

## Where are the Christian voices?

*Social Issues briefing #095, 09/06/2011.*

*Over the past few months it has been my privilege to contribute to Kel Richards' Sunday night program on radio 2CH. Today's briefing is from Kel. He shows how your Christian thinking can reach others, with surprising ease. And, he asks **you** to join his show. Give it a go this weekend!*

– Andrew C

Carbon tax ... live animal exports ... refugees held in detention centres (or shipped to Malaysia) ... Muslim billboards in Sydney ... chaplains in schools ... gay marriage ... hotly debated issues in our society – but as a journalist glued to the media, I am not hearing Christian voices contributing to the wider discussion.

Are we waiting for denominational leaders to speak for us? Are we talking to each on Christian blogs and websites and in Christian magazines, but not to the wider society?

We can do better! Christian voices can (and should) be heard! But how? The letters pages of newspapers sometimes appear to reflect the editorial slant of the paper. They are hard to get into at the best of times. I want thoughtful, articulate, opinionated Christians to think about another medium: **open line radio**.

Open line radio reaches **tens of thousands** of our fellow Australians. Open line radio presenters are constantly looking for callers who will make “good radio” (well expressed, well thought-out opinions). Presenters of these programs may have their own slant, but callers of every point of view are welcome – as long as they're interesting. (I've spent years producing and presenting these programs. I know that *all* I and my colleagues want are callers who are “good talent”.)

Open line radio is hungry for content. It churns through more opinions **every hour** than the newspaper letters page does in a week. And open line radio is open for Christians to become public voices to the wider community – instead of staying silent, or talking to each other, or waiting for a denominational leader to say something.

When you hear an issue in the news and you think “That's wrong,” say so! When you hear an idea in the news and think “That's good – that should be encouraged,” say so!

Here's how to get on to an open line program (and have an impact):

- Listen (for a little while at least) to the program you want to get on to.
- Think about your message – have a clear reason for calling.
- Don't write out a script of what you want to say.
- Do jot down a few bullet points to help you remember what you want to say.
- Can you summarise your message in a slogan? If you can, jot it down – repeat it several times during your call.
- Be gracious to the producer – and explain what you want to say briefly and clearly.
- Be gracious to the presenter – and get straight to the point.

**And here's how to practice your open line technique:** call my Sunday night program on 2CH between 10pm and midnight any Sunday night. You'll get to air, you'll get a sympathetic hearing, and you'll polish your open line technique.

Here's the number to call any Sunday night **1300-13-1170**. Talk through what you want to say with my producer. She'll help you sharpen your arguments before you go on the air.

**Call me on a Sunday night.** Develop your skills. Then become a part of the wider public debate on as many shows as possible. Become a Christian voice heard by thousands.

- **Kel Richards**  
Radio 2CH

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