

About...

I want to touch a thousand lives

...how and why it was written

This song was written out of grief on the day I processed the death of one of the most remarkable people I have ever met – Janet Hosier.

When she died, appropriately on Valentine's day, in 2008, my friend Debbie called me with the news. Quite simply I was devastated – I needed to do something. I left work early, came home, and wrote this song.

It isn't a lament though, it's a celebration of her legacy – a desire to grow into a woman of faith like she was.

...the dedication

Janet Hosier remains one of the strongest inspirations in my life. I doubt she ever knew quite how remarkable she was, or just how many people's lives she touched.

Together with Sheila Meaning, Janet founded Watford New Hope Trust after deciding to take the words of Isaiah 58 - 'take the homeless poor into your homes' - literally. She was remarkable for a number of reasons.

The first was that she was really quite ordinary – a middle-aged housewife who lived in Watford. But she became extraordinary when she allowed the power of the gospel to challenge her to love like Jesus – sacrificially, wholeheartedly and graciously.

The second was that the extraordinary work that she and Sheila pioneered and championed united so many churches in the area to come together and reach out in unity.

The third was just how gracious she was. She was one of the few Christians I have met who could literally alter the atmosphere of a room simply by walking into it – she carried such an incredible sense of the Holy Spirit's presence. And the fruits of the Spirit poured out of her – love, peace, a quiet joy – working alongside her was the most incredible thing, especially because she was so gracious and quick to praise and affirm.

There were literally hundreds of people at her funeral – many of them homeless or formerly homeless people that she, and the Trust, had helped. They spoke of her as embodying love. I sat and cried through the whole service. To me too she embodied love. But she also embodied hope – if we give our lives to God, truly we can change the world.

...how, where and when it could be used

This song is quite a personal, reflective song of worship and would be difficult to lead congregationally. So it's more appropriate to sing over people or to perform as part of a response or reflective time.

About...

I want to touch a thousand lives

...its place on the journey to where world and worship meet

I think if I could only sing one song for the rest of my life this might be the one I'd pick. Just because it expresses what I want my life to be about, and most importantly, who I want it to be about.

I want to live a life of worship which makes people see Jesus in me – and for him to be remembered when I'm gone. I want to touch lives because I want to be like him... because this is worshipping him.