

6. LIFE UNDER THE INFLUENCE.

The roadside railings on most of Khartoum's bridges show evidence of past accidents. Each dent, buckle and gap represents a moment of trauma or tragedy for someone.

I remember one day two years ago when a bus plunged from the Shambat bridge near my home, into the river Nile. Over a dozen people tragically died. Somehow the bus had broken out of control.

From time to time since then, as I have walked across that same bridge, I have watched soldiers from a nearby camp in training . They appear to be required to jump from the bridge into the muddy brown water below. It seems well supervised, and so far as I know, no-one gets hurt.

There is a lesson we can all learn by noticing the biggest difference between the bus incident and the training soldiers.

On one hand the people on the bus were unconsciously committed to a vehicle that went out of control, smashing through the railings, becoming the major part of a tragic accident.

On the other hand the soldiers carefully and deliberately climbed on to the railings and jumped when the command was given, under the watchful eye of their officer and with safety ropes to hand.

As I look around I see too many people here who live carelessly pleasing themselves. To me, they give evidence that they are *not* Christians, whatever they may call themselves. Genuine Christians keep in step with God the Holy Spirit, all through their daily lives. Their life- choices always honour God. Their minds are controlled by the Spirit, who blesses them with the life and peace of Jesus Christ, in whatever circumstances they have to face.

Were we honest enough to admit it, some of our businesses, our homes and even our churches, may display the damage done by past incidents where somebody has been out of control. Much future trauma and tragedy in work life, home life and church life could be avoided simply, by submitting ourselves to the controlling influence of Jesus Christ, all of the time.