

REVIVE!



How beautiful are the feet of the messenger who brings good news of peace and salvation (Isaiah 52:7)

Previous editions of Revive newsletters have focussed on the subjects of Faith, Hope and Love. In this edition, we will be exploring the theme of Gospel, which means GOOD NEWS.

In these days, we seem to be bombarded with so much bad news. For months, Covid-19 has filled our TV screens. The media bombards us with economies in difficulty, environmental malaise as well as people suffering on so many levels such as through injustice, abuse, unemployment and poverty. Politicians also come under a constant tirade of criticism, for good or bad reasons. We yearn for some good news.

The Gospel narratives famously recount the life, actions and message of Jesus. 'Don't be afraid, I bring you good news that will bring great joy' was the message given to a

frightened, oppressed, marginalised band of men (shepherds) at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke, heralding the birth of Jesus. But is the message of Jesus, His life and death, really good news in our complex 21st century?

Jesus was later to say that He had come to give life, and indeed life to the full (John 10:10). By this He offered forgiveness and healing from the past, a new hope for the future, and in the present new power to live a different kind of lifestyle embodied in a new love for God and for those around us.

Isn't this a much needed message still today? The GOSPEL OF JESUS is still GOOD NEWS offering forgiveness and new life. Are you ready to explore what it might mean for you?

With love, David (Mayhew)

But first, some bad news!

When we point our finger at all that is wrong with society and everyone else, it's worth remembering that there are always three fingers pointing back at us!

If we are completely honest, we know that the things we have said, thought and done have not always been good either. Moreover, we all have the capacity of causing even more hurt to others, our environment and ourselves if only we had more money, power or occasion to do so. Even when we do succeed in doing some good things, we know that they are often tainted with pride and self-centredness in some way. Which means ... **I am part of the problem.**

But incredibly, an amazing verse from the Bible says that God demonstrates His love for us in this: While we were sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). So, the not so good news is that I have blown it and am in desperate need of someone from outside of myself to save me. The good news is that God loves me. He has sent His son to die on a cross in my place, but who rose victoriously after three days. We can now bring all the wrong things we have thought, said and done to God, asking Him for His forgiveness and a fresh clean start. Why not take a moment to do this now and read on to discover ...

**some reasons why the
Gospel of Jesus is
GOOD NEWS!**



God really loves you!

Can we know what the creator of our beautiful and incredibly fine-tuned universe is really like? And can we know Him personally? The answer is YES, we do know what God is like because He became incarnate (took on human flesh) and showed us His character in the person of Jesus. At Christmas we hear the familiar words, "*And the virgin will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means God with us.*" (Matthew 1:3).

'Jesus wept' is the shortest verse in the Bible and it shows just how much God loves us. He was visibly upset at the death of His friend, Lazarus, and wept with Mary and Martha as they mourned their brother, and He weeps with us when we grieve. He also wept over an entire city — Jerusalem (Matthew 23:27). The word compassion, at its root, means '*being moved to the very depths*', and when Jesus saw individuals and crowds being harassed and oppressed, He could not hide His compassion for them. (See Matthew 9:36). And we all need compassion!

So it's clear that our Creator God is not distant, aloof or uncaring. The Bible frequently uses language of Him seeing, hearing and responding to our despair and cries for help (eg Exodus 2:23-25).

God loves you and desires to bring you new life through the Gospel of Jesus!

**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**



The Gospel is ... Healing for our brokenness

The Japanese art of

Kintsugi involves taking pieces of broken pottery and putting them together again

with a seam of lacquer and powdered gold. The mended article becomes even more beautiful and precious despite, and indeed because of, its previous fragility. When we give our lives to God, he takes our hurts, brokenness and failures, and with time and his healing power, He not only restores us, but makes our lives stronger and more fruitful in His service ... and more beautiful!



The Gospel is new life and power!



'I can't breathe' has been the heartbreaking cry of more than one person brought to light in the news recently. Back in 1922, T S Eliot famously wrote 'Wasteland', describing the stifling landscape of society without God, and later 'Ash-Wednesday' as he came to faith. In this latter poem, he refers to the Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37) when God breathes new life and resurrection power into a humanity in such need of spiritual life. He still wants to do this today in your life!

The Gospel is 'Homecoming'

Who doesn't love a warm welcome when returning home? We yearn in our hearts for the warmth of that unconditional love. We are, however, often like the Prodigal Son, who found himself in a far country, estranged from his father, eating pig swill, but longing for something more. As he returned home in his rags, thinking he would find an angry father, he was bowled over by the sight of his father already running to him, embracing him, forgiving him, and welcoming him with a feast and new clothes (Luke 15:13-24). This is the welcome God gives us as when we return to Him — grace, love and a new liberating, life-fulfilling sense of being His son/daughter. We feel we have come home!



The Gospel is freedom and a new identity

'I Want to Break Free' was a song released by the Eighties rock band, Queen. These powerful lyrics expressed deep desires for freedom and identity. If we are honest, many things control our lives, and our identity is often formed through a combination of the battle between our desires and the expectations of those around us. Through the Gospel, Christ wants to set us free to be the person He has made us to be. *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.* (Galatians 5:1).

Gospel Building Blocks 'The Roman Way'

Paul's Letter to the Romans in the New Testament shows us that we all stray down the 'wrong road' but with God's 'sat-nav', we always have the opportunity to get back on track.

- ▶ **We need to be honest - we have all blown it! *All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (3:23).***
- ▶ **The result is separation, from God, others and ourselves. *The wages of sin is death (6:23).***
- ▶ **The solution and gift of God is that Christ has died on the cross for us. *God demonstrates his own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (5:8).***
- ▶ **If we confess our sin, put our faith in the cross of Jesus, and make Jesus the Lord of our lives, we begin the journey of new life, forgiveness, healing and power. *If you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe that God raised him from the dead you will be saved (10:9).***
- ▶ **On this 'new road', where there will be obstacles and difficulties, we will know peace (5:1) and that ... *'nothing will separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord (8:39).***

**Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre
has a vision to advance
the Kingdom of God**

How can I respond?

- * Many of you reading this leaflet will already be a child of God, experiencing the joy of a personal relationship with Jesus. Perhaps you have been challenged by some aspects of the Gospel and would like to deepen your relationship with God. Take time to talk to Him now.
- * Pass this leaflet on to someone you would like to share the Good News of Jesus with.
- * And for those of you reading this leaflet who do not yet know Jesus, be encouraged and know that God loves you. The Good News is that salvation is a gift of God, to be received with a trusting heart: *It is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works so that no-one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).* Invite Him into your life and put your trust in Him as your Saviour and Lord. You may like to say the following prayer:

*God, I have
sinned against you,
grieving you and hurting
others. I ask you to forgive
me. Thank you that Jesus
Christ died on the cross in my
place. Today I put my trust in you and my
life into your hands. Thank you for your
wonderful love, forgiveness and
the gift of eternal life. Please fill me with
your Holy Spirit to help me. Amen!*



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