me out of here". Believe me, anyone would pray in that situation.

### **Moaning and screams of death**

During my second military tour, I met my wife, Heather. We returned to the UK to make plans for our wedding in Devon. On our way back, I sent Heather ahead as we could not get on the same flight. I took a British Midland Flight (BD092) on January 8, 1989. At 8.26pm it crashed on the M1 motorway. I remember my head butting the seat in front as we came down at more than 150 miles an hour. Then darkness all around.



Nigel with his wife Regan and children Natalie, Abbie, Eatham, and Rosa.

I came to, hearing moaning, screams of death and creaking as the wreck settled. Then fire, but that was soon put out. I couldn't move my legs; I was paralysed from the waist down. Inexplicably, I was still able to help other passengers from the wreck. Later I made a full recovery and was awarded the Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal for saving the life of a fellow passenger.

### Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

Heather and I had a daughter, Natalie. But my life became unbearable. I suffered from survivor's guilt and acute post traumatic stress disorder along with nightmares. I

sank into self-pity along with drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Three years after the crash, Heather was suffering also. I was not giving her the attention, understanding and love she needed. Tragically, my dear Heather died on June 20, of a prescription drug overdose – with my drugs.

Drink continued to be a major part of my life as I tried to drown my guilt. Three bottles of wine a night or even a bottle of gin plus the usual beer wasn't unusual. But life took a big turn for the better when I met Regan, my present beautiful wife, in the summer of 1996 and I now have four more children.

In the summer of 2002 we decided to make a new start and move to Spain. But I soon found that problems don't go away when you run from them, they just follow you. I was delivering beer for a living as well, so alcohol was free and in abundance.

The result of drinking led me back into drugs and staying out all night. Then, after a fight with a guy, I finally came to my senses. I realised I was once again abusing my wife and children by not being there for them. I didn't want the tragedy of Heather to happen again.

### Only Jesus could clear up the mess

Then God began to speak to me, though I did not realise it was Him. "Get your family out of here and go to the coast." The thought kept coming to me, I wondered if I was going crazy. But nevertheless we moved to the coast where I met a remarkable Spanish guy called Alfonso Sanchez, who led my son's Scout troop. After I shared my story with him, he told me that God is a great healing and loving God who longs for people who have messed up to turn to Him. He told me that I needed to ask Jesus Christ to come into my life. Only Jesus could clear up the mess of the past and give me the life I had

always hoped for but never known.

In 2005, I gave my life to the Lord Jesus Christ and asked him to walk with me and protect me. It has not been easy, because at times I've struggled with my faith, but the following words in the Bible have been a daily encouragement: "The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." (Deuteronomy 31:8).

### A testimony to God's power

My life is now a testimony to God's power. Thanks to Him, I have a wonderful wife and five marvellous children. I have been able to stop smoking after 23 years. Drugs and drink have also gone, though I can enjoy the odd glass of wine over dinner.

If you are looking for an answer to life's problems, please say this prayer with me: "Dear Father God, you said that you would never leave us nor forsake us. I surrender my life to you. Please forgive me and help me sort out my life. Please give me your strength to remain strong and resist temptation from now onwards. I am trusting you and I ask all these things in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the Cross that I might live. Amen."

Nigel is currently needing funds for training as an Army Chaplain. He can be contacted on 01702 345932.

# Bankrupt but Blessed!

## John Gates

**B**ecoming a bankrupt was probably the most harrowing experience of my life. I owned a thriving television and electrical business with a staff of thirteen. Then troubles began to pile up in a serious way.

In my personal life there were big changes, too. Many years before my business collapsed, I had been a sincere Christian with a close and loving relationship with Jesus Christ. But my faith grew weak and I deliberately walked away from Him. My only concern was *myself*. I became so hard-hearted that I didn't care about anyone. As long as I was OK, then everything was fine. How this hardened heart was changed was quite dramatic. It started with my health. I will never forget the night I developed severe chest pains ending up in hospital for heart surgery.

### Robbers cleaned me out

Then things started to get worse. I discovered that threats were being made against anyone who was seen buying goods from me. This was because I had often spoken against the Orange, Black and Mason's Brotherhoods as "not being Christian". My words backfired on me.



John & Esme at their son's wedding.

An IRA bomb just two doors away wrecked my shop. Then robbers cleaned me out of what good stock remained. I was never fully compensated. Finally, after I got the business running again, I was twice broken into and robbed at my shop and at my home, all within a month.

### Saved by Angels!

There was a Loyalist day of protest planned – and I knew this meant trouble for me. On the evening before my wife, Esme, and I stood in the shop and simply asked God to place angels there to protect us. The day after the protest, almost every shop window in town had been smashed. My window grills were pulled off, but amazingly, no window was broken. Later it was revealed in Court that the men wrecking my shop had seen angels and had run away in fear!

Why did God let me end up a bankrupt? Oddly enough, I understand now that this tough lesson

was good for me. I realise today the truth of the Bible, which says God can turn trouble round and bring good out of it, if we trust Him. But at the time, I and my family with two young boys were absolutely penniless. Our electricity was cut off; we had no heating oil; no telephone; no food. I was 50 years old and a failure. What future was there for someone in such a mess?

### God would provide for us

My wife became suicidal and lost her faith. I had no one to turn to except God – and amazingly, my faith slowly grew stronger. I tried to reassure Esme not to worry, because God would surely provide for us. Then money started to come through the door during the night. Food appeared on our doorstep. A tanker drove up and starting filling my tank with heating oil, so I ran out saying, "I don't have any money to pay for it." The tanker man said it was already paid for. Later, I was given a car.

This was a great lesson for me. God turned a disaster into good. I realised this experience of divine supply was worth much more than money itself. In the end, we were able to stay in our home. My wife found a job in a bread factory. I joined a job-search scheme, set up by the government.

### God speaks by prophecy

Christians sometimes receive prophetic picture-messages from God. A friend came to me because he had one of these mysterious revelations, which he believed was for me. He 'saw' a steam engine which made three stops before it finally got going on a longer journey. I realised that I was the train and would have two temporary jobs before a third more lasting one appeared.

My first job was a seasonal one in a food canning factory, but six months later I was out of work. Then within a week I found a job as a bread salesman – which I hated. Finally, I found the third job in a factory making electrical heaters. This was work I loved – and I was good at it as well.

I was able to tell colleagues about my faith. I was able to say how I had experienced the goodness of God. I worked at that same factory until I retired. Today, having recovered from heart surgery, I am cheerfully serving in the community which I see as service to a Boss who has never let me down, because He promises in the Bible: "I will never leave you, nor forsake you," (Hebrews 13:5). That's great news, isn't it?

John Gates is National President of the Fellowship in Ireland.

# Water in the DESERT

Charles Tilbury



Charles with his wife Clare.

I am a London stockbroker, and I live with my wife Clare and our three children in Suffolk. That may sound as if we were settled and contented, but a year ago the story looked very different. I had been out of work for a whole year. Despite cutting back our expenses, our money was running out. On top of that, I had had a serious cycling accident a few months before, and my face had been badly cut up. Nothing seemed to be going right for us and the future seemed pretty bleak.

I had become a Christian as a teenager, when I felt led to read John's Gospel. As I read, the person of Jesus seemed to step out of the pages as if He was right there with me. I could not ignore His command to "come to Him". A couple of years later, while still at school, I was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and given a supernatural language to pray with. But knowing power exists, and taking hold of it, are two different things. Our faith was reasonably strong, but not tested as it needs to be. But I had a premonition that trouble was ahead.

## A real shock

It wasn't until several months later that the blow fell, and I lost my job. When I didn't immediately find a new one, my faith started to be tested. I suppose the worst point was when I had a series of interviews with a good firm, some of whose employees had previously worked with me so that they knew me and knew what I could do. The job was one I was sure I could do. Things were looking good and I was reasonably confident that the job would be mine, and our financial worries would be over.



But when I didn't get the job it came as a real shock. I got quite angry with God, because it seemed that – for what looked like some perverse reason – He had decided I would be better off *not* having that job. I complained to Him that He was not speaking to me. But as I uttered those words I sensed Him say that, on the contrary, He *had* spoken. His answer in this case was "No".

That floored me, because I had to admit that, if He was God, He had every right to say "No"! I might not like it, but I had to accept it, and trust that it was the best thing for me. As I stopped arguing with Him on that point, and exercised trust instead, I recalled that I had never felt peace about that job. (A year later, the entire team I would have

joined were made redundant, so God did indeed know what He was doing after all!).

## Skating on thin ice

All this time I had before me a picture, which I believe was from God. I was skating on thin ice, but in spite of the danger, He seemed to be saying He would not allow the ice to break under me. I tried to hold on to this in faith, and indeed at no time did the ice break. We were never left destitute. But that didn't stop me having some fear that we *might*...

Several fruitless interviews and periods of waiting were to follow, and I was forced to think of an alternative career path. A promising avenue seemed to open up teaching languages, but although I explored

it, I sensed that God was telling me that, though I could do it, he had something else in store for me.

### Light at the end of the tunnel

More frustration followed, until I had a picture of an enormous mountain before me, above a large forest. I groaned inwardly as I saw it. I thought of all the fruitless series of interviews I had had.

I feared another long process might lie ahead of me. However, as I was thinking this, I saw myself taken straight

to the top of the mountain. Above me I could see the sun dimly through thick cloud, and I sensed that God was telling me that, although things might remain shrouded for a while, the sun *was* visible and would not go away. I felt a heightened sense of expectation that there really was, at last, light at the end of the tunnel.

Sure enough, a week or so later I was invited to an interview, about which I was initially sceptical. But it went so well that within two hours I was told that I had the job! The process of signing the contract took a while (the cloud?) but before too long all was signed and sealed. It was a job with considerably more responsibility and interest than any

of the others I had been interviewed for over the past year, and it has given me considerable fulfilment ever since.

### Forced to depend on God

My year out of work cost my family financially, but I had the joy of spending more time at home with my wife and children. Being forced

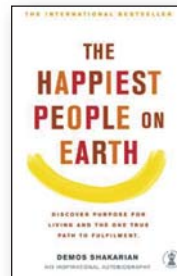
to depend on God is an experience which, looking back, I would not have missed for anything in the world. God has been faithful. In spite of what looked like a very dangerous situation. The ice has never broken under me.

Many times I was tempted to abandon hope, but apart from the fact that I am not sure what that would have achieved, I sensed God challenging me to allow my faith to be stretched, and to believe in what I could not see.

I hope my experience will encourage those who follow me into what may seem, at the time, like a desert. God knows what He is doing and will bring you out again in His time and in His way for His glory. He just asks us to wait and trust and give thanks. Did He not provide water in the desert for Moses? He will do the same for you.

...there really was, at last, light at the end of the tunnel.

Charles Tilbury is Head of Equity Sales at the London Office of CSL Stockbrokers, a Division of First City Monument Bank of Nigeria.



## The Happiest People On Earth

This book contains the remarkable story of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International and its founder Demos Shakarian.

What began as a vision given to Demos, a business man, has spread to over 160 countries with almost 5,000 Chapters meeting in every continent of the world.

The most challenging feature is how God put His seal on the Fellowship, after early efforts to launch it failed.

It is a story to make you both laugh and cry but above all, build your faith in God and all He can do through dedicated men who love and serve Him. You will see God really does use ordinary men in the most surprising ways. To obtain a copy please contact the Office at Knutsford, address on the back cover.

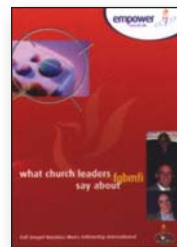


empower  
men for life

## What Church Leaders say about FGBMFI

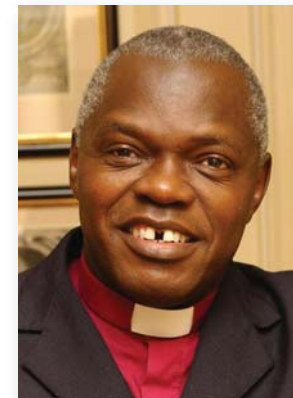
In this booklet church leaders, from a wide range of Christian denominations, affirm their support for Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. They highlight its effectiveness in reaching men, usually outside the church, with the message of God's love.

The Fellowship works as an arm of the church, revealing the power of Christ to men. The result is that God changes even the roughest diamonds into men of God.



"Here are men who take seriously Christ's command to preach the good news. They have found the will and the words to witness to God's deeds of power, Acts 2.11. We need more men like them who not only share what Jesus has done for them, but also practice what they preach in their work places."

**The Most Rev and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu, Archbishop of York**



# Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International

Local Chapter contact telephone numbers

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## ENGLAND – GREATER LONDON

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 Hitchin & District 01462 616185  
 Lichfield & District 01922 642 689  
 Milton Keynes 01908 521751  
 Northampton/Kettering 01604 700521  
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 Stafford 01543 422268  
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 Maidstone 01622 743134  
 Medway 01634 377965  
 New Ash Green 01322 863171  
 Royal Tunbridge Wells 01732 822713  
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 Carmarthen 01267 220234  
 Conwy Valley 01492 572924  
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If you have a testimony please send it to the Editor with jpeg photos at [info@branchpress.com](mailto:info@branchpress.com)

# If you have been challenged by the life stories in this Voice you may be asking, "How can I become a Christian?"

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

God loves and accepts you just as you are. He is able to turn any mess into something marvellous! To become a Christian and to receive the gift of Eternal Life there are three steps to take:

- Step 1** **Admit** that you have sinned and 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.

## Why not pray this simple prayer NOW to invite Jesus into your life

Heavenly Father, I confess that I have sinned and am separated from you. But I believe you showed your love for me by sending your Son Jesus to die on the Cross for my sins. So I turn to you, Lord Jesus, with great thankfulness. I surrender my life to you.

I ask you to forgive me for all my sins, to cleanse me from all unrighteousness and to send the Holy Spirit to live in me as my friend, my teacher and my comforter.

I reject Satan and every evil spirit in the name of Jesus Christ and I declare the Word of God, "If the Son has set you free, you are free indeed". I declare that Jesus has set me free from all my sins and from every bondage of Satan. I have been born again, I am a child of God, I am a new creation, I have eternal life, in Jesus' mighty name.

Please let us know of your decision so that we can send you helpful information to "empower you for Life".

- Please send me details of Chapter meetings in my area.
- Please send me "New Life in Christ" booklet.

First Name: .....

Surname: .....

Address: .....

.....

Postcode: ..... Tel: .....

E-mail: .....

Data information will only be used to send you details of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International information. (Full address details overleaf.)



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For your local Chapter contact:



**empower**  
men for life