

Over the last few months I have been the main speaker on various of Alpha courses and saw some people come to faith and others make a commitment to continuing the journey of discovery.

It's great to hear real stories from genuine seekers. All their questions and diverse backgrounds fascinate me. They make comments like.... " I was pretty cynical when I started this course...not so now." and, " I cant believe I am praying for people...8 weeks ago it wouldn't have even crossed my mind" and, " Jesus really is real,I have felt his presence for the first time." Its great.



### **Peace making, flip flop giving, cut patching - life on the Streets.**

Its been over 2 years since we dreamed the church would grow legs and head back out onto the streets. Its been an amazing time with many new relationships forged, partnering with the police and working alongside church members from all backgrounds. The Initiative is continueing to grow, from a volunteer base of 50 we hope to add more so that we can comfortably cover all the Friday and Saturday nights in a month.

*Martin and I visiting the houses of parliment for a Street Pastors reception*

Serving our nighttime community certainly is challenging and is hopefully changing us. Often it feels a bit like the Emmaus road or Philip hanging out with the Ethiopian. We try our best to answer all of the questions and to show people unconditional love pointing them in the right direction, spiritually and literally, (often to a kebab shop or taxi!...That's if they are still walking!) Evangelism is such a glamorous calling!! We've, cleaned up, patched up, bound up, held up, and calmed down many city centre revellers. And recently, more and more are asking deeper questions and requesting prayer. I think the granite city might be softening.

In march I headed out to see Leslie and Shanti Matthews in Sri Lanka for a couple of weeks of sunshine, crazy driving, curry and a good bout of crying. Spending time in Sri lanka is always good for the heart. For me, it strips back some of the consumerist materialism and self-indulgence of the west. It exposes me to a deeper and more intimate reliance on God. While I was in Sri Lanka I spent a good chunk of time reflecting and reading the book of Acts, and it seemed all the more poignant being in a war torn country.



*Preaching at "Light house church"*

Seeing first hand people being persecuted and forced to leave homes and loved ones in search of safety...the tear drop Island is certainly living up to its name. Political and ethnic division is causing so much pain. The church there is showing the world that peace and reconciliation will only ever be found in Jesus. It's an up hill struggle. There's a lot to overcome, and yet the Lord is working quietly and significantly. Please pray for the church in Sri Lanka. We may never have a full and truthfull picture of what really has been happening behind the war lines, But lets pray for this terrible situation to be resolved quickly and for those caught up in the fighting to receive food, shelter and peace.

There's edginess about the book of Acts, nothing is polished, its raw and exciting. It seems that no one misses out and everyone is involved, nothing stays still for long. Its like everyone is playing catch up with what God is doing. I am challenged by how these early Christian communities lived. Their devotion is compelling, their compassion so evident. They are so bold and full of generosity and it seems Jesus wasn't far from anyone's lips.

During my time in Sri lanka I met with, prayed with, laughed and cried with, disciples just like those I read about in Acts. They are people who are simple, faithful, passionate, loving and committed to Jesus and one another in a such a authentic and transparent way. .

And that's what I'm wrestling with afresh. I want to see people come to faith...I believe the best way for that to happen is when we the church model what these guys where doing back then. One of things Tori and I are looking forward to doing is running a small group in our village. Hopefully trying to put into practice all that God is speaking to us about being a holistic Jesus centered community. + all the food and wine we can muster up.

**Thanks guys for all your support, love and care.  
We certainly feel it. James, Tori and the Girls**

