

Voice

MAGAZINE

*Inspiring
true life
stories*



Life in the fast lane - but how?

A free pocket-sized magazine?

What's this all about?

The simple answer is that for 50 years we - and our friends around the world - have been publishing **Voice** magazine (in many languages), with true-life stories of ordinary people whose lives have been an encouragement and help to others.

In tough times, most of us could do with a bit of good honest news.

In each issue of *Voice*, we ask several ordinary people to tell their own story in their own words.

Big questions

These true stories - all very different - explain how each person found themselves asking: "Is there more to life than this? Is God real and, if so, does he care about me?"

This isn't a pointless 'religious' magazine but about real people - ordinary people who wanted to know *real* answers to *real* questions such as: "What's life all

about?" Each person has made the astonishing discovery that Jesus Christ came to reveal God's love to us. Jesus said (in the Message version of the Bible): "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.

alk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." (from *Matthew 11:28*).

That's a remarkable promise. And remember, Jesus never told a lie. No-one throughout history ever spoke like he did or performed such miracles. He wanted you and I to trust him so much that he died on a cruel cross to redeem us.  three days later he rose again to live as proof that he was telling the truth.

Throughout the ages, millions of people have made the discovery that Jesus offers us *real life* today - a totally fresh start: forgiveness, salvation and peace with God.

Read the enclosed true stories - have you anything to lose?

The best discovery of my life

How an athlete has 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 in the world and the fastest European over 100, 200 and 400 metres - *see picture, right*. 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. Charles



was a convinced Christian and he remained peaceful and grateful for his life - and I was a mess.

We 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."

I told him I'd do that "just before I die," but 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. 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 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 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.

They are strong Christians today. Mike is a worship leader and Andy 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.

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

A TRUE STORY OF HOPE

Darrell Tunningley was a violent armed robber who kicked a £300-a-day heroin habit - and eventually become a youth pastor



New life: Darrell with his wife Rebekah and their young children

I grew up in rough area of West Yorkshire. The police and buses didn't go near it after dark. In my early years I got involved in a lot of petty crime, on drugs at 11, shoplifting, stealing car stereos and eventually stealing cars.

Yet as a lad I also played Rugby League - I represented my county and played for Great Britain Schoolboys - until at 16 I dislocated my knee which suddenly ended my rugby career.

At this point I fell straight back into my old life, selling drugs and dealing for some pretty heavy hard hitters who covered a massive part of Yorkshire. I got involved with them, debt collecting, 'administering punishments'. At the same time my drug use was going through the

roof as well. It all came to a head when one of the guys asked me if I wanted to help with an armed robbery. The outcome of all that was that I was sentenced to five and half years.

While in prison I just carried on the same way as I behaved outside - getting into fights and assaulting prison officers - so I spent a lot of time on the segregation block, in my cell 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Eventually one of the lads came up to me and said: "Do you fancy going on an Alpha Course? It's in the chapel." I was about to thump him when he added quickly, "You get free coffee and biscuits!" So I

thought, 'it's a skive' - and replied: "Alright, see you Wednesday."

I wasn't expecting what I got: two very old Nuns had come in to run it. I thought: what can they possibly say that's worth hearing? But I was wrong. For every little jibe we gave them, they stayed calm. They only ever showed love and compassion. So I made the decision that they deserved a little bit more respect. I told myself, "Right Darrell, for once in your life just shut up and listen to what someone else has to say."

The Nuns said that God wants to take the best of you and get rid of the worst of who you are. Something clicked with me, more to do with *how they were* than what they said because their actions really spoke louder.

At the end of the Course we were given some pamphlets and a Bible. Back in the cell I picked up the Bible and started to read the Book of Job. This story just gripped me. This guy had everything and then lost everything, but through it all he would not move on his faith in God.

I just thought: "What made God so real to him that he would not move no matter what - and then in the the end he got it all back, and then some!"



Darrell: "I've been stabbed and shot at - and should be dead!"

I picked up a leaflet and read the 'Prayer to becoming a Christian.' Well, it didn't make sense to me, so I just said my own version. In prison, I didn't waste words - so the gist of what I said was: "God, if you're real, *prove it*. I've tried to stop with the drugs. I've tried to stop with the violence - nothing I do *works*. If you're real, *prove it*, take away my drug addiction, take away all this anger that's inside me. If you do that for me, I'll live the rest of my life for you."

That was it. There were no bright lights, no roll of thunder, no visitations from angels. Then I just went to bed. However, when I work up next morning, a series of weird events started to happen. The first thing I'd always do when I woke up was have a smoke in bed. But now the thought of tobacco made me feel sick. I got the cig and my tobacco

and threw them out of the cell window. As soon as I'd done that, I felt better. Usually, I'd also smoke a joint, but as soon as the thought popped into my head, I started to feel sick again. So I got the weed and threw that out of the window, too. As soon as I'd done it, I stopped feeling sick.

Then I noticed something really odd: I looked in the mirror and almost couldn't recognise my face, because I was smiling. I actually felt so happy! Every bit of anger and guilt and frustration had gone. I knew I had to speak to someone who knew a little bit more than me. I went down to the principal officer's office.

Within half an hour the chaplain arrived. He said: "Come on, we'll go to the chapel," so we went round to the Chapel where I told him what had happened. He then explained that God had heard what I said - and He's set me free.

From that day on, I haven't touched drugs. I haven't smoked, I haven't drank, I haven't had a fight.

Within a couple weeks, I was in the chapel speaking, trying to tell people what had happened. Soon afterwards, I was moved from a Category A to a Category C Prison - something that never

happens. When I moved to Buckley Hall I wrote a letter and my Dad came up - he just sat down in the visiting hall and looked at me. He said: "I've got my son back." He could see the drugs had gone, everything had gone, and I was back. Since then, my Dad and my Mum have both become Christians.

I came out of prison at 21 years old, joined an Assembly of God Church where I married the Pastor's daughter, Rebekah. God has blessed us and we have a little boy, Benjamin, and a daughter, Lydia-Grace.

I've written my biography, called *Unreachable*, published by Sovereign World. Before I did the Alpha Course, Jesus was just an irrelevant historical figure who said and did a lot of good stuff. Now He's everything to me, I couldn't live without Him. He is more important to me than the air I breath.

I have found the true riches at the end of the rainbow - so much better than robbery - and with no misery attached.

Call out to Him and you will find He is there for you, too.

The writer, Darrell Tunningley is now an Ordained Minister at Hope Corner Community Church, Runcorn, Cheshire. He can be contacted on 01928 580 860.

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 physiotherapist, 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



Barrie and Wendy Lawrence

forgive me for saying that He may 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 honestly 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 study, in the early hours, in October, 1965

(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 sin. I also asked Him to help me live for Him.

The next morning, I felt quite different. Now I appreciate 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 world upside down."

But my life in comparison seemed so shallow and powerless. *They* were filled with the Holy Spirit, who empowered them to live effectively for Jesus Christ, even working 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 brought me back to Himself .

Today, my wonderful wife Wendy and I serve God together. I hope that will encourage anyone reading this story that God

**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.*

can do the same for him or her. There are those who will read this personal story who know they, too, have wandered away from God, and maybe feel they can never get back to him. Remember - *“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 holey teeth!

I have written two books about the various things that the Lord has done in my life - including physical healing. Living in fellowship with the Lord Jesus



Barrie: 'I found the answer'

Christ is the most wonderful adventure.

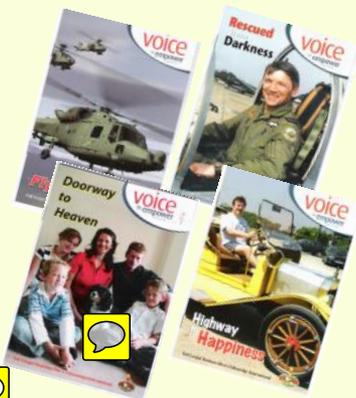
The writer Barrie Lawrence can be contacted on 01603 898 289 and via his website: [www. barrielawrence.com](http://www.barrielawrence.com)

More issues of **Voice** magazine - available free on request

Readers of Voice magazine have asked how they can obtain further issues with other inspirational stories.

For UK readers, we are now able to send you - for a limited time - a selection of three different back-issues of Voice magazine, free of charge, while stocks last. Simply send a stamped addressed A5

envelope with the reply coupon on page 15 and we will send you the free magazines.



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 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 throughout the universe, quite apart from the complexity of genetic information in all life forms.

So I became convinced that a random process could not be the answer. There had to be an

infinitely creative 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, and 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 appropriately 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 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 can do all th

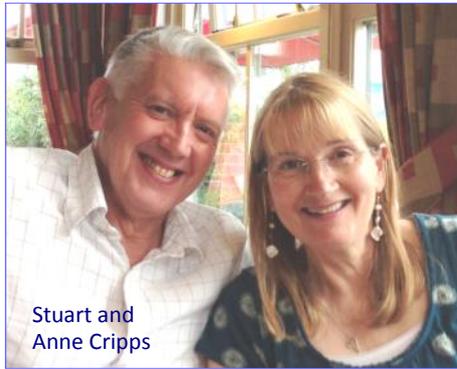
praying for the sick to be healed, through the supernatural gifts and power of the Holy Spirit.

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

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

Later, in my office every Friday lunchtime, I met to pray with



Stuart and Anne Cripps

work colleagues who had recently become Christians. We saw the power of God at work in our group within the nuclear industry. I now know that the power of God is infinitely greater than the power of nuclear reactors I have 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.'

From the first great moment of creation, to our daily efforts to share the Good News about Jesus I have found through scientific logic and personal experience that God is the creator of all Life.

The writer, Stuart Cripps is now National Executive Officer of the Full Gospel Businessmen in the UK and Ireland.

In conclusion . . .

A new life for you

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 big “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 that 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 when you seek me with all your heart,” (*Jeremiah 29:13*).

The remarkable message of the Bible is that God loves each of us personally and wants us to have peace and an abundant life. Trust in God is the foundation of true happiness.

But how do we begin this journey of faith? Simply through trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. Jesus said: “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life,” (*John 3:16*).

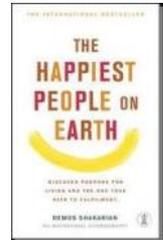
To know more, read “first steps” on the facing page.



VOICE magazine is distributed by the Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship in the UK and Ireland - or FGB for short, which is part of a global fellowship in more than 100 countries.

The remarkable story of how it

all began is told in the best-selling book, *The Happiest People on Earth*. For more about this worldwide fellowship see contact details on the back cover or use the response coupon opposite.



First steps

There are just three simple steps to becoming a Christian.

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 - and 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 simple 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 came to earth and 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 and a new creation. Help me to trust you with all my heart. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen."

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True stories in this issue include . . .



Paralympic star
Stuart Braye



Dental surgeon
Barrie Lawrence



Youth pioneer
Darrell Tunningley



Nuclear scientist
Stuart Cripps

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

This fellowship began through the vision of a Christian businessman. Today, there are thousands of Local Chapters meeting in more than 100 countries. FGB is in many towns and cities across 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.

FGB is an “arm of the church” endorsed by many Christian leaders, including the Archbishop



of York, Dr John Sentamu, *left, Archbishop of York*, who says, “We need more men like them!”

To contact us, or find your nearest event, email office@fgbmn.org.uk, tel. 01565 632 667 website: www.fgbuk.org



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