

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MESSAGE

the message

flow

CELEBRATING DECADES OF MISSION



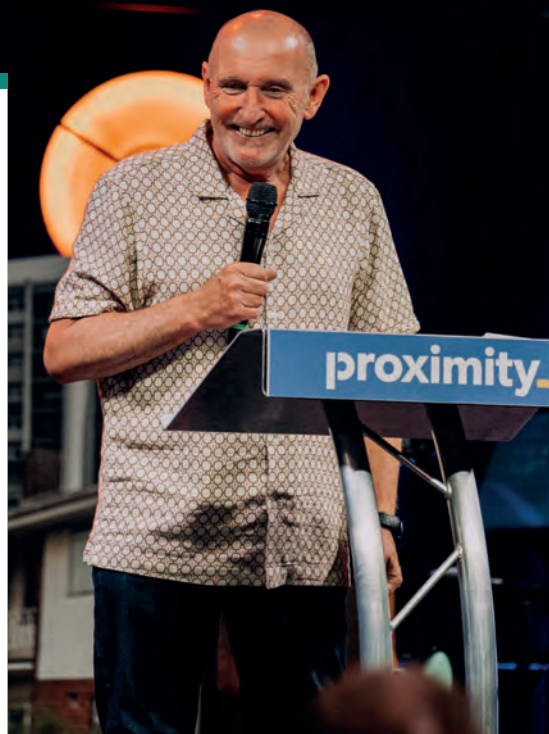
'It does feel like we're living in a special season of opportunity'

Dear friends,

I'm sure, like me, you've been excited to see the stats and news about Bible sales soaring, young people heading back to church and a deep longing for Jesus rising up in our nation. It honestly does feel like we're seeing the start of something new... my prayer is more, Lord! God is moving, not only here in the UK, but right around the world and it does feel like we're living in a special season of opportunity.

As you read this issue of Flow, I hope you'll be encouraged by just some of what God's doing as The Message heads out on mission. It's packed with God-only stories. People like Rhys who found Jesus in a prison cell and Priscilla who, since recommitting her life to God at a LIFT gig, can't stop telling people about him.

I love that we get to play a part in what God's doing. As well as celebrating lives transformed, this issue is yet another testament to God's faithfulness to The Message. Can you believe it's five years since we opened our very first Community Grocery or 10 years since the first Advance group started in my office? And unbelievably, Genetik Sessions is 20! Thank you Jesus.



None of what we do would be possible without you, our supporters. You pray for us, cheer us on and give so generously to make mission happen ...thank you so much. You're helping change lives both now and for eternity.

I'm confident that the best is yet to come.

God bless,

Andy Hawthorne

Founder & Global CEO, The Message Trust

P.S. If you don't currently support us financially and are able to give towards all that God is doing, we would so appreciate it – you can sign up at message.org.uk/flow

flow

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Celebrating decades of mission

Cover image (clockwise from top left): Enterprise team member in London, Rhys (see page 15), Priscilla (see page 22), young person at Genetik Sessions, Community Grocery member, Community Grocery volunteer, Advance Group member in Bangladesh

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Rhys met Jesus in prison and hasn't looked back



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Once painfully shy, Priscilla now can't stop sharing the gospel



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Aaron Routledge shares how we can become steadfast and joyful evangelists



OUR COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT

The paper used for Flow is manufactured using pulp sourced from sustainable sources from within Europe. It is 100% TCF (Totally Chlorine Free) and is manufactured to ISO14001 standards.

01



03



04



01. Team members prepare specialty coffee for customers at Neal Street Espresso in London

02. The first Advance group meeting in Andy Hawthorne's office

03. The end of the first Covid lockdown saw our first Community Grocery open



Let's celebrate!

It's anniversary season at The Message, and we're celebrating all that God has done and is continuing to do. Can you believe that our hubs in Wales and London are both 10 this year? Or that it's been five years since we launched the first Community Grocery? Or that our Genetik Sessions creative workshops have been running for 20 years? Read more in this special edition of Flow.



04. 25 young people in Cardiff shared Jesus' love on The Scattering mission



05



FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM
@messagetrust

05. Young people develop their creative gifts at Genetik Sessions

ADVANCE

10 years and counting

EACH month, over 335,000 men and women in 106 countries are meeting to be encouraged and equipped so that they can tell others about Jesus with a new boldness. Known as Advance Groups, it's mind-blowing that what began as 12 people meeting in Andy Hawthorne's office 10 years ago has grown into a global movement. We caught up with Ben Jack, Global Head of Advance, to hear more.



What's God been doing through Advance?

Ben: It's truly remarkable to see what's happening and the opportunities God's opened up. None of us could have imagined how that first group would grow into the global network we see today, but God did! I think one of the most exciting things – apart from the fact that over 1,000,000 people have given their lives to Jesus after they've heard the gospel from a group member – is how Advance is being used by so many. Yes, in terms of numbers, but it's more than that. You'll find groups running in churches of different denominations, in different cultures and for different ages. As people get serious about sharing the gospel, they're hearing about Advance and choosing to launch groups.

What's surprised you most?

Ben: Aside from the sheer number of groups, it has to be the church planting we've seen happening as a result of people getting serious about sharing the gospel. In Portugal, we heard of one church that, after launching Advance groups, had to start two new churches. And in Pakistan, 96 churches have been planted in Hindi villages as group members have headed out sharing their faith!





And God's continuing to impact lives. Do you have any stories that stand out to you?

Ben: Absolutely, one group in Uganda recently told me that after their monthly meeting, they decided to go out and witness on the streets. They reached a young girl who was trapped in drug addiction and prostitution. She gave her life to Christ as they talked and has since seen a radical change in her life – she's free from drugs and out of street work! She has joined the local church and is now in an Advance group herself!

Another thing I love is that, because a lot of group members share the gospel one-on-one, they build friendships with those who respond, and make sure they're connected with a local church. So, we know that a significant number of those who have responded are still plugged into church, growing in their faith and are now telling others about Jesus.

Looking ahead, what's next?

Ben: We're open to what God wants to do. Having prayed about it, God's given us a vision of having 1,000,000 people meeting in Advance groups around the world every month. This sounds like a huge number but at the rate Advance is growing, it could end up being conservative! Can you imagine what the impact will be when that many people get serious about sharing the gospel and using the everyday to tell people about Jesus?



THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH ADVANCE.

Pray: Will you join us in praying for each Advance group member to have the opportunities to share the gospel?

Join: God can use anyone to tell others about him. Want to become more confident in doing this? Why not start an Advance Group?

Give: Will you stand with us so we can launch more Advance groups around the world?



FIND OUT MORE AT
advancegroups.org





MISSION

STATS & STORIES

01

**“I GAVE MY LIFE TO
JESUS AND NOW
I’M FREE”**

JEREMIAH, UGANDA

321

**PEOPLE PRAYED FOR
BY TEENAGERS DURING
THE SCATTERING
MISSION WEEKS**

83.675

**YOUNG PEOPLE
SEEN IN SCHOOLS
AND AT GIGS
THIS YEAR**

(SEPT 2024 - AUG 2025)



02

**“I CAME TO GET
FOOD AND
LEFT WITH
Jesus”**

ANDREW, COMMUNITY GROCERY MEMBER

01. Jeremiah heard about Festival Bombo in prison and went along when he was released. There, he gave his life to Jesus and has broken free of drugs, drink and crime. ‘My life is better because I have Jesus.’

02. ‘Living with my gran, we started shopping in the Community Grocery to bring the price of our food shop down. There was something different about the store. I heard about Jesus and his love for me and haven’t looked back since.’

1,060,886

**AFFORDABLE SHOPS
PROVIDED IN COMMUNITY
GROCERIES SINCE
DAY ONE**



04

6,000

REACHED AS

MESSAGE

SCHOOL OF EVANGELISM
STUDENTS HEADED OUT ON MISSION

03

**“I AM NOT
ASHAMED
OF THE
GOSPEL”**

03. Archie recently gave his life to God, so doing The Scattering was a huge step of faith. On day one, he battled his anxiety and prayed with someone for the first time ever. By the end of the week, you couldn't stop Archie telling people about Jesus.

**“THEY TOLD
PEOPLE
IN THE NEXT
CELLS ABOUT
JESUS
THROUGH
THE PIPES”**



**READ MORE ABOUT WHAT'S BEEN
HAPPENING AS WE HEAD OUT ON
MISSION**

message.org.uk/impact

04. Two young lads that prisons worker Phoebe has been working with were so desperate to tell others about Jesus that they used the pipes to share the gospel with neighbouring cells. They've also started praying with others on the unit too.

MESSAGE SCHOOL OF EVANGELISM

What an impact!

EACH year, people from around the world come and spend 10 months on the Message School of Evangelism (MSE). As they learn more about God, the Bible and how to share the gospel, they get to put what they've learnt into practice from day one.

In the summer, we said goodbye to the class of 2024/25, but what an impact they had! Involved in mission in 25 different locations, they reached over 6,000 people. From serving those experiencing homelessness and being part of youth outreach, to running dance classes,



street evangelism and more, they got to share the gospel with 735 people, and saw 140 respond! This included Jack, who students TJ and

Vinicius met at a bus stop. As they got chatting, Vinicius asked if there was anything they could pray for. Jack shared that he was struggling with depression, so Vinicius prayed for peace and



breakthrough telling him how much Jesus loves him. TJ then shared the gospel with Jack and invited him to respond. Excited, Jack accepted Jesus into his life and got connected with a local church before his bus came!



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MSE AND
APPLY TODAY AT**
message.org.uk/mse

STAND WITH US

Be part of changing lives

FANCY taking on a new challenge? Why not do this and help change lives at the same time?

Whether you'd love to hold a coffee morning for friends, take on a sporting challenge or are craving the adrenaline rush of a sky dive, there's so much you can do to help raise vital funds for The Message Trust.

Every penny will go straight to making sure young people and communities get the chance to hear and respond to the gospel.



GOT AN IDEA? FIND OUT MORE AT
message.org.uk/fundraising

EDEN

Baptisms on estates



AS EDEN teams build community and chat about Jesus on their estates, they're seeing their neighbours respond to the gospel and others grow in their faith. Excitingly, a growing number are wanting to get baptised. One of these is Jardell in Gurnell Grove.

'I've been a Christian all my life but was confused about my faith when I was younger,' said Jardell. 'Last May, I started coming to The Grove Community, a church on the estate, with my girlfriend. As I went along, I felt my faith growing. I loved life group and chatting about the Bible and Jesus. This helped me understand more about being a Christian and I started taking my faith seriously. I wanted everyone to know I love Jesus so decided to get baptised. The best part of being a Christian for me is coming to church on a Sunday and being part of the community. I feel like I belong here and can start a new life bringing myself into God's family and the church. God's changed me as a person.'



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EDEN AT
joineden.org

HAVE YOUR SAY

We'd love to hear from you

WHAT would you love to see in Flow magazine? How can we send you prayer points? What would you like to hear more about from The Message?

Your thoughts mean a lot to us and we'd love to hear them. Complete our quick online survey.



**HAVE YOUR SAY BY ANSWERING
SOME QUICK QUESTIONS**
message.org.uk/yourviews

Reaching our nations

Catch up with the latest Message news from our international hubs

CANADA

Heading into schools

AS CREATIVE mission continues to build in Canada, mission band SoulBox headed over to Vancouver and Kelowna to be part of a schools tour that shared the good news of Jesus with thousands of young people.



NETHERLANDS

Gospel IMPACT

YOUNG people from the Netherlands and Ukraine came together for the IMPACT conference to connect with God and then headed out on mission sharing the love of Jesus in the streets.



BRAZIL

Stepping out

THE TEAM recently took part in TeenStreet where over 150 teenagers from across Brazil came together for training and practical sessions to grow in their evangelism – and God moved in amazing ways.



SOUTH AFRICA

Coming full circle

'I WANT young people to know that if God could do it for me, he can do it for them too. I love seeing them learn about God in different ways', Jorusha said when he came back to the Citrusdal Holiday Club to serve as a leader.



SUBSCRIBE TO WEEKLY NEWS UPDATES
message.org.uk/connect

Upcoming events

GERMANY

Finding new hope

50 YOUNG people took part in the creative workshops Message Germany ran at Hope Camp. As they had fun and learnt new skills, the teenagers also heard the gospel and 15 responded to Jesus!



Here's just some of what's coming up in the next few months. Find out more about these and other events at message.org.uk/events

28 October 2025

Leeds: Message on Tour

30 October 2025

Derby: Message on Tour

30 October 2025

Edinburgh: Proximity Gathering

13 November 2025

Newcastle: Proximity Gathering

19 November 2025

Exploring Eden (online)

26 November 2025

Cardiff: Proximity Gathering

28 November 2025

Leeds: LIFT gig

5 December 2025

Stockton-on-Tees: LIFT gig

15-16 May 2026

Proximity Conference

UGANDA

Football and faith

OUT OF a passion to reach the young men in Kalerwe slum, Message Uganda have launched Message League – a space where the boys can have fun, play football, have conversations with godly mentors and be part of a three-year discipleship journey.



QUIET REVIVAL

Louder than you think!

THERE'S been lots of talk about a 'quiet revival'. A quiet move of God, behind the scenes. Having helped to plant a church in one of Europe's largest council estates as a response to hundreds of people turning to Christ, I've seen it with my own eyes, and to be honest from where I'm standing, it isn't quiet at all. It's loud.

It's loud when I scan the room on a Sunday morning and spot the local drug dealer with his arms raised in worship. It's loud when the pub landlord, a well-known face in the community, is now the loudest voice in the room singing praises with everything he's got. It's loud when an addict is 20 months sober, and her teenage sons are describing Jesus as the father they never had. These aren't quiet conversions. They're visible, undeniable transformations.



It's loud when I watch whole families walk into church together because one encounter with Jesus in a Community Grocery changed

everything. It's loud when a man turns his life around, and suddenly his friends are responding to the gospel too. It's a domino effect that shouts of grace and redemption.

It's loud when I stand by the water baptising three generations of one family – a son, his mum and the 93-year-old nana who in her later years has encountered Jesus and is experiencing a new life in him.

And it's not just where I live that we're seeing this happen. As The Message heads out on mission and into schools, communities and prisons, we're seeing people's hunger for Jesus growing and countless 'God-only' stories. These things aren't quiet, it's the sound of heaven on earth.

Revival might begin quietly – in raised statistics, in people questioning life, whispered prayers, and quiet tears of hearts turning back to God. But it doesn't stay quiet for long – it multiplies, it sweeps through households, it gives hope to the broken, it rewrites stories, it calls people to purpose.

So, I agree that in some places it's a quiet revival. But not from where I'm standing. Here, it's loud, mind-blowing, unmistakable and it's Jesus – bringing healing, restoration and calling people into his kingdom.

God's on the move, and it's incredible that we get to be part of it! **1**



SCAN AND WATCH PROXIMITY'S NEW SPOKEN WORD ABOUT THE QUIET REVIVAL, 'RATTLING'

This article was first written by Danielle Campsall, our CAO, for Premier Christianity magazine.



From Death *to* Life



Over the last 10 years, Message Wales have seen countless lives changed by the gospel. Just one of those is Rhys, who prisons worker Owain met a few years ago. We caught up with him to hear what God's done in his life ➤



'MY STORY is truly one where I've gone from death to life. I know that God has saved me, and it's been the biggest thing that's ever happened in my life. Sharing my story is such a big part of my life now, and I'd love to share it with you too.

'Back in 2020, I was sent to prison. During my first couple of weeks in there, I was feeling heartbroken, lonely and depressed. It was one of the darkest times in my life. I was in such a bad place that I didn't want to live any more – it was that tough for me. I was so without hope.

'When I was at rock bottom, I picked up a book that the prison had given me. It was a diary that I could write in and at the top of the pages were Bible verses like Exodus 33:19, Mark 11:24 and Psalm 18:6. They immediately caught my eye and jumped out to me. They were so moving. I kept reading and each one connected to me and my situation. I couldn't get enough. I went through the whole diary, reading each verse and writing them all down, and that's when something changed. I felt hope and that I was no longer alone. I started feeling better and knew that I needed to get a Bible and read more, so I did just that. As I sat with my Bible, I did the same thing I'd done with the diary, reading through it and writing the verses down. It was so uplifting, like God was speaking right to me and that he was

trying to help me
in my lowest
moments.



'That's when I gave my life to God. If it wasn't for him stepping in and speaking to me, things would have been so different – I don't think I would be here.

'I felt hope and that I was no longer alone'

'I know that God saved me. I went from someone who was in such a dark place with thoughts full of loneliness and heartbreak to being completely turned around, standing up straight and being ready to take on the world because I had hope, joy and peace. It was the most powerful moment of my life.

'But I knew nothing about God. I knew he was with me, helping me be strong in my moments of huge weakness, but I knew nothing about being a Christian.

'I wanted to learn more, so I went along to a Bible study that was being run in the prison. That's where I met Owain, a prisons worker for The Message Trust. He spoke to us about the story of Joseph and how, like him, God is with us throughout the highs and lows of our lives.





And, wow, the worship after that Bible study was incredible. It was my first experience of worship – I'd never seen anything like it! That Bible study was the first time I could pray, study the Bible and worship with others, and it was amazing – I absolutely loved it.

'Owain started helping me understand the Bible and the more I learned about Jesus, the more I knew I needed to repent from my sins and ask for forgiveness. I felt like I couldn't be a good Christian because of what I had done. But then Owain told me about how Jesus took all my guilt and shame on the cross. It was such a pivotal moment for me, and my faith has grown from strength to strength since.

'Fast forward to when I was about to be released from prison and Owain came to see me saying he wanted to help me get settled into a church. The one he'd found is the one I'm still at now, and Owain supported me the whole way through my resettlement. We kept meeting regularly for coffee – and still do – to catch up and unpack more from the Bible and learn more about living life as a Christian. It's amazing to know that Owain and The Message

are journeying with me in my whole life, not just when I was in prison. They want to support me all the way.

'I went from someone who was in such a dark place to having hope, joy and peace'

'I'm still growing in my passion for Jesus and I'm continually learning more about the Bible – I'm loving it so much. Now I can't stop sharing my testimony! I often get invited to tell it in churches, and I even got to head back into the prison I'd been in to share my story with the men there. Being back in the place where I found God and he changed my life filled me with gratitude. As I shared my story to a full room, I knew the lads understood how I felt, and many came up to me at the end in tears saying how my story had encouraged them. ➤



'I know that God has saved me, and it's been the biggest thing that's ever happened in my life'





'And that's my prayer: that God will use my story to encourage others in a similar situation that there is hope, there is a God who loves them and that the glory is God's!

'Looking to the future, I'm inspired by Acts 20:24. I want to keep sharing my testimony with others because it's proof of God's gospel of grace. I also hope to head out on mission soon with my church and take part in an evangelism course too so that I can learn more about sharing Jesus with others.

'God knows the plans he has for me, and I trust him to guide me and provide for me. I'm so thankful he saved my life and changed everything.' ❶



WATCH RHYS' FULL STORY
message.org.uk/rhys

'I want to keep sharing my testimony with others because it's proof of God's gospel of grace'





FIVE YEARS OF KEEPING FAMILIES FED

What started as one store, launched after the first Covid lockdown, has grown into a network of over 30 Community Groceries that are keeping thousands of families fed each week and pointing them to Jesus as they shop

HAVE you visited a Message Community Grocery? If not, when you step inside, you'll find the shelves filled with all the items you'd expect to get in any supermarket – the only difference is the price. Here, members can fill their baskets from just £5 per shop, choosing the food they'd like for their family.

From day one, Community Groceries have been about more than just providing members with affordable food – they're about sharing Jesus' love in action.

Each time members come in to grab food, they chat with our teams at the till or as

shelves are stocked, and friendships are built. It's through these conversations that they hear about what's going on in members' lives, offer to pray for them and tell them about the hope Jesus offers. But the opportunities to do this go beyond food shopping. Every member gets access to a wide range of free support courses and events too. As they connect with these, they hear more about Jesus' love for them, the hope he offers, and lives are being turned around.

Every week we hear of members responding to the gospel and giving their lives to Jesus. Here are just three of them. ➤



Christine, BURNLEY

'When my husband left me, I had nothing. Having to feed myself and my son, I signed up for Universal Credit and the person filling in the forms with me told me about the Community Grocery. I was so nervous walking into the grocery for the first time, but the teams welcomed me straight away and put me at ease. The range of food on offer was more than I expected, and having access to the fresh fruit and vegetables was a life-saver as they're so expensive everywhere else.'

'THE GROCERY HAS BEEN A LIFE-SAVER WHILE I'VE BEEN OUT OF WORK'

'To help my mental health, I decided to start volunteering in the grocery and noticed that everyone on the team was so full of joy, and I wanted some of it for myself! When they asked if I wanted to go along to church, I said 'yes'. I was then invited to be part of an Alpha course that the grocery and church were running, so signed up for that too. There I discovered Jesus' love for me. Since then, I've got baptised and haven't looked back, life is better than I could have imagined.'



'I CAN NOW AFFORD TO FEED MY KIDS WITHOUT SKIPPING MEALS MYSELF'



Beverley, MANCHESTER

'I proudly tell people I'm Community Grocery member number 48! I signed up on the very first day it was open. I'd heard about this new store that was opening and how it could help me bring down the cost of my food shop, which was something I desperately needed as I was caring for family and money was tight. That first day, I queued down the road to sign up, and when I got inside, I was blown away with what I found. I couldn't believe the choice I had for so little money. Soon I was shopping in the

grocery as often as I could. What surprised me is that as well as getting food in the store, I found a community too. I made friends with the team and I was always so welcome. They also put on different events and courses that I went along to. One of these was called Alpha and on it I heard more about Jesus and gave my life to him. As well as being debt free I now have hope and it all started in the Community Grocery.'



Kerry-Ann, TELFORD

'I live near the Telford store and people told me what a great place it was. Three years ago, family illness meant money got tighter than ever and I didn't know where the next meal was coming from. It was then that I decided to try the Community Grocery. I went in for the first time with my mum and couldn't believe what I could get for £5, it felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. One day I was

**'THE
STAFF AND
VOLUNTEERS
ARE ALWAYS
FRIENDLY
AND
WELCOMING'**

chatting to the team and they invited me to the carol service that was happening. I thought 'why not?' and went along. That day, my life and my whole family changed!



'Hearing the Christmas story again and having chatted to the grocery team about Jesus in the weeks leading up to it, I was sat in church and I immediately knew I needed God in my life and responded to the gospel. But it wasn't just me, my mum did the same too. Since then, I've joined the church and got involved in the worship team, and my son and my dad have become Christians too. To say my life's been transformed by God and the Community Grocery is an understatement.' 



**SCAN TO HEAR MORE STORIES FROM
COMMUNITY GROCERIES**



'I HAVE TO TELL OTHERS'



From finding it hard to speak to others, Priscilla now uses every chance to chat to people and tell them about Jesus. This is her story

I GREW up in a Christian family going to church each week, but it wasn't until I went along to a LIFT gig that The Message Trust put on at the end of a schools mission week that I fully responded to the gospel.

'Even though I'd heard it before, as the band explained that Jesus loved me enough to die on the cross for me, I knew I needed to give my life to him. When they asked if anyone wanted to respond, my hand went straight into the air. The team came and prayed for me and I've never looked back. I threw myself into church, began reading my Bible, started praying whenever I could and got baptised a few months later. I just wanted to grow closer to God.

'When I was 13, someone mentioned The Scattering to me. If I am honest, I had never heard of it before, but as they explained that it was a mission week where I would get to hang out with my friends and learn more about Jesus, I knew I was in, so I signed up.

**'THE ONLY WAY I CAN
DESCRIBE MYSELF
BACK THEN WAS AS
PAINFULLY SHY'**

'I got to The Scattering excited about the week ahead but also knowing I was totally outside of my comfort zone. Anyone who knows me now, knows that I love to talk, but I wasn't like that at 13! In fact, the only way I can describe myself back then was as painfully shy – I would do anything not to talk to people – so a week of telling people I did not know about Jesus was scary to me.



'After the first training weekend, my team and I headed to Enfield Town. As the day went on, I knew I needed to throw myself in so, praying the whole time, I approached a stranger and asked if I could pray for them. And you know what? They said 'yes!' I could not believe I had done it. God had given me the confidence I needed to offer to pray for someone I didn't know and tell them about him. And I knew that if I had done it once, I could do it again. But it was more than that, I felt something in me change.

**'I FELT SOMETHING
IN ME CHANGE'**

I felt a massive urge for people to hear about Jesus, and to be part of telling them. That week on The Scattering changed my life. Not only did shy Priscilla start to disappear but my relationship with God was drastically transformed. I found myself desperate to read the Bible even more than I had been doing, praying as much as I could and wanting to tell others about Jesus every opportunity I had. ➤

'Since then, I have done five more Scattering mission weeks, including this summer where, for the first time, I was a team leader. I loved getting the opportunity to encourage the next generation of young people to share their faith with boldness, just like my team leaders did for me when

I was 13. And I saw God do amazing things such as seeing people healed, watching and hearing about how Jesus transforms lives today.

'The Scattering is only one week a year – I wish it were more! But from that first mission week, I knew telling

people about Jesus was not something I did just one week of the year, it was daily. So, I would go with my mates into town to be part of street evangelism our church ran.

**'GOD IS AT
THE CENTRE OF
EVERYTHING
I DO'**



'When I was in sixth form, one of my friends from The Scattering started a Christian Union in my school. As he finished Year 13, he asked if I wanted to take over running it. I remember thinking if I can tell strangers about Jesus, I can easily do it with people I know.

'Every Thursday lunchtime, I put sessions on where people could come and ask me the questions they had about being a Christian – and we had great conversations. To start with, there were only three or four of us, but by the end of the year there were almost 20 people, and I have seen some of them grow in their faith too! I was so encouraged to see what God was doing in the lives of people I was at school with.

'I am currently at university and love finding those times, whether it is over a coffee or sitting in a friend's kitchen, to get chatting to people about Jesus and share the gospel with them at any opportunity.

God is at the centre of everything I do and that is never going to change.' ❶



**WATCH PRISCILLA'S
FULL STORY**
message.org.uk/priscilla



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

20 years. Over 1,000 young people. Around 2,500 hours of creative workshops and discipleship. Hundreds of responses to the gospel. This is Genetik Sessions

THROUGH music lessons, workshops and dance classes, Genetik Sessions are all about helping young people develop new skills whilst walking alongside them in the situations they face each week and pointing them to the hope of Jesus. Over the last two decades, the impact of these sessions has rippled through young people's lives as they've flourished into who God has created them to be.

Here are some of their stories.

RACHAEL

'I first came to Genetik Sessions when I was 14. I used to be so star-struck because I was being taught by members of bands I loved!

Things were really tough at home for me during the years I attended, and my singing tutor would always make time for me at the end of every session to listen and pray with me. I felt so seen and valued – she will never know how significant that was for me. It was the lifeline I needed every week. To have amazing Christian role models take time out to invest in us was so powerful.

'After Genetik, I did a gap year with The Message and I have been working with them for nine years since then! I now get to help create material that the bands use to reach more young people with the same message of hope – it really feels like a full circle moment!' ➤

HARRY

'The biggest blessing God put in my life during my teenage years was Genetik Sessions. Having God at the centre of my favourite hobby kept me strong in faith at a time when the world was really trying to pull me from him. Every week, we were reminded of how much Jesus loves us, and getting to release the week's stresses as I danced in a supportive environment was always a highlight. I didn't care that it took a 90-minute bus journey to get there from college!'

'As I grew in skills, I was given amazing opportunities to perform at events and festivals in front of thousands of people and this spurred on my passion for dance – which I'll soon graduate from university in. Throughout it all, the Genetik team continued to support me and pray for me, which has been invaluable. I'll forever be grateful for The Message and Genetik Sessions for pushing me and others into God's best for us.'



These are just a few stories from the hundreds of young people we've journeyed with over the last two decades. Some stories we won't even know about until heaven, but we love planting the seed of faith, trusting God will work in the lives of the young people as we walk alongside them in life.

With Genetik Sessions now in Manchester and Derby as well as in Germany, South Africa and Brazil, we're so excited by what God continues to do through young people as they grow in their creativity and their faith. **1**

JOSH

'I started going to Genetik Sessions when I was 13. I absolutely loved it and learnt a lot, but I particularly loved how there was an underlying focus on God and worship.'

'I'd grown up in a church, but didn't find it cool or exciting, so Genetik helped me to stay plugged into church. I'm now 29, a qualified doctor and also a volunteer at my church's youth group. Through these things, I try to shine Jesus' light in all I do. I'm grateful to Genetik for encouraging me to stay in church, and that I now have the opportunity to share God's love, both with the young people I work with and in my day job.'



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT GENETIK SESSIONS AT
message.org.uk/genetik-sessions



Passionate about seeing a generation of evangelists rise up, The Message's London Hub Leader **Aaron Routledge** shares traits we can grow in to be steadfast and joyful evangelists

FOR nearly a decade, I've had the genuine joy of training people to share the gospel. I've seen all sorts: the fearless, the fretful, the eloquent, the awkward and the ones who treat social cues like terms and conditions... they never read them!

But amidst the variety, certain patterns emerge. The people who persevere in sharing Christ, not for a month or a mission trip, but year after year, tend to have three common traits: they are motivated by love, marked by joy, and moved by a deep, settled confidence that the power lies not in their presentation, but in the gospel itself.

I'm convinced that if we want our evangelism efforts to be more than a flash in the pan, then these three traits are non-negotiables.

1. Motivated by love (not guilt, not duty)

Let's be honest, some of us share our faith because we think we should. Maybe someone told us, 'If you really loved Jesus, you'd tell others about him.' And while that might get you out the door once or twice, duty and guilt are terrible long-term motivators. Love, however, endures.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:14, 'For Christ's love compels us'. Not duty. Not shame. Not a whiteboard tally of how many people we've 'won'. Love. A deep, Spirit-empowered love that flows from knowing the heart of God. When we realise that God longs for none to perish (2 Peter 3:9) and that people are not statistics or 'targets' but the treasured reward of Christ's suffering, it changes how you see them. ➤

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Love lifts evangelism out of the labour of obligation into an organic act of overflow.

You can guilt someone into action for a season, but only love will keep them going when it gets awkward, costly, or fruitless. Love endures. It was love that nailed Christ to the cross, and if love compelled him, and his love compelled Paul, shouldn't it compel us?

2. Marked by joy (the gospel is actually good news)

David in Psalm 51 prays 'Restore to me the joy of your salvation.' This is the cry of someone who knows the importance of joy in talking to others about God. Here's the awkward truth: joyless evangelism is deeply unattractive.

If we say we've found the treasure in the field, the pearl of great price, and yet we look like we've just been forced to eat our greens, we're probably not helping our case.



Joy's not hype. It's not a fake grin or a forced tone. It's a deep-rooted gladness in the gospel that says, 'I know what he's saved me from.'

The world is hungry for joy. Real, durable, unmanufactured joy that leaks out in conversations, not because we're trying to

be persuasive but because we're genuinely delighted in Christ.

Want to be a more effective evangelist? Revisit the cross. Marvel at grace. Let your salvation move you again. Joyful people make the best evangelists.

3. Confident in the gospel's power (because you're not that good)

Here's something I can guarantee, at some point in your evangelism, you'll completely botch it. You'll fumble your words, forget your testimony or walk away thinking, 'Was I speaking English just then?' And that's okay.

Because the power never resided in your delivery – it resides in the message. Paul didn't say, 'I am not ashamed of my ability to explain the gospel clearly.' He said, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation' (Romans 1:16).

The gospel is not a fragile concept in need of clever marketing. It's a divine announcement backed by the Spirit of the living God. It's the *dynamis* (explosive power) that rescues people from the kingdom of darkness.

So yes, refine your craft, but never let your confidence rest in your skillset. Put it in the message and in the God who works through it.

If you're weary in evangelism, don't try to muster up more grit. Go back to the well of love, reignite your joy and let your confidence shift from your efforts to God's promises. ❶



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