Communicate your passion!

by Victor Pilmoor, ADRA-UK treasurer

Fred was walking down the street when a boy scout rushed up to him. “Hey, Mr! Would you like to buy a raffle ticket? It’s in aid of our Scout hut.”

Fred was a generous type and took £10 out of his pocket. "Cor, Mr! Would you like to come down to the scout hut and make the draw?"

"OK,” replied Fred. "When is it?"

"Friday six o’clock,” said the lad. “Come and meet Mr Green.

Sure enough, Fred showed up and started talking to Mr Green about the boys and the work they were doing. They were doing the changes that scouting brought to the young lads. Before long Mr Green said, "How about helping us paint this place on Sunday?"

"Why not?” said Fred.

On Sunday Fred pitched in and did his part, chatting with Mr Green and the boys as he worked. "Have you ever thought about joining our committee?” asked Mr Green.

"Sure, why not?” said Fred.

From one chance encounter Fred moved from being a casual acquaintance and donor to becoming a committed member of the cause. Fundraisers don’t only raise funds, they raise participation and commitment to meet the needs of people. The ADRA Annual Appeal programme is not just about raising funds. It is an invitation to care about people in distress and ultimately associate with people who care. Most of us admire the work that charities do. We all know that they need funds to continue but we have reservations about being a ‘champion’. How do we pick up the courage?

Identify your personal convictions

Do you get angry? What do you really feel strongly about? Does it matter to you that the majority of children in this world grow up in poverty, experience needless suffering and curable pain? Most of us live contented lives mildly conscious of disparities. We shrug our shoulders because the problems are so great, and decide that they should be solved by others or by governments. Sometimes we believe that people are responsible for their own suffering. Adopt the strongest of your convictions, find out which form of suffering really makes you angry, brings a lump to your throat or is closest to your own experience. You can’t be passionate about everything.

Put a face to your conviction

People who support cancer charities for instance often do so because they associate with the pain and suffering of a loved relative. They argue: ‘No one should experience the pain my mother experienced.’ Try to imagine that the children you are trying to help are your children. See the institutional oppression of women as a limitation to your mother, sister or daughter. Imagine a cancer-bound victim as a father and husband in a family who will become destitute. Admit that you would not stand idly by if something could be done for someone you love. Think about real people.

Respond to a face

There are many ways that you could respond. You could join a political party, organise a march, write a letter to the United Nations. You could offer an act of kindness that would bring relief for one day. There are people who do all of these things. The best charitable organisations, however, try to address ‘causes’. ADRA seeks to address a range of causes.

Choose one.

Set an achievable goal

Not one of us can do it all! But all of us can do something!

- Commit yourself to give 8 hours, over two weeks, and raise £50 in 50p notes.
- Decide to run a marathon and get 10 sponsors at 50p a mile.
- Tell 10 of your best workmates about your challenge and get them to contribute £10.
- Goals give us a sense of achievement; they help us to triumph in the face of helplessness.

Communicate your vision

Tell people about the goal that you have set and ask them to help with 50p or 50p a mile to support the kind of people you have visualised.

We make the mistake of ‘begging others’ to support an institution because we believe in ‘the Church’ or ADRA. We find this embarrassing because we are asking people to support something we feel we own. In reality, people are just as frustrated about suffering as you are. People will enjoy hearing your passion. They don’t mind being invited to help do what they would love to do themselves. The charity is the vehicle - not the journey or the destination. People feel good about helping other people.

Become a continuing instrument of God’s peace

Once you have allowed God’s Spirit to work in and through you to address the needs of ‘the least of these my brethren’, you will want to do more. God wants to finish the work he has started, in you. The support of people in need is not just an annual event. God’s people are called to address the needs of ‘the least of these’ and ultimately associate with people who care.

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Faking it

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The Pharisees were heavily into fakery. To the ten commandments they added a further 250 and then, on top of that, another 365 prohibitions. And having ‘shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces’ (Jesus in Matthew 23:13, 14), that still was not the end of it for them. They built a whole structure of ‘alterna- tive truth’ to throw seekers off the scent of authentic truth – and, by the by, to bolster a religious system.

There were enough echoes of Pharisaism around in the early Christian Church to make it necessary for Paul to take on the phenomenon explicitly in his letters to the churches in Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus and Philippippi.

By contrast to those masters of obfuscation and spin, Jesus was a master of clear communication; the living Word. He laid it down as the Ronseal Principle: ‘It does exactly what it says on the tin.’ By contrast to the hypocritical, phoney, faking it lifestyle of the Pharisees, Jesus lived authentic Christianity. Unlike the pious professionals of his day, Jesus’ words made sense – and he lived the message he taught. Unintentionally the Pharisees, through their double talk and double standards, made Jesus with his simple style and authentic life impossible to like, to be tolerant of those whose fine points of theology differ from yours, whose worship style is different. If you are young, be tolerant of the ageing. If you are ageing, be tolerant of the young. Nevertheless, beyond the reach of tolerant compromise is the truth of the Gospel. Stand four-square on that or you will fall for anything, witness, communicate the tenets of that Gospel with kindness and consistency, but – clearly and without spin. The Commission does not say, ‘Go undercover, infiltrate your society and con people into becoming Christians,’ but ‘Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every language group, social group and nationality. There’s a blessing promised to those who do that:’

S ersons in Jesus’ day, like many people in ours, were sufficient with the hypocrisy of, and manipulation by, religious and political leaders. Then, as now, organised religion had a bad name. Then, as now, it was evident that structures were used to intimidate and control. Then, standing out from the power plays, hypocrisy and double talk came Jesus with his message of liberating grace, encouragement to the weary, and hope for the sinful. He fanned away the fog that surrounded organised religion. No wonder the Pharisees found him unbearable! Hypocrisy despises authenticity. When truth unmasks wrong, those who are exposed get very nervous.

There is something violent and toxic about the righteousness of the Pharisees. But those in any walk of life with well-developed political instincts incline towards pharisaic hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy, after all, enables us to look righte- ous but be unholy, to sound pious but to be secretly profane. Invariably, those who get trapped in the hypocrisy syndrome find ways to deflect attention from their hollow core. The easiest approach is to add more activity, further emphasise an intense, ever-enlarging agenda.

Jesus said, ‘ ‘ Be careful not to do your “acts of righteousness” before men, to be seen by them.’ (Matthew 6:1.) Jesus knew how easy it was for the Pharisees to try to live the principle.

He wanted his followers to be people of simple faith, modelled in grace, rooted in truth. Nothing more. Nothing less. Nothing else. ‘ Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, ’ Jesus said, ‘ you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.’ (Matthew 5:20.) Did you notice the ‘certainly not’? The Pharisee and the phoney Christian aim to satisfy law; but to the demands of law there is always a limit. The authentic Christian aims to show his gratitude for love; and to the claims of love there is no limit.

When Jesus spoke out against acts of righteousness to attract attention (Matthew 6:6), he applied his admonition to three areas: giving, praying and fasting. (Matthew 6:1-18.) When we live by faith, big-time performances that bring us the glory are out of place. But following his passionate reproach against hypocrisy, Jesus warned against judging each other: ‘ Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?’” he asks (Matthew 7:3). It is so easy to reduce Christianity to theo- logy. It is much harder to translate it into life. The phenomenon of the “Real Adventist” was, I understand, highlighted by a lay speaker at a recent ministers’ meeting. The violent righteousness of the Pharisees – and the sys- tem that it supported – was not limited to the first century. In the sixteenth it provoked the Reformation. In the eighteenth it made the Great Awakening necessary. Are we due for another awakening now about something? Too many of us are speck specialists when there are planks in need of more urgent attention.

Jesus encouraged tolerance. Be tolerant of those who don’t look like you, dress like you, live like you. Be tolerant of those whose fine points of theology differ from yours, whose worship style is different. If you are young, be tolerant of the ageing. If you are ageing, be tolerant of the young. Nevertheless, beyond the reach of tolerant compromise is the truth of the Gospel. Stand four-square on that or you will fall for anything, witness, communicate the tenets of that Gospel with kindness and consistency, but – clearly and without spin. The Commission does not say, ‘Go undercover, infiltrate your society and con people into becoming Christians,’ but ‘Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every language group, social group and nationality. There’s a blessing promised to those who do that:’

‘ Surely I am with you always.’ (Matthew 28:20.) ‘ Jesus needs to get involved, through the Spirit, if conversions are to take place. And, you must encourage him to get involved, to help his followers to be people of simple faith, modelled in grace, rooted in truth. Nothing more. Nothing less. Nothing else.

Reference: John Sampson. Give Me Ten Seconds (Pax, 2002), page 246. All quotations from NIV.

Editorial with David Marshall

Faking it

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The Pharisees were heavily into fakery. To the ten commandments they added a further 250 and then, on top of that, another 365 prohibitions. But ‘shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces’ (Jesus in Matthew 23:13, 14), that still was not the end of it for them. They built a whole structure of ‘alternative truth’ to throw seekers off the scent of authentic truth – and, by the by, to bolster a religious system.

There were enough echoes of Pharisaism around in the early Christian Church to make it necessary for Paul to take on the phenomenon explicitly in his letters to the churches in Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus and Philippippi.

By contrast to those masters of obfuscation and spin, Jesus was a master of clear communication; the living Word. He laid it down as the Ronseal Principle: ‘It does exactly what it says on the tin.’ By contrast to the hypocritical, phoney, faking it lifestyle of the Pharisees, Jesus lived authentic Christianity. Unlike the pious professionals of his day, Jesus’ words made sense – and he lived the message he taught. Unintentionally the Pharisees, through their double talk and double standards, made Jesus with his simple style and authentic life impossible to like, to be tolerant of those whose fine points of theology differ from yours, whose worship style is different. If you are young, be tolerant of the ageing. If you are ageing, be tolerant of the young. Nevertheless, beyond the reach of tolerant compromise is the truth of the Gospel. Stand four-square on that or you will fall for anything, witness, communicate the tenets of that Gospel with kindness and consistency, but – clearly and without spin. The Commission does not say, ‘Go undercover, infiltrate your society and con people into becoming Christians,’ but ‘Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every language group, social group and nationality. There’s a blessing promised to those who do that:’

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Scannap-eal

On Sabbath 23 November Sands High Wycombe church was privileged to welcome Dr Chris Foot, founder and trustee of the charity Wycombe’s ‘Scannapeal’, who came on behalf of the South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust in order to receive a cheque for £600 from the Women’s Ministries department.

Scannap-eal was originally started in 1987 and raises money to purchase cancer treatment equipment for hospitals in South Buckinghamshire. The Women’s Ministries department chose to support Women’s Apples with their project during 2002 which has been aiming to raise £300 in aid of a dedicated scanning and procedures centre for women in South Bucks as helping women of all ages in the surrounding area.

Fundraising began with a Valentine’s meal in the youth hall where roses were sold during the evening. This proved very popular and provided a good foundation for the charity fund. Throughout the year many church members and friends of the community made personal donations which kept the fund growing.

However, the majority raised came from an eight-mile sponsored walk on Sunday 29 November which involved fifteen enthusiastic walkers. A fun day out, walking and getting to know one another better, was had by all, helping each other up some of the very steep hills for which High Wycombe is renowned. The genesis of the church community and our members’ friends proved quite overwhelming. On receiving the cheque, Dr Foot was particularly impressed by the warmth of the reception that had taken part in the fundraising.

On the following Sunday, 24 November, the Sands High Wycombe church also hosted a charity concert in aid of their project, which swept through the small island of St Vincent during September. High Wycombe has the most descendants of Vincentians outside of the small Caribbean island of St Vincent. We were graced by the presence of the Mayor of High Wycombe and also the High Commissioner of St Vincent and the Grenadines along with the local press. The evening, which was organized by the Men’s Ministries department, proved a great success with local groups including ‘Vision’, the ‘Mangos’ and the Men’s Choir of Sands church, along with other individuals who contributed their talents to make the evening extremely enjoyable for all who came.

In November 2003 work started on the first issues of JSS magazine.

Africa Day at Southampton

There are three languages spoken during our Sabbath worship services in Southampton. The first is a Zulu dialect (the title of this article is ‘Endebele’) and the others are Shona and English. It had been decided weeks ago that we would ask our friends who have connections, no matter how tenuous, to lead us in worship on what we called Africa Day. It could just as easily have been called United Nations Day as there were representatives from Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Ghana, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Turkey, Brazil, Bolivia, Ireland, and, last but not least, England.

Readings and poems either from, or based on, the African continent and the most harmonious singing of songs that had familiar tunes, and a short talk by our Pastor Barry Allen on the theme of Christ being ‘First and Second’ in that morning. It only remained for us to share in a fellowship lunch that had a delicious African flavour.

SAND BRADLEY

Launch of JSS magazine

In November 2003 work started on the first issues of JSS magazine. The magazine consists of the junior Sabbath School department in Tottenham West Green church.

The magazine team consisted of six reporters: Neisha Hitch, Jennifer Kiel, Rob Sharrock, Sarah Mawool-Cox, Gino Samuels and Darren DeBelle, a photographer: Deon De Brique; and an assistant editor: Nathasha Campbell.

The magazine team was given a job description and a candidate specification, as they would if it were a real job. Unfortunately, they were not paid as if they were in a real job, much to their dismay!

The group worked extremely hard to meet their deadline date for publication and conducted their interviews in a thoroughly professional manner.

The magazine was distributed to each child at the junior Sabbath School ‘Ende of Year’ party, and members of the JSS team received certificates for their good work.

The team worked really well together and enjoyed working on the first ever issue of JSS. Hopefully there will be many more issues to come.

Children’s Day at Tottenham

Tottenham West Green Road church held their Children’s Day on 23 November and it was a great success. The speakers for the divine hour were Ben Mangane, Nikkia Cunningham, Rhea Strachan and Nicholle Arnh. Special music was sung by the children’s choir led by Sister Carol McDonald.

Junior Sabbath school superintendent programming, another gift from youth department, much to the delight of the children.

Christina and Chisola

On Sabbath 5 October members, friends and visitors joined in worship, praise and celebration as Christina and Chisola committed their lives to the Lord through baptism.

Local minister Pastor Malcolm Taylor spoke briefly of the path they had followed which led to their decision. Christina, a believer in another denomination, came in contact with the Addis Ababa church in Chipena, a work colleague and mother of Chisola. "After hearing about all of the wonderful things that the church does, I decided to come and visit,” she said. "I am so glad I did!" Chisola followed shortly after Christina’s baptism.

Choosing to follow the Lord from an early age, Chisola and Christina are visiting friends from Leeds complemented the day’s service through songs and musical items that blessed us.

COMMUNICATION SECRETARY
Her Majesty the Queen, represented by the Duke of Edinburgh, presided over the wedding of Peter Edwards, son of the late Donald and Mary of Christchurch. The service was held at the Royal Guards Chapel, Knightsbridge, London, on Saturday, September 23rd, 2000. The bride was Sarah Wild, daughter of the late Major Wild and his wife, of Marnham, Newark, Nottinghamshire. The service was conducted by the Rev. R. W. Telford, chaplain to the regiment. The bridesmaids were the princesses Beatrice and Eugenie, granddaughters of the Queen, and the Countess of Wessex. The maid of honour was the bridegroom's sister, who was accompanied by four guests. The best man was Sir Richard honey, and the ushers were the Prince of Wales and Prince Charles. The bride's father, Major Wild, gave the bride away. The groom's father, Mr. Edwards, was the chief usher. The bride's mother, Mrs. Wild, was the matron of honour. The wedding was followed by a reception at the Royal Guards' Club, and the wedding cake was cut by the Duke of Edinburgh and the Queen. The couple left for their honeymoon in the West Indies.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge were married in Westminster Abbey on April 29th, 2011. The ceremony was attended by family, friends, and guests from around the world. The couple tied the knot in front of 2,000 guests, including politicians, royalty, and celebrities. The service was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Rev. Dr. Rowan Williams, and was watched by millions on television. The couple wore traditional British wedding attire, with the bride in a gown designed by Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen and the groom in a bespoke tuxedo. The Princess of Wales and Prince Charles were among the guests, along with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's parents, Prince William and Kate Middleton.

The couple then embarked on a Royal Tour of Canada, where they were greeted by crowds of wellwishers. They visited sites such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the National War Memorial, and the University of Victoria. The tour culminated in a State Banquet at Rideau Hall, where the Queen and Prince Charles presented the couple with a gold key to the city.

The newlyweds then flew to the United States for a Royal Tour of the United States, visiting sites such as New York City, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. The couple were often seen wearing matching outfits, with the bride in a beautiful gown and the groom in a sharp suit. The tour was a success, with the couple being greeted by crowds wherever they went. They wrapped up the tour with a trip to the White House, where they met with President Barack Obama.

The couple then embarked on a Royal Tour of the Middle East, visiting sites such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The tour was a success, with the couple being greeted by crowds wherever they went. They wrapped up the tour with a trip to the White House, where they met with President Barack Obama.

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Moderate drinking for heart health? While recent news reports suggest that having one or two alcoholic drinks a day can have a beneficial effect on heart health, the adaptation of a healthy lifestyle can yield similar benefits without the risk of alcohol side-effects, one health expert said.

Dr Alan Handysides, Health Ministries director for the Adventist world church, said that following the healthy lifestyle promoted among Adventist Christians will produce all of the heart benefits — without the risk. He stated that regular consumption of alcohol is likely to cause serious health problems — addiction or cirrhosis or other conditions — in one of every fifteen people.

Depending on the degree of adherence to a healthy lifestyle, people can add 7-14 years to their life, he said. By exercising, changing the nature of fats in their diet, eating more nuts, people can live healthier and longer, and we have statistical evidence of that.

Handysides said that people who have more than two or three drinks a day will increase their stomach cancer risk.

300 Churches Project gains momentum. The work isn’t finished yet, but they’re getting closer. Some 300 Adventist Global Mission pioneers and their families are planting member-led congregations across the countries of the former Soviet Union. The so-called 300 Churches Project, launched in the spring of 2001 at Zaoksky Teological Seminary near Tulja, Russia, includes purchasing 300 houses to be used as churches.

When finding new families who participate in small groups is more likely to remain church members,” says Becky Scoggins, associate Communication director for the Church in Euro-Asia. “The small-group model has worked in countries as diverse as Brazil and Korea, and we believe small groups are also the future of evangelism in our territory.”

When the project began, the pastors expected limited growth. In 1985 the field had about 50 members. After a special division initiative called the Shalom-Project, started in 1997, it now has over 1,200 members and a regular group of worshippers between 1,500 and 2,000. But the field leaders are not satisfied with this. They are convinced that the way to continue growing is through small group ministry and a Small Group Seminar was held in Jerusalem, 16-18, January this year. The meetings were held in facilities rented from the Hebrew Union College between Advent House and the Old City of Jerusalem. The field president Richard Elder, led out and was assisted by the division president, Pastor Bertil Wiklander.

Growth in Israel. Some of the more spectacular growth in the Trans-European Division is taking place in Israel. In 1985 the field had about 50 members. After a special division initiative called the Shalom-Project, started in 1997, it now has over 1,200 members and a regular group of worshippers between 1,500 and 2,000. But the field leaders are not satisfied with this. They are convinced that the way to continue growing is through small group ministry and a Small Group Seminar was held in Jerusalem, 16-18 January this year. The meetings were held in facilities rented from the Hebrew Union College between Advent House and the Old City of Jerusalem. The field president Richard Elder, led out and was assisted by the division president, Pastor Bertil Wiklander.

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