

J John Update

It has been thrilling to witness the excellent response to the J John meetings over the past six weeks.

Figures released by the organisers indicate that the average attendance at Gateshead for the first five weeks of the mission was just under 5,000 per night (4,740); in addition, there have been over 4,000 per night, on average, meeting in Stockton on the Wednesday evenings (4,200) – making a total of close on 9,000 people per week.



663 people registered a response to the message at Gateshead over the first five weeks and a further 437 at Stockton – a total of 1,100, a quarter of whom have been making a first time commitment of their to Jesus Christ.



As I write, there are only four more weeks to go – and so **only four more opportunities** to take our friends and colleagues, family members and contacts, along to this unique opportunity for them to hear such a clear and appealing presentation of the Gospel. Let's seek to seize the moment and make the most of the opportunity God is giving us.

As J John approaches the last four commandments, which have to do with our duty towards God, his messages will become more and more directly evangelistic.

J John Gems

But there has been plenty of good teaching for Christians, as well as for seekers, so far. Here are a few highlights of what he has been teaching us.

Hold to the truth: "Don't bear false testimony"

- There are three types of false testimony we must avoid – gossip, slander and false flattery.
- *Everything we say must be true; but not all the truth always needs to be said. Learn to be discrete as well as truthful, generous as well as honest.*
- How to hold to the truth: - examine your own heart; refuse to gossip; get connected to the truth, i.e. Jesus.

Prosper with a clear conscience: "Don't steal"

- There are three types of theft we must avoid – dishonesty, defrauding, and defaulting on our promises.
- *The problem with stealing is that we think everything should belong to us – when, in fact, everything belongs to God.*
- How to deal with guilt: don't deny it, don't deflect it on to others, don't try to drown it by suppressing it. Confess it before God to be cleansed from it.
- *The human conscience is like a pencil – it continually needs to be sharpened. Restitution (for what we've stolen) shows true repentance.*
- Key Principles for Prosperity: - work hard; save well; give generously; pray about everything.
- Have you been robbed? *It's better to forgive and forget than remember and resent.*

Affair-proof your relationships: "Don't commit adultery"

- The keys to a successful marriage relationship: - respect your partner; be responsible; keep the romance alive; resolve to be faithful.
- *The best partner to have is an archaeologist. The older you get, the more interested they become in you.*
- Cultivate small talk, serious talk, soul talk, sweet talk, self-talk.
- *Walk hand in hand even when you don't see eye to eye.*
- Trying times are not the times to stop trying.
- *If there was more courting in marriages, there would be fewer marriages in court.*

- Four vital phrases to learn: I was wrong; I'm sorry; I don't know; I need your help.
- *Adam said to Eve, "You're the only woman in the world for me!"*

Managing anger: "Don't commit murder"

- Three types of anger: the maniac explodes; the mute represses rage; the manipulator schemes.
- *Anger: you can't get rid of it by losing it. People who blow a fuse end up in the dark; people who fly off the handle usually crash land.*
- Anger is an acid that does more harm to its container than when it's poured out.
- *Repressed anger always hardens into bitterness.*
- Understand anger: anger often stems from a hurt, which in turn comes from an unfulfilled expectation. An insignificant trigger may detonate a large explosion.
- *When you see red, stop. If you keep your mouth shut, you won't put your foot in it. The best time to keep your shirt on is when you are hot under the collar.*
- How to deal with anger: admit it; deal with it immediately; avoid doing things to get even; stop and think before you speak; ask God to fill you with his Holy Spirit.
- *The spoon for taking your own medicine always seems huge.*
- Jesus never wore a cross round his neck; he wore it on his back - for you and for me.
- *God allowed his own Son to be murdered, so that murderers could be forgiven.*



Keeping the peace with your parents: "Honour your father and mother"

- Four ways to honour our parents: accept them; appreciate them; affirm them; don't abandon them.
- *A judge is called 'Your Honour' because of his position, not his personality.*
- Jesus knew more than his parents, but still obeyed them.
- God is the perfect Father: he always listens to us; he always understands us; he always loves us; he disciplines us.

- *Parental credibility is vital. Don't make rules you're not going to enforce and don't make promises you're not going to keep.*

The Follow Through

Coaches tell golfers and tennis players that their follow through is vital for playing good shots. And the same applies to any large-scale mission. So, please pray for those who have made a response at the J John meetings. Pray that they will be followed up effectively by their Christian friends and through local churches.

For our part, we are planning to run our own **Get a Life course** for those who want to find out more about the Christian faith and what it means to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. The course will be running on Wednesday or Thursday evenings, starting the second week in June. Please see me if you would like further details.

Dates for the Diary

- **7.30pm Wednesday 4th June: Quarterly Church Members' Meeting.**
- **7.00pm Saturday 7th June: BMS World Mission Fund-raising meal (cost £4),** for our current project, *Higher Ground*, which is seeking to raise money for Christians in Indonesia who were badly effected by the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami. Our target for the year is £250. See Wanda Stockdale for further details.
- **12 noon – 2.00pm, Saturday 21st June: Mid-summer Charity Barbecue at the Hunts,** to raise funds for an IREF church building project in India. See David and Elma Hunt for further details. Please let us know if you would like a lift across to Sunnyside from the church or if you will have spare places in your car.



David Hunt