



CHAINLINK

The Magazine of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association UK

WINTER 2020-21

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Winter 2020-21

Thank you again to all who have contributed to make this Winter issue a really interesting read.

And a huge 'Thank you' to Shelley Punshon from CMA North East for her suggestion to add a 'Junior' section in the magazine.

It's here – check out the centre four pages.

Please let's have your feedback on this new initiative!

If you like, you can pull out the centre 'mini-mag' pages and pass to your child/teenager to read.

Special thanks too, to Paul Rainger for his design of the mini-mag!

The views expressed in *Chainlink* cannot be taken as official CMA policy on any subject. The magazine is published up to four times a year, to provide information for CMA members and to encourage them in their personal walk with God. We pray that this magazine will also stimulate non-Christian readers into thinking more about Jesus Christ, and also seeking Him for themselves.

The Bible says: 'Seek and you will find' · St Matthew chapter 7, verse 7

From the Editor's Garage

As I write this, it's the last day of 2020 and for a short while I've been reflecting on not just the past year but as far back as I can remember. The good, the not-so-good and the positively awful things that have come my way. I remember also the words of my favourite Gospel singer, Andraé Crouch – 'Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus, I've learned to trust in God.'

Many of the articles received for this issue of the magazine have some reference to the COVID-19 virus that's plagued the world. But the writers of these articles all have the same faith in common—that our Father in Heaven is still on the throne and still in complete control of what's going on on His earth.

Someone once said, 'If we didn't go through the valleys we wouldn't appreciate the hill-tops'. Andraé goes on to sing,

*I thank God for the mountains
And I thank Him for the valleys
I thank Him for the storms He brought me through
For if I'd never had a problem
I wouldn't know God could solve them
I'd never know what faith in God could do.'*

Andraé certainly had his problems during his life on earth, as we all have. Thankfully, for him, he's now in the presence of the Saviour he loved so much.

David says in his psalm, 'My soul thirsts for You like a **parched land**'. Some translations render the word, *weary*, or say, '*my soul is a desert, thirsty for water from you*' (CEV). Like me, I suppose many of you will have bemoaned not being able to ride our bikes as we would like to: the lockdowns have affected us all in some way. But what I really miss is not being able to meet up with my Christian family – the hugs and kisses, the close fellowship, sharing testimony of how good our Father is to us. You know, the '*good and pleasant*' bit in Psalm 133 when we ' *dwell together in unity*' – another of David's psalms. But David also declared, '*my spirit is overwhelmed within me*' (Psalm 143:4) but then later, '*I have put my trust in you... for I am your servant.*' Remember, we are indeed servants; but we are also **sons and daughters** of the almighty, living God! Enough said. Amen.

John

Articles for Chainlink are most welcome, and should preferably be submitted by e-mail to john@hodge.uk.com

All images should be high resolution (originals from your camera/smartphone) and **NOT** embedded in a text document. Vector graphics are also welcome. Text documents should be unformatted text or rich text format (RTF) files. MS Word, OpenOffice and WordPerfect documents are acceptable, **PDFs are not**.

The sender must have permission for the inclusion of ALL names, addresses and pictures, especially of children, prior to submission and be able to provide accreditation for all material that is not original. The sender takes all responsibility for all content and rights relating to all items that are submitted. If in doubt, please obtain verification from the National Chairman or the Executive committee. The editor retains the right to correct spelling and grammar as appropriate.

**'I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all that you have done;
I ponder the work of your hands.
I stretch out my hands to you;
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.'**

*Psalm 143
(ESV)*

Many years ago, Sandy and I were riding through Glen Coe on our BMW Adventure – if you have been there you will know that the mountain views are incredible and the roads are twisty; the perfect combination to put a big smile on a biker's face. It's hard to keep your mind on the road when the views are so breath-taking, but we must.

However, on this particular day there were some *unexpected conditions that changed our whole journey*. There was a side-on gale-force wind blasting through the valley which had the bike at a *50-degree angle* and torrential rain pouring down which could only be compared with the monsoon we once rode through in Thailand.

We couldn't see the view in any direction and even if we could I was focused on keeping the bike upright and Sandy was hunkered down behind me.

We arrived at our B&B soaked through and very tired. The truth is we both enjoyed the adventure and even laughed out loud as we rode through lots of deep floods. (Actually, thinking about it now, it must have sounded like a maniacal laugh – but you get the idea!)

We could have moaned a bucketful and wished we hadn't bothered, but God showed us that blessings come even in a time of storm and adversity. I admit it wasn't immediately obvious but when we eventually rode it in His perspective, it became clearer. Had that been our first and final trip to Glen Coe we would be forgiven for thinking it wasn't up to much and should be avoided at all times. But the next morning the sun was out and the sky was blue, so after breakfast we rode back over Glen Coe and *saw the spectacular views that were there the day before but hidden from view by the storm*.

I'm not trying to sound trivial but I wonder if there are any similarities in our Glen Coe ride to your experience of lockdown today? I can hold my hand up and say most of these thoughts have gone through my mind at one time or another in the last year:

Unexpected conditions that have changed your journey with Christ. Frustration that we can't engage with those we love, our churches, CMA family; everything feels isolated and for some, very lonely.

Do you feel unable to see God's Heavenly view during Covid? Sometimes we are so focused on the virus we miss God's hand at work and forget His promises.

Have you closed the door, hunkered down and hoped it would pass soon?

Perhaps we have moaned about the restrictions rather than finding other opportunities to love the world. God isn't limited by restrictions.

Have we asked God to show us His blessing in this time of adversity? When we look at the world through God's Word we will gain His perspective and everything will seem clearer; however, some things will always remain unanswered this side of Heaven.

Whether life is like a sunny day's ride or a stormy Covid-19 uncertainty, God's promises to you are certain and sure. In 2 Corinthians 1:20 the Bible calls them 'Yes' and 'Amen' – that in itself is a promise!

When Paul wrote to the church of Corinth (2 Corinthians 4) they were facing persecution; their lives were at stake as they faced opposition to the Gospel. But Paul reminded them that even though times were hard, they should continue to preach grace and give God the glory.

V13-15 'You believe in God so don't stop witnessing and as God's Grace reaches more

and more people, there will be great thanksgiving and God will receive more and more glory.'

He continued by writing, **'So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.'**

As we pray with the CMA team, we know many of you have lost loved ones or have experienced the virus yourself, all our hearts go out to you; it's hard to imagine that the crisis will eventually pass, but one day it will. These present troubles won't last for ever. Whatever degree of faith we have let us fix our gaze on Jesus. He is our strength and security, He cannot—will not—ignore us. (Hebrews 12 v2)

This morning Kobus reminded us that there are at least 366 verses in the bible that say we should not be afraid, even one for a leap year. Why did God graciously remind us of that so many times? Because He knew our hearts would one day fail us and wanted to confirm He is still our safe refuge.

Psalm 46:1 (The Message) says, *'God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need him.'*

In closing, we had some sad news this week; our friend and neighbour of many years passed away. He was only in his mid 50's. It may have been the virus but that is yet to be confirmed. We take heart that he accepted a leaflet I offered him at the start of Covid-19



quoting Psalm 46 and reminding us that God is only a prayer away.

There is no reason why we shouldn't have a Heavenly perspective as we make our way through this pandemic storm – when we discover that, it will make an incredible difference.

Richard J Foster, an author on prayer, wrote: 'The discovery of God lies in the daily and the ordinary, not in the spectacular and the heroic.

'If we cannot find God in the routines of home and shop, then we will not find Him at all.'

Ephesians 1:18 NLT

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope He has given to those He called—His holy people who are His rich and glorious inheritance.

Keep safe, Sandy and I send you our love.

God Bless you,

Mike

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CMA TV & HSB at BBC1 SML

Kobus Bensch, Thames Valley

I know, there are loads of TLA's (Three Letter Acronyms) just in the heading of this article. You must wonder if there will be loads more. I do work in I.T. and we have loads of them. If I was to expand the heading it would read as follows in full: *Christian Motorcyclists' Association – Thames Valley and Hants and Surrey Borders at British Broadcasting Corporation Channel 1 – Sunday Morning Live. A massive mouthful.*

How it came about

I received an email in my CMA mailbox from the BBC on 31st July this year. Karen Donnelly, producer, somehow came across the CMA and she emailed us. Personally, I think it had to do with the fact that she likes bikes. Here is a quote from her email: "I'm also a big fan of motorbikes – I got my first little Honda Monkey when I was 11, then moved on to a Vespa in London (which I know is NOT the same!)". My reply to her on that point was, "It has two wheels so all is good".

After the initial contact I was put in touch with Clare Fleming. She is a researcher and she would take us all the way to the big day.

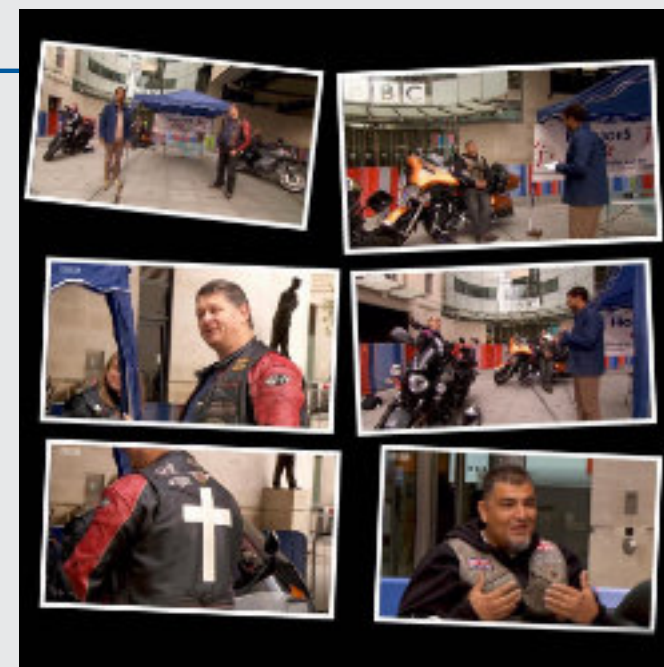
Clare had telephone interviews with me, Catriona, Ted, Tanas and Jaimee. We were all set for going on TV on 7th August. About three days from our appearance Clare rang. We would not be able to appear on TV on 7th August because Westminster Council was concerned about the noise of the bikes so early on a Sunday morning. She then explained that they were looking for a gazebo to set up a Holy Joe's. As they started asking around they came across a comment, 'Did you ask the council?' The council was asked and the BBC were told that they would have to wait for authorisation. This could take a month as the noise was a major concern. Our appearance was postponed to 6th September.

The wait

This was not too gruelling. We just waited.

The week before our trip to Regents Street

In the week before our appearance I contacted Clare and everything was finalised. She confirmed that everybody was still up for it and would be ready on the Sunday morning. Mickey



supplied me with some banners for Holy Joe's. We had to wait just a little longer till the Friday to find out when we had to be at the studio for filming. The time would only be known at around 13:00 on the Friday due to the scheduling of the show.

During some of the interviews Clare said that some asked for the time to not be too early. I was eagerly awaiting the release of the time so everybody could get mentally prepared for the shock of getting up that time of the morning, and that on a Sunday morning.

The shock

So, the Friday arrived – and so did 1 o'clock. As I received the call from Clare I could only smile as I could already hear the various responses, not having spoken to anybody about it yet – especially from Catriona. The time we had to be in London, Regents Street at the BBC1 offices was 7:30 in the morning. Yes, folks, that is early. For us and Jaimee it was an hour and a quarter's journey. For Tanas it was a little further – more like two hours. Ted was the only one that could sleep longer.

The journey

On the Saturday I asked Catriona which bike she would like to ride on into London. (Before I continue, look out for Catriona's article in the next issue of Chainlink on how a complete noob to bikes gets into bikes and all the perils that go with it). The choice was really between my BMW R1250GSA or, as I call it, my old lady – a BMW R100RT. It's a vintage 1993 model that I fell in love with in 2017 when I took my GSA in for a service. The only electronics on it are the lights. Everything else is mechanical and so easy to work on, except removing the battery. It's a bit of a nightmare to get that out but all I need to

get it out is two number 10 spanners, a number 10 socket and a cross-head screwdriver. I digress. Back to the BBC.

We arranged to meet Jaimee on the M3 Junction 3 roundabout at 5:55. We'd have plenty of time to get to Ace Café where we would meet the others and then on to Regents Street.

We met Jaimee in good time and set off on the M3 towards the M25 from where we would get onto the M40 London-bound to meet Tanas and Ted. All was going swimmingly until we got to the M25/M40 interchange. This is when...

The flat tyre

We approached the interchange. I leaned the bike and then thought, surely I can lean it just that little more. I pushed a bit on the left-hand side, the bike leaned over as instructed, then it struck.

As I leaned the bike on the interchange, the next moment I felt this small wiggle, and then a huge, what felt like a dunk, on the front wheel and the bike started to go down. I tried to rectify by jerking the handlebars the other way. The bike stood up, the rear wiggled a lot more and eventually the bike just stood up. It stood up very precariously as the front tyre was completely flat. I steered towards the shoulder, stopped and started inspection.

What I found was both very alarming, but also encouraging. Although the front wheel was flat, there was a little air left in it which meant at least we didn't have a complete blowout and that at worst we had a puncture.

I started phoning a couple of people, Tanas and Ted, but neither of them could help. For a short period, we stood there thinking what to do next. Jaimee just went into prayer mode. We moved a little further towards the M40 to see if we could maybe catch Tanas, but we were too late as he had already gone past.

I then decided to send Jaimee on with the banners I was carrying for Holy Joe's Café and proceed to the BBC1 studios once they had met up at the Ace Café. Catriona and I were still stuck on the interchange. I rang the BBC and said we had a bit of trouble and that we would do everything to get to the studios in time. At this stage I was giving up all hope of getting to the studios and just wanted to get us home and not leave my bike on the interchange.

This is when I thought about phoning my friend of many years. I felt really sorry for him as I found out later that this was the first Sunday in a very long time that he had a chance to just relax and lay in. It took Cliff all of two minutes to hear my predicament, get in his van, after clearing it out of his home improvement tools and stuff, and come to the rescue. I let BBC1

know and about 45 minutes later Cliff stopped at the side of the road. At this stage, time was running out for us to get to the studios in time.

As Cliff arrived, we quickly assessed that we may just need some air. Cliff promptly brought out his compressed air canisters and ten minutes later we were back on the road heading towards the BBC1 studios. On the way there I had at least four calls asking how we were getting on and if we were going to make it.

Our arrival

We arrived at the studios with about four minutes to spare and were promptly stopped by some parking officials who refused to let us go to where we could literally see Tanas, Ted and Jaimee getting ready for the camera and they just would not let us through. I did the only thing left to do at such a tight timeline. I just rolled on past and stopped next to the gazebo they had set up for the Holy Joe's. If you have not seen the interview you can scan one of these QR codes and have a look.

The return journey

This was not without incident either. We decided to take the most direct route back home. Unfortunately, the front tyre went flat again so we had to stop to get some more air in it – three more times. The best bit was, we did not go direct as we went for a small detour to where Catriona's nan used to live in Richmond. We then headed back home to Bracknell.

The end

I think with everything that happened God supernaturally provided for us. I know people might say otherwise but I know He did, especially when the front tyre went flat the first time on the intersection. He also provided for us all the way home. Most of all, God made a way for us five to be on TV to tell people about the CMA and to hold His name high. I have so much hope for the future of CMA – so much work for us to do. There are thousands of bikers of all types that have not heard the good news. Thousands that need to hear and know that Jesus loves them, died for them and made a way for us to be with Him for eternity. †



This is a link to a YouTube video that shows only our interaction with BBC and cuts out the rest of the Sunday Morning Live Show.



This code will take you to the BBC iPlayer and you can watch the whole episode. It is series 11 Episode 12. We are mentioned at 1 minute 21 and the interview is at 52 mins 54.

Ted Bell from CMA TV writes

Going to be on TV! Better make sure the bike will start for me! Like me, it does not like cold mornings and the battery was beginning to struggle to turn the Harley over. This occurred to me late Thursday so I rang Big Jims Motorcycles repairs in Ealing and ordered a new battery. All preparation was done, prayers said and off we went. Past my old office in Devonshire Street and with a little trial and error found the right entrance. Praise God as they had not warned us the road was one way. Temperature taken, passes arranged and 'can you please push the bikes in as they are filming a segment on single-sex couples!' Still, it was worth the effort in the end and CMA, the Biker Bible presented and three very interesting stories. And as I live in Ealing I got to lay in for an hour longer than everyone else. †

Jaimee Nix from CMA HSB writes

I was so anxious about getting to the meeting point with Kobus that I dreamt I got up, got dressed and got the bike out. Then I woke up only to do it again properly. I prayed against getting a puncture waiting on the side of the roundabout amongst the accumulated rubbish. We met up and travelled M3, M25 and as we turned off onto the M40 Kobus had a problem with his tyre so we pulled onto the hard shoulder. I was instructed to take the posters and Bibles and continue on to meet up with Tanas and Ted at the Ace Café. It was a very cold morning and the sun shining directly into my fogging visor added to my tension riding alone, hoping I wouldn't get lost. I successfully met up with them and Ted led the way. We arrived in time to be given a cuppa and use the toilets. We were told to walk our bikes into position so we wouldn't make a noise. They kept changing their minds how they wanted us and if we had been filmed it would have looked like a musical dance with bikes as partners. We were told what question would be put to us and there was only one run through so none of us could rehearse exactly what to say. It was pretty much off the cuff – and it was still cold. God is great because Kobus arrived just in time for the run through. It was interesting to see how the cameras, sound and action were orchestrated by someone we couldn't see or hear and watch how the crew kept stopping and listening before doing something. The whole atmosphere was lovely and an enjoyable experience. †



Yesterday, Today, Forever

Steve Wilds, West Yorkshire

I have to admit that this past year has been a tough one for me. It is just over a year since I lost my precious wife to a brain tumour, then we went into lockdown—what a year. Thank God He is on my side, thank God He has a plan for me and although I don't understand all that has happened, I know that 'all things work together for good for those who love the Lord'. So I trust in the Lord knowing I am in his hands and that he knows best.

I have spent some time recently clearing out wardrobes, emptying drawers and trying to move all Ruth's clothes. The task has brought many a tear but also some smiles including finding over 50, yes, *fifty* pairs of glasses—she had a pair in every drawer, in every bag and in almost every pocket. She was so organised. Moving the clothes and also finding loads of photographs set me off remembering the years we spent together since meeting in 1966. That's the year I started my motor biking career—it became a lifetime obsession.

The memories of those early biking years are great, very special memories. I, with my life-long friend and brother in the Lord, John, (your hard-working editor) would ride around our home city of Liverpool, sometimes venture north into the Lake District and often ride coughing and spluttering through the Mersey Tunnel to visit the girls in North Wales that would subsequently become our wives.

I rode a little Garelli machine, a bright red Italian bike that served me well. I do remember however it was a tough bike to start; I would kick it over maybe thirty times, clean the plug three times and be hit several times in the shins by the recoil on the kick start. How relieved I was when it revved into action, then I would fill the Aintree air



with clouds of two-stroke smoke, my contribution to global warming.

I also remember arriving at Church on a Sunday morning, two bikers in our oily rags and on noisy, smoking bikes ready to join the communion service. We fell under the beady eye of the Pastor's wife who had little sympathy with these leather clad young men breaking the tranquillity of Sunday morning.

My Garelli was great fun despite its starting problems. It had drop handle bars, a cut-away tank, an upswept seat and was flat out at 45 miles an hour, well maybe 50 downhill with a tail wind. Soon the time came for me to move up to a better bike and I bought a Triumph Tiger cub, a great bike and much more reliable. Eventually I sold the Triumph to Paul, a teenager just starting his biking life. He now rides a Pan



European and is chair of the North Cheshire CMA branch. When he bought the Cub he loved it but sadly it was stolen from outside his family front door, never to be seen again.

Now, more than half a century on, we ride much better quality bikes with ABS, traction control and much more. These additions to bikes were never heard of when we first started in the 60's. Also, thank God, we have a starter button to press rather than a kick start and they nearly always start first time. That's progress and what a change there has been in biking over the years.

What hasn't changed is the God that we worship. He is the same 'yesterday, today and forever' and His love for us is the same now as when we were those greasy young bikers. We are of course better described now as gentleman bikers on our smart cruising machines. However, we are still sons of God and carry the CMA cross on our cut-offs to identify that we are Christian bikers.

I recently went on a ride out to Whitby—it was full of bikers. There were a group of seasoned bikers in the parking area with 'Sons of Satan' written across their backs—how sad we felt and wondered did they really



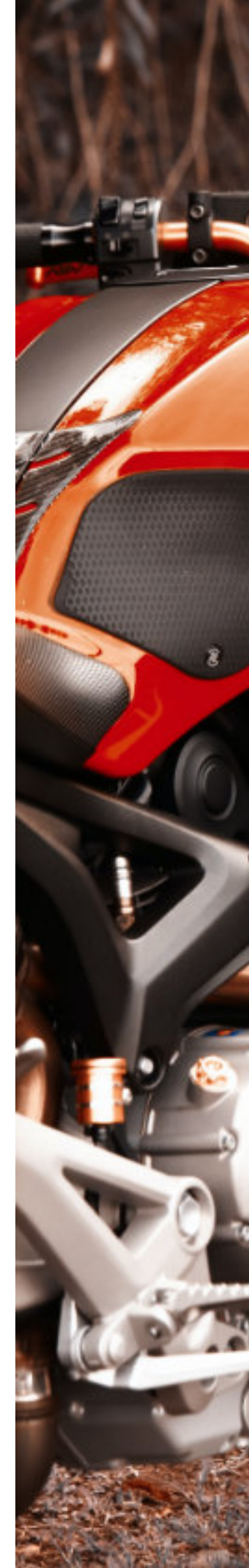
understand the enormity of that statement. As for us we wear the cross, a symbol of our faith which often opens conversations but it also sometimes draws some mocking. Either way the cross is there as a witness, as a testimony to our faith identifying we are followers of the

living Lord. Praise God our symbol shows an empty cross, not a crucifix but a clear reminder that Jesus rose from the dead. He defeated sin and death and rose in victory for you and me. Now He sits on the right hand of His (*and our*) Father in heaven interceding for us until that day He returns to take us home.

What joy we have in Jesus, how great is His love for us. I know that without His love I would not have come through this challenging year. Yes, it's been hard going but, praise God, I have been drawn closer to Him, reliant on His love and grace and I know

He is directing my path. As my friend John said, "the Lord is not through with you yet". I remember we used to sing, 'There's a work for Jesus only you can do'. Well let's go for it and as for me I say, "Here I am Lord, send me... but wherever you send me can I take my bike with me?" Praise God! 🙏

the Lord
is not
through
with you
yet!



God Spoke to Me by Text

Dave Smith, Thames Valley

As part of the Thames Valley group we were due to attend a road safety event at a local bike meet. At this event I knew that there could be a group of people that I was very anxious about seeing. Now I had a dilemma on my hands, did I let my CMA friends down and not show or go and face those that had caused me so much stress and grief?

In my current job I am responsible for sending out crews and individuals to events, festivals, delivering fire equipment etc. As part of this I ask them to let me know when they are on site or when they return to the yard.

On this day, I had one guy out delivering fire extinguishers to an event. Mark normally sends quite lengthy messages explaining in detail what he has done and the location of his delivery, its just his way of letting me know. But not that day.

As the day went on, I prayed and prayed for a sign, should I go to the event or stay away and avoid any possible confrontation?

Just as I was starting to think that I should make my excuses and not go I received a text message. Now as I have said, Mark's messages are normally a lengthy affair, but not this time...

My phone lit up with the message:

MARK 16:15

A sign surely, I grabbed my Biker Bible and quickly looked up the verse

And He said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

This is how God spoke to me through the power of a text message, so helmet on and off I went. ☮



Let Love Be Who You Are

Stephanie Thomas, Hants and Dorset

For all my biker brothers & sisters

God is still in control. No matter how it may look at times. Not a sparrow can fall but under the Father's watchful care. He remains the Sovereign Lord, ruler of the heavens and earth. The pandemic isn't going away any time soon, is it? What a mess this world is in. None of this has caught the Lord by surprise. God is in control and God is doing a new thing. God is working in you. Have you felt closer to the Lord these last few months? Do you trust Him more, seek him more and listen to His voice? Do you lean on Him, search His ways and ask him for everything? Do you spend more time than ever before in His presence?—reading His word and praying to the God who really does hear us ask and answers us.

Well that's exactly what Jesus wants from you. A relationship like never before—His love pouring into you so you can pour out into one another.

So dear friend, keep on keeping on and keep on loving no matter what.

No matter how hard and how terrible it can be, God is in control and his love is for everyone—but not everyone will accept it. We must be strong and focused like never before. You must ground yourself in Jesus. The world is reeling—it wants to pull you down with it. Fear and anxiety are more contagious than any virus. Hate is speaking fast. Some people are full of hate and not love.

When Jesus lives in us we have love—so much love to share with others. This is our chance to shine.

Peter tells us to be ready to offer the reason for the hope we have to anyone who asks us (1 Peter 3:15).

He's assuming that in times of crisis, the friends of Jesus will be so rooted in Him, so grounded in His goodness, that they will have a visibly different reaction to those in the world around them. And others will see that we are set apart. We are different. The love inside us changing those around us. This is our time to offer hope!

This is our time to love even when people hate us and they will and they do hate us. But it's not always us that they hate—its Jesus in us. So Jesus was laughed at, mocked, spat upon, beaten and killed; because of the love He had inside of Him.

Do we think we will be treated any different? More than ever before we need to be filled with Jesus—His strength, His courage, His boldness but most of all His love.

Let's spread God's love over the world; love over our communities and love into the chaos. Only in love will people react well, make good decisions, find peace and know Jesus.

What is God's love?

'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'
(John 3:16)

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.' (John 15:12)

Wonderful scriptures!

The times we are living in are anxiety-inducing. Such times can bring out the worst in people—selfishness, panic, ignoring the needs of others, spreading fear.

But they can also bring out the very best in people.

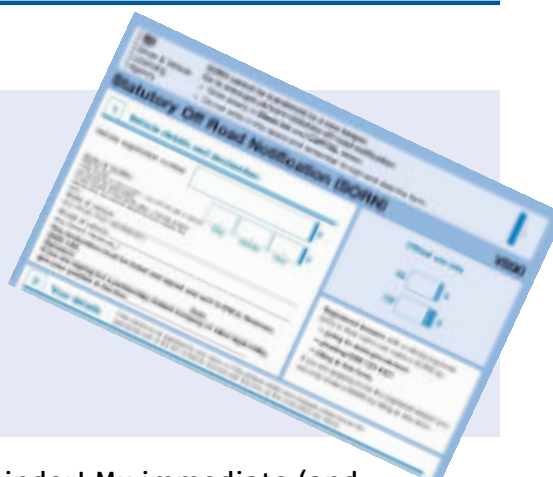
We all know the verse found in 1 Corinthians chapter 13

'Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it isn't proud, it's not self seeking, not easily angered, does not delight in evil, but rejoices in truth' and so on...

Very hard to do isn't it to love like that when someone hates you or despises your family, but with Christ in us His love in us can do just this.

SO—let's love them, just love them and God will do the rest. For God is love—that's who He is! ☮

Is there not a more sad sight than your motorcycle locked up in the garage, on a trickle charger, most likely SORN'd (as the photo of my poor Super Tenere shows!). Not able to go anywhere, not able to give joy to the rider, or being used as a tool to spread the word of God amongst the motorcycle community.



Feels depressing, right?

Pondering this led me to Jeremiah 29:8-14 (NLT).

This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let your prophets and fortune-tellers who are with you in the land of Babylon trick you. Do not listen to their dreams, because they are telling you lies in my name. I have not sent them," says the Lord. This is what the Lord says: "You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. I will be found by you," says the Lord. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land."

How often have you heard Jeremiah 29 v 11 (mis)quoted? It is often used to tell people that God is going to bless them and that God has wonderful, ecstatic plans for their life. I don't doubt the sincerity of those who quote this scripture in isolation, but I do wonder just how many read the whole chapter in context! I remember a fellow Christian coming up to me in church and gushing how he had had a word spoken over him – "it was Jeremiah 29 v11, God has got plans for me, to bless me! Isn't that wonderful!" Looking back I guess I could

have been kinder! My immediate (and ungentle) response was, "That's great – where are you going to spend 70 years in captivity away from God beforehand?" He looked a bit shocked!!

The truth is that this one sentence occurs in the midst of a fairly sobering message for the people of Israel – God basically says, 'Sorry chaps, you wouldn't listen to me, but were quite happy to listen to those lying prophets. Now I counsel you to settle down in Babylon and make the best of it, because you are going to be stuck here isolated from your homeland for 70 years!' However, the message of hope that is delivered with it is, yes, the captivity in Babylon will be real, but there is hope – God will remember you and if you seek after Him, you will find Him, and He will restore you to your homeland, and prosper the nation. For the exiled Israelites this was the 'light at the end of the tunnel'.

And so it feels to me seeing my bike and me shut away, 'in exile', if you will. Granted, the exile has been enforced by a carpal tunnel operation on my right hand (two weeks no riding), followed by a hernia operation (six weeks no riding!) and just when I thought I might get a good ride over Christmas – Tier 4! (Disgruntled, I decided if the government would not let me ride my bike for pleasure I would SORN it and deny them the VED until restrictions lift – what a rebel, eh?) The exile from riding has been a time for me to reflect, to question, ultimately to draw near to God, to start listening to what he is saying, and not my own opinions and the many voices in the world.

Because like the Israelites, I'm not good at listening to his voice. I'll admit that. And I frequently listen to my own bad advice when I

should be waiting on God for guidance. I ask myself – has my involvement with CMA ministry been because I had fixed ideas of how I wanted to do it 'my way'? Have I been obeying the call of the Lord, or have I just been ploughing on with my own ideas? It seems to me that He is saying to me "Your ministry is not over, I've just called a pause. And when we resume, I want you to come to Me and ask what I want you to do, not follow your own agenda". Because in time we hope we will be back out amongst the motorcycle community (please Lord, not 70 years off the bike!) and able to share the message of hope and salvation through Jesus Christ.

And we may have to do it very differently. We may be asked all kinds of difficult questions (the usual 'how could a loving God allow all this misery' will inevitably come up!), for which trite answers and Bible verse 'soundbites' will not satisfy the searching soul. We can't feed soul hunger if we haven't prepared and stocked up our 'spiritual food bank' ready to feed the spiritually hungry.



a fish-eye view un-wrapped



the Super Tenéré under wraps for Winter

I'm sure many of us have used the time off the bike for motorcycle maintenance, modifications, improvements, general cleaning, etc. If we take such stock by keeping our motorcycles tip-top, surely a spiritual 'deep maintenance' is even more important if we are to be effective servants for Christ in the CMA. We need the 'trickle charger' of the Word feeding our spiritual batteries so that we fire up first time when called upon to resume service!

Time off the bike could be just what we all needed – a space to seek after God, to ask his pardon for our mistakes and to fit us for renewed ministry ahead. I firmly believe if we do this, then, once we are roaring back onto the highways of Britain and meeting with the motorcycle community, our ministry will be better for this humbling time of rediscovery and drawing closer to Him. 🙏

Zoomed Out!

Colin Wood, East Midlands

Has anyone thought Zoom looks like the set of the Muppet Show?

Yes, 2020 has been a very strange year for us all.

CMA's ministry involves meeting people—be it at bike nights, shows, rallies or just chatting whilst filling up at a petrol station. All this changed overnight back in March. No longer could we arrange to meet up and go for a ride to a café – the cafes were closed and we had rules prohibiting meeting up.

CMA has had to adapt like everyone else.

Soon we discovered 'Zoom', 'Microsoft Teams', 'Facebook Rooms' and 'WhatsApp' groups, etc.

The CMA National AGM went online.

Bikers Church is live streamed on YouTube and Facebook.

Our local East Midlands branch has regular Zoom meetings that have replaced our physical meetings. We even had our AGM and Christmas party via zoom.

CMA have held local and national prayer meetings via Zoom. Who would have thought that it would take a pandemic to get a prayer meeting where someone living in Scotland could be praying alongside someone sitting in their house in Devon.

A whole new language has developed: 'Zooming', 'Zoomed Out', 'Zoom bomb' and phrases like, 'You're on mute', 'you need to put your video on', 'you're frozen' or 'you're breaking up'.

Technology has enabled us to keep in touch and to reach out to others. It is true, however, that not everyone has embraced the tech—the challenge has been to maintain contact.



The work of CMA has not stopped because of the pandemic; if anything, our mission to reach the world *one heart at a time* with the Gospel of Jesus Christ is needed now more than ever.

As we enter 2021 we need to be creative in what we do and continue to be supportive and watching out for each other.

God bless and see you on that next zoom meeting. ✝

Winter 2020/21



CHAINLINK Junior

Welcome to the first Junior section of Chainlink for the younger members of CMA's families. Whether you are a son, daughter, grandson or granddaughter of a CMA member, in this 'mini-mag' we would like you to enjoy various events and possible competitions—maybe even with small prizes to be won! If you have a story of a trip or visit somewhere with a family member on a motorcycle—or what your thoughts are from your first trip on a motorbike—let us know.

In this first Chainlink Junior we would like you to have a bit of fun. See if you can identify the motorcycle logo. Enjoy doing a word search and find the missing words.

Thanks and enjoy,

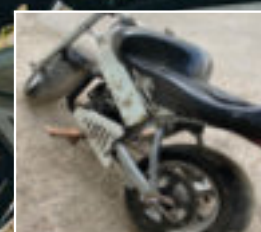
Shelley

WORDSEARCH //
CUSTOM BUILDS //
YOUTUBE REVIEWS
AND MORE...

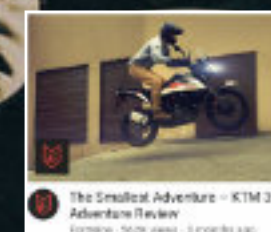
BACK PAGE //

WIN!

First one to send the word search back wins a special prize



INSIDE//
CMA NORTH EAST
BRANCH NEW ADDITION



INSIDE//
YOUTUBE BLOGGERS
WORTH FOLLOWING

CMA NORTH EAST BRANCH NEW ADDITION

During 2020 in February whilst at Pete Rigg's some of our group had an idea that we could buy a backdrop and use it at events, like Whitby Regatta and others. I then suggested looking for either a toy motorcycle or a minibike so that the kids could sit on it and have their pictures taken. We started looking on Facebook marketplace and found one.

I bought the stickers from CMA Merchandise. Cameron then took the bike wheels to Bill's bike unit, which works on motorbikes and various other bikes, to get the tyres taken off so he could take them to the next stop.

Cameron started the wrapping...



The next stop for the tyres was at Hyper Coating where they sandblasted the wheels then sprayed them. Now they look amazing! So we are now in the process of putting the bike back together. This is where we are up to at the moment...

Paul from our branch offered to pick it up and one Tuesday we had a coffee at Whitby café so on the way home went and collected it from Paul. The next day Arthur and I started dismantling it and washed it all down. Arthur (my dad) then started painting the handlebars and frame. My nephew Cameron, who works at Tinted Vision, wrapped the bodywork in the colours of CMA.

YOUTUBERS WORTH FOLLOWING



SUBSCRIBE



Name: Bike World

Followers: 191k

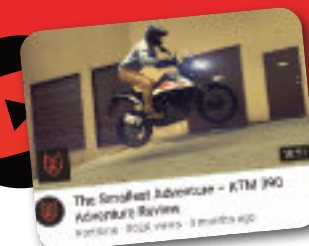


One of the more well known channels, 'Bike World' are bikers who create content for motorcycle enthusiasts across the world.

Here you'll find video reviews of all the latest motorbikes, gear, bike builds, motovlogs, racing and garage features.

Name: FortNine

Followers: 1.05m



Based in Canada, Fortnine is sure to be one of the bigger YouTubers around with over 1 million subscribers! Expect a very theatrical presenter with plenty of tips, reviews and motovlogs. He is one of the more interesting YouTubers out there and is sure to pass on some good advice.

Name: MCrider

Followers: 233k



MCrider not only provides weekly sound motorcycle training and road strategy, he is also an active Christian and often shares his faith on his channel. With his focus on helping you improve your skills, he is definitely one to subscribe to.

Name: TheMissendenFlyer

Followers: 188k



One of my favourites, The 'Missenden Flyer' provides bike reviews, bike tips as well as long tour reviews from local places like Wales to riding in Thailand!

He has a following across the globe and is definitely worth a watch!

Name: Motorcycle.com

Followers: 374k



Although very heavily biased towards American muscle, you can't go wrong with Motorcycle.com. Established back in 1994 it's professionalism and knowledge for bikes shines through.

Presented usually by a bunch of the magazines own reporters, you can't go wrong.

SUBSCRIBE



WORD SEARCH

M	C	L	H	E	L	M	E	T	Y
B	O	X	Q	U	E	H	J	M	C
L	X	T	A	S	F	S	G	H	V
W	G	L	O	V	E	S	R	T	M
Q	W	D	C	R	N	Z	T	T	L
P	O	K	S	A	B	I	B	L	E
W	S	D	C	H	A	I	N	E	D
B	N	K	M	G	E	M	K	B	R
V	M	R	A	L	L	Y	E	E	D
L	O	R	D	J	E	S	U	S	W

MOTORBIKE
CHAIN
HELMET
BOX
GLOVES
CMA
BIBLE
RALLY
LORD
JESUS

If you want to ask one of your parents or grandparents to take a photo of the finished word search, then the first one to send it back with your name and address will receive a little something in the post. Have fun!

✉ sap3@hotmail.com

INSERT THE MISSING WORDS?

This is the
the has made;
Let us
and be in it.

PSALM 118:24

WHAT LOGO DOES THIS BELONG TOO?



email answers to
sap3@hotmail.com

All Bikes Bright and Beautiful

Di Raven, Staffs and Shrops

- Chorus:** All bikes bright and beautiful,
All engines great and small,
All things known mechanical
The Lord God gave us all.
- Verse 1:** Each biking shop that opens
New bikes to us doth bring,
In dark or glowing colours
With chrome for polishing!
- Verse 2:** What's an o'erhead camshaft?
Hey, 'tis the petrol running by
The spark plug in the engine
Which makes these darn things fly!
- Verse 3:** The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The rain which fills your biking boots –
God made them, every one!
- Verse 4:** He gave us eyes to see them
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all bikes well!

(With apologies to
Cecil Frances Alexander)



Through Adversity

Vince Neale, Devon and Cornwall

'Per Ardua Ad Astra'

'Through Adversity to the Stars' –
The Motto of the Royal Air Force



2020 has been, let's be honest, a really tough year! With everything going on, I don't have to tell you. I've been going through tough times, with poor health, personal problems and working on the front line in the NHS. I have been in the desert since this has all happened, through adversity and then some.

My faith and walk have suffered greatly, I don't mind being open and honest with you. I have had people judging me, saying very unkind and untruthful things about me. I have struggled with day to day stuff and life in general. I know what the Bible says about this but when you're in the middle of it all you lose sight of reality and where God is in it all. Often I have asked, "God where are you in this?" I know He is in this, but when you're going through the desert and up against it, you don't think straight.

But through it all, God promises that He is our ever present help, our strong tower! Sometimes I have felt like King David. The Bible is full of promises; **Isaiah 41** talks about God's help, and how He will strengthen me with his right hand.

Psalm 46:1 says that God is our refuge and ever present help in trouble. Although I've been going through the desert, I have been going to the 'Drive-in' church services in the Torbay/Torquay areas of the Southwest run by the local Pentecostal Churches, as well as listening to live services streamed on the internet from different international Ministries.

So really this has been the oasis for me (*Elim, the place of refreshing*). Support from those leaders, the leadership from the CMA and from the local Branch has really helped me to reconnect with God. I know I'm not perfect, but then, God hasn't finished with me yet either (**Philippians 1:6**). Through it all, I know that God has been there through the hard times as well as the good. So to encourage you, if you're going through what I've been through, remember that God is your strength. Phil Wickham's song, '*This is amazing grace*' has been my anthem through this—God is bringing me through this. He can do the same for you as well. **Jeremiah 33:3**, 'Call to me and I will answer you'.

Thanks for reading. 🙏



Feelings

Jaimee Nix, Hants and Surrey Borders



Lord, I cannot help my feelings
they change like shifting sands
I grasp for something solid but
it slips right through my hands.

I'm blown about by circumstance
my hormones and my health
my job, my kids, retirement
my pension and my wealth.

My mental state does worry me

I can't stop what I think
just when I thought my life was fine
my feet begin to sink.

My feelings seem to be the truth
but often caused by lies
it's doldrum times I hate the most
no stimulus outside.

The boredom of the quiet times
my restlessness, no peace
'cos when I try to meditate
I often fall asleep.

O woe is me; I say again
the problem is quite plain
I'm inward looking at my state
frustrated that you've told me wait.

News from Devon & Cornwall

Philip Head, Devon and Cornwall

Kingdom Rally 2020

The pandemic crisis has put the nail in the coffin of so many biking events this year. The weekend of 18, 19 and 20 September which saw Kingdom Rally 2020, organised by 'Follow The Son Motorcycle Ministries', was particularly outstanding at this time. Devon & Cornwall Christian Bikers and the Devon and Cornwall Branch of CMA were also invited to take part. Beccy Pemberton and Philip Head represented the Christian Motorcyclists' Association at the rally.

Friday evening was 'getting to know you' time and settling in.

On Saturday we had a ride out to Lands End then on to Marazion, overlooking St Michael's Mount for lunch. Then back to Little Trethvas camp site near Helston for a barbecue, evening word of God, Holy Communion together and a time of worship followed by prayer and ministry.

On Sunday we had a morning service followed by the 'blessing of the bikes' and a ride out to Portreath.



Philip and Becky

A thoroughly successful, enjoyable and worthwhile weekend.

Special thanks to Ken Hodgson and Rika Hodgson, Skippy Bates, Stuart the Elder, Mark the Bard (Minstrel) and Mike the camp site owner and preacher man – and thanks to one and all for good fellowship and friendship. 🙏



Philip's Ordination

On Sunday 18th October a limited number of mask-wearing, socially distanced supporters were gathered at CleerWay Community Church, which meets in the Memorial Hall at St Cleer in Cornwall, to witness the ordination of Philip Head. Philip is Secretary of the Devon & Cornwall Branch of CMA UK. He was ordained as a Deacon Minister and commissioned as a Chaplain, with particular focus towards the local motorcycling community.

Philip started riding in 2015 at the age of 64. Now, five years later he is a qualified member of the IAM. He soon recognised his call to ministry and started training in ministry with Elim/AOG in the Malvern

Hills, and continued training with the Christian Leaders Institute.

Philip says, "My thanks to all involved with my call, training, mentoring and ordination, in particular to my three sponsors – my wife Diana, Pastor Martin Bunkum (my mentor) and local GP and church trustee Graham Toms. Special thanks also to Mike Fitton, our National Chairman (who I first met outside a hostel in Hannover, Germany, on our way to EMC Latvia) who was in attendance to endorse the appointment and to Pastor Martin Bunkum who oversaw the service and conducted the ordination". 🙏

The Truth and Nothing But The Truth

Philip Bell, Creation Ministries International



A. E. Wilder-Smith (1915-1995) was a Swiss-born, British scientist with a brilliant mind and three earned doctorates. His many books presented a strong scientific challenge to evolution, but he also opposed the idea of theistic evolution. He pointed out that such an idea was contrary to Jesus' healing miracles:

*'If God worked by that way, that method [of evolution], then Jesus ought never to have preached the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus is the Creator. All things were made by him and for him for his glory and enjoyment. Now if he made the world by the process of eliminating the handicapped and the sick, then he ought never to have said, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth'... You see, everything which is Christian, everything which is really the mind of Christ, has been cut out if you say that it was done by the mechanism of neo-Darwinian theory; that is, by chance mutation and natural selection sorting out the unfitted from the fit, in order that the race may rise.'*¹

Wilder-Smith's point is clear: Jesus constantly healed unfit people but this is diametrically opposed to the belief (of theistic evolution) that He created via a process where only the fit survive. Creation by the Word of God (Jesus) reveals His vast wisdom and intelligence, the very opposite of anything haphazard or accidental. Souls who are troubled by the misery, sickness and suffering of this world are desperate for answers. There is no substitute for the healing, transformative grace of Jesus Christ, the Creator who became the Saviour.

1. 'Arthur Ernest Wilder Smith – Evolution vs Creation', a recorded lecture from the 1980s, [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11738-11833); accessed 4 August 2020. The quoted material (1:17:38-1:18:33) is taken from a section at the end of the lecture where he is critiquing theistic evolution.

Reproduced by permission of Philip Bell, C.M.I.

A weekend in Wales ~ Len's Run

Anna Hertzig, Hants and Dorset

As I pretty much worked through Summer, by September I was completely drained. When I reach this state I become extremely explosive and I just run out of energy to keep my gunpowder stable. I desperately needed some time off to recharge my battery and, as I used to say, my life is like a car/bike—my battery charges when I'm on the move but with the engine off, it would slowly drain. The advert of the event of Len's Run was on the back cover of the Summer issue of the Chainlink and when Martyn messaged (he had already signed up) I jumped straight into it. Although worrying a bit about the possibility of bad weather I really looked forward to this trip.



The meeting point was the usual and the weather was nice and sunny. Martyn selected a route using more 'A' roads and fewer motorways—we could use the motorway on the way home. Even though I was very tired, I was very excited about our long journey ahead and the fact that I was facing 200-odd miles didn't feel like such a big deal. I knew I needed this time to actually leave all my anger, stress and frustration behind, accumulated throughout the months and Bob [the bike, Ed.] seemed to be the best cure for my troubles. The air therapy helped.

We had several stops on the way, really took it easy, we were not pushed by time at all. The scenery was nice and the weather was ideal, although the wind picked up a bit by the time we reached the M4 and riding across the Bridge on the Welsh border was a bit challenging – I feared it would just blow us off! That did not happen and we reached the other side safely.

The Welsh roads are amazing and the countryside is beautiful. There

were more bikes on the road than cars! I really had a good chance to practise those blooming left-hand bends for my IAM Advanced Rider Training Course I have signed up for in August though I'm still struggling with them—I much prefer the right-hand bends—oh well. I will get there one day. Somehow the left side of the road seems much more intimidating than the middle!

We eventually arrived around 16:00. It was a bit later than we estimated, but it didn't matter. It was still daylight and we had a few hours to set up the tents, have a drink and be at the pub for dinner. I must confess, by this time I had such short fuses I nearly chucked my tent into the river as it did not want to cooperate. Eventually it gave up resisting my efforts to put it up, it was wonky as I managed to crack one of the poles but I could not care less; I felt so bad for Martyn as he had to witness my tantrum.

When all was sorted, we rode to the pub for dinner. We were hungry and it was a nice relaxing meal but the plan was to fuel up for next

day's ride-out before we got back to the campsite. With a flashing last bar on my battery—not Bob's, but mine—I knew this was really pushing my limits, but it had to be done if I wanted to have a relaxing morning. Bear in mind, we were in the middle of nowhere and the closest gas station was 10 miles away. We shared the idea of a chilled morning with Captain Chris and Mick, so four of us set off in the complete darkness. We followed Martyn's satnav and got to the gas station relatively easily. Fuelled up, paid, but when I got back to my bike I realised the lady at the till completely mixed up the pumps and she actually charged me for Martyn's petrol. This wouldn't have been a big deal normally since our bikes used nearly the same amount of fuel but by then my tolerance threshold had been reduced to zero. I meticulously collect the receipts of my vehicles, have spreadsheets and follow closely how they are doing with their fuel consumption and this completely blew my fuses. I'm not into public tantrums, but well, it happened. Eventually all was sorted, I got my

receipt and felt a bit better about myself when we left the petrol station.

Martyn's satnav generated probably the shortest route to the campsite but didn't take into account that we were not on a Paris-Dakar rally but casual riders on road bikes... Oh my dear God, only you know how I managed to stay on my bike—steep slopes, hairpin bends on narrow lanes with grass in the middle and gravel everywhere and the complete darkness! I was diligently calling the name of my Heavenly Father to keep me in one piece and I seldom reach my limits, but I was screaming pretty much from the moment we turned off the main road and I was only a hair's breadth from a full-on panic attack. I knew I couldn't just pop my side stand, get off my bike and curl up on the road side and die. By the time we reached the campsite I felt my brain had turned into a chunk of charcoal. I fell into my tent and listened to the howling wind and creaking ancient oak trees around the field for a while, but nothing seemed to be as terrifying as this night adventure had been.

We woke up to a beautiful morning; I like waking up with my bike parked in front of my tent! It was sunny but as we were in a valley one of the mountains kept the campsite in the shade for a while, but eventually the sun climbed high enough. Such a peaceful and amazing place this was! To have a relaxing morning it was worth the effort to fuel up the night before, even if it nearly cost my life. I also had a little walk around and met old friends and made new



acquaintances. I always enjoy meeting new people at these events!

We gathered for the ride out and followed mostly narrow country lanes with breath-taking views. It was a great challenge and I still haven't decided yet which was more terrifying, seeing what was ahead of me or not seeing anything except what my headlight revealed. I know a year ago I wouldn't have been able to complete this route on Bob and in a way, it was an achievement. I was proud of my big machine to tackle these truly challenging roads. We had a few stops—one of them was at a dam, which most likely was the Claerwen Dam according to my research—an amazing view with a furious wind. I must confess I was exhausted by the time we got back to the campsite, but it was a good feeling though!

We had a barbeque dinner which was delicious and I had a few great conversations, first with Mike, who I had known for a few years now but never had the chance to have a

personal conversation with, so this was truly a special time, then Steve and finally David. Such great men and I enjoyed talking to them so much!

The night was quiet this time and we woke to yet another beautiful morning. Our Father God had been so gracious to us and blessed us with beautiful weather! It was relaxing, we had breakfast, Martyn cooked it on his camping kitchen equipment then Mike lead the morning service. I even got company in the form of a little sausage doggie, who casually hopped into my lap for a little rub. Not sure why she chose me as I'm not a doggie person, but she was very convincing and of course I could not resist her!

We left the campsite a bit before lunch time. A few of us rode together for a while then we had to leave the group and face the long way home.

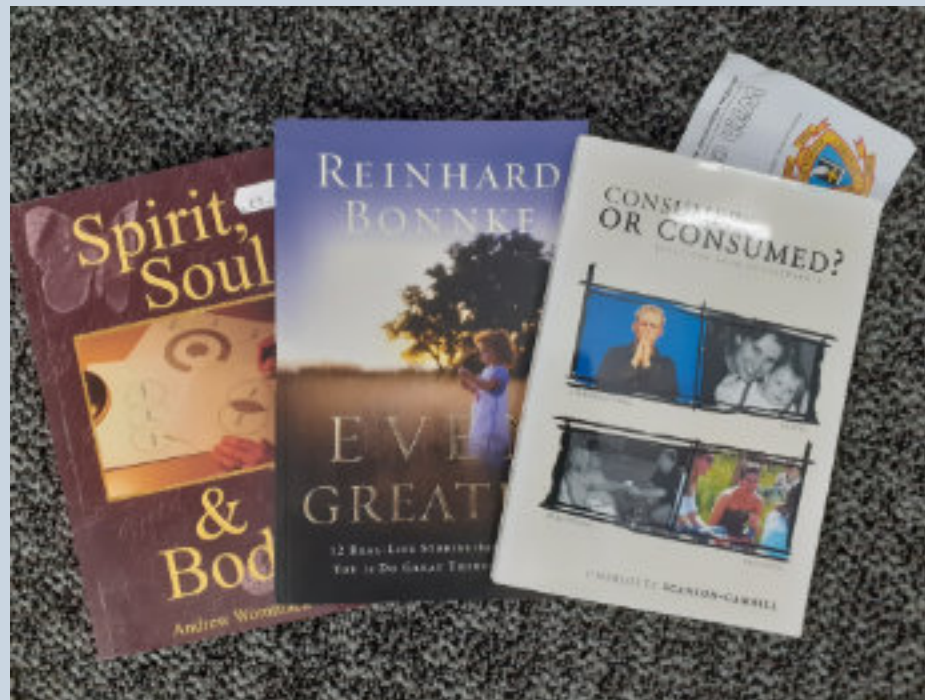
It was tiring but it was also exactly what my exhausted spirit needed so much! ✨

I don't know about you but I love books and reading. It comes from being old enough to get bored in the school summer holidays and living in a tiny village with no one my age to knock around with. I try to be careful about making disparaging remarks about young people who don't stop looking at their mobile phones – that was me but with a paperback instead. Even now I have to be mindful about starting a book because I will lose time I don't have spare. My tastes have broadened over the years, although there is a compendium of Capt. W.E. Johns knocking about on one of the shelves, and most genres are covered apart from biographies and spiritual books. The latter must seem a little odd for a professed Christian! There are several—perhaps many—who feel and actually live out the notion that as people of faith we should be apart from the ways of this world. Further, we should be constantly seeking improvement and spiritual guidance – a wonderful source of which can be found in books written by theologians, scholars, witnesses and Spirit-led authors. I read a chapter a day of the Bible, with prayer, from one end to the other and then start again.

If there is anyone left reading this then perhaps they are thinking, or even saying, "Why didn't you ask? I could have recommended one, two, a dozen, loads of brilliant writings that would have helped explain or surprise you with the power of God." In some ways that was the problem – too many options. Have you seen the film *The Hurt Locker*? It's about an American soldier in a bomb disposal team working in Iraq. I want to tell you about the colours. In Iraq, where the sun is bright, all the colours are muted and seem to be various shades of brown and grey, all very washed out. When he goes back home for a period of rest his wife sends him to the supermarket for something mundane like washing powder. In the store, faced with an entire aisle of washing powders all in garish colours, he is unable to cope and has to leave empty-handed. That image has stayed with me and gets reinforced every Christmas time. Sometimes, you cannot comprehend the necessity for so much choice so you walk away. Fortunately for me the Bible was always readily available and discussion at church and in house groups provided breadth to the depth.

As is often the way, the Lord made my decision for me. Knowing me as He does, He knew that if someone said they were getting rid of a load of books and that otherwise they would be going in the recycling, I would have to offer to rescue them. So it was when my Branch Secretary made that awful statement I found myself with a carrier bag full of no

doubt righteous and worthy tomes. He even sorted out the timing such that I was going on holiday, in the middle of a pandemic that had shut down all my evening and weekend motorcycle related outings and needed 'a good read'. I went for the 'lucky dip' approach—even though there is no such thing as 'luck'—and I was suitably blessed with amazing stories of great acts of mercy and faith. In particular the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in healing, protection and guidance has been emphasised in my heart and affected my prayers. It has been a revelation and has found me realising that you can learn even from seemingly totally



unrelated topics. I am in the middle of *Consumer or Consumed?* which is about the zeal required to build a House of God (the *Abundant Life Church* in Bradford in this case) that is for everyone. Initially not sure how this was relevant I persevered and, part way through, realised that this was amazing stuff and I could draw parallels with how my Branch should run and what could be done better, especially by me. I am trying to pace my reading so that I can fully appreciate what is being revealed.

'If not now – when?' is a popular refrain in Church and related places. It is clear that, for me, now is the right time and by being ready and willing to receive I have been blessed—again. The generosity of our Lord knows no bounds and His blessings are more than we will ever be able to count. I am terrible at parting with books but these were a gift to me and one I will be glad to share. 🙏

I will praise you, the God of heaven and earth,
Who has made the world.
I will praise you, who shows my eyes the hills and the seas,
The meadows and the woods.
I will praise you, who spreads out the road before me,
The road with the smooth asphalt.

Lord, as I notice the journey's breeze in my face,
I feel your revitalising wholesomeness.
Lord, when I reduce my speed
Then I feel the breath of eternity.
When the trees and the fields slip by me,
Then I wonder at the variety of your creation.
As I travel the country roads,
Then I rejoice in my being.
When I let the engine scream,
Then I express my joy of living.

Lord I thank you for the joys of my youth.
But Lord, when I ride out in the morning,
Then I do not know if I will see evening,
Lord guard me from accident and danger;
Guard me on the road and protect my youth from death.
Lord, I will praise you on the road
In the journey's fresh wind, while I am still young.
Amen

May the Lord bless you
Doc Holliday, biker pastor

Found on CMA Germany's website and translated by Brian Jenner
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Can you think of something that symbolises the sense of control that you have over your life? We all have at least one object which reminds us that we have a degree of control over our lives. It could be the keys to our vehicle, the tools of our trade or something connected to our hobbies or passions. Such articles of independence reassure us of that certainty in life which we all long for.

The desire for this certainty is understandable. Certainly, predictability and control are the watch-words of the modern era. These are the terms that we like to live by and they underpin our lives.

For the biker in particular, that desire for control and certainty is bound up in our love of two wheels. Many bikers consider riding as more than a passion or mere transport; it is a right which underpins our sense of independence. Consequently, many bikers are suspicious of changes to legislation which may compromise bikers' rights.

That said, I have been impressed by many bikers' willingness to make sacrifices and advance the welfare

of others. For example, many bikers have exercised their choice to leave their machine in the garage during the first lockdown. "The NHS is stretched with COVID," one biker said on a Facebook group. "If I crash it diverts medical attention from the frontline. So, my bike's staying at home."

Like many of us, I stopped using my motorcycle during the first lockdown. Sure, the loss of the saddle-time played with my head. This pandemic has had a detrimental effect on all of us. But I took solace from the fact that I would be riding again at some point in the near future. As I said – control, certainty and predictability are the watchwords of modern society. This microscopic bug may have turned our world upside down, I thought, but I will be riding again soon.

Of Lockdowns, Motorcycles and Driving Licences

Daniel Harris, South Lancs.

However, in June 2020 my life took an unexpected twist. I had been experiencing dizzy spells which I had put down to some sort of lockdown fatigue. Then a blackout came out of the blue leading to hospitalisation. I can never remember the Latin names of these medical conditions, but I remember being told that I suffered from an irregular heartbeat. I jokingly say that my heart goes to the rhythm of *Another One Bites the Dust* by Queen but missing a beat here or there!

An Unexpected Lockdown

I was hospitalised three times in total during the pandemic. Or should that be a double lock-down? You know the routine; my family couldn't visit and I was isolated from the ward until the COVID test came back as negative. On one occasion my condition was life threatening. But I came out the other side reasonably intact with a pacemaker fitted. The DVLA does not usually regard a pacemaker as a major problem. The usual advice after surgery is not to drive for a week. All being well you can return to the road after that. In my case however, the cardiology department had not made an exact diagnosis and continued with ongoing investigations into my condition. I was deemed unsafe to get behind the handlebars, so lost my licence.

Ask any petrol-head what it is like to lose their licence. It's like a cowboy being deprived of their horse. It represented the loss of a key part of my identity and the ability to travel where I want, and when I want. It wasn't just the pandemic; the state of my health was confronting me with the reality of life today. We are all struggling to maintain a sense of control, predictability and certainty within our lives.

The loss of my licence also came at an inconvenient time. In June 2020 I moved to Manchester to start a new job as a minister with the United Reformed Church. It's a big patch – how was I going to get around? The government advice at the time was to avoid using public transport. I started using an electric bicycle. I am now on friendly terms with the environment. Stick that in your exhaust pipe and smoke it!

Searching for a Deeper Reality

We often start soul-searching in times of disorientation. This can lead us to asking hard questions about the nature of life and our relationship with God. Personally, I found that God was very close to my heart (if you pardon the pun). I've been through hard times in the past and have learnt the valuable lesson of God's faithfulness. The loss of my licence was

a pain in the butt. But it also offered the golden opportunity to reflect on the state of lay life. How much of my life had I given to Jesus and how much was I still holding back for myself?

I am reminded of Jesus' famous words to Peter and his two brothers: 'Follow me, and I will make you a fisher of people' (Matt 4.19). Peter was the sort of character who featured in the television show *Deadliest Catch*. Several interesting things emerge from such a simple sentence.

Firstly, Jesus challenged Peter's own sense of control, predictability and certainty. For Peter, these words were wrapped up in the tools of his trade – his nets. Understandably, he wanted a predictable and certain world with a predictable supply of fish. If he didn't fish his family would suffer. And Jesus cuts across all of this, challenging his priorities in life and inviting him to a life on the road as the disciple of an itinerant preacher.

This sounds like a tough call. But look at the words that Jesus used. He wanted to reassure Peter that his very real physical and social needs would be met on the road. He deliberately used the familiar language of the fishing trade to reassure Peter: 'I will make you a fisher of people.'

We all stroll down different paths in life. My wife Saskia is an artist. Jesus could possibly say to her something like this: 'Put down your paint brushes, follow me, and you will paint a new world showing people the beauty of God.' Run a thought experiment reflecting on Jesus' words. What *prized possessions* would He ask you to place down? And what *words of reassurance* would He say inviting you to follow Him? The challenge and the words of reassurance would be very personal to us.

What can we take away from this? If the pandemic has taught us anything it is this: the world is *not* predictable, certain or controllable. And *neither is Jesus*. But that shouldn't put us off. Instead, He invites us to put down those objects which embody our self-reliance and to follow Him in a life of adventure on the open road. Will it be hard? Maybe. But our lives will be all the better for it. ✚



Thoughts on PTSD, Covid & Me!

Memories remind us, can make us happy or sad, miles may separate us but they can never divide us, life may weary us or invigorate us but God will never leave us or forsake us—he has put us here for a time such as this.

Looking inward is inevitably all about **me** and that's OK for a season but it makes the world a small place and everything a reaction to what has happened to us instead of a response to what God has done for us and what He can still do through us. Jesus tells us in John 10:10 that He came so that we may have 'life and life to the full'. This life is meant to be more than just going through the motions. We are meant to experience life through the lens of eternity—through the lens of Jesus. Changing lenses can bring new clarity and focus. How often, because of circumstances, have we used the word **never** in a sentence and how often was it proved wrong? Pray that we have eyes to see **all** things from another angle when the devil starts directing our eyes. The only **never**, for certain is that God has never and will never give up on us.

God desires for our lives to be rich and full. That nothing—no issue, no addiction, no fear, no worry, no nothing—will be able to keep us from living our new life in Christ. I have an amazing, beautiful, and blessed life but in more recent years I have because of my circumstances lived a life in shadow but I believe there is purpose in the pain! God's thoughts are of an expected end for us, an outcome rather than a finishing point. If we can discover our God-given purpose then surely we have learned the heaven-sent

lesson! There **is** purpose (even or perhaps, especially) in the pain and that's why it is for a season, so we can harvest that which God has planted and nurtured in our lives, both good and painful. Everything has a purpose—even death on a cross had its purpose!

The story of Legion is my daughter's favourite Bible story from Sunday School. She always felt a bit sorry for Legion afterwards because he wanted to go with Jesus, but Jesus sent him home! We need to understand we all have different roles to fulfil, different ministries within the faith, in different places, situations and times. God-given according to His purpose, none of less importance than the other.

I learned from a wise Christian policeman in Northern Ireland many years ago that life is about choice. We choose what we are going to wear each day so in times of real battle I have literally not got out of bed without reading through, praying and putting on the full armour of God before my feet even reached the floor. Practice makes things more natural so in the same way as I learned to clothe myself, I decided to try focusing on forgiveness for a while. Forgiveness is the journey I am on. To clothe myself in forgiveness as a daily state and live it in the smaller things is a step closer to the finish line. Forgiveness is after all a gift I can give to myself! It continues to be a struggle but know this: if we stay steadfast in our relationship with God, He will continually work in our lives to renew us and rid us of the stains of sin that continue to plague us. We **all** struggle with sin but in and through our continued

relationship with God we have a hope like no other, even when we fall short and I am so grateful for that as someone who does struggle.

When surrounded by the current events, fake news, fear, worry and uncertainty remember that we stand on a rock, surefooted, so do not need to look down. We are **in** but not **of** this world so we don't need its validation. Allow God to renew our minds and replace negativity with clarity and purity. Let God help fight the battle and gain the victory. Keep looking up toward Heaven—our home, our dwelling place. Fix our minds and thoughts therefore on the heavenly things—all else is temporary. Healing is holistic and we are a 'whole' being, physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional and we need to take time with God to renew **each** area. Bible study is so important and much more than 'doing' church. It is immersing oneself in the story of faith, from its prophecy to its legacy. We may 'do' or live out our faith differently but the Word and therefore God the living word remains the same. True and steadfast in all situations and all forms, whether we use a book or an app. We may change, our circumstances may change, technology will continue to change and even the world as we know it but God doesn't change and His word doesn't change. Think about the realisation and reassurance we can take from that.

Hebrews 2:15 says, 'And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage'. When Jesus set us free from the fear

of death he also set us free from all other fears. **All other fears**—that's a huge statement but I am reminded of Israel and that I have stood where Jesus stood. Likewise, He has been where I have been, experienced life and death for my sake. There is nothing we feel or go through that He does not understand. Looking from the Mount of Olives to the Temple Mount, standing where Jesus stood, I have contemplated Jesus' return—how will He be perceived and received, who will they say He is, will there be need for the question? Will any man be able to deny the truth? That is an overwhelming picture to think about. I always wonder about those on the edges of the Bible stories. I wonder if the centurion at the crucifixion was the only person to understand at that moment who Jesus was and I am reminded of how many times I have been told that He would have gone to the cross even just for the one, just for me or just for you. How amazing that John mentions Jesus specifically praying for us before He went to the cross. Doesn't that make the story even more poignant?

In the meantime, we are tasked with pointing the world to who He is and to salvation, that they too will be with Him in heaven and not spectators. I do not want to be like the Pharisee, watching, waiting for people to do something wrong so I can pull them down for it. It is all too easy for us to be like them in a Facebook generation, from behind a screen. Pass a comment, be critical, share rumours: instead, let us praise God and lift people up, pointing the way to Jesus, helping, and not hindering, allowing Jesus to reveal himself to them. Jesus was scorned by those nearest who knew Him best and yet news of His greatness travelled abroad. His authority to teach was questioned

at home, yet His holiness and authority was recognised by the king; a king whose sin confronted him; a king who did what was wrong in spite of knowing it was wrong rather than lose 'face' or reputation. A king, a powerful man manipulated by a dancing girl. How easy it is for us to fall into step with the crowd, become so familiar with Jesus that we fail to see and recognise who He truly is and His authority. May we be true to our faith and our conscience and not swayed by the world but be willing to proclaim who He is. May we continue to have faith in His plan, in His word and that the situation, media and speculation will not divert us from the ministry given to us all in the Great Commission.

In Mark 9:24 we read the words of a desperate father 'Lord I believe, help my unbelief'. This verse in the midst of all the holiness speaks right to our humanity. The words spoken by one who stood before Jesus physically, who brought his child to be healed because of what he had heard but the disciples had been unable to heal his son—perhaps his belief was shaken. When things do not go our way and we do not get the answer or healing we are seeking we must continue to give everything to the Lord, even our doubt and unbelief. Our faith and service must continue to be like that spoken of in the first commandment, pure of heart and without agenda. May it never be about our own position or looking good but about us being humble servants.

2 Corinthians 4:7 says, 'that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us'. What an encouragement and relief, it's all His power, His doing, His strength, so whether we are weak, troubled, scared or stressed it makes no difference as long as we dwell in Him: He in us all will be complete and perfect according to His will.

'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also' (Matthew 6:21). God loves us. Let me repeat that to allow that truth to sink into your mind, heart, and soul. **God. Loves. Us.** And His love knows **no** limits, **no** bounds, and **no** conditions. That He loves us at our worst when we sometimes don't even like ourselves, is a strong reminder of the **sure** and **certain** hope we have of eternal life through His death and resurrection because He paid that price whilst we were still sinners. He died in the hope that we would turn from our wicked ways. Likewise, all powers and principalities and evil **must** submit to the power of the name of Jesus; the rest of our words are merely for our own vanity. It has not got anything to do with how eloquently or not we phrase His name, it is all about the Name. How encouraging as we often do not have 'the right words' in a situation but we can always call on **Jesus'** name.

He prepares you to do His will, equips you to carry it out, then leads you in accomplishing it. So, God does everything; we just have to wait and listen but we become impatient, lose focus and become anxious and stressed because our gaze turns inwards again instead of upwards; internal rather than external. We need space in our hearts and heads to hear from God. Space not filled with earthly things—money worries, our job, social media, TV. It is so important to take the time to meditate on His word, converse with God so when problems and pain come—and they surely will—we are able to say 'Gods got this' and learn to endure expectantly...

'You need to persevere, so that after you have done the will of God, you WILL receive what He has promised.' (Hebrews 10:36). 🙏

Why a White Cross?

Martin Cullum, Suffolk



Why a plain white cross?

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

While riding it's for all on the road to see

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Hanging there no more is He

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

God's Son, who died for you and me

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Come follow, his only plea

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Creator, Sustainer, Chain-breaker. Now I am free

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Jesus the Christ, over sin He's paid our fee

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Over Hell and Heaven he holds the key

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

With him, in Heaven, we shall be

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

As a swear word it's offensive to me

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Saving my life, I am truly happy

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Seek Him and bow the knee

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

The Trinity, He's One of Three

It's a symbol of Jesus of the Bible

Want to know more, please have a chat with me!

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We make Scriptures available where there are none. We work to help the church engage with the Bible more effectively. And we endeavour - through the arts, education, media and politics - to make the Bible available, accessible and credible in our culture.



Our mission is to make the life-changing wisdom of the Bible understandable and accessible to all.



World Horizons exists on behalf of places and people not yet prayed for, churches not yet planted and cross-cultural workers not yet sent. We are a prayer based, pioneering, prophetic, pastoral mission movement.



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