

News from Bible Society

Transmission is provided free by Bible Society as part of our mission to equip the church to live out the Bible's message. We also work creatively and with passion to show that the Bible resonates with issues today – and to make Scriptures available where there are none.

James Catford

Group Chief Executive



The body: Our primary ally in Christlikeness

Guess what tickets I got for the Olympics? Out of applications for both high profile events and the least glamorous sports, my wife and I ended up with just one ticket – beach volleyball. And, yes, the women's. But I thank God for athletics for more reasons than spending time at 'the beach' in Horse Guards Parade.

First is the way that sport teaches us about training not just trying. In the world of Christian discipleship the religion of 'just try harder' is commonplace. But athletes know better. I can try to run a marathon with all my willpower, but I'd fail. What I need to do is train. Second is the importance of habits. It's raining on a Saturday morning and I don't want to go out before breakfast. But the habit of doing so, sunshine or showers, helps me fall out of bed and pull on my running shoes. It takes 90 days, so we are told, to form a habit. In our Christian walk that's good to know as our bodies carry the disciplines even when 'the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matt 26.41). And that leads to the third aspect of the Olympics that I like; the body is good and to be celebrated! For many it is a hurdle on the path of holiness, or a wicked opponent to life with God. Certainly, 'sin dwells within me,' as Paul writes, 'that is, in my flesh' (Rom 7.18) and sinful passions are still at work in our body parts, he says (Rom 7.5).

Yet it is important to realise that the body itself is not evil. 'The way of Christ,' says Dallas Willard 'is restlessly incarnational – it is *bodily*'. And God loves the physical. He made a lot of it. And through the physical world, including our bodies, God is mediated to us.

As we watch the 30th Olympiad we can recognise how the body can be trained to increasingly support a richer life rather than opposing it. We can learn, in a profound way, that the body can become our primary ally in Christlikeness. Let's get training.

A Residents' Guide to the Kingdom of God

The first international *lyfe* forum, 8 to 12 October, will be hosted by myself and the combined ministry teams of Bible Society, Renovaré and the Lee Abbey community. This unique event will draw on the teaching of Dallas Willard, Richard Foster and

the ancient wisdom of the Church. The aim is to embrace a deeper life with God in the context of beautiful surroundings at Lee Abbey on the north Devon coast, and in the company of leaders from business, culture and the Church.

The carefully-planned four days, are designed to allow space for *Transmission* readers to relax, engage with like-minded Christians and experience a stimulating mix of teaching, experience and TED-style presentations. (And if you don't know what a TED-style presentation is then go to www.ted.com and see examples of 'riveting talks by remarkable people'.) We will be the guests of the *lyfe* project team which is a growing new initiative at Bible Society to connect God, life and the Bible.

Details at www.lyfe.org.uk/theforum
Book directly at leeabbey.org.uk
Freephone 0800 389 1189
For further information email
rob.hare@biblesociety.org.uk

A shorter alternative weekend from 12 to 14 October will also take place at Lee Abbey. Please contact us for details.

Join the resonate research panel

Recent months have seen Christian Research (a part of Bible Society) launch a dual-targeted piece of research. On the one hand, it is aimed at stimulating reflection on what it is to be a Christian today and the role Church plays to that end; while, on the other, recruiting 'Christians' (howsoever that is interpreted) to join a new online research panel called **resonate**.

To date, 3,500 'ordinary Christians' have joined, coupled with around 800 church leaders/clergy, both numbers continue to grow on a daily basis. Christian Research intends **resonate** to be the biggest and best tool for serving Christian organisations with the kind of powerful high-quality insight that informs effective strategic decision-making.

So, here's where you can play your part. You are invited to take either of these two short questionnaires, by entering one of the following URLs into your web browser. Either ...

- for church leaders/clergy, use: <http://bit.ly/HDwrt2> or
- for everyone else, use: <http://bit.ly/HaC4j3>

Early findings reveal that, 40% of Christians

recall a specific moment they came to faith, while 20% indicate that it was a gradual, more transitional process. Meanwhile, the 'Church Through Your Eyes' section is currently asking church leaders to what extent 'a sense of belonging' is a strategic priority at the church they lead or serve. So far, 93% say that it is.

You can help make the Church more responsive to both Christians and those outside the church by signing up to **resonate**.

Paul Cairns

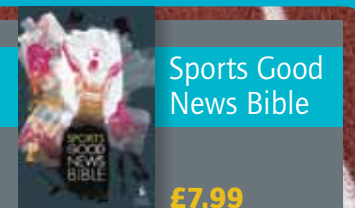
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The special sports edition of the Good News Bible contains an additional 40 full-colour pages which connect sport with faith.



Sports lyfe: seven steps to soul fitness

Sports lyfe provides a programme of small group sessions for sports fans and participants alike. It will help you connect with others, get deeper into Scripture and discover a new rhythm of spirituality and training for a deeper life with God.