

RIAT 2003 Fairford

One of the most unusual sights at Fairford was that of a USAF Stealth Bomber (pictured right) with fighter escort without which it might have passed by unnoticed unless one happened to be looking in the right place at the right time. Generally however there was no mistaking what was going on as the skies over rural Gloucestershire were painted various shades of red, white and blue, or green, white and orange depending whether it was the Red Arrows, the Patrouille de France or the Italian Frecce Tricolori aerobatic teams, the last enacting their display to the sounds of Pavarotti whose voice at full throttle rose above the roar of their Aermacchi MB336 Jet Trainers. But even Pavarotti could not compete with the sounds of F16's and MIG 29's standing on their tails with the benefit of reheat or the Harriers hovering along the crowd line. The Harriers might not be quite as noisy as more conventional aeroplanes but what they lack in outright decibels is certainly made up by the fact that they just do not go away as they hover and manoeuvre sideways, backwards and forwards, whilst lesser craft have been and gone in a thunderous high speed flash. If that was not enough, the sight and sound of a Rockwell B1B supersonic bomber with full reheat on all four engines was enough to leave Concorde well and truly acoustically challenged.

Earplugs were definitely the order of the day for the 20 AAACF members who willingly gave up a quiet weekend at home to provide witness to Christ among the 200,000 people attending the show. Our normal practise has been to walk through the crowds distributing our specially produced newspaper, this year the show authorities were quite categorical in refusing us permission to do this, so we concentrated efforts around our tent which was located on a thoroughfare between the static aircraft displays and the main runway where the daily 8 hour flying display took place. Consequently there was a steady stream of people passing our door and many gladly took up the offer of a free newspaper, others accepted a Crossway magazine. Many stopped by to look at the other information on display in the tent, or for a chat. The chairs we arranged on the grass outside proved popular, especially by the middle of the afternoon, when folk were glad to rest their legs and accept a cup of tea or a sweet (candy to our American readers). Most team members at one point or another took the time to chat with visiting aircrew in the static aircraft park or in their hospitality tents, many valuable discussions and contacts were made. Through a series of incidents, where one of our team went to help reunite an elderly gentleman with his wife, contact was made with the station Chaplains, who this year had decided not to hold a public service of worship due to the poor response they received last year. With some encouragement they agreed to hold a service at 9.30am on Sunday morning in the main Information Tent and were more than surprised when they had to rush next door to the Police to borrow chairs so that everyone attending could have a seat. Later on in the day we were pleased to welcome them to our tent.

It is difficult in a short piece to give a full flavour of what it is like to participate at an event such as at Fairford, but the



question must be asked 'Was God in it?' The answer has to be 'Yes, of course'. The way we had planned to do things did not turn out as expected but the Lord had other ways whereby our witness could be more effective even if we were not as prolific as we had hoped. We could have ignored the ruling that we were not allowed to roam the showground with our newspapers, but by obeying the ordinances of men the Lord was able to provide openings in ways that we did not expect (1Peter 2 v.13-15). Most importantly as a team we were one in mind and spirit and therein the Lord also commanded a blessing (Psalm133).

Smart Little One

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that a whale swallowed Jonah.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah".

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him".

Conference 2003. 30th October-2nd November

A booking form for the annual AAACF Conference at the Slavanka Hotel, Bournemouth is included with this Newsline. We recommend early completion and registration to ensure your place for this highlight event of the year. Our theme is to be 'Christ in the Marketplace' as we explore ways of extending our Christian boundaries beyond the four walls of our church or fellowship. Isaiah 54:2.

If you would like further copies of the Aviation Miracles Newspaper to distribute to work colleagues, friends and neighbours, or perhaps at some aviation related event, please contact the AAACF office.



NEWSLINE

August 2003

How distinctive are we?

Jesus stood out from the crowd, more than that He was the reason for the crowd. As Christians, Jesus calls us to follow Him; that means we become not only a part of a crowd but also crowd pullers.

This edition of Newsline contains articles showing how Christians can be active both as a crowd and in generating a crowd. Being noticed though is a double-sided affair and it's the tough side of being a Christian, which most of us could well do without. Often our counter to the harsh word said against us is to take a militant 'in your face' stand, but is that really the way of the cross? How we desperately need God in our lives to have the impact we long to make but seem incapable of.

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' means those who depend on nothing other than what God can bring are the ones whose lives reflect God's kingdom. Whenever we rely on what we have rather than God it will always act as a hindrance to being effective witnesses. The Bible tells us that the Lord gives and the Lord takes away. In other words nothing is certain or lasting but God and God alone; thus Jesus could say 'my meat is to do the will of Him who sent me'. It is not talents, abilities or gifting, but only God who really matters, and that He is the source of our satisfaction. Surely that was the distinctiveness of Jesus that not only marked Him out from the ordinary but also enabled Him in the miraculous. Miracles of themselves prove nothing but are an indication of something much greater; Jesus commanded a paralytic to get up and walk, to demonstrate to others that he had authority to forgive sins. The link is vital, for to deny the miracle is to deny Jesus' power to forgive, but accepting the miracle yet scorning forgiveness is to deny the all-conquering authority of Jesus. Our response to the miraculous quite rightly should be one of joy and happiness. Peter, after fishing all night and catching nothing, was told by Jesus to go out into deep water in the middle of the day and let down his nets. The resulting great catch must have taken his breath away in astonishment, but after time for reflection he could do nothing but hang his head in shame, exclaiming 'Lord, depart from me for I am a sinful man'. It was not a

prayer Jesus answered, nor is it a prayer that He will answer for any of us except in the contrary. Jesus seeks out the confessing sinner who brings not an ounce of self-justification; salvation depends on neither anyone's achievement nor their character, just their willingness to accept the one who has the power to forgive. Anything else is to deny the sufficiency of God's grace.

Living in grace brings in its wake humility. Not the self-deprecating humility of Charles Dickens' character Uriah Heap, but the true humility to accept, with gladness, that without Jesus one can do nothing. The world will struggle to come to terms with such a position, for many it will be an offence and a source of irritation and anger. It's a mould that does not conform to conventional thinking but to which every true Christian is being conformed. It's not a mould that can be worked or developed except through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Bible talks of the fruit of the Holy Spirit; fruit only grows because it is tapped into a source of nourishment, in this case that source is God Himself. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control come, not because of who we are, but because of who He is. The measure we display the fruit, ripe fruit, is the measure we give of ourselves to Him. If there is any act of the will in being distinctive then it is in our willingness to be fully given over to God and His purposes in His son, Jesus Christ.

When we allow ourselves to be moulded in obedience to His word, God draws together into unity ordinary people from every national, ethnic and social background. It is a unity unlike any other, displaying the servant heart of God. This church, which Jesus is building, will come up against much opposition; but as Jesus said even the gates of Hell shall not prevail.

Heaven and Hell are as chalk and cheese, so too are the true church of God and the institutions of this world, whether their guise is political, military, religious, commercial or any other form.

Just how distinctive are we?

Christopher Cowell

The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy.

Revelation 19:10

Dare to be different.

It is the distinctiveness of Christ within us that both draws others to Christ and brings flack. What we have to do is reject the heresy of the secular/Christian OK. We will get some flack for being distinctive... that's expected.... we are told to rejoice when this happens, not shrink back (Matt 5:10-13). Be strong in the Lord ~ maintaining the integrity of who we are in Christ and relating to others with dignity, humility and compassion.

Here is a story that will garrison the soul:

"I was born in 1956 into a religious Muslim family in Egypt. Although I performed all the duties of a pious Muslim and even made the pilgrimage to Mecca, I still felt no peace.

When I was 24, a Christian invited me to his home on Christmas Eve. We had a lively discussion about the differences between Islam and Christianity. For me, it was only natural that I had to seek God, and now I was told that God sought me. I had always perceived God as a condemning judge. Now I learned I could be certain of God's forgiving love. But still I did not understand how this Christian could call Jesus "Son of God". Because I wanted to know what other kinds of erroneous things these "infidels" believed, I borrowed a book from him entitled 'The Way of Salvation'. I locked myself in at home and began reading it in secret, washing my hands before reading as I did before reading the Qur'an, according to the prescribed Islamic rituals. In the course of some months I found my way to Jesus simply by reading the Bible. I no longer needed the ritual washings because I experienced the power of the Holy Spirit as inner purity in my life.

My relatives and friends swore at me and rejected me. In 1981 I was arrested by the secret police at my job in a hotel and held for nine months in solitary confinement in a military prison. My cell was only one square metre, and every night water was poured on the floor so that I could not even lie down. I was prevented from sleeping by a dazzling light. I was beaten, burned, and my fingernails were ripped out.

My father visited and offered me money to return to Islam. When I refused he disowned me, disinherited me, and symbolically buried me in an empty coffin with my name on it.

Islamic clergy came and tried to persuade me to return to Islam by simply repeating the Islamic creed. After three fruitless visits from them, I was declared insane and sent to a psychiatric clinic, where I was given electric shocks to my spine, which resulted in permanent damage.

Because the Egyptian constitution states that Islam is the state religion and that Islamic jurisprudence is the principal source of legislation, my property and my inheritance were taken away from me in closed court



proceedings. My case then went from the civil court to the Mufti, the highest religious court. Here it was ruled that I must leave Dar al-Islam [the house of Islam i.e. territory where Muslims are in control] because as long as I remained any Muslim had the right to kill me.

My case was made public and I did not know where to go. Every Christian group and church I turned to was afraid to help me because they risked becoming a target themselves of Islamic extremist groups. I lived in hiding for some time, and was baptized in early 1983.

I managed to contact my fiancée and within a few weeks she also had become a Christian and was secretly baptized. On our way back from her baptism, three men from an extremist group ambushed and shot at us. I was unhurt but my fiancée was killed right there on the street. The gunmen escaped and I was arrested as a suspect and imprisoned for two months until forensics proved that I had not done the shooting. While in prison I held on to the promise: "Fear not ... I have summoned you by name; you are mine." (Isaiah 43:1)

Eventually, completely exhausted, I was able to find safety in a desert monastery, where I could slowly recover physically and emotionally. An anonymous donor sent me an airline ticket and a European visa. I knew that departing from Cairo airport was dangerous, as my name was bound to have been "blacklisted" : But there was no alternative. Trusting in God's help, I joined the queue at passport control.

Just before I reached the desk, the computer crashed. In the ensuing chaos nothing on the database could be checked, but only the documents that each person was carrying. Mine were in order and I boarded the plane.

Since then I have lived in Europe, and it is these words of Jesus that keep me going even here today: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last." (John 15:16).

"Michael"

Source: Barnabas Magazine
July-August 2003

What we are on about in the Marketplace of Aviation is bringing a prophetic expression of Jesus to people as we meet them on a daily basis. We don't need buildings; the people are already there... in their daily vocations and involvements... fantastic!

God wants to bring to these places Christians who transparently reveal Jesus within them... Christians who are not conned by the heresy of the secular/religious divide... people who live to do Kingdom stuff 24/7.

A Christian whose life is a testimony to Jesus is making a prophetic statement straight into the heart of non-Christian friends and colleagues on a daily basis! As Hocking said: "The true spirit of prophecy always shows itself in bearing witness to Jesus: any teaching or prophecy that takes our minds and hearts away from Him is not being properly communicated".

Jesus teaches on this at John 5:31-47 and Acts 1:8.

Some time ago I was having dinner with two non-Christian pilot buddies. One claimed that his neighbour did all this bad stuff and then went to Church on Sundays. The other non-Christian pilot responded: "Well I'll tell you about my friend here, he lives a seven day a week Christian life". Jesus was doing his stuff

through a person. As St Francis remarked: "Preach the gospel everyday; if necessary, use words".

Some months later I again had lunch with the pilot who sought to justify his separation from Jesus by the bad things he had seen at his Christian brother's school and later when working as a pilot on a mission in New

REGULAR FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS:-

Mondays, 1230-1300: Terminal One Prayer Room, Manchester

Tuesdays, 1230-1300: Amadeus World Business Centre, LHR

Tuesdays, 1800-1900: Central Area, LHR

Wednesdays, 1230-1330 & Fridays, 0830-0900: British Airways, Waterside

2nd & 4th Monday of the month, 1230-1330: Compass Centre, British Airways, LHR

1st Tuesday of the month, 1230-1330: Jubilee House, British Airways, LGW

For further details of these and of other fellowships at Stansted, East Midlands, Virgin Atlantic LGW, CAA LGW, British Airways Manchester, CitiExpress Southampton, or if you are part of a fellowship that has not been mentioned, please call the office.

Guinea. The reply that came from the Holy Spirit shocked both parties: "the reason you are not a Christian has nothing to do with that... the reason you are not a Christian is that you will not submit your sex life to God". The recalcitrant pilot replied... "you might be right".

This had been a prophetic expression from God straight to this pilot's need... he was cheating on his wife. He needed to listen. However he didn't take heed. About a year later he had a blood clot in the spine and became a quadriplegic. He would never have sex again.

The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ... the creator of the universe is at work within us for his own glory and his own expression of love to those around us every day. This is awesome stuff. Be strengthened in the Lord. Be encouraged. Let your light shine.

Captain Peter Kentley
www.airborne.org

Day of Prayer

Around 24 AAACF associates gathered at Brook Place on the 6th June to pray and seek the Lord. If anyone had the notion that a prayer meeting might be rather hard going, dull as ditch water and punctuated with long silences until someone thinks of what to pray then certainly their eyes would have been opened at this meeting. The day included lively worship, excellent teaching with application to current events, and fervent prayer as many poured out the desire of their hearts to a listening and caring God. There really did not seem enough minutes in the allotted time to cover everything that we would liked to have covered, even with a shortened lunch break (although that did not prevent the strawberries, meringues and cream from being properly appreciated!). Everyone that I spoke to said how significant the day had been, not just through the blessing of being together but with the business that we were able to conduct with the Lord.

How God answers our prayers is not for us to determine but answer them He will and in ways that may surprise and delight us. Paul writing to Timothy says 'I want men (that includes women and children) everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing'. Therefore how we pray, or what we say or do is not the question, but what is on our hearts. If we are serious about the kingdom of God then let us be serious in prayer, acknowledging that the hands we lift up are holy, not because of who we are or what we do, but because we have been washed through the blood of Jesus.