

*“I thank my God...because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” (Phil 1:3-5)*

Dear Partners

*“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”* Jesus spoke these words (Mark 13:31) to the disciples as he discussed the imminent destruction of the Temple and the accompanying *“days of distress unequalled from the beginning”*. In addition to the coming catastrophe for the Jewish nation, Jesus was looking forward to the “End of the Age”, the great day of judgement which would herald the establishment of his kingdom. Just a few decades after these words were spoken, in AD70, the Roman armies led by Titus destroyed Jerusalem including the Temple. Jewish historian Josephus records that over a million people were killed in the siege and subsequent razing of the city.

Terrible as the events of AD70 were, they were but a foreshadowing of the great day of judgement that is to come. Jesus meant *“heaven and earth will pass away”* quite literally. This world will come to an end. We read elsewhere (Matthew 23:37) of Jesus’ anguish as he contemplated what was to come *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.”*

Set against the backdrop of this sort of calamity, the current (at least as I write) collapse of the financial system is of little consequence. Please don’t misunderstand me; the human cost of the coming recession will be high; I expect a long and brutally deep retrenchment. But we do not at this stage face the wholesale slaughter of all the inhabitants of a city (though taxpayer anger may yet make some think that this would be appropriate retribution on the City). And the prospect of being one of those that must face God’s wrath on the Day is too horrific to contemplate: *“Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”* (Revelation 6:16,17)

History tells us that Jesus’ words of warning for the Christians were heeded in AD70. When the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem and ordinary people flocked to the city to celebrate Passover, the Christians fled to the hills. Jesus has warned us of the coming Day; we don’t know when it will be, but come it most certainly will. Like the man who goes away, leaving his servants in charge, we are to keep watch. We do not know when the owner of the house will return, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, will he find us sleeping? We must continue to pray, continue to trust in Christ; we must continue to live for Him.

Jesus said *“my words will never pass away.”* Jesus’ words are true for all eternity. His promises will never fail. And in this context, the word of the gospel must be centre stage. How will people escape the Lamb’s wrath? Jesus’ words give us the answer (for example: *the Son of Man must suffer and be rejected* – Mark 8:31; *the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many* – Mark 10:45).

Gospel Partners Trust is thrilled to be committed to Jesus and his words. Thank you for your partnership in this life-saving ministry.

Simon Pilcher  
Chairman

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## Annual Partners Reception – Monday 11 May 2009, 6 for 6.30pm

Meet other Partners and hear first-hand from some of the people and projects we’re seeking to support  
Location: St Helen’s Church Bishopsgate

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## Contact us

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### GPT funding is divided into three areas:

- Apprenticeships -** Typically a combination of church-based ministry and training, equipping young men and women with ministry gifts, and providing the opportunity for testing whether they have the godliness and gifting for full-time ministry
- Theological College -** Full-time training for three or four years for a life-time of ministry – pastoral ministry in the UK, overseas mission and theological educators and trainers
- Ministry Initiatives -** Pioneers starting ministry from scratch, Church plants, additional workers to develop and grow new areas of ministry

### > Apprenticeships

*Average grant in 2008 - £3,000*

- GPT supported 25 apprentices and 6 ministry apprentice schemes (including three overseas training schemes, one in Siberia and two in Africa). We anticipate at least 10 of these apprentices and scheme seeking further funding in 2009.

*Excerpt from a reference for the leader of a pioneering apprentice scheme in Africa:*

*“He has organisational skills that exceed much of what we see here and a sense of purpose which is exemplary.”*

### > Theological Students

*Average grant in 2008 - £3,500*

- During 2008, 42 students have received funding from GPT to study fully-time at Theological College.
- 25 of these will need further support in 2009.
- We've already received 15 first-time applications for support in 2009.

*The average budget for a couple with children is £30,000, and single students £13,000.*

*“We praise God for your support and what it has enabled us to learn and so. We are confident that a fourth year [at college as a Church of England Ordinand] has further equipped us to proclaim Christ and pastor his people.”*

*“In our final semester my wife was able to take the Engaging with Other Faiths course. I will be raiding her notes for many years to come!”*

### > Ministry Initiatives

*Average grant in 2008 - £4,000*

- GPT helped fund 19 new gospel workers, and 8 church plants in 2008. Our policy is to “pump-prime” these initiatives, and giving funding in such a way to encourage the ministry to be self-funding after the first few years.

*“We have been blessed out of our socks to be enabled to do the work of ministry without financial worries. It is teaching our children not to have a negative view of ministry and to be very thankful to the Lord that He provides, meets and sees our needs.”*

### > Taking the initiative

#### One woman's route into full-time Christian ministry

**Aly Bush – currently a full-time schools worker in Central London** – had just started work as a Chemistry teacher when she was converted, through her new boss inviting her to an evangelistic event. Over the next five years she set up Bible studies and after-schools clubs for pupils. With the encouragement of her boss, Aly went part-time to be better equipped for ministry through studying on the Cornhill Training Course whilst at the same time maintaining her link with the school clubs.



*Aly Bush – Christian Schools worker in London*

At Cornhill she met another enthusiast for taking the gospel into schools, who was also already involved in schools-based ministry. As they made plans to work together, they were put in touch with a charity funding schools workers. They joined CrossTeach firstly as volunteers, then part-time and eventually full-time when they had raised sufficient funds from individuals and

organisations, including GPT.

Aly writes, “My hope over the next two years is to continue and expand my current work in three Westminster Schools and try and build more links with local churches for the longevity of the work.”