

99 Readers and One Crazy Aunt

I like change. I'm one of those "seasons" kind of guys who gets excited about new beginnings. But I also realize I'm in the minority and that, for most people, change is like the crazy aunt whom you're perfectly OK with seeing only once in a blue moon.

Lately I've received a handful of e-mails and calls from readers who apparently don't adjust well to change when it comes to this magazine. With any major shift you're bound to have some strong reactions and opinions. And our last issue, which kicked off some major changes with *Charisma's* look, feel and tone, has certainly garnered reaction—99 percent of which has been positive.

But the few concerns I've heard made me wonder if I needed to clarify at least three things. Jesus told the parable of the shepherd leaving the 99 to go after the one; here's my attempt to pursue the change-challenged "ones" and clear the air of any misunderstandings about *Charisma's* new season.

1) *Charisma* isn't abandoning our older readers. Or any readers, for that matter. I still laugh at some of the comments I've heard about us "jumping ship on the older generation." A fresh new design and feel doesn't mean we're ignoring our more mature readers, nor does it mean we're favoring younger ones. If anything, we're more attune than ever to ideas from readers of all ages. (Many of the changes you see here originated with you!) As our April issue highlighted, it's critical that both young and old come together today within the Spirit-filled community. I believe *Charisma* fosters such a convergence on a monthly basis by letting every generation—boomers, busters, millennials, mosaics ... whatever you are—know what the Holy Spirit is doing

on a broader scale.

2) Lee Grady isn't going anywhere. At least not in our magazine. Lee's become a prominent voice of truth within the church who continually challenges us to a higher level of Christ-likeness. As a contributing editor, he's still involved with each issue of *Charisma*, and his Fire in My Bones column will conclude each issue. We know Lee's words resonate with believers around the world. Aside from that, he's a cool guy and a good friend to our team. We think we'll keep him.

3) *Charisma* isn't forsaking Christian news. If anything, we're expanding our coverage and delivering it in more ways (check out p. 56 for what's on our new mobile app). Fair or not, *Charisma* has been blasted in the past for reporting on the good, the bad and the ugly. (OK, mainly we're criticized for the bad and the ugly parts.) Yet when we purposefully *don't* cover the latest scandal within the Spirit-filled community, readers tell us they're frustrated at having to find out about it from other sources. So here's what we think is a happy median: When possible, we'll minimize our print coverage of "scandal stories," opting instead to spend more ink on the positive elements of the Holy Spirit's work around the world. For those who want the full scoop (including the bad and the ugly), is the place to go, with developing news stories, features and more posted throughout each day.

Our purpose as a magazine isn't to frustrate our readers but to serve you. So feel free to let me know what you think of these changes. I promise, I won't treat you like the crazy aunt.

CONTRIBUTING TO THIS ISSUE ...

At 31, **David Platt** isn't just one of the youngest megachurch pastors in history. He's also way smarter than the average bear—the man has five degrees (and counting) and can recite most of the New Testament from memory.

As a freelance writer in Singapore, **Karon Ng** has contributed articles to magazines, newspapers and e-publications. She devours a book a week (on average) and loves chocolate. Not so much for mushrooms.

Recording artist, worship leader, author and speaker **Alvin Slaughter** has never missed a *Seinfeld* episode. His secret passion is to record a CD of Barry Manilow's greatest hits. You read that right—Barry Manilow.

T.J. Harrington has a master's in political science and is interested in how the spiritual and political connect. He works as a consultant for political candidates and on policy-change initiatives. Thus the blue shirt and red power tie.