

JEW for JESUS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE CHRISTIAN WHO WANTS
TO KNOW MORE ABOUT JEWS AND EVANGELISM

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The *NEW* Jews for Jesus

BY DAVID BRICKNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

You are now holding a half-sized Jews for Jesus newsletter wrapped around a full-sized Journal!* This *New Jews for Jesus Journal* is our third; we published the last one in 1995. We felt it was high time to update that Journal and I'm very pleased to present you with this, "the latest."

If you have been a part of the Jews for Jesus family for some time, you'll recognize many of the faces and places that you've seen in our Jews for Jesus newsletter. But whether you've been with us for two months or 20 years, this Journal will help introduce you to *The New Jews for Jesus*.

Some of you who met Jews for Jesus back in the 70's or 80's may find it difficult to picture how much we've changed since then. Imagine an uncle who takes a snapshot of his niece as a toddler, then moves overseas. Over the years, that uncle may hear regular reports of his niece's growth through adolescence into adulthood. Yet the image he carries in his mind is still that little girl taking her first awkward steps. Now, imagine the uncle returning after some twenty years and seeing his niece again for the first time.

We want you to see that we have a new picture, a new image. Toddlers are endearing and many of you were very patient when we were so clumsy and just finding our footing. Well, I can't say that we're exactly "smooth" these days, but we've learned how to work much more efficiently and we're bursting to try new things. As we look back, some of the things we did in the "old days" give us cause for serious reflection while others make us smile.

For example, our first New York Summer Witnessing

Campaign in 1974 was a great adventure. We handed out a lot of gospel tracts and faced a great deal of opposition. Twenty-four years later, campaigns are still a great adventure. We still hand out lots of tracts and meet with a great deal of opposition. But we hand out even more tracts with fewer people because our campaigners are better trained, better equipped and our schedules are better coordinated. In 1974, if someone harassed one of our campaigners, other team members would stop handing out tracts, gather around the harasser and blow whistles until he decided to leave. Now, when a campaigner is harassed, we've discovered it's better for one team member to get the police and let *them* blow the whistles while the rest of the team continues to hand out gospel tracts.

In the early days, most of our leaders were themselves spiritual toddlers. Because we faced constant opposition, we developed a reputation for being thick skinned. I'm afraid we may have been hardest on our own people. Well, the opposition is still strong and we still need to teach our staff to withstand it. Nevertheless, our leaders are learning to serve those whom they lead as it becomes more and more clear that this is what it means to serve the Lord.

In our early days, Jews for Jesus was comprised mostly of college-aged Jews who were the first in their families to believe. While this is still true of many of our staff, now we are seeing an influx of second generation Jewish believers, children of Jewish believers who are growing in their faith and want to tell others about Jesus. Our burgeoning children's ministry and camp programs reflect a new emphasis on nurturing and raising up this new generation.

Of course there are things that we should not and will not change. We are rooted as firmly as ever in the gospel that

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In with the *NEW* does not mean *out* with everything that's TRIED and TRUE.

That is why many of the photographs you'll see in the New Jews for Jesus Journal show people doing what we've always done: handing out broadsides (gospel tracts). "Broadsiding" is just one of many ways that we reach out—but it's one of the easiest to photograph, because it's a highly visible form of evangelism. That is one reason why we continue to do it—even those who don't respond can still see the message.

Another reason is that time and time again, the Holy Spirit blows this gospel seed far beyond the soil where we first planted it—and often our gospel tracts provide opportunities for people we've never met to witness to their Jewish friends.

For example, one brother, Dino Bolletto, wrote to say,

I'm an Italian Bible-believing Christian, married to an English woman, and we have three children. Two years ago, we came to England for a holiday to see our English relations. We took a day off to do some shopping in London, and while we were walking around going out of one shop into another, I came across some leaflets left on the footpath. At a glance, I noticed that they were Bible related, but you get so many people misusing the Bible these days that I said "No" and walked away, but an inner voice told me to go back. I did and picked up two leaflets. To my surprise, I noticed that they were from Jews for Jesus. I showed them to my wife and took them back to Italy with us, always wondering why the Lord wanted me to pick up English material! For Jews? In Italy? [Yet] every time I looked at them it made me happy.

Some months later in my home town Assisi, my wife Vina met Joyce, an American Jew. Then we remembered the leaflets, and after several visits and long discussions, Vina handed over the leaflets to Joyce who then got in touch with Jews for Jesus in the USA. Today Vina has regular Bible studies with Joyce who is very thirsty for the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are soon to move back to the UK, and I would like all your brothers and sisters to pray for Joyce, for the Lord to free her from M.S. and strengthen her in her faith.

Praise be to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Another brother, Kevin Shannon, wrote:

As a gentile believer in Y'shua, I have been learning Hebrew at a London synagogue.

Our last lesson of the term [found] our class reduced to two, plus our Hebrew teacher—Tsipora, a Russian Jew. Tsipora remarked that she had been shopping in Oxford Street when she came across a group of people wearing some very bold T-shirts handing out leaflets for Jews for Jesus. She was obviously startled and said that she kept and observed from a cautious distance.

To my surprise, the other student, Rose, said, "Do you know, Tsipora, there are thousands of Jews coming to know Jesus as the Messiah." I discovered that evening that Rose is a Messianic Jew. We spent the next two hours speaking to Tsipora about Jesus, [pointing out] numerous Messianic prophecies.

Tsipora was open and listened intently, interjecting occasionally. She said cautiously that it was difficult for her to comprehend God within the context of [Jewish Scriptures] without accepting all that we had given witness to. A definite new candidate for prayer.

What an amazing evening I had personally experienced—talking of Y'shua in a synagogue; and inadvertently becoming involved with the Jews for Jesus summer witnessing campaign. What a precious day—many thanks to you and to Him.

Of course, handing out broadsides is still a great way for our missionaries to meet Jewish people who are willing to hear more about Jesus, as is evident in the article on the next page.

Mizner Park Man Meets Messiah

Broadsiding is one of the mainstays of our Jews for Jesus ministry. I usually hand out tracts once or twice every week. The responses from the Jewish people I meet on evangelistic expeditions such as these range from indifference to hostility. A few are genuinely open to hear more.

I met Paul, a Jewish man in his mid-sixties, while broadsiding this past May at Mizner Park, a chic downtown section of Boca Raton, Florida. After a brief conversation, he gave me his mailing address and phone number for further contact. When I phoned him shortly thereafter, he was enthusiastic about meeting to hear what I had to say.

We met at his home in Del Ray Beach. I found that, like many Jews, he had been heavily influenced by the secularism of our age and had learned to regard all religion as foolishness.

As he grew older, however, Paul's atheist convictions began to weaken. There were moments in which he had the overpowering feeling of the presence and working of a greater Power. Eventually, he grew convinced. As he began to search for answers to his spiritual questions, he was drawn to Eastern religious literature and concluded

that Buddhism contains the answers to life's spiritual questions. Such was his mindset when we met.

We met again in two weeks' time to discuss the issues of sin, salvation, and the Savior in the context of the Gospel of John. At one point in our discussion, Paul frowned and looked down. I paused to hear what he had to say, thinking that he was going to express skepticism. After a moment of silence, he looked up and said, "David, does God draw people?" I answered affirmatively. He then shared with me that he had seen a therapist the day before. The therapist told him that he had much bottled up guilt which he would have to learn to deal with through forgiveness. He then told me that as I spoke about God's forgiveness through Y'shua's atoning death, things seemed to make sense. He also shared his profound sense of God's guiding him to this point.

I sat there thrilled with the privilege of being a cog in the wheel of God's purpose to draw someone to Himself. As I explained to Paul again that Jesus invites him to enter into a personal relationship, it was clear that he was ready. I led him in a prayer of repentance and faith, and he invited Jesus to be his Savior. Please pray that the God who has faithfully drawn Paul will continue to guard, protect and increase his faith in Y'shua.

—David Rothstein, missionary
Fort Lauderdale

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the Apostles Peter, James, John and Paul preached so faithfully. We remain committed to being on the "cutting edge" of creative communications in Jewish evangelism.

When it comes to those areas that are not new—those unchanging principles and values at the core of Jews for Jesus—I don't think I'd be exaggerating if I told you that we're finding ourselves renewed. You'll find one aspect of that renewal in our recently adopted mission statement: **"We exist to make the messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide."** Our organization's very reason for being is to find new ways to ensure that Jewish people everywhere will hear about Jesus in ways that cannot be dismissed as "someone else's religion."

We have a renewed commitment to prayer which includes an ever increasing desire for you to pray with us and for us. You will find a prayer calendar in the center of the New Jews for Jesus Journal. We hope you will pull it out, fold it up, keep it in your Bible and remember to pray with us and for us throughout the year.

Yes, we've made mistakes and learned many lessons over

the years, and I'm sure we'll continue to make different mistakes—maybe even bigger mistakes since our ministry is not a toddler anymore. However, we can also accomplish bigger things for Jesus than ever before.

The New Jews for Jesus is no longer a band of young American Jewish ex-hippies. Our staff members are in their teens, twenties, thirties, forties, fifties and yes, a few are even in their sixties and beyond. Some of us speak with a New York accent, but others have British, Israeli, even Russian accents. (In fact, some of our staff don't speak English at all!) To visit all of our missionaries at work, you'd not only have to jet around the world, you'd need to rocket into space . . . cyberspace that is.

So fasten your seat belts as you open your Journal for a tour of *The New Jews for Jesus*. We hope you will rejoice with us in what God has done and what He is going to do. "He has put a new song in our mouth—praise to our God; many will see it and fear, and will trust in the LORD" Psalm 40:3.

**Wonder why we wrapped half a newsletter around your Journal? Please flip to the back of this newsletter . . .*



A Bit From a Branch

Mitch Forman, one of our New York Missionaries, has been faithful to keep our testimony going in the Boston area, traveling there every month to evangelize, conduct fellowship meetings, and occasionally attend a conference.

Whenever we attend a conference where people set up booths, we bring our Jews for Jesus shopping bags.

They aren't stylish, but they are big, and most people appreciate having something sturdy with handles for all the literature they receive. But they serve another purpose.

When Cheryl came by our booth at Congress '97, she told Mitch a "shopping bag" story. It seems that upon walking out the front door of the auditorium where the conference was

held, she found herself face to face with a fire fighter who is stationed across the street from the auditorium. He approached her to say how silly it was for her to be carrying a Jews for Jesus shopping bag.

Cheryl proceeded to discuss spiritual issues with this gentleman. He had grown up knowing a little about Jesus but had not been walking with Him. She quickly turned the conversation to the status of his own heart, and this fire fighter who had attempted to mock her turned quite serious. Before long, she led him through the sinner's prayer right there on the streets of Boston. Talk about putting out a fire—all because she had taken a step of faith and was walking around the streets of Boston with a big "silly" Jews for Jesus shopping bag!

Here's Why

We have an abbreviated newsletter wrapped around the Journal.

No one complained when we sent our last two Journals out instead of the Newsletter. In fact, we received tons of "fan" mail. Yet as we were planning our third Journal, we had to face one troublesome fact: despite the compliments, our regular income decreased both months that we sent

the Journal instead of our Newsletter. You'll find your response card/envelope with the prayer calendar in the center of the Journal.

It makes sense—many of you are accustomed to sending in your gift when our Newsletter arrives. (Don't worry, we won't start mailing it twice a month!) This time we decided to send a newsletter *with* the Journal as a friendly reminder that if you usually

give a gift at this time, we need your support as much as ever (and maybe even a little extra if you enjoy the Journal and would like to defray the cost of this special publication).

If you haven't been a supporter of Jews for Jesus yet because you are still getting to know us, we hope that you'll prayerfully consider us as a possible link to Jewish people who need to hear about Jesus.

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