

OAC Hits the Streets of NH

By Fred Comella

Every Sunday I hear my Pastor talk about our charge as Christians to engage in the work of spreading the Gospel. And it's always a challenge to find the right ways



Mark Sohmer of OAC hitting the street

to do this as individuals. As you know I've been fortunate to write for this Christian Newspaper, and in turn have met dozens of folks who've answered the call on their heart setting out across the globe and bringing the Gospel to the ears of all in need and who would hear it. Nevertheless, I still feel a sense of confusion about how Jesus would

work through me. Maybe I'm still developing the skill set he has in mind for me. Maybe I haven't done enough in the place I am today. Truth be told, only he knows the answers to those questions. But in a world which appears on the brink of total disaster on any given day, it's almost as if we should be in high gear, working like crazy believers and touch-

ing as many lives as we can.

Look, there's no special degree required to look around and see the need. Mankind is spiraling at breakneck speed toward darkness on so many levels, both nationally

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A Concert of Evil

By Tony Perkins – Family Research Council

Nothing could have prepared Americans for the news many of them woke up to on October 2nd, 2017. After so many horrible tragedies, Sunday night's massacre was a sickening shock to a country that has seen far too many evils lately. This nightmare, though, seemed different. In an instant, 22,000 people were transported from a breezy performance to a bloody warzone that would change their lives forever.

It's a horrific tragedy for too many families, whose sons and daughters will never come home again. It's a tragedy for every single survivor, who will bear the scars of that night for the rest of their lives. And it's tragic for America, a country that has felt the intensity and frequency of these attacks multiply faster than anyone could have imagined.

For now, there's no comfort in the facts. The motive of gunman Stephen Paddock is as unknown today as he was that night. ISIS claimed responsibility for radicalizing Pad-

dock, warning months ago that Las Vegas would be the site of an attack. Authorities say there's no evidence to support that claim. What we do know is that this was an act of unthinkable evil, one that reminds us all of the worst -- and, in stories of that night's heroism, best -- of humankind.



Until more is known, here's what we can expect. There will be calls for greater restrictions on guns and gun ownership.

While the victims' families try to pick up the pieces of their lives, the last thing they need is to be in the middle of a national gun rights debate. And is that really the solution anyway? The government can't make us safer until it recognizes that the problem isn't the instruments of violence -- but the culture of it. The heart of the matter, as Dr. Ben Carson once said, is the matter of the heart. Gun control is merely dealing with the symptom. What about the real problem

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Clinton, Assange and the war on truth

By John Pilger

On 16 October, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation aired an interview with Hillary Clinton: one of many to promote her score-settling book about why she was not elected President of the United States.

Wading through the Clinton book, What Happened, is an unpleasant experience, like a stomach upset. Smears and tears. Threats and enemies. "They" (voters) were brainwashed and herded against her by the odious Donald Trump in cahoots with sinister Slavs sent from the great darkness known as Russia, assisted by an Australian "nihilist", Julian Assange.



ing photograph of a female reporter consoling Clinton, having just interviewed her. The lost leader was, above all, "absolutely a feminist". The thousands of women's lives this "feminist" destroyed while in government - Libya, Syria, Honduras - were of no interest.



In New York magazine, Rebecca Trainster wrote that Clinton was finally "expressing some righteous anger". It was even hard for her to smile: "so hard that the muscles in her face ache". Surely, she concluded, "if we allowed women's resentments the same bearing we allow men's grudges, America would be forced to reckon with the fact that all these angry women might just have a point".

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Messianic Jews battle to halt Israeli immigration block

By Christopher Proudlove

UNITED KINGDOM (ANS) – Israeli believers in Jesus are to mount a public relations blitz to stop Ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox Jews preventing Messianic Jews immigrating to the land of their forefathers. They are to hire a public relations firm in an attempt to halt the large numbers of Messianic Jews being unfairly prevented from settling in Israel.

Messianic Jew David Silver, who heads Haifa-based Out of Zion Ministries (out-of-zion.

com), explained: "Many Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus) who are active in aliyah (immigration) are agreed that the time has come for us to take action to change the way we are



Messianic Jew David Silver and wife Josie

viewed by the Israeli public; that it is time for the Jewish Israeli public to understand that we are still Jews, and thus prepare the way for a revolution and in Messianic Jewish Aliyah.

"To change the way a whole society relates to a very sensitive subject is a huge undertaking and can only be accomplished with much

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In The New York Times, there was a strik-

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and internationally. The value of human life is at an all-time low, so low in fact that the butchery of our children in the womb is excused away as women's health, and infant body parts are sold under the guise of the so-called scientific advances they may or may not yield. The rise of Godless dictators mirrors a time in the early 20th Century when entire nations were lulled into a deadly complacency of the heart, leaving millions in harm's way and still more millions dead. Serial murderers and criminals now feast on the innocent, portraying their gruesome deeds, actions and a lifestyle of subjection imposed on the unbeliever (infidel), and all sold as somehow in the name of a higher power. And false narratives are bandied about in place of common sense, and reason, and in our schools and halls of government, leaving many in search of accountability and truth in an ever changing 21st century dynamic.

So, you see my fellow believers, when we consider all this as it relates to an overall human condition God never intended for us, the Gospel of Jesus Christ keeps coming up as the only definitive solution to what ails this wounded world, and is like a roadmap back to a place in the light. But how do we get that word out? What do we do that hasn't already been done? Is it more of the old ways, or something new that will turn the tide. I would tell you, that while the Gospel as written is the indisputable framework of revival, I'm often floored by the creative and often ingenious ways my missionary friends have come up with to reach out to those in need. That said, sometimes the basics of putting foot to pavement and getting out in the open so all may see and hear us can make all the difference.

Street evangelism? Really? Creating a presence where there was none just an hour before. I guess that sometimes those tried and true approaches are actually the best way to grab the attention of those lost in the wilderness of a life without Christ. And I'm sure there's a certain satisfaction to proclaiming the word to people engaged in the walk of everyday life, as well as sharing one's faith one on one which offers a personal touch to an otherwise reluctant recipient.

14 years ago Lisa M. Campbell wrote an article for "The Good News" about "Christian evangelists serving with Open Air Campaigners or (OAC), folks who go out several times a week and preach the Gospel on city streets, neighborhoods, parks, subways and college campuses. As a non-denominational group, OAC began in 1892 in Australia, and has trained missionaries in more than twenty countries worldwide. Their motto is "Presenting Christ by All

Means Everywhere", and they're dedicated to reaching lost people with the life-saving message of the cross". And as fate would have it, they're also at the core of the very messaging I write about today.

Mark Sohmer of luke-15.org, an experienced "Open Air Campaigner", is one of these "messengers" and I spoke with him recently about his efforts to bring the good work of OAC to New Hampshire. I was a little surprised to learn Mark actually grew up in a Jewish home where he learned that "Jews are not supposed to believe in Jesus." He explained that he became hardened to the name of



Jesus, and even rebuffed and challenged those who professed belief in Jesus while he was in college. But then he met Josh, a somewhat new believer himself, and Mark would learn that God can save anybody...

You see when Josh engaged Mark about how he could deny that which he didn't know anything about, and how he hadn't read the Bible, the most widely read



text in all of human history, Mark became incensed and moved onto his prized intellectual battlefield to prove to his new friend that believing in Jesus was a fools play.

After picking up and saturating himself with the New Testament however, Mark was flabbergasted, (after about a week and a half of exhaustive research and soul searching), to discover that Jesus was actually really JEWISH... Hard as he tried, he could not dismiss the Savior of the world and instead continued down his investigatory pathway only to acknowledge his sin and be saved himself. Jesus Christ was the true and living Messiah... Whoa.... Since that time of realization, Mark's heart has been filled with the gift of Christ's love and mercy, and he's channeled that love into a ministry for the aforementioned lost of this world. Mark's life's desire is that everyone hear the word of God, and that they be saved by its transformational power.

As a side note, and having spent some of my own childhood growing up in a Jewish neighborhood,

I'm always intrigued by the things that bind the Jewish and Christian peoples, and their stories of faith. I'm happy to have had my life influenced at a younger age by these experiences. It truly helped me avoid the pitfalls of stigmas and stereotypes, and I was sure Mark's story would only reinforce my faith and belief systems.

It didn't all happen at once for Mark though, and it's been twenty years since that fateful time when Mark realized that all his college successes and popularity were not the be all and end all in his life. While he would still live out (this) life's greatest expectations



to the fullest, as loving husband to Shelby, father to four beautiful children, and as a successful IT executive with Fidelity Investments, there was something tugging on his heart which had its beginnings during his college years when he simply "couldn't shut up about Jesus". Leaning on what he'd read of John:28, his realization of the text of that passage convinced Mark that the truth of Christ as our Savior was not

only true for him, but for everyone. Thus Mark would summon the courage and ultimately walk away from the norm to answer Christ's call to service.

Mark would eventually cut his teeth as part of OAC and learned that the "the missions organization that no one's ever heard of" was likely the single most effective way to smooth the road to Jesus for the masses. In the end folks, what was Jesus doing back then? Street evangelism... By way of training in an organization that's been around since the 19th Century, Mark learned the art of visualization and object lessons as a means to break the ice with those in need of the Word. Painting on the leftover paper that the Boston Globe was going to throw out, and using that art as a spiritual language of sorts, Mark was growing and thriving in an organization which had laid roots in 35 countries and 20 cities across the U.S.

Eventually landing in the Boston Office, but living in New Hampshire, Mark grew weary of the commute into Bean Town and began to see his way to growing OAC to the New Hampshire area. Sticking with the message of OAC in the sense that it was bringing church to the people, whether in a bank, homeless shelter or kids club, and not so much getting people to the church, a new mission field north of his current one

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was the next most sensible move. With his message of "Turn and Trust", (Repent and Believe), Mark has continued to live out the task laid on his heart by Christ.

Armed with Bible tracts in 35 languages Mark likes to think he's on an international mission no matter his location. And with a goal of 25 by 2025, in terms of outreach branches, his "go where the people are" mentality is working to bring folks to Christ. Welcomed on college campuses for his non-confrontational approach, Mark is a man singing a song I want to hear. Willing to forgo the argument for the conversation about Jesus, he sees the importance of the how and why which sometimes stymies even the most ardent believer. And acknowledging that it's not about the messenger so much as the message, God will work mightily through him, I'm sure of it.

If you hadn't guessed, and while I've been moved and educated by all those whose efforts I've highlighted in His name, my conversation with Mark ranked up there at the top. This is truly a man who I believe God wants in the streets doing the heavy lifting. I hope to take you up on your invitation Mark. Be well...

If you can see what I see in this hands-on approach to the "spreading the Word" part of our responsibility as the saved, please consider donating on Marks web page luke-15.org and hit the donate tab to be part of the solution. Also, Mark has been invited to speak at a "Men's Night Out" to be held at the Halifax Country Club Route

106 Halifax, MA. This would be a great opportunity for those with questions about how to get involved. There will be a dinner and Mark will speak about his two main goals:

1. To Biblically and lovingly share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the lost and
2. To come alongside, encourage, and equip Christians to share their faith and see God work as they have never imagined.

God Bless you all and have a blessed Thanksgiving...

If you would rather mail in a check, please make it out to "Open Air Campaigners" and write "The Sohmer Family" in the "memo" section of the check, or include a note indicating that the funds are to go to The Sohmer Family. Please mail it to:

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