

LIFEWORDS

Lifewords Prayer, June 2018

*"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,
and in all Judea, and to the ends of the earth."*

Acts 1:8, NIV

In the early days of the church, good news spread like wildfire. At Pentecost, the writer of Acts records, "three thousand were added to their number". And after that, "the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved". In the crucible of Roman-ruled Jerusalem, this new Jesus movement took root in ordinary and extraordinary ways. From tongues of fire, to shared meals; from prison-breaks and earthquakes, to daily meetings in the temple courts.

The first witness to the good news outside of Jerusalem is made as Philip teaches an Ethiopian eunuch, on the road to Gaza. Paul (and others') missionary journeys follow, and by AD 42 there are converts in Egypt, then Turkey, Greece, Malta, Syria, Italy ... the list goes on. The first missionaries to Japan are reported in AD 178, and by the early third century (less than 200 years after Pentecost) Tertullian records that "Christ has followers" on the far side of the Roman Wall in Britain, where even "Roman legions" have not penetrated.

The spread of the church in the first centuries is extraordinary. Yet so is its enduring presence today. We hear stories week in and week out about how people are sharing life words, and making the kingdom visible in their communities. In the global south and east especially, the church is still growing fast. And we are still called to be witnesses – in the ordinary and the extraordinary – to see lives changed through the good news of Jesus that is for everyone, everywhere.

Welcome to the June edition of Lifewords Prayer. This month we're sharing news about *Daily Strength*, looking at modern day slavery, hearing about a mission week in Dover, and celebrating Pavement Project's 18th birthday – all a reminder of the witness of the Bible's life words in the world.

3–9 June

Daily Strength

Since 2004 you've helped us print and share hundreds of thousands of copies of *Daily Strength* around the world, but we are now out of stock! While we work on a fresh, new design for the popular, pocket-sized booklet, here are a few stories of *Daily Strength* in action:

- “How wonderful and blessed all the Christian prisoners are to have your wonderful resources,” says UK prison chaplain Yvonne. “They are truly a gift and *Daily Strength* is unquestionably a favourite here. I’m grateful for the simplicity, beauty, and perfection of the messages.” Praise God for how *Daily Strength* continues to reach people in different circumstances all over the world.
- “I recently came across a young man who told me he was a teacher and was passionate about helping people,” says Barbara from Cambridgeshire. “We spoke for a while then I gave him a copy of *Daily Strength*. Since then we’ve kept in touch and he now orders his own copies to share with those he meets.” Praise God for those who are excited about sharing good news.
- “Many, many years ago I was given a copy of *Daily Strength* at a London airport,” says Erik from Sweden. “The booklet continues to bring comfort, strength and hope, and I always include it in my morning routine. It’s a blessing.” Give thanks for how *Daily Strength* continues to inspire people in their walk with Jesus.

To view our latest range of Bible resources in English and non-English languages, please visit www.lifewords.global/shop. We’ll update you when the new *Daily Strength* is available.

10–16 June

Modern day slavery

The Diocese of Rochester has ordered over 450 Bible booklets to share at their modern slavery conference this month. These include *Consider the Wildflowers*, *Finding Hope*, *One of Us* and *Little Book of Chaos*. Caroline Clarke, diocesan community engagement and social responsibility advisor, explains more:

- “Modern slavery is a crime against humanity,” says Caroline. “It robs people of their freedom and the church has a responsibility to step in, raise awareness and help tackle the issue. We’re so grateful that Lifewords could partner with us, supporting our vision to continue raising awareness and help put an end to this crime.” Please pray for the Diocese of Rochester this week as they finalise their plans. Pray too for those attending and speaking, that more communication will lead to positive action.
- The campaign is part of a wider project set up by The Clewer Initiative – an organisation mobilising the church to help end modern slavery. Working together with Church of England dioceses and wider church networks they develop strategies for detecting modern slavery in their communities and help provide victim support and care. Give thanks for churches and organisations around the world working together to help put an end to exploitation.
- The 2017 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery report shows that in 2016 more than 40 million people worldwide were estimated to be victims of modern day slavery – and one in four of those were children. These victims are forced to commit commercial sex acts, coerced into a system of domestic servitude or forcefully

employed in occupations that are mentally, physically, socially and morally harmful. Please pray for victims who find themselves trapped in situations of modern slavery. Pray that more people are inspired to make a difference through prayer, gifts and actions.

If you would like to register for this event and attend free of charge, please visit www.lifewords.global/blog.

17–23 June Evangelism in Dover

In March Dover Town Centre Group Ministry carried out a week of mission – a combination of street and door-to-door evangelism. The group of five parishes held outreach exercises under the theme “There is love in Dover.” Mission Priest Josias shares more:

- “Two years ago I moved to the UK from Brazil and took up the role of Mission Priest. Although I realised there were a number of cultural differences between churches in Brazil and churches in Dover, I was keen on sharing the gospel through door-to-door evangelism and other various ways in the town throughout our mission week.” Give thanks for the ways in which churches are reaching communities with different initiatives. Pray too for the work and rest of ministers, especially when adapting to new places and environments.
- “One of the toughest issues we faced was the lack of resources, but I remembered using Lifewords booklets back in Brazil and then in the UK. I got in touch and was delighted when they offered to resource our week of mission.” Give thanks for the impact of Lifewords around the world and pray that those who received a Bible booklet in March would be encouraged to explore more of God’s Word.
- “We had a team of 90 people from more than 10 churches participating in the door-to-door evangelism. From that there were more than 60 positive follow-ups and many people have been attending our evening sessions since. We also had a small team carrying out street evangelism and visiting schools. As a result the number of teenagers at our youth events has greatly increased. More than 20 people have given their lives to Jesus.” Praise God for those who have been introduced or re-introduced to the gospel. Pray too for Christians who have been sharing the Bible’s life words through outreach projects and in daily ministry.

Please visit www.lifewords.global/give to help us to continue making Bible literature freely available where cost is a barrier.

24–30 June Happy 18th!

This month Pavement Project marks 18 life-changing years of mission and counselling that has helped reshape the lives of tens of thousands of children-at-risk around the world. Pavement Project director Clenir dos Santos explains:

- “For years the Pavement Project green bag has attracted smiles and the expectation of good news when workers carry it to the children. We are so grateful for the partnership of groups, trusts, churches, individuals, organisations, volunteers, translators and workers making this possible.” Give thanks for the continual support over the past 18 years helping to effectively impact the lives of tens of thousands of children worldwide.

- “This year’s birthday celebrations are extra special as Pavement Project has been rebranded, this includes our cartoon mascot, Verdie. Using a friendly, non-human character prevents the children from feeling threatened, intimidated or uneasy. Instead many children experience reassurance and have described him as a friend.” Give thanks for the way Pavement Project helps vulnerable children feel safe and cared for – a testament to the team, the workers and the Holy Spirit working to bring real change to young lives.
- “Verdie – named by children in a competition – comes alive through illustrations, with a wide array of expressions to communicate with all who meet him. The green bag is all about cultivating a safe space for young people to share their feelings. This new look encourages children to express their truest, deepest emotions.” Please pray that the redesign of Pavement Project will attract even more people to the programme and be recognised as something to connect with and confide in.

To help more children and young people at-risk experience God’s hope and healing please visit www.lifewords.global/give. And to take a peek at the new Verdie, please visit www.lifewords.global/blog.

Thank you for praying with us! Your partnership in prayer is vital to all that we do as we share the Bible’s life words around the world. You can make a donation to our work online at www.lifewords.global, by post or by calling 020 7730 2155.