

March - April 2008
Issue 26

The Next Step



Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)

Rev. Mark Warren - 17th February, 2008 - 2nd sermon of a series of 3 on Luke
WHY IS JESUS SO SHOCKING?



Mark with Marie following the service

In Luke 5 we read about Jesus teaching the crowds from Simon's boat. Then Jesus (a retired carpenter) gave advice on fishing to Simon, a professional fisherman who had been out all night fishing and had got nothing. This was a bit much for Simon but he grudgingly agreed saying "But because you say so, I will let down the nets." They got so many fish that Simon called his partners, James and John, to give a hand and both boats were full and beginning to sink. Simon Peter fell at Jesus' knees and asked Him to leave him because he (Peter) was a sinful man. Jesus' response was like that of Isaiah when God called him (Is. 6:5). Jesus said to Peter "don't be afraid." Peter, James and John left their nets and followed Jesus.

Levi was a tax collector. Tax collectors were corrupt businessmen, racketeers who extracted money from people. Who would think that Jesus would call one of them? What was Jesus about? Mark Warren's emotions would have been like that of the Pharisees who were outraged! But Levi jumped at the chance to get out of the mess that he was in. The company that Jesus keeps will make you feel awkward. (Levi became Matthew and wrote Matthew's Gospel).

Leprosy was considered a sign of being unfit to be in God's presence. A man covered with leprosy asked Jesus to be made clean. Jesus risked infection and became 'unclean' himself by touching the leper. Jesus wanted him to come to God, not just be healed.

A man with paralysis of the legs was let down through a hole made in the roof (his friends took the tiles off the roof, because there was no room for him to be brought into the crowded house where Jesus was). Jesus said to him "Friend your sins are forgiven."

His friends must have thought "check the legs mate." The son of man was given authority to forgive sins and He came to die on a cross for the sins of all of us. He came to re-integrate us with God. The Pharisees thought in their hearts that Jesus was speaking blasphemy. But Jesus showed that he was able to forgive sins by telling the man, to take up his mat and go home, which he did.

Why does Jesus hang out with the baddies? Its all about turning from living for yourself to living for God. The Pharisees were about looking good. Jesus was about turning to God. JHB

Bible Studies

To start off our Bible Study year with a flourish, Joyce and Ian Hall invited members of both the Tuesday and Friday Bible Studies to their home for lunch. The meal together was a time when we were able to enjoy some very good food and good fellowship.

Bible Studies are held at the Gospel Chapel on Tuesdays at 2-30pm (mostly ladies) and Fridays at 2-00pm (currently all men but ladies welcome). Both groups would be very pleased to welcome new people.

We enjoyed Rev. Ron Peters company when he preached for us on 24th February.

L to R: Ian, Ron, June, Valda and Jack.



Malcolm, Elizabeth and the DRC

Rev. Malcolm Richards has been back in Australia for some months and is preparing to return to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We were glad he could fit us into his busy schedule and preach for us before he headed back to Africa.



Above: Elizabeth explaining about their life in DRC.

Right: Malcolm, Elizabeth and Malcolm's mother Beryl.

Malcolm spoke on the parable that tells of a vinyard owner sending servants and eventually his son to his tennants to collect what was owed to him (Luke 20: 9-18). The servants were mistreated or killed and the son was also killed.



In Africa, apparently, many of the poorly educated pastors use this parable to teach that churches should treat their pastors well.

Malcolm pointed out that, as we better educated people would of course already understand, the parable is really talking of God's (the owner) relationship with his people (the tennants), sending prophets and His son Jesus (the servants and son) to them to remind them of their obligations to him. It speaks of the certainty of God's judgement.

Only by accepting in faith what Jesus has done for us can we escape the penalty for our rebellion against God.

ID

Farewell Paul

Rev. Paul Dudley has been visiting us every so often for some time, mostly preaching from the Psalms. (This week Psalm 110). His children's talks have also been memorable.

On 16th March we were to glad to see him once again, but sad that it would be his last time with us (in the foreseeable future at least). Paul has accepted an appointment as senior chaplain at Shore Grammar School in Sydney and so is heading up the Hume Highway.

This night's children's talk was typical Paul. No camels or inedible recipes this time but it demonstrated Paul's considerable artistic talents and was LOUD. Paul painted the scene of Jesus approaching from the viewpoint of a blind man wanting to see Jesus and calling out (loudly) to Him. To art 'philistines' like most of us Paul's painting appeared to be just a black blob on a blank canvas (it was after all what the BLIND man SAW) but eventually the soggy black blob peeled away to reveal a picture of Jesus as the blind man saw him after Jesus healed his blindness.

Following the service, we enjoyed a meal with Paul and his family outside in the cool. This was not our usual sandwiches, party pies and cakes, but a feast of casseroles, quiches, trifles and fruit-salads.

We wished Paul God's blessing for his future work and thanked him for his ministry to us.

ID

Rev. Kevin Kim – Easter Day

We have enjoyed visits from our Korean friends on a number of occasions in the past and were thrilled they could join us again for our Easter service.

We greatly enjoyed the Korean Choir's singing and as an added bonus Kevin again sang for us before commencing his sermon.

Kevin Kim told us about a sesame plant his wife was nurturing that disliked the hot weather and 'died'. After a period it finally rained and they were surprised that the plant came back to life.

Despite apparently coming back to life, the sesame plant was NOT resurrected as it had never really died.

Kevin explained he didn't believe in the sesame resurrection, but he does believe in Jesus' resurrection. Jesus died for real. Jesus died and we too have died spiritually, but Jesus was resurrected and He gives us a resurrection life through our faith in Him.



Kevin (centre) with others at the after service refreshments



Some people hear the good news message of Easter but don't believe. They only see or hear what they want to see or hear.

Some people are unable to come to belief without seeing compelling evidence for themselves

Some people hear the message and believe in faith.

Kevin suggested we should not try to see extraordinary things through ordinary eyes but rather pray for extraordinary eyes.

Following the service we all shared refreshments and fellowship outside.

ID

Rev. Peter Nelson and the Austral-Asian Church Choir joined us on Sunday, 30th March.



Rev. Ray Hughes + Fijian Methodist Choir - 13th April

Rev. Ray Hughes' sermon on 13th April was titled "Need A Lift?" and was based on Acts 9: 36-43.

Ray suggested that concentration on and over concern about your own problems can lead to an unhealthy introspection. The best way to help yourself often is to get out and do something for someone else.

Speaking to the children, Ray explained that our bodies have automatic ways of getting rid of unwanted physical irritations, for example a sneeze will sneeze away irritating dust or pollen. Our minds don't have that sort of mechanism. If something bad gets into your mind, it sticks there, so it is VERY important that we avoid bad thoughts and ideas and never let them into our minds.

The Fijian Methodist Choir sang for us at the same service.



Coming Up

Bible Study

Tuesdays at 2-30 pm at the chapel, 17 Chauvel St., Campbell
All welcome - contact Joyce Hall (6241 2085) for more information

Discussion Group

Fridays at 2-00 pm at the chapel, 17 Chauvel St., Campbell
Currently discussing Ephesians
All welcome - contact Ted Dennis (62593487) for more information

Services

Sunday **20th April** at 5pm – **Mr. Laurie Hockridge**

Sunday **27th April** at 5pm – **Dr. Howard Bradbury**

Sunday **4th May** at 5pm - **Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan**

Sunday **11th May** at 5pm – **Mr. Adrian Milne**



Sunday **18th May** at 5pm – **Rev. Mark Warren**



Sunday **25th May** at 5pm - **Rev Ron Peters (Anniversary Service)**



Sunday **1st June** at 5pm – **Rev. Mark Warren**

Sunday **8th June** at 5pm – **Rev. Dr. Murray Earl (Principal Air Force Chaplain)**

Sunday **15th June** at 5pm – **Mr. Zane Edwards (Bible Society)**

Sunday **22nd June** at 5pm - **Mr Tim Omrod**

Sunday **29th June** at 5pm – **Rev. Peter Nelson and the Austral-Asian Choir**

Contacts

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