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## DIGITAL MOVEMENT GAINS MOMENTUM 10

### NEWS

PUBLIC EVANGELISM SEES SUCCESS  
IN NEW ZEALAND 8

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## PRESIDENT AS LEADER

Every week, on average, I receive an email or letter requesting that I, as president of the South Pacific Division (SPD), fix a particular problem. As a leader, one of my roles is to work with people and solve difficult situations. However, the thinking behind the request is usually that I have executive power to do what I think is best. In other words, I have the authority of the CEO of a company or the president of a country. After all, the title we give leaders in our Church is "president". Whether it is George Bush, Barack Obama or Donald Trump, the president of the USA is considered the most powerful person in the world, and they do have some executive power to do exactly what they think best.

However, within our Church, the president, or for that matter any of the senior officers—secretary and chief financial officers or treasurer—do not have executive power or authority. The senior officers of the Church are responsible to the executive committee. The executive committee has the power and authority; not those in the position of leadership. In other words, as president I am accountable to the executive committee and it is their decisions that have executive authority not my decisions.

In reality, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is structured with the people having the power and authority. This is the biblical model that the Church aims to implement. Our fundamental beliefs highlight the priesthood of every believer. Every follower of Jesus who belongs to the Seventh-day Adventist Church receives the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit living within the person is the presence of Jesus in the disciple's life. The Holy Spirit gives power for a person to become more like Jesus in character and lifestyle. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to each person for ministry and witness so we can make more disciples. God gives the power and authority to each disciple of Jesus.

Disciples of Jesus form local communities of faith—or churches—that coordinate and oversee the work of the followers of Jesus.

Within the Adventist Church the church board does the coordinating and overseeing and has the executive

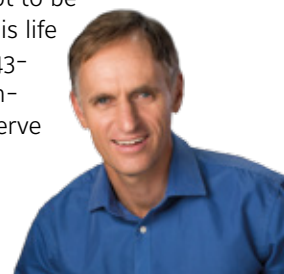
authority in the local setting. These churches chose representative members who they trust to be involved at the different levels of the organisation—the conference/mission, union or division of the General Conference. Each of these entities has executive committees who are the authority within the territory to which they have been assigned.

If the matter involves a local church the local conference/mission deals with it. If the matter involves a conference/mission, the union deals with it and if it involves a union then the relevant division of the General Conference works through the matter. Even the General Conference cannot dictate to a local church an action unless the General Conference executive committee has voted it and it is within their authority.

The Church has an extensive committee system with representation and skill from many levels in order to make sure the people have the power and the authority. No one person within our Church system has executive power or authority. However, human nature does challenge our system. This should not surprise us because even Jesus had challenges with His disciples on how they perceived leadership.

Just before Jesus went to Calvary, two of His closest disciples, James and John, asked for special privilege and position—a seat next to Jesus in His kingdom. This would give them more power and authority. When the other disciples discovered this secret request they were indignant—because they wanted the same benefits of leadership from their perspective. Jesus used this as a teaching moment—turning cultural leadership and expectations upside down: "... whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:43–45, ESV). Simply, leaders and committees are to reflect Jesus and serve His values and purpose.

**GLENN TOWNEND**  
CONSULTING EDITOR



### senior consulting editor

glenn townend

### senior editor

jarrod stackelroth

### assistant editors

kent kingston

maritza brunt

vania chew

linden chuang (digital)

### graphic designer

theodora amuimuia

### copyeditor

tracey bridcutt

### noticeboard

julie laws

### letters

editor@record.net.au

### news & photos

news@record.net.au

### noticeboard

ads@record.net.au

### subscriptions

subscriptions@record.net.au

+ 61 (03) 5965 6300

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### website

record.adventistchurch.com

### adventist media

locked bag 1115

wahroonga

nsw 2076 australia

+ 61 (02) 9847 2222

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"Opening of Digital Discipleship 2017."

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## ROLL OUT THE WELCOME MAT

Remember the first time you visited a new church and how awkward you felt not knowing anyone? This experience is not unique to you and may be one of the reasons people stop coming to church or keep shopping for one that makes them feel welcome.

During a visit with old friends from a church I pastored 23 years ago I was surprised and disappointed at the stories I was told of family members who had such an experience. Of most concern were stories like this one:

"Our son and daughter-in-law decided they would like their children to experience Sabbath School as they had done when they were children. So they went to an Adventist church near where they lived. They walked in, took their children to Sabbath School and walked out. Tragically, no-one had spoken to them. So they decided to go to the local Baptist church where they were welcomed and made to feel wanted. Today their children are enjoying Sunday School and our son and daughter-in-law are now actively involved in this church."

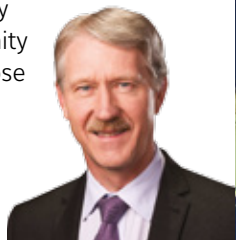
I heard the same story more than once over the weekend. It forced me to ask, "How aware are we of new persons entering our churches? Are we missing an easy opportunity to reconnect people with Jesus and our Church?"

I know many of our churches work hard at welcoming visitors but how effective are we at this and can we do better?

Research indicates that most visitors have decided whether or not to return to your church before the worship service has begun. While clean and attractive entry spaces increase the likelihood of a favourable impression, the most important thing is the friendliness of the members.

Making visitors feel welcome must be an important goal for our Church. After all, our churches are not just for our benefit. They play a part in sharing the good news of Jesus by providing an opportunity to meet and greet those who visit.

**BRAD KEMP**  
NZPUC PRESIDENT



## NEWS

### VANUATU ADVENTISTS WELCOME NEW PRESIDENT

KENT KINGSTON/MARITZA BRUNT

After three rounds of voting, Tallis Obed Moses was elected Vanuatu's head of state on July 6.

According to Radio NZ, Reverend Moses is a Presbyterian minister well respected for his moral character. "Our prayers are with the new president of the coun-

try," said Pastor Nos Terry Mailalong, who leads the Adventist Church's 23,000 members in Vanuatu. "He now has big shoes to fill left by Baldwin Lonsdale."

President Lonsdale died suddenly on June 17, after serving in the largely ceremonial role from 2014 (*Adventist Record*, July 29).

At least three of the 16 candidates were clergy, including two Adventist pastors. Pastor Dorolyn Laloyer, the only female candidate, is also the only commissioned Adventist woman pastor in Vanuatu. Pastor John Lee-man, the previous president of the Adventist Church in Vanuatu, was the other Adventist candidate.

"All the presidents of the country from independence [1979] up until now have been either Presbyterian, Catholic or Anglican," said Pastor Mailalong. "We hope when the time is right, the Lord will allow an Adventist [to be] in that position."

Pastor Moses' first public appearance as president was on Sabbath,



PASTOR MAILALONG WITH PRESIDENT MOSES AND HIS WIFE ESTELLA.

July 15, when he and his wife Estella worshipped with church members at the Freshwind Adventist Community Church.

As part of the program, Pastor Moses took the opportunity to thank Pastor Mailalong for encouraging him to apply for the presidency.

"I am standing here today to thank members of the Adventist Church and the Vanuatu Mission for your prayers throughout the country for the government, our nation and the head of state, because without your prayers, we would not have come as far as we have today," he said.

Pastor Moses also thanked the wider Adventist Church in Vanuatu for their continued support for people in need in rural communities throughout Vanuatu, specifically mentioning the work carried out by ADRA Vanuatu.

"Thank you also for your contributions towards the social sectors of Vanuatu through your education and

health systems, which have contributed significantly towards the development of our human resources to arrive where we are today as an Independent Republic," he said.

As a gift, Pastor Mailalong presented the newly elected head of state with a book on leadership.



PATHFINDERS WELCOME THE NEW PRESIDENT.



## NORTHERN AUSTRALIAN BIG CAMP SEES TRIPLE ORDINATION

THEODORA AMUJUIA

"Love God, love people and bring the two together," were the three keys to ministry presented by South Pacific Division president Glenn Townend to the ordination candidates at the Northern Australian Big Camp in Townsville, Qld.

Three families were ordained into ministry on July 1: Pastor Daniel and Katy Matteo, Pastor James and Omera London, and Pastor Christos and Raquel Spero.

Pastor Matteo graduated from Avondale College in 2012 and was appointed assistant pastor at Mossman, Cairns, Edmonton and Weipa as well as chaplain at Cairns Adventist College. Today, he is pastor of Mossman, Edmonton and the Cairns Northern Beaches church plant. He and wife Katy have two children, Grace and Sam. At 11am on the same morning of the ordination, Grace was baptised in the junior tent. Pastor Matteo's passion is to facilitate church-planting cultures in churches.

Pastor Christos Spero also graduat-

ed in 2012 and started working in the Tasmanian conference at Scottsdale and Launceston churches with Pastor Alfredo Campos. In mid-2015, he was appointed youth director for Northern Australia. Last year he married Raquel.

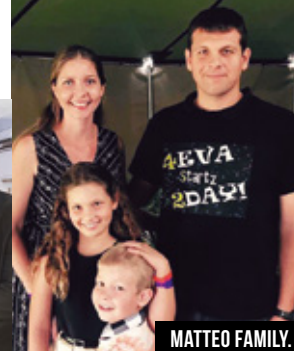
James London, originally from Canada, married Omera in 2004. Graduating from Avondale College in 2012, Pastor London is now ministering in Innisfail and Tully. His passion is to see churches have a deeper connection with God and that church becomes a place where people not only hear about Jesus, but see Him living as well.

President Townend had a clear message for the ministers: "First and foremost, love your families—I didn't do it perfectly . . . in fact some of the things my son said to me about my work and my priorities really challenged me . . . I didn't get it all right, but I

made some changes and praise God, there was a turnaround in him and in me."



RAQUEL AND CHRISTOS SPERO.



OMERA AND JAMES LONDON.

MATTEO FAMILY.



PRESIDENTS AND PASTORS PRAY OVER THE ORDINATION CANDIDATES.

## FIRST BAPTISM IN TIMBER CREEK

JARROD STACKELROTH/DON FEHLBERG

A new town has been opened up to the Adventist message in a remote area of the Northern Territory with the baptism of a 29-year-old Aboriginal woman on Sabbath, July 15.

Shatrina Jones lives at Timber Creek—600 kilometres south-west of Darwin. Pastor Don Fehlberg, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries' remote area senior pastor, assisted by Andrew Johnson, literature evangelist team leader in NT, baptised Shatrina in a beautiful creek backed by a small waterfall in Timber Creek.

"There is great excitement here in Timber Creek," said Pastor Fehlberg. "After my appeal for baptism we now have a total of 16 adults who are requesting baptism. It is a wonderful response from a new community where 12 months ago we had no contacts at

all and we praise the Lord."

A health demonstration accompanies the evangelism program run by Pastor Fehlberg.

"We are also making good contacts from Keldirk Station," he said. "Five people from there are really enjoying the meetings. One senior lady commented after the Sabbath program 'this is really good news. I will attend every meeting while you are here'."

Ms Jones' journey began in August 2016, when, along with her cousin Desley Jones, she visited Katherine. The women were praying for a Bible and two literature evangelists, Marion Jones and Sue Wilson, called at the house where they were staying. The



PASTOR FEHLBERG (L) WITH SHATRINA AND ANDREW JOHNSON.

LEs took an order and gave them the book, *The Girl that Talked to the Stars*. They learned about the Sabbath and were convicted of the Sabbath truth. A few days later Pastor Fehlberg and his wife Eileen arrived at Katherine and local church member Desley Green took them to see Ms Jones and her cousin. They gave them resources about the Sabbath plus the "Bible Says" lessons. The women returned to Myatt Community in Timber Creek, opening the town to the Adventist message.

## HISTORIC ADVENTIST HEARTLAND GETS NEW DISTRICT OFFICE

RUSSELL WORUBA

The Bisiatabu District of the Central Papua Conference (CPC), Papua New Guinea, has a new reason to celebrate the progress of God's work.

On Sunday June 25, the members witnessed the official dedication and opening of the new district office and director's complex.

Bisiatabu is where missionaries from Australia and Fiji established the first PNG mission station in 1908. Today 16 congregations meet around the district and Adventist membership throughout the country is due to reach 300,000 before the end of the year.

The dedication event opened with an official guard of honour provided by the Bisiatabu Youth and Adventist Community Service members. Speeches made by Conference officers, including president Pastor Kove Tau, highlighted the progress of God's work. Chief financial officer Max Lassah elaborated that the financial growth

and maturity at Conference and district levels are the result of deliberate planning and the faithfulness of members. As Conference secretary Pastor Rex Koi officiated in the ribbon cutting, he challenged Bisiatabu members to look after the facilities and be more intentional in God's work.

Work on the complex began in September 2016 and was completed in nine months. The ground floor comprises the district treasury office, the director's office, an Adventist Book Centre outlet, bathroom amenities and two conference rooms. The upper level is the district director's housing with

guest rooms.

Labour was partially sourced locally and from Goroka, including building supervisor Jonah Bipiza. District director Pastor Miller Kuso and the district committee were appreciative of the tireless work by the construction team and for the Conference's financial backing.



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# COLLABORATION KEY FOR CHURCH COMMUNICATORS

## RECORD STAFF

Church communication staff from around Australia met for the first communication advisory in a number of years on July 17–18, after Digital Discipleship 2017.

Organised by the Australian Union Conference and hosted by Adventist Media, the meetings featured productive talks about the future of church communications, adapting to digital technologies and branding the Church.

Associate communication director for the Seventh-day Adventist world Church, Pastor Sam Neves, attended the two-day think tank to inform attendees about communications at the General Conference, as well as updates on Adventist branding and identity, a project begun in part, in the South Pacific Division (SPD). Pastor Neves paid tribute to the branding work begun by James Standish when he was SPD communication director.

Apart from conference communication officers from the AUC, North NSW, Sydney, WA, South Queensland and Victoria, attendees included the *Adventist Record* team, head of editorial Tracey



PASTOR SAM NEVES.

Bridcutt, SPD communication director Steve Currow, Hope Channel director Wayne Boehm and Adventist Media CEO Calvin Dever. Also in attendance, artist and designer Shelley Poole, who worked on visual identity, presented a session on communicating with the Millennial generation in Australia.

"There was a very real sense of togetherness, a willingness to collaborate and work together," said Jarrod Stackelroth, *Adventist Record* editor.

"I think in the next few years, we will see some amazing messages produced by the church communications departments that will help further the gospel message. And the seeds were planted at these meetings."

# REMOTE REGION HOSTS STEWARDSHIP CAMP

## LENON GRESON

The Fly River district in the South-West Papua Mission (SWPM) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church hosted an historical Stewardship Seminar Camp meeting at Gaima Village in late June.

Papua New Guinea Union Mission stewardship director Pastor Robert Jonathan was guest speaker for the program, which resulted in 125 people accepting the Lord as their personal Saviour through baptism.

Fly District churches have already been practising Total Member Involvement (TMI) and as a result, many young people were baptised on the Sabbath.

Pastor Jonathan said the Holy Spirit was behind the program, which also saw 85 people make a decision to stand when an appeal was made. Pastor Jonathan said it was amazing to see many young people making a stand for the Lord.



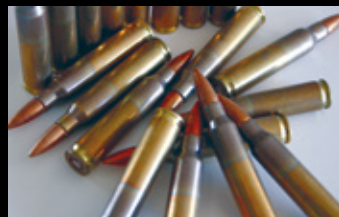
125 PEOPLE WERE BAPTISED.

"We have a big work to do and not only in SWPM but other local missions as well," he said.

"I can say that work is done at the local level. We can coordinate in the office but it is good to [go] and evaluate the work of God that our faithful, dedicated Bible workers are doing for the Lord."

Despite the geography and other challenges face by the SWPM, local minister Lenon Greson said that TMI is "a very powerful tool for ministry" and "God's work is on the move" in the region.

## NEWS GRABS



### ADVENTIST TEACHER KILLED

Elly Oloo Ojiema was shot by armed men while she was teaching pupils at Fafi Primary School in northeastern Kenya, near Garissa. The militants, believed to be from the Somalia-based Al Shabaab group, also kidnapped a Christian teacher along with a Muslim colleague who stepped in to defend him. —*Morning Star News*



### DARKNESS DESTROYED

A feared Tanzanian witchdoctor has been baptised in a countrywide campaign that saw more than 80,000 people come to Christ. After his public stand, Joseph Maduhu burned all his paraphernalia at his home village. He has already brought a fellow witchdoctor to a commitment to baptism. —*Adventist Mission*

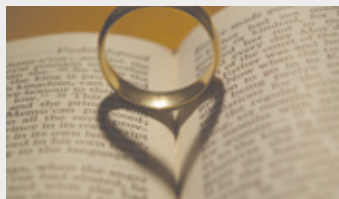


### WE COME TO YOU

A group of Puerto Rican Adventists worship outdoors, sharing food and stories of Jesus with the homeless. "Church Without Walls" includes up to 70 people, who support one another in various ways, including finding accommodation. The first footwashing service brought some participants to tears. —*Adventist Mission*



## HOT TOPICS



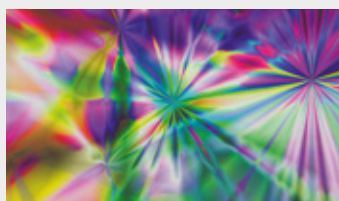
### BIBLE BASHING

Research showing men with evangelical beliefs are more likely to abuse their wives has sparked claims that “complementarian” Bible teachings on gender are destructive. Church leaders say these men selectively misuse and twist Scripture and that men who participate in worship services more often, abuse less. —ABC



### ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Islamic State claims it has executed two Chinese nationals who were teaching Mandarin in the Pakistani city of Quetta when they were abducted by armed men. Chinese media describe the couple as Christian missionaries who attracted the ire of local Muslim activists when they began sharing their Christian faith. —Quartz



### FUNGUS-FUELLED FAITH

Mystics and hippies have long claimed that hallucinogens bring spiritual insight. Johns Hopkins University is testing this claim, having convinced 24 mainstream religious leaders to take strong doses of psilocybin—the active ingredient in magic mushrooms. Early feedback shows subjects expressing a more universal and less sectarian spirituality. —The Guardian

## PUBLIC EVANGELISM SEES SUCCESS IN NZ

VANIA CHEW/CLIFTON GLASGOW

A recent evangelistic campaign in Auckland has led to 95 baptisms with nearly a hundred more to follow.

The North New Zealand Conference (NNZC) partnered with the Institute of Public Evangelism (IPE) to run a citywide campaign that looked at archaeological evidence that supports the accuracy of the Bible.

With the guidance of Pastor Glenn Townend, president of the South Pacific Division (SPD), and Pastor Gary Webster (director of IPE), 17 Adventist churches took up the challenge of running “Ancient Mysteries” meetings over five weeks.

Training meetings were held prior to the event and weekly prayer meetings were set up every Sunday at 6am, where members from across Auckland regularly came to pray. The prayer meetings were an opportunity for church members to praise God, confess their sins and seek the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

“I experienced the Auckland public evangelistic series firsthand in five churches and public meetings,” said Pastor Townend. “I sensed the commitment and compassion of the church meetings and prayed with some of them for the people. I did some training with the evangelists and members. The process of discipleship using public evangelism is flourishing in the South Pacific Division.”

“My wife Simone and I attended the talks by Pastor Gary Webster,” said

attendee Heath

Johnson.

“I found the archaeological evidence in relation

to biblical events fascinating. For me, the seminar highlighted the accuracy of the Bible versus the scientific consensus. Simone felt there was a sense of harmony and kindness amongst all those who attended. It was a moving and informative collection of talks, which culminated in us both being baptised.”

The revival meetings led to many success stories, including a church plant that grew by 50 per cent with more than 25 decisions for baptism, a new church planted on a previously unentered island (Waiheke) and a church that had a regular livestream viewership of 400-600 for each evening meeting.

“One of the key things we learned during this campaign is that discipleship is best done in relationship and is about the whole person,” said Pastor Clifton Glasgow, director of the campaign in Auckland. “The evangelistic program is the icing; the life of the Church is the cake. They are most powerful when they go hand in hand.”



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# FLASHPOINT



## SPECIAL LUNCH

Avondale School (NSW) hosted the annual Volunteers Luncheon on June 20 to thank all the community volunteers for their contribution to the local area. Eighty people attended the event, organised to recognise those who have gone above and beyond. Avondale School's hospitality students provided the meal as part of their vocational education and training (VET) course. "Students planned, prepared and cooked a three-course set menu exceptionally well and are to be commended for their amazing skills displayed throughout the entire function," said Donna Nevell, Head of VET. It was a much appreciated event for all the volunteers who attended. —Colin Chuang



## BE THE SERMON

Young people in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, recently found an opportunity to "be the sermon" on a Sabbath afternoon. A Total Member Involvement initiative of the youth department of the Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission, the young people ministered to others in the local hospital, marketplace, office buildings and also on the street, distributing material and fruit. Keiya church pastor Ronny Fiya concluded the day with a sermon in front of 1000 people outside a shopping centre in the western part of the city. "We see God's hand reaching us in the pit of our sinfulness to show that He still loves us," said a local community member. —Ronny Fiya/ Maritza Brunt



## NEW TITLE

An academic whose prolific publications and competitive grants have given his infection control research a national profile is the first to receive a professorship from Avondale College of Higher Education (NSW). Nursing academic Professor Brett Mitchell's promotion from associate professor reflects the quantity and quality of the papers he has had published, the quantity and the size of the competitive research grants he has received, and national and international recognition for his contribution to infection prevention and control. The promotion is "personal recognition for a lot of hard work", says Professor Mitchell, who is director of the Lifestyle Research Centre at Avondale College. —Brenton Stacey



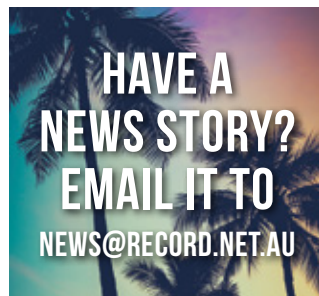
## CHURCH TRANSFORMATION

Two years ago, Burnie church (Tas) was looking run-down and in need of some maintenance. Church pastor Mark Goldsmith was approached by Reclink Australia, offering a work-for-the-dole program after success at Margate church. After just six months, the front gardens had a complete makeover, and a concrete drain and a toilet for the disabled were installed. The children's Sabbath School room, hall and window frames, front entrance, outside window frames and male toilet floors were painted, and the hedges and trees trimmed. The church members are very happy with the finished results, praising God for freshening up the church for their upcoming evangelistic programs. —Tasda



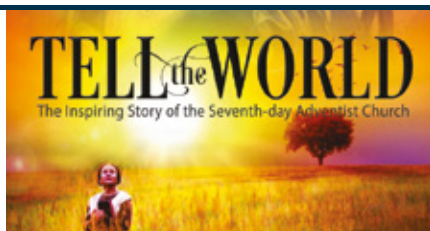
## BIG CAMP BOOT CAMP

There was no sleeping-in this year for youth attending Northern Australian Big Camp. Local Adventist personal trainer Pauly Abdul-Rahman, together with pastors Sean Tavai and Ray Ray Moaga, created high intensity interval training sessions at 6.10am every day at URT Gym (opened for free use by Abdul-Rahman). "It was an opportunity for our youth to connect and fellowship in an active, positive and challenging environment. We needed to encourage each other during the session [and so we were] challenged to apply that in our lives/churches," said Pastor Tavai. —Theodora Amuimuia



## BOOKS FOR WIDOWS

A special lunch was recently organised for more than 80 widows and widowers from various Christian denominations around Malo Island (Vanuatu). Susan Nasak, a literature evangelist, and Joceline Bangalulu, a volunteer, organised the event, also handing out copies of Bible readings, *Steps to Christ*, *Happiness Digest* and the *Desire of Ages* to all who attended. —TPUM




## SIGNS CAMPAIGN 2017

To celebrate *Signs of the Times* month (August), *Signs* is offering a free *Tell the World* DVD to current subscribers who add at least one new sponsorship to their current subscription, until the end of the October campaign period. "It's a great gift and an ideal follow-up for anyone happily receiving a *Signs*," said editor Lee Dunstan. For more information, see back page. —Record staff



## FROM CULT TO CHURCH PLANT

Church members from Vunisalusalu church (Fiji) recently had reason to celebrate. After running a three-week evangelistic series in the village of Nabua, well known for its cult worship, seven people were baptised. There has never been an Adventist presence in this village and plans are already underway for the establishment of a church branch. —Na Kaci



# DIGITAL MOVEMENT GAINS MOMENTUM

More than 180 Adventists from around Australia and a handful from New Zealand attended Digital Discipleship 2017 run by the Greater Sydney Conference.

DD2017 was held for the second year at the University of New South Wales' Randwick campus over the July 14-16 weekend.

The conference was opened by four panellists from *At The Table*, Adventist Media's TV production aimed at young mums. This was an opportunity for the panellists to demonstrate what an actual episode of the program looks like, from discussing hard-hitting topics such as racism, to watching short clips on cooking, camping and making homemade moisturiser. This was followed by a short presentation from senior producer Adam Kavanagh who explained the purpose of the program and how Christians can use it as a tool to witness to non-Christian friends.

With that the conference was launched, with Digital Discipleship coordinator Rachel Aitken giving a keynote on how the idea was born. Ms Aitken missed last year's inaugural conference due to the birth of her firstborn son but nothing would stop her from attending this year.

Like last year, attendees took part in a design thinking exercise to examine hypothetical problems facing the Church that could be solved digitally.

International guests running workshops included Pastor Sam Neves, associate communication director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide, Leslie Samuel, from <becomeablogger.com>, and viral video blogger Justin Khoe, as well as local talent such as author and editor Nathan Brown and artist/designer Shelley Poole.

Mr Samuel presented workshops on blogging, forming mastermind groups and maximising social media potential for a ministry. An Adventist teacher, he began by blogging about biology and gained a large online following before switching to teaching others about how to be effective online.

Oregon-based Justin Khoe spoke about his YouTube ministry "That Christian Vlogger", which features weekly messages in the form of devotionals or Bible studies. Starting off with an audience of 30 in 2016, the popular channel now has almost 30,000 subscribers.

His most popular videos include titles such as *Should Christians kiss*

*before marriage?*, *A Guy's Perspective on Christian Modesty* and *Why Many Christian Girls Remain Single*.

During his two workshops, Mr Khoe encouraged attendees to take advantage of YouTube's popularity and use it as a tool to reach people for Jesus. His videos have led to online Bible studies in countries all over the world, from Romania to Belize.

"The average person spends at least an hour a day on YouTube," he said. "YouTube is a search engine—they're going there to ask questions and we have answers."

On Friday night there was a screening of the short film *The Towns We Lived In*, followed by an interview with its director and Wahroonga church (NSW) member Robbie Fatt.

The presentation of the Gabe Reynaud Award was a new feature of the event, with digital disciple and children's pastor Daron Pratt, as well as musician and creative Melissa Otto, jointly receiving the award.

Another highlight of Saturday night was 10-year old Ronan Winfield's stop motion animated videos. The home-schooled director has used his films in Sabbath School and uploaded them online, spending many hours creating and shooting his videos. DD2017 affirmed his creative calling and he was awarded a Lego Jesus figure to use in his videos.

The weekend ended with a session where attendees met with those from their conference to discuss ongoing discipleship opportunities. A 40-strong contingent from Victoria agreed to meet up in the first week of August.

**JARROD STACKELROTH/VANIA CHEW**



# THE TEN

## great acts of faith

### 1. ABRAHAM—GENESIS 22

Losing a child is a parent's worst nightmare but that's exactly what Abraham was faced with when God asked him to sacrifice his son, Isaac.

### 2. QUEEN ESTHER—ESTHER 3-5

Approaching King Xerxes uninvited guaranteed death, but Esther's faith gave her the courage to come before him, saving the lives of every Jew in Persia.

### 3. DAVID FACES GOLIATH—1 SAMUEL 17

In this favourite tale of faith, the young shepherd David faced off against the Philistine giant Goliath—and won. Armed with only a sling and five small stones, David had something much more powerful: his faith that God could do the impossible.

### 4. NOAH BUILDS THE ARK—GENESIS 6

Noah spent years building an ark. At times when it seemed pointless, his faith kept him obedient to what God had instructed him to do. He and his family were the only ones saved from the flood.

### 5. ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL—1 KINGS 18

One of the biggest showdowns in the Old Testament, Elijah was up against the prophets of Baal. On Elijah's side—his faith. Elijah rebuilt the Lord's altar, drenched it in water and prayed for fire to burst from heaven. His faith proved to an entire nation whose God was the one true God.

### 6. MOSES AND THE RED SEA CROSSING—EXODUS 14

After years of slavery, Moses was finally able to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. But they were trapped between a giant body of water and an angry Pharaoh. Moses' faith never faltered. The sea parted and the Israelites made it across safely.

### 7. MARY IS VISITED BY THE ANGEL GABRIEL—LUKE 1

If a virgin becoming pregnant isn't impossible enough, Mary was told she was carrying the Saviour of the world. Overwhelming? Yep! But she embraced God's plan saying: "I am the Lord's

servant. May everything you have said about me come true."

### 8. SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO—DANIEL 3

These three faithful amigos refused to bow to King Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue—and were thrown into a blazing hot fire. But, while those who threw them into the furnace were burned and killed, the trio remained unscathed.

### 9. THE BLEEDING WOMAN—MATTHEW 9

Not a lot is known about this woman, except that she had incredible faith. After bleeding uncontrollably for 12 years, she wholeheartedly believed that if she could just touch Jesus, she would be healed. And she was.

### 10. STEPHEN'S STONING—ACTS 7

Stephen's faith was so great that he refused to give up preaching the gospel, even when sentenced to death. In fact, while rocks were being hurled at him, he continued to preach until the skies opened and he saw a glimpse of heaven.





# Dragged under

**I**T'S JUST ONE OF THOSE DAYS when I am being dragged under the water. I try to struggle, but the current is stronger than I.

I am lifted by the waves sporadically, enough to get the tiniest sliver of fresh air into my burning lungs before being dragged back under again.

It wasn't supposed to be like this. How did I get here? How could I have messed up so badly?

Tell me to come, I said, and He did.

And for a time, everything was perfect. Everything was great. Everything was good.

But in one split second, everything changed.

The waves are whispering. They tell me I can't beat them, that I will have to learn to breathe underwater. Fear grips me from all angles; doubt clouds my mind—should I bother? I can't do this. I don't have the mental, physical, emotional strength.

And strangely enough, when I cease the struggle there are no more waves. The wind stops howling. There is just the sunlight reflecting off the clear water as I stare not down but up at it from the depths below.

But this isn't what I want. I would rather fight for those tiny occasional

breaths than learn to breathe underwater and live my whole life that way.

So it begins again. The struggle.

And this time, it's harder than before.

My legs are burning, my eyes stinging with saltwater reminiscent of thousands of tiny needles. I am about to be dragged under again, but suddenly a hand reaches down. His strong grasp sends a surge of energy through my body, and I am lifted out of the white zone to take my first full inhalation of air.

There is a boat. I climb aboard. I look around to see jellyfish, their venom-filled tentacles poised to lightly tap their prey. Shark fins dip in and out of the waves on the horizon. A rip crashes, howling, against the rocks, eagerly anticipating its next victim.

But none of that matters, I realise, as the wind ceases and I bask in the reflective glow of the sunlight on the water.

I can see the shore.

I am on the other side of the water.

I have conquered

Because He is the Conqueror.

**MARITZA BRUNT** ASSISTANT EDITOR  
 @maritzaemunoz





## A CUPPA WITH GORDON

**G**ORDON BOUGHT A RUN-down farmlet in the back hills of Foster (Vic) many years ago as a means of escaping from the bustle of Melbourne. His plan was to supplement his income as an electrician by raising beef cattle for market and sharing his venture with his wife and two children. However, as the years passed, his children became more and more reluctant to trade the excitement of the "bright lights" for the boredom of the bush and so their visits became more and more infrequent; eventually stopping altogether. Occasionally a grandchild would visit, but that too petered out. His wife's visits to the farm ended suddenly with her death, and then it was only Gordon to battle the burrs, the fencing and the solitude.

I met Gordon when he contacted me to renovate his decrepit house. Rusted out gutters, rotten weatherboards and a myriad of other jobs to complete resulted in me spending many days with Gordon as my workmate. He came up to my shoulders, weighed about 40kg wringing wet, and was a little unsteady on his feet as a result of a tree landing on him and pinning him for nearly five hours. His calls for help were eventually

heard by a distant neighbour and it took many months of rehabilitation to regain the use of two badly smashed ankles and toes.

Working with a limited budget of time and manpower, I initially begrudged Gordon the amount of time that he wanted to spend in conversation over "a cuppa". He would sometimes share experiences of work and family that brought laughter but often his countenance was tinged with obvious sadness. Life had changed for him in so many ways and the old times would not return; but that was life! Duty called and I was anxious to get back to work—until one day.

One day I had the thought that if Gordon was my dad, wouldn't I want to sit around the table and listen to his yarns instead of being in a hurry to go? Wouldn't he love to have his boy hear him share snapshots of his life so that he could benefit from his wisdom and become more resilient for his own journey? I thought of how it took me many years to understand my dad because I had never really considered the effects that life's experiences have on people. Dad came through the Great Depression and was a staff sergeant in World War II, being stationed as an engineer during

the bombing of Darwin. He lived his life as someone who knew what hardships were and demonstrated his resultant thriftiness by traditionally washing the dishes on Friday night in a few cupfuls of water. If we left the light on in the room he would come behind us and turn it off! But that was Dad—and we loved him.

I have two boys of my own now whom I would love to hang out with, but the tyranny of distance has its impact. I would love them to come home for Christmas occasionally, but . . . I can only dream. My dad left me a legacy of being "the hands and feet of Jesus" by his practical ministry, and I came to understand that I was ministering to Gordon by giving him time to share what was dear to his heart. He was being affirmed as a child of God who, while having a unique life experience, still struggled with that basic human need to be accepted for who they are. This is something that my heavenly Father does so beautifully and I was privileged to experience as I had a cuppa with Gordon. Gordon hadn't changed, but I had! Thank you Father!

**STUART BARONS** LIVES IN VICTORIA AND WROTE THIS PIECE IN RESPONSE TO "VICTORY ROAD" IN ADVENTIST RECORD, APRIL 15.

# STEREOTYPICAL CHRISTIAN



## ARE YOU AN ALL-IN-DISCIPLE OR A DEDICATED DABBLER?

**I**F I ASKED YOU TO DESCRIBE A superhero, what would come to mind? Maybe a chiselled body, a commanding voice, intolerance for injustice—but probably not someone who enjoys romantic movies yet struggles to call his mother on a regular basis. How about a princess? You may picture a beautiful woman with an amazing voice, an innate way with animals, someone used to the good life—but you probably wouldn't picture someone who's old, married and who prefers to live in a modest flat instead of a luxurious palace. Stereotypes are abundant in the media and, let's be honest, they are two-dimensional characters, both predictable and boring.

Have you ever thought of Christianity in a similar vein? Now, before you

put up your defences, let me please give you some examples.

For many, even among churchgoers, being a Christian is largely just a way of thinking and a decision to embrace certain habits. For example, for many, being Christian means going to church, having a set of rules that you live by (and expect others to live by), and for the most part being more conservative than secular society, morally at the very least. Many in church and out of church believe that Christianity is far more theology than ministry, and certainly more talking than doing. It's a bit harsh, I know, but from my conversations with many people these are the stereotypes we are facing as Christians.

The biblical reality is however quite different from what many in the church

portray. Whether it makes you uncomfortable or not, the fact is, unless you are a disciple of Jesus you are not a Christian. For those who would like a definition, a disciple is someone who is actively becoming more like Jesus while also helping others become more like Jesus. This includes introducing people to Jesus.

Discipleship is not one or two-dimensional. It is not simply paying your tithe and keeping the pew warm. It is not simply agreeing with doctrinal fundamentals, nor is it going out of your way to tell others that they are wrong and you are right.

### **FOLLOWING JESUS INVOLVES EVERYTHING.**

Discipleship takes place at your desk at work and on your screen at home. It is a process that impacts not



only thoughts but actions. Discipleship is not satisfied in watching a church service as you would watch a movie. Discipleship means becoming who Jesus wants you to be, not who you want to be, nor who you *think* Jesus wants you to be.

Think of the original disciples. They gave up their careers, their families, their positions, their wealth, their culture and their pride. The rich young ruler sadly wasn't willing to give everything up, although the prestigious Nicodemus and wealthy Joseph of Arimathea eventually did. Does this mean we have to give up our careers and wealth too? Maybe. It depends what God is asking and calling you to do. The point is that being a disciple isn't just about using the Ten Commandments as a righteous checklist like the rich young ruler did. Rather, it means going beyond the basic commandments and doing anything Jesus is asking you to do.

Now, don't get too discouraged, as this is not an instant transformation. Just like a good novel takes time to paint a three-dimensional character for its reader, it takes a lifetime for

loving others as we love ourselves, are integral in growing and maintaining a healthy wellbeing spiritually but also physically, socially and psychologically.

In relation to loving the Lord, studies have shown that those who have a positive attachment to God have greater life satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> Those who have a spiritual connection with the Divine have also been found to get along better with their neighbours and co-workers, and have also shown to cope far better when life does not go as well as hoped. Being connected to God is not synonymous with being religious of course; you can strictly follow a set of rules or traditions and yet not have a loving relationship with Christ.

Loving others also has multiple benefits. Depression has been named as the single greatest contributor to global disability by the World Health Organisation.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, a recent study has found that depression can be cured or at least significantly reduced by positive social connections.<sup>3</sup> In other words, when you belong to social groups that you identify with, depression symptoms are reduced, often completely. When we love others, we

is indeed true, then are we not worthy of love and respect? When we love ourselves in a godly sense, not to be confused with a narcissistic lust of self, although we know we are sinful beings we regard others and ourselves as vessels that can be used by God for great things. According to another recent study, those who are highly spiritual and faithful have higher rates of optimism, sense of self-worth, perceived meaning in life and hope.<sup>5</sup>

### FOLLOWING JESUS IS EVERYTHING.

The reality of having an abundant life right now is fantastic. However, we know that this life is temporary. When all is said and done (quite literally) what matters is eternity, which is why discipleship is everything. In the end our relationship with Christ is all that really matters. The big question is: is Jesus the motivation behind everything we do?

Jesus. All.

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## STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT THOSE WHO HAVE A POSITIVE ATTACHMENT TO GOD HAVE GREATER LIFE SATISFACTION.

Jesus to turn us into His authentic and faithful followers. It wasn't until after Jesus was resurrected that His disciples finally were truly transformed into worthy role models; and they spent more than three years with Jesus face to face! Discipleship involves continual growth, earnest faithfulness and love; love which serves to qualify the growth and faithfulness.

### FOLLOWING JESUS BENEFITS EVERYTHING.

To love the Lord, with all of your heart, strength, mind and soul, as well as your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40), not only benefits others but benefits us. Loving God, and

are connected with them. This does not mean we agree with everything they believe or say, but it means that we treat them as we ourselves would like to be treated. The longest living communities on Earth are all interdependent communities; they are strongly bonded relationally.<sup>4</sup>

To love others as we love ourselves implies that we have a healthy and positive self-concept. When we think of ourselves as terrible and treat ourselves with disrespect, the same is done to others. When the Lord made us in His image it pleased Him to the point where He sent His Son Jesus to sacrifice Himself for our sakes. If this

**JOE AZZOPARDI** IS A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY CANDIDATE AT AVONDALE COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

### the One project Avondale 1:1

Joe Azzopardi is speaking about wholistic discipleship at Just Disciples, a post the One project Avondale 1:1 gathering event on August 13. The "Following Jesus"-themed gathering is supported by the South Pacific Division's Discipleship Ministries Team and also features Following Jesus and Mission Shift authors Drs Peter Roennfeldt and Kayle de Waal. [www.the1project.org](http://www.the1project.org)

# WHEN THERE SEEMS TO BE *NO* miracle LEFT FOR ME

“Unless we can look the darkest, blackest fact full in the face without damaging God’s character, we don’t yet know Him.” Oswald Chambers



OUR WORLD WAS SHATTERED, TURNED upside down and sideways in a matter of seconds. Forever our hearts would be left with the scar—a hole that nothing on earth can fill. It felt like God had let us down, like He was nowhere to be found when we really needed Him. Where was our miracle?

Let me back up a little.

It had taken us only three months to fall pregnant. Our families were ecstatic—the first grandson on one side of the family, and the third on the other side.

Every day of the pregnancy we prayed for Bub. Every day we sang him beautiful Bible songs and told him about Jesus.

The nursery was fully decorated and ready for its tiny new occupant. The hospital bag was packed, ready to go at a moment's notice. Bub himself was in perfect position. Only the arrival day was taking its own time. We tried everything to encourage Bub to come but nothing worked.

At last, the much anticipated day arrived and we headed off to the hospital. It was June 1, 2013, the day we would finally meet and hold our son.

In the labour ward I tried to brave the pain as yet another contraction ripped through me. I buckled over, stooping to catch a breath. I was wearing a track in the tiled floor, pacing back and forth, back and forth in a vain effort to encourage my baby to come quickly and to try to relieve the terrible pain.

One particular memory stands out vividly. If I close my eyes, I can see it as clearly as if it is happening right now: a woman stands in the doorway of a hospital labour ward room. Our eyes connect briefly before she returns to looking and cooing at the sleeping baby in her arms. Despite the pain, I smile at the thought that it would soon be my turn to cuddle and coo and love a baby, our very first—a boy named Kaelen.

It was pure exhaustion, pushing and pushing, but still Kaelen didn't want to come. I remember asking my husband to pray that God would help Kaelen to come out right now. I was tired, the epidural was wearing off and the pain was intensifying. Ken bowed his head against mine and asked God for help.

What happened next is still too hard to comprehend.

I changed position, hoping that it would prompt Kaelen to come. Exhaustion turned to fear when the nurse reattached the CTG machine—Kaelen's heartbeat could not be found. The labour pain was so horrific that I didn't even comprehend what that might mean. Nurses rushed me to theatre for an emergency C-section. I gave



my consent to being anaesthetised and started counting. I made it to five before I went under.

I awoke groggy and confused. The room was crowded. A doctor walked over to where I was lying and said those dreadful words, "Your baby didn't make it."

My reply to the news was, "God knows best." To this day, I don't know where in my soul those words came from.

They placed Kaelen in my arms. He was warm. Beautiful. Motionless.

We bathed and dressed him, took photos and cuddled him. He "slept" in a cold cot in the room with us. Throughout the night we prayed, pleaded, begged, hoping for a miracle. I listened out for a cry that would tell us that Kaelen was alive, but in the morning our baby remained silent and still and cold.

It felt like God had let us down in a gigantic way. That day challenged our belief in a God who is kind, loving and ready to answer our desperate prayers. Where was our miracle? Where did our prayers go? Why did this happen to us?

Thus began our journey of grief.

It was a slow, painful journey. Choosing the tiny white coffin, the tear-shaped silver urn, the order of the funeral service, closing the door to a nursery full of toys and clothes yet empty of life, recovering from a C-section with nothing to show for it, swallowing the two little pills to stop my breast milk coming in, days of asking God why.

The support from our families, friends and church family was amazing and helped us through those dark days. We clung to the promise of the resurrection and our hope in Jesus. Precious Bible verses comforted us, as did prayers for peace and healing. God was there through it all, our source of strength.

As I type this, it has been four years and two weeks since that wretched day. Time has flown by swiftly. Today, while there is scarring on our hearts, we can smile and laugh again and the pain has dulled, somewhat. We always remember Kaelen and his birthday. Occasionally we still ask God why. "Why did Kaelen have to die? Why didn't You answer our prayer?" But no answers are forthcoming.

We thought we would have at least two other children to fill the quiet nursery by now. But after nearly four years of trying, praying, lab testing, doctors visiting, and trying some more, we remain inexplicably childless—childless despite the numerous people who have been praying for us.

I often wonder what has happened to all those prayers. Why does God seem to turn a deaf ear? Why do those who don't want children, or who abuse, neglect and mistreat them, seem to pop them out in droves, but those who want them can't conceive? Why do unbelievers and atheists have their families, but God-fearing Christians languish with empty hands and full hearts with no child to love?

And why do some people get their miracle—people whom doctors think will never be able to conceive? Yet people like us, for whom there is no medical reason for their infertility, are still praying, hoping and losing hope, because there seems to be no miracle for them?

I remember the recent Mother's Day clip that was shown in church about a double miracle: the miracle conception and birth of two babies when all hope for even one was gone. The video mentioned thanking God for mums. But what about those women who long to be mums but for whom there is no miracle? There was no assurance about the enduring love of God or the example of God being seen in those would-be mums. It felt like we were forgotten.

I know there are many women in our churches wearing my shoes. It's not something we talk about because it's so heartbreaking and we believe, rightly or wrongly, that people with kids just can't understand our struggles. But many of us are struggling through our smiles and "Happy Sabbaths".

Usually, when you read an article like this, there is the thrilling news at the end about how God has finally answered prayers and delivered a miracle. But that isn't so in this case. Our arms are still empty, hope has almost flickered out. Yet we still cling to the tiny flicker that is left, that maybe, just maybe there is a miracle for us.

And if there isn't . . . Then even though hope dwindles, we still have faith. Faith in a God who is merciful, kind, compassionate, loving, gracious and full of wisdom. We know that God knows ultimately what is best and He desires, above all else, our eternal good. God will not withhold from me even one blessing that it would be for my best good for Him to give.

So if I never have another child this side of eternity, I know that God knows best. He will strengthen me and soothe my aching heart. He will give me peace and dry my tears each month when nature makes its round and I stare at yet another dying ember of hope. He is my Father. He loves me and cries with me and longs to reveal His plans and purposes. But for whatever reason, He hasn't. He might not answer my "whys" but He is interested, involved and active in my life though it doesn't always feel that way and at times I get frustrated with His silence.

Maybe my destiny in life is to love other people's children as I would my own. Maybe this is the only way to guarantee my eternal salvation. Maybe this way, through my testimony, many people can be brought to a saving relationship with Jesus. Or maybe there is no particular reason or purpose and this is just another effect of sin.

All I know is that without God this journey would be 10-fold worse, but with Him I can endure emptiness, loss, grief, pain and disappointment. With Him I can smile at the storm and find peace and joy despite our circumstances.

I look forward to the second coming when Kaelen will be returned to our arms. When others like me, who missed out on parenthood this side of heaven, will be given their own precious child to love. Don't give up on God because He will never leave nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).

**HOPAL MCCLINTOCK**, SCHOOL CHAPLAIN AND COUNSELLOR, BLACKS BEACH, QUEENSLAND.



## IS IT REALLY HEALTHY?

A recent Cancer Council survey of 1000 Australians and 130 nutrition experts has found a worrying divide between what the general public and nutrition experts consider to be healthy food. It's not surprising that with a never-ending cycle of fad diets sold to us, some foods get an unearned reputation for health, but what were the biggest offenders?

### COCONUT OIL:

75 per cent of adults surveyed rated this as healthy, while 85 per cent of nutrition experts thought the opposite. Coconut oil is surrounded by a lot of dubious health claims with very little science to back them up. Current research suggests that in small amounts it appears to have a neutral effect on health at best and at worst has the same drawbacks as other saturated fats.

### ORANGE JUICE:

71 per cent of adults considered this healthy but 76 per cent of nutrition experts disagreed. There's nothing wrong with the fruit itself but when you juice it you get rid of all the healthy fibre and end up with a much more concentrated source of sugar. A small glass every now and again is ok but whole fruit is always the healthiest option.

### GLUTEN-FREE CAKES:

Despite having "cake" in the name, 44 per cent of adults rated these as healthy, while 94 per cent of nutrition experts thought otherwise. "Gluten-free" is one of those terms that seems to have become synonymous with "healthy" without good reason. For a small section of the community, such as those with coeliac disease, following a gluten-free diet is vital for good health, but for the rest of us it's unnecessary. And even for those who do need to follow a gluten-free diet, foods like cake, regardless of their gluten content, are not healthy.

It can be easy to get caught up in the marketing around food, which is why we need trusted sources more than ever to help us sort the truth from the hype.

## WHAT FOODS GOT AN UNFAIR RAP?



### PEANUT BUTTER

Only 48 per cent of adults rated it healthy compared to 78 per cent of nutrition experts. A source of fibre, healthy fats and plant-based protein, peanut butter is a great choice in appropriate amounts.



### PASTA

68 per cent of adults thought pasta was healthy, compared to 96 per cent of nutrition experts. A source of fibre, protein and low GI carbohydrates, pasta is a healthy and budget-friendly pantry staple. Look for wholemeal versions for the biggest nutritional benefits.



### JACKET POTATOES

Another victim of the low-carb message, 69 per cent of adults thought they were healthy, compared to 94 per cent of experts. Top them with some beans and corn for a quick and healthy mid-week meal.

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# WHERE DOES OUR IDENTITY LIE?



People are often surprised when they hear that, although I was brought up in a South African family, I was born in Seoul, South Korea, I lived in New Zealand and now I live in Australia.

I like to think of myself as a multicultural person, since my family has lived all over the world.

Yet even as a teen I wonder about the big life questions. *Who am I? What am I going to do in life? Will I have an impact on people who want to know God?*

So many people ask me nowadays, "What are you going to do with your life?" It's such a big question and I try to sound like I'm so sure of myself. But the truth is I'm not—and the answer isn't important, it's not certain and it doesn't change anything about who I

am as a person. A verse that always reassures me in times of doubt is Jeremiah 29:11: "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

I'm still finding myself and I think you never stop learning things about yourself. Young and old, we will always be venturing out and taking new steps in the next stage of our journey.

Wondering about who I am raised another question: "Where does my identity lie?"

Identity is just a name—the important details about ourselves—a word that sums up who we are all too quickly. Because when I think about my place in this world and how small I am—how my identity is nothing but a name—it makes me feel non-existent.

Someone can steal my identity and I become a nobody but we have the power to change that—we don't need to be defined by our identities.

Our financial status, our Facebook account, our position in the community doesn't change one bit of who we are because when we have God as our Saviour our identity lies in Him. God is the Potter and we are His clay. When doubt settles in—when darkness sneaks its way in—remember who your Creator is. When you are at your lowest point, build yourself up through God. His ways are stronger and purer. The comeback is always stronger than the setback.

What God moulds us to be is what we will become because our identity through Christ is what sets us up for greatness. It's true, our identity is what makes us different, our individuality is unique, but who would we be without God?

Without God our identity is meaningless, without God we aren't the people to change hearts and minds to look to Christ. Without us being anchored deep in God's love, what would be our purpose? Our identity?

As a human race, we are selfish, imperfect, flawed—but when Christ stands in our place we are glorified so when our identity lies in Christ we become a little less selfish and a little bit more like Jesus.

1 Corinthians 2:9 says, "For no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived—the things God has prepared for those who love him." When we who live in Christ allow God to change the way we live we can then impact others in the biggest way possible. Saul changing to Paul is an example of a person becoming someone entirely different. See, when we allow God to enter our hearts, things we never imagine end up happening. If our lives change or stay the same, one thing will always be certain and that is God.



**CHARE DE WAAL** IS A YEAR 10 STUDENT AT AVONDALE SCHOOL, NSW.

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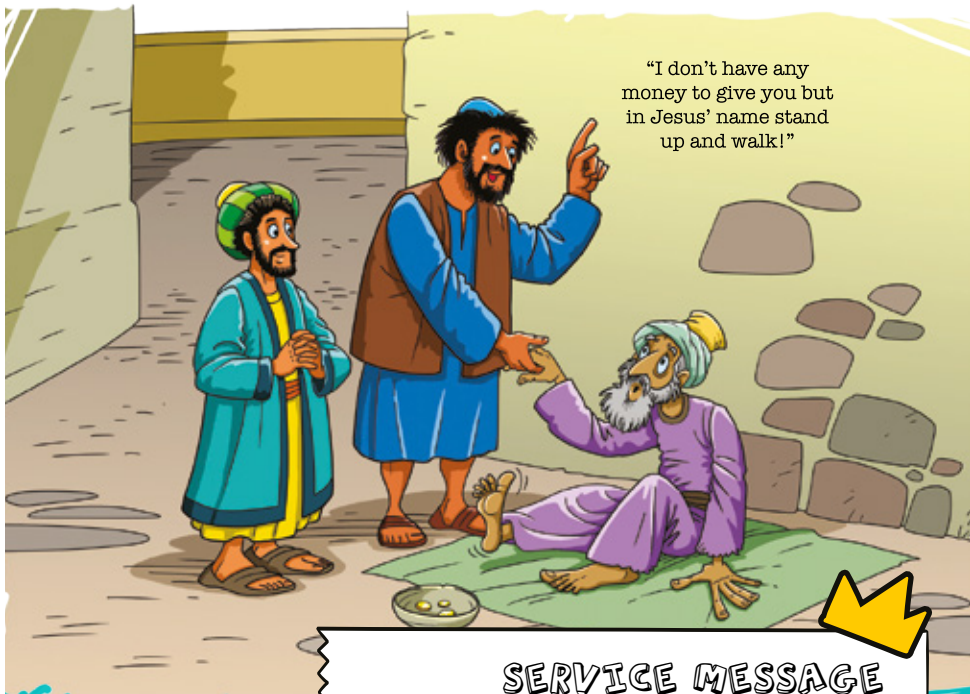
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WERTE KIDS\*

# KIDS SPACE

## PETER AND JOHN HEAL A LAME MAN

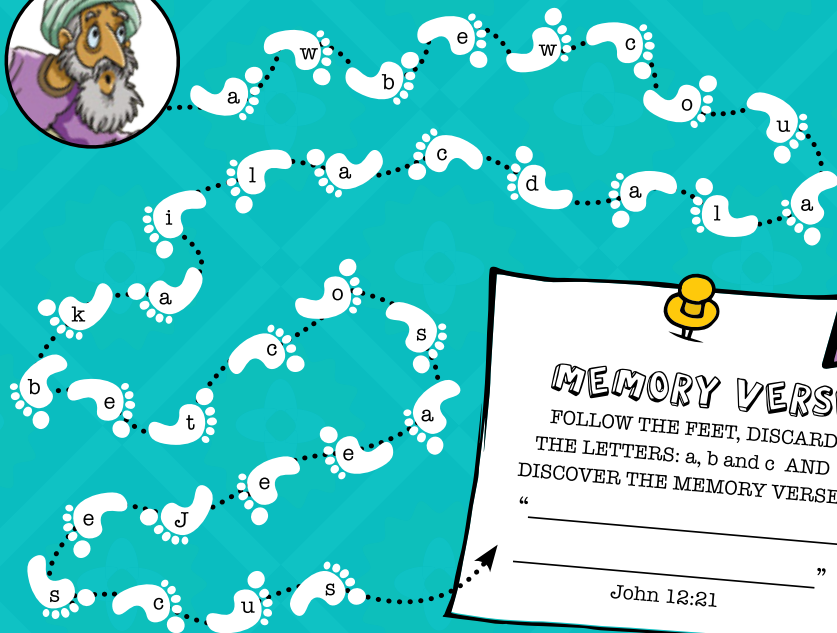
Peter and John are moved by the Holy Spirit to serve a man, crippled from birth, by healing him. They tell him to stand and walk. He does. When people come running in amazement, Peter tells them about Jesus and many believe.



### SERVICE MESSAGE

When I help others I show them Jesus.

START



### MEMORY VERSE

FOLLOW THE FEET, DISCARD THE LETTERS: a, b and c AND DISCOVER THE MEMORY VERSE

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

John 12:21

\*hello in Arrente (Central Australia)





When Jesse Duperouzel tells people that he grew up in Cooranbong (NSW) and attended Avondale School, they assume he was always a Seventh-day Adventist. They're surprised when they discover that he was actually raised as a Christadelphian.

"What do Christadelphians believe? Well, they believe that sin and evil originate from the heart, they don't believe in Satan and the Trinity," Jesse tells me. "And they worship on Sundays."

At the age of 15, Jesse saw his home church go through a serious rift. "For the first time, I was exposed to adults who were meant to be Christians acting horribly," says Jesse. "I decided that I didn't want anything to do with God or church."

When Jesse graduated from high school, he was kicked out of home. "My first thoughts were 'Cool, I don't have to go to church anymore,'" Jesse says frankly. He decided to move to Sydney but became quite depressed during his time there. When he mentioned this to a good friend who was studying at Avondale College, his friend encouraged him to "come up".

Jesse met a lot of great people at Avondale who began talking about the Bible and Christianity with him. However his depression relapsed and became quite serious.

"I then moved to Adelaide, where I hit rock bottom," says Jesse. "One time, I stayed in bed for four days straight." At his lowest point, he tried to commit suicide with a mug filled with pills, but he unexpectedly changed his mind. "I just thought, 'No, I'm not going to do that, I'm just going to try to live one day at a time.'"

Jesse re-established connections with his college friends and they

helped him through his struggles. His moods were stable, he was taking medication and he was re-opening the Bible. "Eventually I got off medication and for the first time I felt what I would consider to be happy."

In early 2016, Jesse decided that he needed to take his Bible seriously. He began reading his

Bible every day and praying twice a day, and started doing Bible studies with Pastor Travis Manners.

"Usually Bible studies take half-an-hour or so. Our first Bible study took an hour and-a-half, and that was one of the shortest meetings," laughs Jesse. He accepted the existence of Satan quite easily but struggled with other biblical beliefs, in particular, trying to understand how Jesus could be God and man at the same time.

Eventually Jesse was baptised in May 2016, on fire for Jesus. He'd always been an argumentative person, eager to persuade people to his point of view, and people had often told him that he should become a lawyer. Now that he was baptised, everyone began telling him that he should be a pastor!

"At Big Camp 2016 (South Australia), at least nine different people told me that I should be a pastor," says Jesse. "I got frustrated and drove away to have a conversation with God. I told Him that if He wanted me to be a pastor, He needed to send at least one more person to Big Camp to tell me to do it. There were only six hours of camp left and most of it would be at the Saturday night concert. I thought I was safe."

As soon as Jesse walked back into camp, he ran into a girl whom he'd gone to high school with. After the usual "Hey, how are you doing?" greeting, she suddenly said to him, "You know, you'd make a great pastor."

Jesse heard God's message, loud and clear. "I'm now studying a Certificate IV in Ministry at Influencers Leadership College, a Bible college in Adelaide," he says. He looks forward to seeing what God will continue to do with his life.

## LIVING HIS WORD

WITH WAYNE BOEHM

### LESSONS FROM A 365-YEAR-OLD MAN

Of the 3237 characters mentioned in the Bible, who are your favourites? Joseph, Joshua or Jochebed? In five short verses, Genesis records the life of one of my favourite Bible characters—Enoch. The last few words of Genesis 5:24 leave me in awe and wonder as I consider a life well lived.

**Consider Genesis 5:24** What do you notice about this verse?

Genesis establishes a formula that records the lives of the Patriarchs. Enoch's is different. Can you spot the difference?

Genesis 5:24 records three elements of Enoch's life worth considering as we grow as disciples of Jesus:

1. He walked with God;
2. and he was seen no more;
3. God took him.

Let's focus on what it means to walk with God. **Consider Hebrews 11:5.**

Ellen White gives further insights into the life of Enoch:

- "During the early years, Enoch had loved and feared God and had kept His commandments" (PP 84-85).
- "The infinite and unfathomable love of God through Christ became the subject of his meditations day and night."
- "With all the fervour of his soul, he sought to reveal that love to the people among whom he dwelt."

- Spent time in meditation and prayer.

• Enoch avoided constant association with the world (**1 John 2:15-17**).

**Consider Matthew 5:8. How are Jesus' words seen in the life of Enoch?**

"In communing with God, Enoch came more and more to reflect the Divine image. His face was radiant with a holy light . . . For 300 years, Enoch had been seeking purity of soul, that he might be in harmony with heaven . . . now the portals opened, the walk with God so long pursued on earth, continued as he passed through the gates of the Holy City" (PP 87).

What a life! What an example of what it means to be living the Word and growing in the image of God.

**I VANIA CHEW** ASSISTANT EDITOR.

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**Applications close August 18, 2017.**

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