

TOUGH TALK!

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2007/8

We are very pleased to report that again in 2007 we have had an amazing year, and have been privileged to present the gospel at approximately 200 meetings up and down the UK. Although we did one meeting in a British Army base in Germany, we are convinced that our ministry should be focussed in the UK where there is an urgent need for the message of hope in Jesus Christ to be presented.

Message from Ian McDowall, founder of Tough Talk:

And pray for us, too that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ (Colossians 4:3).

"We thank the Lord for the many doors that have been opened for us to proclaim the Gospel and over the years schools, universities, churches and prisons have opened their doors to our ministry. Our 2008 diary is nearly full and we have already taken bookings for 2009.



[Ian presenting the gospel at Kensington Temple](#)

However, the need is great and the prayers of our supporters and friends are required in these last dark hours, especially when we are working in the prisons in the UK. As you may well know, Tough Talk visit different prisons around the country, working by invitation from the Chaplaincies. Arthur White has dedicated his time with me to travel up and down the UK, sharing the gospel with men that are on

the edge. We conduct meetings both in prison chapels and in gyms, often in front of 50-100 inmates at any one time. We have seen incredible responses to the gospel this year.

Please, therefore, keep us in your prayers so that many more doors may be opened up to this important work." *Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (Timothy 1:13).*

Notting Hill Carnival.



As in previous years, a Tough Talk team was involved with the members of Kensington Temple as they reached out to visitors to this year's Notting Hill Carnival. The car park at KT was the venue for the daytime meetings and Ian, Martin, Joe and Adam did two sessions before hundreds of people.

[Joe Lampshire demonstrating the squat at KT](#)



A member of the audience tries the bench press

There was a great atmosphere and the gospel was clearly presented to all who were there. The guys did an evening presentation and many responded to the gospel challenge. Ian says that this year's Carnival outreach was the best of the many he has done with the sense of God's presence being more real and powerful.

Testimonies



Chris Sayers, an ex-doorman and ex-bailiff, has been meeting regularly with the Tough Talk team at our weekly prayer meeting. He believed in God from an early age. As a young boy, his parents became Jehovah's Witnesses and he was made to go to their meetings. But as a teenager he rebelled, refused to go to the meetings and began drinking and smoking joints. Later, he took up kick-boxing and body-building to improve his self-image. He used anabolic steroids excessively and his life spiralled out of control and his marriage broke up. After his divorce, he started a relationship with a Christian woman but continued in his old ways. Then his life really changed! Here is how, in his own words.

"In the summer of 2005, Barbie suggested that we go to Notting Hill Carnival because a bunch of weight lifters called Tough Talk were going to do a demo outside Kensington Temple. I went along with it because I had never been to the Carnival and I wanted to keep Barbie happy! Well, it was great! We stayed on into the evening and went to the inside meeting which included singing and praying etc.....it really affected me. I prayed the prayer that Ian McDowall said to pray to become a Christian. I did not know what I had done, but two days later I told Barbie that I had prayed Ian's prayer and she said that I was now a born-again Christian! I didn't have a thunderbolt experience, but something was happening inside me, it was like a softening.

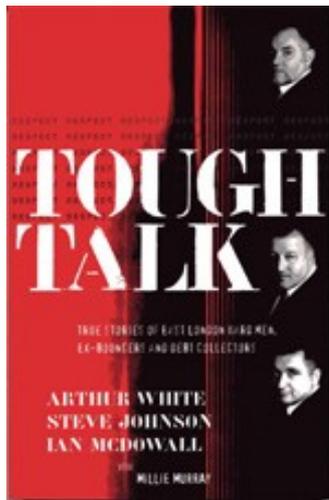
We visited a church in Whetstone where I met a lot of really good people who seemed to like me for just being me! We got loads of support from our church family and I got baptised and we were married in 2006.

I still do weights but am steroid free. I hope to be able to witness like Ian and the boys at Tough Talk and I'm praying that God will give me opportunities to witness about his love and grace."

At our meetings we are delighted to say that many people respond to the gospel challenge and give their lives to the Lord. But over recent months, we have met, and have received letters from, people who gave their lives to the Lord at Tough Talk meetings some years ago and are still going on in the faith and are becoming real disciples, which is very encouraging,

Here is one example:

" After seeing you about 5 years ago in Dereham, Norwich, my life has really changed. I was in rehab after being an alcoholic and drug addict for 28 years of my life. I lost 7 children because of my addiction and 3 partners died from addiction. I'm always watching your two videos you sent me every day...an inspiration for me. It would be nice to see you again given the chance. Prayer is daily for me now, where ever I am or what ever I'm doing. I'm now clean and sober.....God bless..."



We also receive letters from many prisoners asking for help after they have seen Tough Talk in their prison or have read the Tough Talk book. These are so challenging to read. Please pray for us as we respond to these challenging requests. Here are a few examples of the letters we have received:

" I've been inside 2yrs now and I've read your book Tough Talk. I've had a life of violence and all sorts of mad stuff and would like to change my way of life now. I'm out soon and have a feeling I could end up fighting and other stuff. I would like your advice on what to do cause in this book the main heads sorted themselves out before destruction"

" I have been in and out of jail since I was 15 ...because I have a drug problem. I've tried everything to get over this evil but the temptation is so great....I have lost any real friends I had and most of all I have lost my family. This is why I'm writing this letter to get you to help me try and find Jesus Christ because may be he will help me conquer this bad part of my life...like he has done for Arthur, Steve and Ian...."

"The book has made me look at my life and I know that I cannot be like I am for the rest of my life. I can be a decent, helpful person, but I want it to be like that, full stop. The book has made me think of a better future".

"I thoroughly enjoyed the book. But I can't do it that easily. I have prayed the prayer over and over but I still get drawn into the drugs and other things whilst in here. I hope you can answer some of my questions and give me a little guidance".

"Dear Ian , on reading your book I now know what I want in my life.....since I have read about you and your friends I have felt that I can do anything that I put my mind to. When you came to my prison it was like a sign.....I felt something come over me when you were speaking. I went back to my pad and said would God help me like he has helped that man. I started talking to him, and no I'm not mad, but its like he is talking to me. I have been doing so many things different. I know that me not doing wrong won't happen overnight but I know that something will change....."

New book: "Tough Talk 2"

In 2000, the three founder members of the team started to share the dramatic stories of their journeys to faith in Jesus Christ in the book "Tough Talk". This book has been very popular and

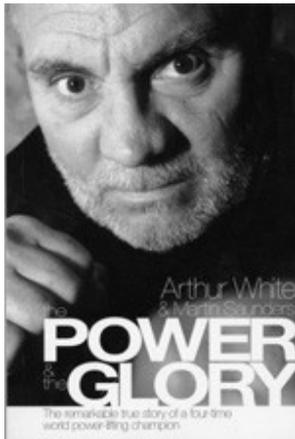


has been read by thousands of people and reprinted several times. We regularly receive letters from people who have given their lives to the Lord after reading the book.

However, over the years the membership of the team has changed - new men have joined who also have powerful stories to tell. Therefore, this book has been produced to present the life stories of three of the newer members of the current team: Joe Lampshire, Simon Pinchbeck and Martyn Parrish.

The book gives the details of how faith in Jesus Christ has impacted these men's lives and has given them a great desire to tell the good news of Jesus up and down our country as members of Tough Talk. Their stories have been expertly written with Millie Murray and the book is due to be published by Authentic Media early in 2008.

New book: "The Power and the Glory"



In this new book, recently published by Authentic Media, Arthur White, a founder member of Tough Talk, tells how his encounter with Jesus Christ turned his life around.

A shorter version of Arthur's story was published in the first Tough Talk book but in this book, Arthur and Martin Saunders give a detailed account of how his life as a world champion power lifter spiralled out of control with drug addiction, an affair and violence. Death seemed to be the only way out. Then, he had his amazing encounter with Jesus which dramatically affected his life and continues to do so up to the present day. The book describes in Arthur's own words how *"He lifted me out of*

the pit, and set my feet on a rock. I have never looked back, and I never will".

Message from the Chairman of the Trustees, Mike Steward:

It has been another amazing and challenging year of evangelism for Tough Talk. The invitations to preach the gospel keep flooding in, but unfortunately we often we have to say "sorry, we are fully booked". All the team members have jobs so there is a limit on how many meetings we can accept without putting a severe strain on the guys and their families.

Prison work remains a priority for the charity and this year we have decided to send a copy of our Tough Talk testimonies DVD to the Chaplain of each of the prisons in the UK with the hope that they will use these stories in their work with the prisoners.

Please continue to pray for the team members and their families as they share the gospel up and down our very needy land.

TOUGH TALK!

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