

ANYWHERE, ANYTIME!

Joseph Orton was born in England in 1795. In 1831, he was assigned to the colony of New South Wales as a missionary. Within a year of his arrival, Joseph made several long trips over the rugged Blue Mountains to preach to the outlying settlements. Rather than looking for a church to plant or a building to build, Orton would preach whenever the opportunity arose. Every time he broke his long and difficult journey, he would preach to whoever would listen, whether in a settler's hut, or a roadside inn.

On one such three-week journey to Bathurst, Orton wrote that his heart went out for the welfare of the people who so seldom heard the Gospel preached. He felt that all his efforts would be amply repaid if just one soul were saved.

He was even found on more than one occasion stopped along the road-side preaching to chain gangs of 50 -300 men. They had been convicted of offences in the colony and sentenced to penal labour. These men probably saw themselves as the outcasts of the outcasts, and were probably treated as such. And yet, they were very attentive to Joseph's preaching and some were even reduced to tears as they heard the offer of Divine mercy to even the worst of sinners.

Men and women like Joseph Orton have given Australia a strong Christian foundation; not a formal faith in name only, centred on services and buildings, but a faith that strives for Christ-likeness.

Joseph Orton has also given us a great example to follow today as we minister to lost Australians. We don't need to wait for Sunday and let the Pastor witness. We can let our light shine for Jesus anywhere, anytime. That includes work, school, day, night, wherever there is a lost soul hungry for the truth.