



Bro/Sis.....

# THE BIBLE 4 LIFE

Dedication February 2011

Preaching

Have you prayed to the Lord this week to help you with your preaching? How are you showing the Lord that you are ready and willing to get started with His help? Surely if we are asking for help, we have to be ready to commit to action ourselves! Let's not get too comfortable or we may never get started.

We mustn't get so incredibly comfortable that we sit back and wait for others to come forward and do the preaching work that is to be done. Surely a better response would be that we prayerfully explore how we could grow in our preaching and take a few tentative steps outside our comfort zone.

Once in the preaching habit, with the Lord's help you might start to make that comfort zone bigger, confidently and faithfully becoming more comfortable with sharing the word of life with those still in darkness. Let's start getting in the habit of doing more preaching for the Lord than we had perhaps thought possible. Are we not told that with Him... all things are possible?

**This leaflet has been produced as part of 'The Bible4Life' project, marking the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible. Since 1611 we have all had the immense privilege of being able to read the scriptures in our own language, and we are taking this opportunity to mark the occasion with a programme of dedication and preaching.**



### We have started!

The first van load of Bibles and newspapers being delivered at the Campaigns' Fraternal on 12 February.

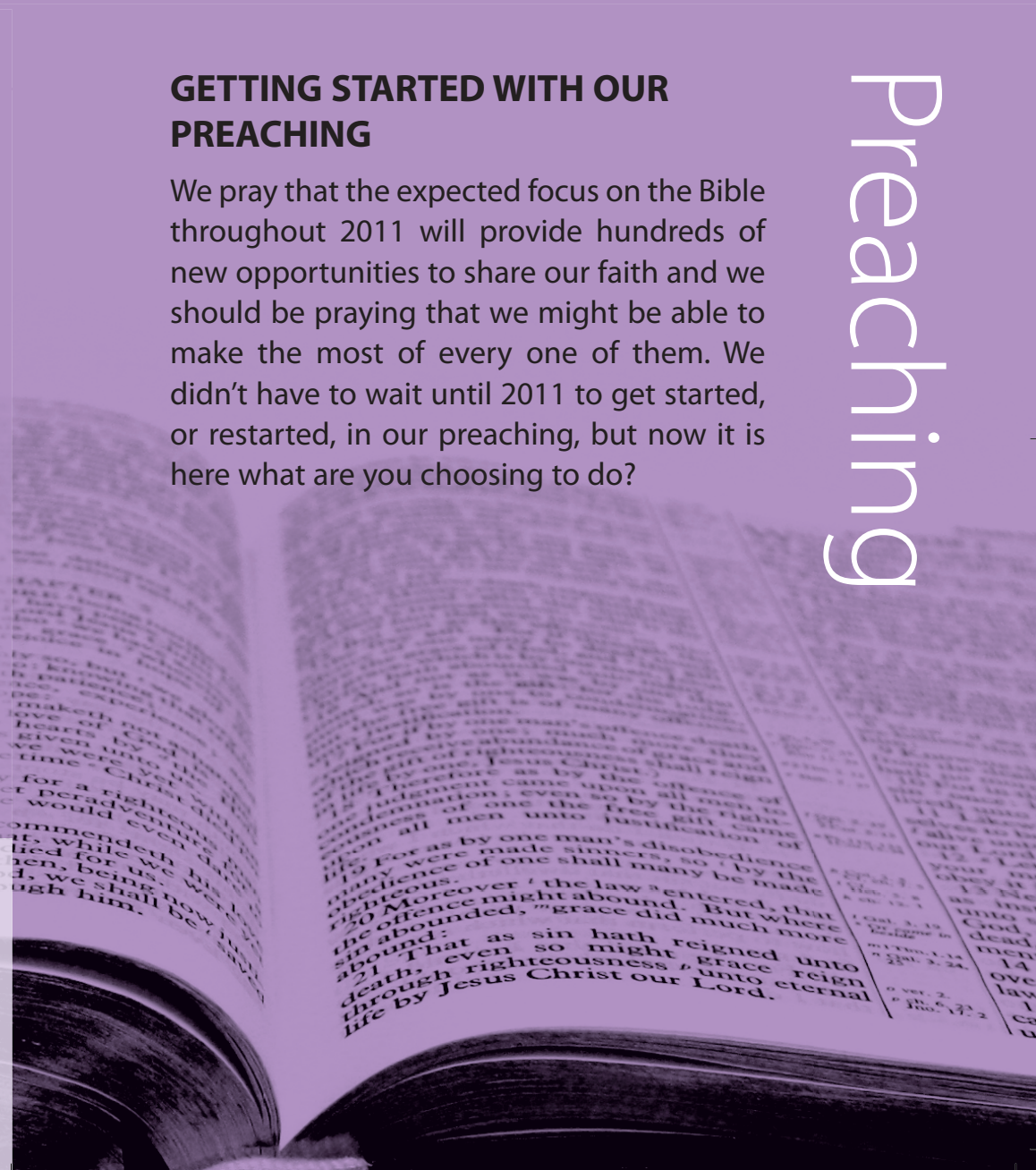
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## GETTING STARTED WITH OUR PREACHING

We pray that the expected focus on the Bible throughout 2011 will provide hundreds of new opportunities to share our faith and we should be praying that we might be able to make the most of every one of them. We didn't have to wait until 2011 to get started, or restarted, in our preaching, but now it is here what are you choosing to do?



[www.thebible4lifededication.org](http://www.thebible4lifededication.org)

## GETTING THE PREACHING HABIT

Wouldn't it be wonderful if preaching was a habit for us, and that rather than talking in terms of 'getting started' with our preaching, it was more a case of 'what shall we do next?' If we accept that being 'ready to preach the word' is a responsibility for every Brother and Sister in Christ, we really should be trying to make it a habit. But how might we start to do that?

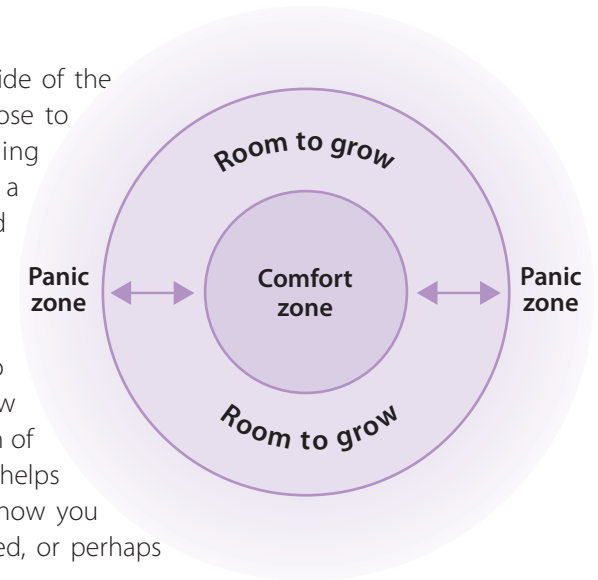
When we are in the habit of doing something, we tend to do it automatically, almost without having to stop and think about it. But like most things that we do out of habit, our preaching efforts can often start slowly and with a degree of uncertainty. Often, just like pushing a heavy object, it takes more effort at first until you get some momentum. If we are out of the 'preaching habit', or perhaps have never really had it in the first place, then getting started might initially feel a bit like hard work. But has it ever been easy for brothers and sisters of any previous generation?

It may be helpful to draw strength from reflecting on 'why' we need to get started. Those early apostles provide examples of faithful preachers acting quickly because they knew that they had the word of life, a good reason for not wasting a moment. When we have a big enough 'reason why' for any call to action, we can find ourselves taking on all kinds of challenges in life. When we reflect on possible reasons for getting started in our preaching we might be reminded of the words used by Paul when he spoke to the Ephesians about 'redeeming the time'. His words convey the idea of time being precious, demanding that we make the most of every opportunity. In these last days with the ever increasing signs of our Master's return being near, what evidence could you possibly still feel you need to see before you have a sense of urgency in response to your call to 'preach the word'?

## GETTING OUTSIDE OUR COMFORT ZONE

There may be a variety of issues that hold us back from getting started in our preaching. One possible cause of us being hesitant is the doubts that come from stepping outside of our comfort zone. You might be aware of the size of your 'preaching comfort zone'. It comprises of those activities that you feel comfortable doing. You can do a simple exercise by taking a blank sheet of paper, drawing a circle and writing down inside it the preaching activities with which you are personally comfortable.

Then draw a second circle outside of the first and start to write down close to the inner circle those preaching activities that you feel would be a little uncomfortable for you and those you feel are a bit beyond you. On the outside of the circles you can write those activities that you feel would be likely to send you into panic. This now offers you a visual representation of your personal comfort zone and helps you to identify some ideas for how you might get your preaching started, or perhaps 'restarted'.



All of those activities listed in the inner circle are the things you could be doing now. You can ask yourself if you are in fact doing these things. If you aren't it could be simply a matter of finding the opportunity because you know you can. It is the outer of the two circles though that offers an opportunity to grow and do more. There are activities here that with prayerful thought and perhaps support you could do.

Take a look at the things written in that second circle. Ask yourself which of those preaching activities are the least uncomfortable for you as this could be where you make a start. A simple next step might be to talk to a brother or sister who you believe to be comfortable with that particular preaching activity and benefit from their experience. Perhaps they could offer you some advice, do some work alongside you or signpost other people who could be of help.

There are of course scriptural examples for us of individuals who learned to step outside their comfort zones in their preaching. The apostle Paul in his first letter to the church at Corinth writes of his determination to put his need to preach the gospel ahead of his natural desires. How far did Paul 'stretch' his comfort zone as he extended it to enable him to reach out to so many different people in different situations? He was constantly willing to be who he needed to be in order to share the gospel.

*"I have become all things to all men that I by all means might save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you."* 1 Cor 9 v22 - 23