

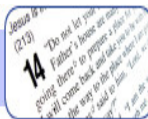
# CLUB OASIS MARCH 07

## Difficult choices in the Garden

When we were living in Ireland, we owned a nursery and over the years produced many thousands of plants, mostly shrubs and conifers. Every plant was produced for a purpose, usually flowers or foliage colours but sometimes fruit in the form of ornamental berries. It was always a disappointment when they did not "perform" and sometimes you had to make tough choices as a batch of plants may



'The Word For Today'



## ALL OVER THE WORLD THIS GOSPEL IS BEARING FRUIT AND GROWING... COLOSSIANS 1:6

We say: 'All God expects of us is faithfulness!' Wrong! He expects faithfulness - and fruitfulness! Fruitfulness is a major theme of the New Testament: a) '...I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last...' (John 15:16 NIV). God wants to see lasting results from your ministry b) 'This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples' (John 15:8 NIV). A successful ministry is proof that we are following in Christ's footsteps c) 'We pray... that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work...' (Colossians 1:10 NIV). Our ultimate goal should be to please the Lord in all that we do.

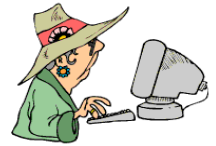
The nation of Israel lost its privileges because of unfruitfulness. Listen: '...the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit' (Matthew 21:43 NIV). The same principle applies to churches. We've all seen God remove His hand of blessing from churches - churches that have been greatly blessed in the past - because they became self-satisfied, self-absorbed and stopped bearing fruit.

The word fruit is used about 55 times in the New Testament and refers to repentance (Matthew 3:8); practicing the truth (Matthew 7:16-21); answered prayer (John 15:7-8); giving to God (Romans 15:26-28); winning the lost (Romans 1:13). The truth is, God wants us to be faithful - and fruitful! As long as there is still one unreached soul for whom Christ died, our work has not been completed

See OASIS home Page to receive the Word for Today EVERY DAY [www.arc-en-provence/oasis](http://www.arc-en-provence/oasis)

Also Click on [www.ucb.co.uk](http://www.ucb.co.uk) to find out about Christian radio and tv

Club oasis hopes to link its friends through the wonders of the web; OASIS meets on the Second Sunday of Every Month At the home of Shirley and Peter Massey 1801 Chemin des Pailles LORGUES 0494 739337 [www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis](http://www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis)



not. be saleable. I can easily understand how much more critical a fruit grower would need to be.

The parable of the fruitless fig and its near demise is a blunt reminder to us that God has an expectation that we also should be fruitful and that God's patience is not endless. But there is also the opportunity for repentance, forgiveness and another chance. In the parable the vineyard manager said to the owner " Let me tend to it for one more year and give it a chance to perform". Jesus pleads to His Father and intervenes on our behalf with the promise to help us "be fruitful".....the rest is really up to us !



Pass Club Oasis onto a friend .....

## CONNECT PRAYER GROUP

Connect meets on the first Wednesday of the month between 6 and 7.00 pm at Domain de St Marc, Chemin des Pailles LORGUES Details from Peter at 0494 739337 or Alistair at 0674934208



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## Oasis Christian Fellowship

### EASTER 2007



#### Good Friday April 6th

" When it's all been said and done " at Shirley and Peter Massey's home 1801 Chemin des Pailles Lorgues

12 Noon followed by a simple lunch

#### Easter Day April 8th

Sharing with Prasada at MONTAUROUX 11.00am and St John's, Maison des Pères LORGUES 5.00pm phone 0494 739337 or email [oasis@themasseys.fr](mailto:oasis@themasseys.fr)



**Club Oasis** now reaches email addresses as far away as America and New Zealand, and closer to home, the UK and Ireland. If you know anyone who you think might like to be added to the group email please send us their address at [oasis@themasseys.fr](mailto:oasis@themasseys.fr)

## The Little Apple

The little apple clung tightly to the branch as a gentle breeze blew by. An older apple noticing the younger apple's despair, chuckled and said, "Looks like your holding on to that branch for dear little buddy."

The little apple glanced up at the older apple and said, "I am! I don't want to fall to the ground. Don't you know it's hard and dusty down there? The ground is filled with worms and creepy crawling bugs. Why just take a look for yourself, can't you see all the rotten apples down there?"

The older apple thought for a moment then replied, "I know you're concerned about falling from the tree, but some good things have come from the ground."



"That's not the life for me," retorted the little apple, "I plan on being hand picked by a special family, taken to their home and placed into a beautiful fruit bowl. With my shiny red skin, I shall be the most delicious looking piece of fruit in the entire bowl!"

The older apple gently replied, "There is much more to being an apple than just having shiny red skin."

"Yes, I know!" the little apple quickly interrupted, "One of the children will probably take me to school for lunch or perhaps have me for a snack after school. They will know that I was more than just a beautiful apple with a shiny red peel, they will find out that my fruit is great tasting and healthy for them." "Yes, yes, you could be all those things for a season," the older apple tried to reply.

But once again the little apple broke in, "Why after they've finished eating the fruit, and all that is left is my core they will... they will..." the little apple's voice dropped, "They will probably throw my core in the trash."

"Yes," replied the older apple, "That is what your life could be like, if you decide to live for the moment and choose to reap the quick rewards." "What ever do you mean?" asked the little apple, "What other life is there?"

The older apple spoke, "I have been trying to tell you, if you'd just slow down for a moment and listen." "Well please hurry, as it appears that the wind is picking up again," the little apple said nervously.

Soothingly the older apple explained, "When the winds come you may be shaken from the tree and fall to the ground. It is then that your shiny red skin will keep you from splitting apart and becoming applesauce. Once on the ground a hungry bird or squirrel may find you and carry you away from the base of the tree. Once you've met their needs and filled their stomachs they shall leave your core and a little fruit behind. It is then that your real work begins."

"That doesn't sound a bit better," the little apple screeched, "in fact it sounds worse!" "Please allow me to finish," the older apple said sternly, "Once your left on the ground, the rest of your fruit shall slowly rot and blend into the ground. It is at this point that your seeds shall be buried into the earth. For a period of time the seeds will remain in the ground, but then ever so slowly something wonderful begins to happen. The seeds begin to sprout, breaking through the dirt. The sunlight and the rain help the sprout to grow into a small tree. Within a few seasons the tree shall grow big enough to start producing apples of its own. From that season on the tree shall produce hundreds of apples each season. So you see little apple there is so much more you can be." All the little apple could say was, "Wow!"

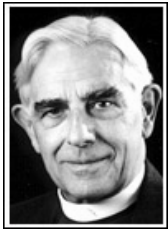
As the winds picked up you could see both the apples swinging in the breeze hoping beyond hope to fall to the ground and begin their life's work.

Our lives can be very much like the apples, we could choose to live for the moment, to fulfill our own plans and desires. The plans we have for our lives may be good, but God always has a better plan for us if we would only take the time, be patient and listen to what He is softly telling us. We can surround ourselves with many "things" to make us comfortable, but alas these things only last for a season. Or we could use the time, talent and money God gave us for His purpose and glory. It is only then that we can reach our full potential.



\* \* \* \*

***And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God  
Col 1:10***



### TIMOTHY Dudley Smith

Bishop Dudley-Smith was born 26 December 1926 in Manchester, England. He was educated at Tonbridge School and Pembroke College, Cambridge. He was ordained a deacon in 1950 and a priest in 1951. He served as Archdeacon of Norwich, 1973-81 and as Bishop of Thetford, 1981-91. Since his retirement in 1991, he has lived in the Cathedral City of Salisbury, England.

Bishop Dudley-Smith has been writing hymn texts for more than 30 years. This usually happened during his holidays in Cornwall and he still writes 6 or 8 new hymns each year. As a hymn writer, has published approximately 250 hymn texts (no music, but many to well-known tunes) in four single-author collections (see below). Many of his hymns have appeared in published hymnals throughout the English-speaking world and in translation, including six in the *New English Hymnal* (1986). Eighteen Dudley-Smith hymn texts can be found in Hope's new hymnal *Worship & Rejoice* (2001). He is a member of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland. The Hymn Society of the United States and Canada has named him a "Fellow", a rare accomplishment for a British hymn writer.

Asked to write the biography of his friend John Stott the task required two volumes. The first volume JOHN STOTT - THE MAKING OF A LEADER and he has just completed the second volume.

One of the constant themes in his hymns was fruitfulness of God and ourselves !

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**Fruitful trees the Spirit's sowing,  
may we ripen and increase, fruit to life  
eternal growing, rich in love and joy and  
peace.**

**Laden branches freely bearing, gifts the giver  
loves to bless; here is fruit that grows by  
sharing, patience kindness gentleness.**

**Rooted deep in Christ our master, Christ our  
pattern and our goal; teach us as the years  
fly faster, goodness, faith and self-control.**

**Fruitful trees the Spirit's tending, may we  
grow till harvests cease; till we taste in life  
unending, heavens love and joy and Peace**

T Dudley-Smith

## AMAZING GRACE Postscript see club Oasis Feb

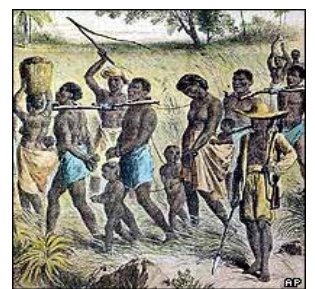
### Celebrating 200 years of Abolition

Last week, the great great great granddaughter of William Wilberforce walked 15 miles chained together with others in the memory of the lasting memory of her relatives mission and achievements 200 years ago, the story of which is told in the film released this week.

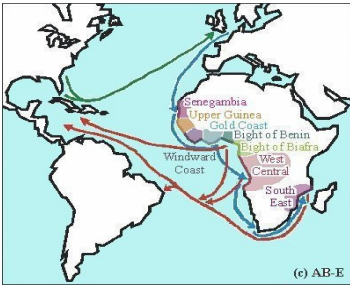


**William Wilberforce** Played by **Ioan Gruffudd** in **Amazing Grace**

**William Wilberforce** was born in Hull, England in 1759, and first elected to the House of Commons at the age of 21. A turning point in his religious life was a tour of Europe. In the luggage of a travelling companion he saw a copy of William Law's book, *A Serious Call To a Devout and Holy Life*. He asked his friend, "What is this?" and received the answer, "One of the best books ever written." The two of them agreed to read it together on the journey, and Wilberforce embarked on a lifelong program of setting aside Sundays and an interval each morning on arising for prayer and religious reading. He considered his options, including the clergy, and was persuaded by Christian friends that his calling was to serve God through politics. He was a major supporter of programs for popular education, overseas missions, parliamentary reform, and religious liberty. He is best known, however, for his untiring commitment to the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. During his time in



Parliament, Wilberforce led the political battle to abolish slavery and its trade throughout the British Empire. He introduced numerous bills to Parliament in the 18th and early 19th centuries, all of which were defeated. In hopes of persuading the British government to support abolition, Wilberforce and his fellow abolitionists scoured England, collecting evidence of the slave trade's crimes. As part of this effort, Wilberforce collected 390,000 signatures from British citizens in support of the anti-slavery cause. Finally, after 20 years of struggle, Wilberforce saw the end of the British slave trade when his 1807 abolition bill passed by a large .



majority. Twenty-six years later, just three days before his death, slavery was abolished across all British colonies as well. Despite chronic illness and repeated defeat of his anti-slavery bills in

Parliament, Wilberforce persisted in his mission to abolish injustice in the world. For his abiding courage and conviction, Wilberforce earned the title, "conscience of Parliament."

**William Wilberforce; a truly fruitful life**

One of William Wilberforce's closest friends was John Newton who wrote **AMAZING GRACE**

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**In Jesus Name**  
for those we love;



*When I am praying the most eloquently, I am getting the least accomplished in my prayer life. But when I stop getting eloquent and give God less theology and shut up and just gaze upward and wait for God to speak to my heart He speaks with such power that I have to grab a pencil and a notebook and take notes on what God is saying to my heart." -A. W. Tozer*

**Please remember in your prayers .....**

**Priestly** after the recent loss of his wife Andrea after 66 years of devoted married life and that his new home will be soon available.

**Richard's** family, after his short battle with cancer and their coming to terms with losing him. And also for Richards's dear friend **Sue** .

**Trevor and Anne** after the recent loss of Trevor's brother

**The English Speaking Community** here in the Var, for fellowship, for friendship, for harmony and for all those who work for these things.

**The Lonely**, that their situations may be made known and eased and their needs met.

**Peace** in places of unrest particularly thinking of the displaced and the threatened in the Middle

East. For religious tolerance not conflict, for unity not division, for harmony and not discord.

**For the French Election**, that the needs and hopes of the community are heard and the right decision made.

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A week is a long time in.....

**Holy week a challenging time**

As the journey through Lent approaches its climax and we approach that extraordinary week when worship changed to weeping, palm fronds to thorns and shouts of Alleluia to roars of Crucify, we are challenged about our own attitudes towards Jesus.

*Challenging God when the words we speak fail to match the life we lead challenge our hypocrisy*

*When we choose our friends and other folk we ignore challenge our prejudice*

*When our point of view is the only one that counts and challenges our intolerance*

*When love of possessions is the focus of our lives and challenges our selfishness*

*When our desire to run ahead causes others to stumble which challenges our impulsiveness*

*When our outward show of faith becomes holier than thou and challenges our theology*

*Challenging God, when our lives no longer centre on your Kingdom and your call challenges our obedience*



**Dear Lord allow our hearts to be softened, our minds to be opened, our faith to be deepened and our lives to be enlightened by the knowledge of your passion and sacrifice for each one of us until we can say;**

**Alleluia He is Risen Indeed**