

From

Anarchy in the UK

to

Amazing Grace

Steve and Emma Dunne, Warwickshire

Church is for good people ennit? You know the sort who wear hats and don't smoke," I told the Preacher as he tried to convince me that Jesus actually loved me! "There is no way this Jesus loves people like us. We are not exactly Church material are we mate?" The preacher's eyes seemed to look right into me as he replied, "Jesus still loves you Steve, regardless of what you have done!"

And done it we had. Emma and I got involved in the Punk scene in the late seventies and early eighties. We were products of a rebellious, youth culture desperately searching for reality and the meaning of life. We decided to counteract the blandness all around us by dyeing our hair, listening to angry, aggressive music and dressing like something that resembled a cross between the Adams Family and Mad Max. We were part of the Punk/Gothic movement and living the lifestyle of Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll to the extreme. Dirty leather jackets, chains, heavy make-

up (for Emma that is, my make-up was always more subtle) were the dress code for the hour. The colour of everything needed to be BLACK, BLACK and more BLACK. We hung out with people who enjoyed sleeping in coffins, sleeping around and sleeping rough. We were thrilled to try the latest 'high' whether it be sniffing 'poppers', smoking pot and diving deeper into the world of LSD and speed. We even smoked banana skins once in a desperate attempt to get high.

Getting High was our Goal

We needed something to elevate us from the humdrum boredom that other people called life. We were searching for excitement and enjoyment! By our late teens we had had multiple sexual partners (including transvestites and Sadoomasochists). We were hooked on pornography, violent films, alcohol, cigarettes and an assortment of drugs. By this time in our life Emma had tried to commit suicide twice.



Steve and Emma in their punk days.

She suffered from anorexia and bulimia and would spend her days starving her body and vomiting up the little food she had eaten. She heard voices in her head saying that she was fat. Emma was hardly overweight weighing in at barely 6 stone (84 pounds) at one point. She could barely do a days work without bursting into floods of tears as she suffered severe panic attacks. The voices in her head continued to drive her saying "Kill yourself! Kill yourself!"

By my late teens I had got involved in a post-punk band and enjoyed exercising my massive ego by singing in front of audiences all around England. I appeared so confident on the stage to the crowd, yet inside I

was empty. I just wanted to be loved. The more I tried to fill the emptiness the bigger the hole inside of me became. The more concerts I played in the band the more I needed to play. I was hooked on trying to fill a huge black hole inside of me and nothing was filling it. By nineteen I was drunk four nights a week and singing and coughing like an old man.

During this time a handful of people tried to reach out

to us and tell of the love of Jesus. But the words did not seem to hit home. We did not know if there was a God. We thought about religion and supernatural things. We tried a bit of Buddhism, Astral Projection, Ouija Boards and TM but nothing seemed to satisfy the hunger for reality. The

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only time we were ever in a church service was either stoned or drunk on a Christmas Eve midnight mass service.

Our first 'sober' church service was in North America at a smallish Baptist church in Rockville, Maryland in 1990. We had been invited there by the preacher mentioned earlier. We were overcome by the people in this little church. They all seemed so pure hearted. We were rebellious, sinful post-punk anarchists and were happy to prove it! These people seemed holy, kind, humble and very, very loving. It was all a bit too much for us in one go and we were delighted after an hour when the service ended, so we could hurry outside for a cigarette!

From Anarchy in the UK...

Let me make myself clear right here. One of my favourite songs at this time in our lives was Anarchy in the UK by the Sex Pistols. The words to this song go "I am an antichrist, I am an anarchist. I wanna destroy passer by." My favourite tee-shirt was by an anti-establishment, super-tough, cult band called Crass. The tee-shirt read "Jesus died for his own sins not mine." I wore that foolish tee-shirt (and many others too inappropriate to mention) with arrogance and pride flowing out of me. I did not care what people thought of me. I put up a hard exterior shell to hide the pain and loneliness inside of me. I put on a brave front, but I was dying inside.

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...to Amazing Grace

Now try to get the picture. Here I am listening to the words of the hymn Amazing Grace in some church building in North America. The words to this song go “Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!” Honestly! I am sure there was a tear in my eye as the people sang it.

God Almighty had begun to soften my heart. The only reason we went to the church service was because the preacher had put us up in his house with his wife and three teenagers. We felt obliged to go! But what a shock when we did. We met with the ‘churchy’ folks after the service to ‘suss’ the congregation out a bit.

But we were horrified to find out that some of these people used to have fairly messed up lives. One massive fella used to be a bar brawler and

would spend his weekends beating the living daylight out of people. Others used to be involved in drinking, drugs and similar vices we had. We were shocked and amazed at how these everyday people with everyday problems seemed to glow with something different than the other people we had crossed paths with in our life up to that point. These people had something; some kind of weird, inner-joy that we wanted.

Our problem was we did not know what the inner joy was or how to get it.

After a few hours of interrogation from us the people in the church began to tell their story of how Jesus ‘saved’ them. Each story was different. But each life seemed so sincere we found our eyes being opened to this ‘God’ stuff! The truth about the love of Jesus was beginning to become more real to us.

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Within days I actually found myself turning from my sin and believing that Jesus, the Son of God, died for my sins. That He paid the price for me. That He rose from the dead, to give me a new life. I found myself with my sins forgiven and washed clean before a Holy God. I was pronounced 'clear' before God because of what Jesus had done by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. It was quite incredible to find myself guilty before God one minute and the next minute pronounced forgiven. I felt like I was in the courtroom of heaven and had just received triple life sentences for the sin I had committed. Then in walks the Holy Son of God and says, "I will take the sentence upon myself, this one can go free!!!" My whole body was flushed clean of the weight of my guilt and shame. Jesus had paid the price and taken my sins on Himself! At this point, as the love of God flooded my heart and mind, I devoted my whole life and entire existence to Jesus. He was the only one who ever had the power to save me. He brought me from darkness into light.

Emma had some similar experiences. On the same night as me (October 8th 1990) she realised that God Almighty loved her beyond anything any human

Steve, Emma and their children now live in Warwickshire.

love could offer. The huge hole of emptiness in her heart was filled immediately as she came face to face with the love of her Heavenly Father. The anorexia and panic attacks simply left her in the light of God's love for her. We are both thrilled to say that they have never come back. Now that is what I call good therapy!!!

Please allow me to encourage you to pray and seek the face of God. Even if you feel God could never accept you because of the mess you have made of your life. Cry out to Him, He will accept you. He will forgive you and cleanse you from all your sins. He will set you free to live a new life the way He intended. God will give you a fresh start, even when others have written you off as useless. Read the Bible (start with the gospel of John) and ask God to reveal His love to you. You will never be the same again.



Death Denied

**Ron Barrow,
Corsham, Wiltshire**

Trapped and Helpless

The 15th December, 1981, dawned with threatening snow storms, and I knew I was in for a day of hard work, manning a grit spreader for the North Wiltshire District Council. This meant more 'overtime' money, and the thought of extra income before Christmas was an encouraging prospect. Although the worst of the winter snowfall was yet to come, I had already spent many long hours working through the days and nights clearing the roads with the gritter and snow-plough.

Today would be just another, long day – I didn't know it would last a lifetime.

By 5 p.m. my workmate and I had already put in a full day's work, but heavy snow was imminent and some of the local roads were still untreated. We had our tea break and set out

again. By now it was dark so we stopped beneath a street lamp, which could provide sufficient light to see the mechanics of the gritting mechanism and help us get it started. I remained in the cab to ensure that the cold engine did not fail while my workmate struggled to start the donkey engine of the grit spreader. However, his failing eyesight made it impossible for him to see clearly what he was doing. Finally, he got back in the cab and I went to take his place by the donkey engine.

While he kept his foot on the accelerator I walked to the back of the lorry, where I found an oil can and poured oil into the primer hole to lubricate the piston. The mechanism was capable of moving three and a half tons of grit. Normally, once started, it was kept working until it ran out of fuel. The engine started and, with a sigh of relief, I reached over to adjust the amount of salt that

would be spread across the road. Suddenly, my clothes became enmeshed in a moving part of the engine. Struggling and shouting for help, I was being dragged into the machine. The noise of the donkey engine and the revving of the lorry drowned out my cries for help.

As the grip on the clothing around my neck tightened, my body was twisted and pulled up and over into the machine. My head was held below my right armpit. Though I was still able to thrash the air with my left arm, my right arm had gone dead, and breathing became increasingly more difficult. "Oh God, I am going to die", I thought. "Is this the end? Will I ever see my wife and children again?"

Passing motorists, seeing my frantic waving, courteously waved back, thinking no doubt of the approaching season of festivity only ten days away. Then the impossible happened! The normally powerful engine, having raised its otherwise pleasant sound to a scream of protest, suddenly failed, and there was silence at last. An age passed . . .

Rescued Just in Time

My workmate climbed nonchalantly from the cab to enquire what had happened. He was greeted with the terrifying sight of my body half in and half out of the machine! Looking around in desperation, he spotted a car at a nearby filling station. Soon he and the driver came hurrying back

to the lorry with a Stanley knife, with which they began to cut me out of my clothing so that I could breathe again.

In the amber of the street lamps my wet clothing, which now revealed the orange colour brace and bib worn by road workers, together with my red T-shirt, glistened red. For a terrifying moment he thought I was bleeding to death. After a short pause they frantically resumed cutting and eventually I was freed. Just then another work lorry and its team arrived. After informing the foreman of the accident, I was taken home in the cab of the lorry.

Gradually my body regained its feeling and I was soon racked with pain. My neck was swollen and my body was one

enormous bruise. To my doctor's surprise I had no broken bones. I was given pain-killing injections. By the following day, I had gone into a state of shock, which lasted several days. When my wife, Carol, showed me what was left of my clothing, it began to dawn on me just how lucky I was to be alive. As I remembered the powerful grip of the machine, I began to thank God for sparing my life... He'd knocked on my door before, but this time maybe I heard Him?

Pain, Debt and Depression

The right side of my body had no feeling. In fact, it felt as though I had suffered a stroke. I had to visit the

Oh God, I am going to die, I thought. Is this the end? Will I ever see my wife and children again?

local hospital to receive physiotherapy treatment. My pain continued night and day. For a time my neck had to be supported in collars – one for daytime wear and another for nights. After three months of suffering, my neck was still two inches out of alignment with my spine, so I was sent to an osteopath. By manipulation my neck was put back in line – time and time again – twenty-six times in all. I was then told that early arthritis had begun in my neck, spine and hip. Also my balance had been affected, which was not being helped by the fact that one leg was now shorter than the other! As if these were not enough, I had fallen into debt. I was now out of work and the bills were piling up!

I fell into deep depression. I knew what time the postman came and the paper man called, and what cars were in the street because I used to watch all that went on. Months and months went by with me just sitting and watching life go by outside the window. One day I said to myself: “Why not just pack it in?” – I’d had enough. I just sat looking at my pills on the side. My ‘sleepers’ as I called them were really strong. Carol, my wife, had gone to work. The tension I caused her during this time upset her a great deal, and work was her only break away from me. I knew that the insurance cover would clear the mortgage and leave a bit over, so I began to think about the tablets.



God Intervened

I reached over, fully intending to take all the tablets, but my hands missed the bottle of pills and instead got a Bible Carol had on the side. I put it on my lap and the Bible just opened up. I looked up and saw a dark, dull day – but there was a light coming through, so I said to myself: “This is

the sun, trying to take my mind off the tablets.” I concentrated on this light, still thinking it was the sun trying to get through, but this light kept coming

towards me, closer and closer all the time. It came through the window into the room where I was sitting, and it covered me. I felt a warm glow all over me. My eyes were filled with tears. I cried like I’d never cried before in all my life. My tears were like water, running down my face onto the Bible. Still I cried, yet still

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felt this warm glow all over – as if I'd got into a warm bath!

The telephone was nearby. Peter Barton, the local vicar at Malmesbury Abbey, was a good family friend – even though we didn't go to church he'd even helped with building work on our house, that's the sort of vicar he was. So I called Peter in my distress, and he came straight round. I showed him where the Bible had opened, and he read the Scriptures to me. Next he told me about Jesus. When I explained all that had happened to me and my family, Peter told me that the Lord had blessed me.

"How could He?" I thought, "after the way I had behaved, after all the things in my life I had done wrong?"

Peter called quite often to see me after that, read Scripture to me, and left little cards with verses on them. I looked forward to his visits. My workmates hardly ever came, and that hurt me, but Peter always turned up, telling me stories about Jesus. It lifted me out of my depression. It made me interested in what was going on around me and I began to feel better, and started going to the Abbey. This all happened after Peter's visit one day, when I made a complete confession, and accepted Jesus into my life for the first time."

I began the fight back to spiritual and physical wholeness. During this time I continued to grow in faith and understanding. Now that Carol and I had both invited Jesus into our lives

we started attending local church. Then, someone prayed for me and my shortened leg grew to the length of the other. My limp disappeared. My balance was restored and my arm, which I could not bend above my head, was healed by God. It is now as supple as the other. The early arthritis, which had been diagnosed by my doctor, is also gone. My enormous debts have all been paid off. Through all these difficulties, the Lord Jesus Christ has strengthened my faith, and I have learned to trust in His goodness. I have seen Him work similar miracles in the lives of all types of people from all walks of life, and He can work a miracle in your life right now.



Ron and Carol live in Corsham, Wiltshire and Ron is a member of the Bath Chapter of FGBMFI.

Is God interested in Businessmen?



Rodney Radcliffe, London

My career and earning work has been and is in personnel, now termed human resource management. I was converted to Christ while working as a Factory and Sales Personnel Officer with the Warner Lambert Pharmaceutical company in Southampton. My boss had asked me to recruit sales personnel throughout the UK to bring our manpower requirement up to its projected level. A month later the American owners arrived to identify that the new staffing levels could not be justified and that these men had to be made redundant on a last in first out policy. I wondered what I was doing in personnel management? It was an experience that got me searching to try and discover what life was about. Meeting Christians while taking a holiday break in Elba moved me to attend weekends

they held in the South of England, explaining their faith.

After much questioning over a period of time I came to accept Christ as my own Saviour and committed my life to following Him. Reading the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, written some 700 years before Christ came, and other Old Testament prophecies about Christ's coming, convinced me that the bible was the word of God, for history has shown the fulfilment of such authenticated words. Reading too in the 3rd Chapter of Revelations verse 20 that "Christ stands at the door of our hearts and knocks and that whoever open their door He will come into them and be with them," showed me clearly that I needed to open the door of my own heart to Christ who is the "Way, the truth and the life" as shown in John Chapter 14 verse 6.

Is Christ in Business with me Today?

One of the first verses I read in the bible, which has since under-girded my faith, was Paul's declaration in the book of Philippians chapter 4 verse 13 – "I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me". Before conversion I held older people and especially Directors in my company in awe and I had an inferiority complex due to a failure to live up to the aspirations of others. The day following conversion I was at ease and felt an inner confidence in all dealings. I was conscious of a new creativity and boldness in approaches to obstacles. Many commented that the company magazine, which I edited, was much more impactful,

relevant to all and had been transformed for the good of all.

I started to learn that Christ, now working through me, was making a difference to me in the world of business! A last in first out redundancy notice for me had even been extended by a deputation to my boss of the Works Council!

God had rescued me and done, I believe, what I could not have done without Him!

My next business role was with the Holt Hosiery Company in Bolton, now Damart Ltd, as their new Personnel and Training Manager. The need was to cut a 50%+ labour turnover of new employees and enable the average production level on the flatlocking and overlocking sewing room floors to reach a higher identified work study target. After three months on site I had to go to



Rodney as Personnel & Training Manager at the Holt Hosiery Company, 1967.



Rodney and Judy with their son Timothy.

my Managing Director to confirm that I thought it was beyond my capabilities. My visible progress had been nil up to that point. My boss simply conveyed that he had confidence in me and commanded me to continue! It was at this point that I was struck by Paul's words, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 9).

The training project was completed six months later, on time exactly to the day, through my bringing a small, appropriately skilled, team around me, using their technical competencies to complement my organisational and creative abilities. God showed me some unique concepts and the Knitting & Lace training board of the time wanted to use the scheme as a model for the industry. All targets for recruitment and productivity were met. God had rescued me and done, I believe, what I could not have done without Him!

I was then approached about another position and spent eight years with a subsidiary of British Airways in the

South, travelling world-wide on many complex assignments, completing all well, often after what seemed very testing experiences. Then I was asked by another Christian to help found an International recruitment company in London's West End. Our first assignment was to recruit a Managing Director for the Woodhall Trust Group in Teheran, Iran. The project would be given to us if we could assist the group with establishing the tax structures for staffing in Iran. The year before my last company had sent me to Iran to carry out this very assignment, so we started in this new West End business competing with top consultancies. Such a role had not been envisaged by me as I had been thinking of working in a full time church or voluntary service sphere, but I was clear that God wanted me in business!

A Christian calling as a Businessman – for Businessmen?

The London Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International was launched from meetings held over a

year at our company's offices in January 1978. My partner had been on an FGBMFI "Good News" TV programme in 1975 and I had attended one of their conventions in New York in 1974. I had not known my partner before being invited to join with him in starting the business.

For the last twenty six years I have been privileged to serve in the FGBMFI, the last six as the National Director for London. Having gained only four O levels at school, God later enabled me to obtain my professional personnel qualification. Today I teach and train Human Resource Management subject areas at London University business schools and provide career and HRM consulting services. HRM has been my earning and profit business.

I thank God for my wife Judy who I married at 40, for our healthy son Timothy of 20 studying business at university and for their own Christian commitments. I have lost monies in businesses and my family and I have experienced many testing times, but we learn from such experiences. God has ensured that I and my family have profited! Free of any debts, today, with our house paid for and needs met, I can say that "God has truly provided more than abundantly for all our needs by His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" – Philippians chapter 4 verse 19, more than we would ever ask or think possible. He also healed me of a heart disease which enables me to continue serving in God's businesses.

Rodney Radcliffe is a self-employed Personnel and Career Management Consultant and Trainer and a Fellow of the Institute of Personnel and Development. He is the London Director of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, having been a founding officer of the work in London. He is married to Judy. They have one son, Timothy

THE FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL IS AN INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN MEN WHOSE PURPOSE IS:

1. To call men to God and into the church by witnessing to God's presence and power in the world today.
2. To provide a basis for Christian fellowship among men everywhere under the single banner of their experiences in Jesus Christ and to strengthen them so that they can go back to their respective churches refreshed and renewed. The FGBMFI is not a church nor a sect. It has no priests nor pastors, and does not start churches.
3. To bring about a greater measure of unity amongst all Christians.

6 Steps to Salvation

Men still cry, "What must I do to be saved?" The Bible provides a clear answer.

1 Acknowledge

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." (Luke 18:13)

2 Repent

"But unless you repent, you too will all perish." (Luke 13:3)
"Repent then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out." (Acts 3:19)

3 Confess

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

4 Forsake

"Let the wicked man forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord . . . for he will freely pardon." (Isaiah 55:7)

5 Believe

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) "Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)

6 Receive

"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." (John 1:12).

Why not make your eternal decision now?

"Lord Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and I ask for Your forgiveness. I receive You now as my personal Saviour and invite You to manage my life from this day forward. Amen."

Write to us to tell us of your decision. We'll send you a booklet, "Now that You've Received Christ."

Yes! I have made my eternal decision. I have read the Six Steps to Salvation and have asked Jesus to be my personal Saviour. Please send me the booklet "Now That You've Received Christ."

Name:

Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Send this to: FGBMFI, PO Box 11, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6QP

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