

"THE CHANGING WORLD – THE CHANGING CHURCH"

A SERIES OF RESIDENTIAL 3-DAY EVENTS FOR CLERGY AND CHURCH LEADERS

LINSI SIMMONS

"MAKING THE BIBLE HEARD" IS FAR MORE THAN A STRAP LINE: IT IS THE CORE OF BIBLE SOCIETY'S RAISON D'ÊTRE, THE HEARTBEAT OF AN ORGANISATION DEDICATED TO CONNECTING THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE TO PEOPLE'S EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE. It is also an expression of Bible Society's commitment to changing the mindset of our culture, and at our roadshows last year we were set alight by the many ministers and church leaders who indicated their own commitment to exploring new ways of being church amidst the complexities of our contemporary society. So Bible Society has planned residential events during the spring of 2003, not only as a response to your requests, but also as an indication of our commitment to be in partnership with the churches in a way that is both helpful and accessible.

As leaders, you will understand that the task we face is huge and challenging, but the challenges provide exciting opportunities for the Church. *The Changing World – The Changing Church* is a course especially designed to stimulate the mind and refresh the spirit as key Bible Society staff work in depth with church leaders from all denominations, exploring together the communication and interpretation issues that face us today. The time for reflection and imaginative worship built into the programme is designed to help participants process the challenges that the course will throw up and reshape their thinking accordingly. Are we really able to recast the future in such a way that will bring about the renewal of public life, and could the Bible and the Christian faith, in truth, be restored to the heart of public debate about the future of our society and our world? These are the big questions that stand at the centre of our engagement with contemporary culture and face all of us committed to the Church regardless of denominational allegiances.

It is hoped that a guest speaker, who will help to outline the significant challenges that postmodernity presents, will complement Bible Society's team. Additionally, a specially commissioned piece of drama is being written by Murray Watts (who wrote "The Walk" which was performed at every roadshow) and this will be performed for the first time at each venue. The residential nature of the course will also allow plenty of time to build relationships and to engage in conversation and debate, both with Bible Society's team and others attending the course.

The courses will be held from lunchtime to teatime over three midweek days. We are sending out publicity and information to all those ministers or church leaders who

attended a roadshow, but if you were unable to attend and are interested in *The Changing World – The Changing Church*, please contact Bible Society for a brochure.

Either write to *The Changing World – The Changing Church*, Bible Society, FREEPOST SN48 1, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7BR, telephone 01793 418100 quoting *The Changing World – The Changing Church*, or e-mail events@biblesociety.org.uk

The cost of the three-day course, inclusive of en suite accommodation and meals, is £120 per person, but we believe the course falls well within the mandate of in-service training for ministers and church leaders, and encourage you to seek funding through your denomination. The courses are running on the following dates:

28–30 January 2003 at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire

18–20 February 2003 at Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire

6–8 May 2003 at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire

Additionally, we are making the same presentation at an extra event at Lee Abbey from **28 April to 2 May 2003**, as part of their teaching programme. Should you be interested in this particular event, please contact The Booking Office, The Lee Abbey Fellowship, Lynton, North Devon, EX35 6JJ, Tel. 01598 752621, or e-mail relax@leeabbey.org.uk

Please give serious thought to joining us at one of these courses so that we can continue to deepen our conversation and explore the future together.