

April, May 2016
Issue 87

The Next Step



Canberra Christian Fellowship
(in the Methodist Tradition)

Sunday, 3rd April – Mr. Mark Warren – How to live as a Christian

Have you ever struggled to find motivation? Are you tempted to take shortcuts in what you do because it is unclear why you are doing it?

Romans 6 addresses a cynical approach to christian living and chapter 7 a legalistic understanding. Chapter 8 provides a description of what God has done for us and why, presenting us with a real motivation for living as God wants.

We need not fear God's condemnation because Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law (our punishment for breaking that law) by dying for us. We have a new allegiance. No longer are we living for ourselves ('the flesh') but for God because His Spirit lives in us. What a motivation for living - we are given life because of the righteousness we receive through Christ. Now God sets our agenda.

We are part of a new family. We are 'sons of God' and heirs. We have new hope. God wants us to share in His glory.

God has done it all, not us, and there is so much more in store for us.

We are not ruled by fear. We are motivated to live in The Spirit which will bring us freedom, allegiance with God, a new family and hope.

God's Spirit brings life, peace and hope.



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Vicky, a distraught wife went to the local police station along with her next-door neighbour, Pauline, to report that her husband was missing.

The policeman asked for a description of the missing man.

Vicky described him clearly and in detail, 'He is 35 years old, 190cms, has dark eyes, dark wavy hair, an athletic build, weighs 84 kilograms, is softly-spoken and is fabulous with the children.

Pauline interrupts her protesting, 'Why Vicky, your husband is 170cms, corpulent, bald, has a big mouth, and is horrid to your children.

Vicky replied, with a sigh, 'Yes, but who wants HIM back?'

Sunday, 10th April – Mr. Phillip Ng – The truly good life



What qualifies as a 'good' life? How should we go about life when life is not easy?

In Psalm 73 the psalmist pours out his heart to God. He faces a dilemma. He knows of God's goodness but he sees ungodly men seemingly prosper. It appears to him that doing what is right achieves little but bring trials and God seems distant.

The psalmist realises that the way he sees things is not reality. When in God's presence he understands that the apparent successes of the wicked are insignificant. They will perish as a result of God's judgement.

Those who know God have good reason to sing God's praises and can look forward to joining God in glory.

When the going gets tough, don't let appearances get in the way of reality.

To live a truly good life we need to get rid of the facade that this world presents, see the world and success as God sees them and live in the reality of God's world.

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Sunday, 17th April – Mr. George Huang – The fall of Jericho



When do we really get to know people? It is often in tough times and when facing adversity that we break through a superficial knowledge and really get to know someone. The same applies to God. In the battle for Jericho the Israelites got to know God better.

Nothing can stand against God.

To take a city the normal approach was to starve the inhabitants to submission. With Jericho, God said to do something different, something battle tacticians would regard as silly, but God's plan worked. Impossible situations cannot stop God.

Human thinking would question whether forgiving people for their wrong doing is a good thing. God is willing to forgive. He enabled it to happen through Jesus' death on the Cross. While on the Cross Jesus said "*Father forgive them*" [Luke 23: 34]. God changes people.

We cannot claim the victory.

The Israelites took the city of Jericho, but it was given to them by God. The Israelites only part in the victory was obedience to God.

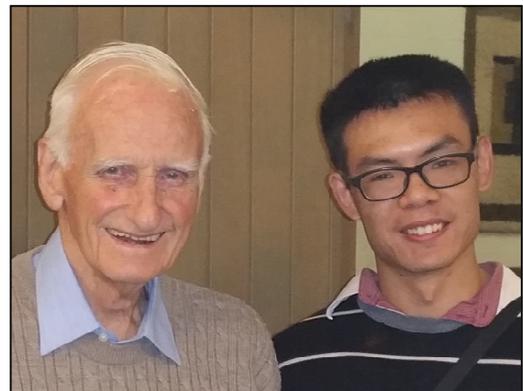
The Israelites often failed God but were given victory. We too deserve nothing. Our 'good' does not erase our sin. We are offered eternal life by God. That is something we certainly have not earned.

Our God is full of grace that runs deeper than we know.

All the inhabitants of Jericho were killed except for Rahab, the prostitute, and her family. Rahab had helped the Israelites because she recognised God was with them and she 'feared' Him. She was not saved because of her race, family or what she had done. She was saved through God's grace alone because she acknowledged Him for who He was. (It is interesting to note that Rahab was the mother of Boas who was an ancestor of King David and of Jesus. [Matthew 1]).

God is serious about fighting the enemies of His people and protecting them. He is merciful to those that fear Him. God spares and saves those that call out to Him.

Nothing is impossible to God!



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We celebrated two birthdays at supper after this service. Marie and Maurine were both 21 with a possible margin for error of 59 and 69 years.



Sunday, 24th April – Mr. Brett Hillam – A forgotten God



In society today there seems to be a tendency to downplay the concepts of good and evil. Rather than consider right and wrong, many people just pursue 'happiness'. People have forgotten God.

People think they can fix their own problems and those of the world themselves. History tells us that is wrong. The problems of this world continue on.

This self sufficiency attitude is a violation of purpose. God made us for relationship with Himself and each other. "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*" ... *'Love your neighbour as yourself.'* There is no commandment greater than these." [Mark 12: 30,31].

In 2 Chronicles 7: 14 we find God telling Solomon "*if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*"

- Humility is lacking in society. God calls us to humility. We can't change things 'out there' until we change inwardly. When we forget God, we have a tendency to be proud.
- We are called to pray.
- We should seek God and find out who He is and what He is like. We will find He is not a dictating tyrant but a loving Father.
- We must turn from our wicked ways. If we turn away from things that have no eternal value we will find God provides forgiveness and healing. It is up to us to turn to God. He does not force us to have a relationship with Himself, but He has made it possible.

We are able to proclaim the Good News about God to a world that has largely forgotten Him. We are His messengers. God has given us a cure for death. We can receive forgiveness and healing.

God has led by example. He has humbled Himself and come to us as Jesus.

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Thanks

Recently many of our Fellowship's people joined in two different celebrations.

The first was a time of celebration for the life of Ailsa's husband Arnold and committing him to God's care. Such occasions inevitably involve a degree of sadness however Ailsa was comforted by the support she received from her friends. She has sent us a card thanking us for that caring support and the flowers we sent her.

Maurine's celebration at the Southern Cross Club, Jamison was to mark her 90th birthday. Quite a crowd turned up to help her enjoy that milestone. She says "*Heartfelt thanks for the gifts and greetings to all who came to the afternoon tea for my 90th birthday. It was much appreciated and humbling. God bless you all. Maurine*"

Sunday, 1st May – Rev. Phil Anderson – Not as the world gives

Revelation is a Biblical book that we do not fully understand. Despite that it is valuable and brings us great hope. There are times of tribulation, but God wins.

Christ is the first fruit of those who are raised back to life. We will be fruit too, we will be raised. Whose, not who, we are sets us apart. We are God's and He gives us new life.

How are we different?

- If we love Him, God will dwell within us.
- We have God's Word. The Holy Spirit reminds us of Jesus and His teaching that it contains. The Word is the power of God.
- The Holy Spirit teaches us and convicts us of sin. The Spirit enables us to see things in a different light.
- We receive peace, not a worldly peace, but God's peace. (Do not be troubled or afraid.)

Where He is, there we will be also.

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Salt Society <http://www.saltsociety.org/>



Hi there, I'm Ruthie.

I help hopeful small churches kickstart their design and communications.

WELCOME!

Recently I was sent a web address to check out. I was very impressed by the purpose of the site and the look and helpfulness of the site. Rather than rehash what it is all about, here is what we are told on the site's 'about' page.

I'm Ruthie, and I'm the creator of Salt Society, a lover of all-things design, communications, and most importantly, a gracious God.

I have a particular passion for small churches with no money. Why? Growing up, I was a pastor's kid (we call ourselves PKs in Australia) and my dad worked the small church circuit. We constantly found ourselves in tiny churches with little resources (one church had TWO regular attendees) and our family basically made up the welcome team, the hospitality team, the worship team, the sound and projector team, the Bible-reading team...the list goes on. The point is, I *know* small churches. I *know* that you have willing people who love to serve. I also know that those willing people can sometimes be overworked, undervalued, and end up burning out.

My aim then, in creating Salt Society, is to help you; help the volunteers! I want to share the knowledge and experience I've gained from doing church media in different small churches, and top it all off with some gems of know-how that I've picked up in my Marketing and Communications degree.

Not everything on a site such as this will be of use to everyone, however there are likely to be morsels that can be very helpful.

If Ruthie's photo looks vaguely familiar to you, it is probably because her Dad has preached for us, Ruthie has visited us and she happens to be Ruth and Howard's grand-daughter.

Sunday, 8th May – Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan – Mothers' Day 2016



The Bible Reading was from Proverbs 31: 10-31 and is sub-titled 'The wife of noble character'.

God made us male and female - equal in humanity but different in gender. Men and women find completion in each other and have children together. The woman has a greater role in nurturing children.

Mothers look after their family's needs and have a important role in the care of their children.

Husbands are important too, supporting and loving their wives. (Often today husbands and wives are talked of as partners. Partners can be of fleeting duration, however husbands and wives are enduring).

Good women and mothers are industrious, working hard for their families.

They are energetic both in their homes and in the community.

Women of faith are to be praised.

The passage in Proverbs paints a wonderful picture of a good woman.

"A wife of noble character ... is worth far more than rubies." [Proverbs 31: 10]

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A couple had two little boys, ages 8 and 10, who were excessively mischievous. They were always getting into trouble and their parents knew that, if any mischief occurred in their town, their sons were probably involved.

The boys' mother heard that a clergyman in town had been successful in disciplining children, so she asked if he would speak with her boys. The clergyman agreed, but asked to see them individually, so the mother sent her 8-year-old first, in the morning, with the older boy to see the clergyman in the afternoon.

The clergyman, a huge man with a booming voice, sat the younger boy down and asked him sternly, "Where is God?"

The boy's mouth dropped open, but he made no response, sitting there with his mouth hanging open, wide-eyed. So the clergyman repeated the question in an even sterner tone, "Where is God!!?" Again the boy made no attempt to answer. So the clergyman raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face and bellowed, "WHERE IS GOD!?"

The boy screamed and bolted from the room, ran directly home and dived into his closet, slamming the door behind him. When his older brother found him in the closet, he asked, "What happened?"

The younger brother gasped for breath and replied, "We are in BIG trouble this time dude. God is missing and they think WE did it!"

Sunday, 15th May – Pastor Steve Prior – Storing treasures for eternity

These days shopping malls seem to be the temples of the people. Material goods are 'worshipped'. The saying "He who dies with the most toys wins" illustrates this. Even on a church website that highlights church activities and spiritual matters, the classified advertisements are accessed most.



The focus on things is pointless as a goal in life. Things are temporary but they can stop us finding what really is important and valuable.

The rich fool (Luke 12: 13-34) put his faith in his fortune for his future.

Jesus presents us with an alternative. His message is not to worry - life depends on more than food. He offers life to the full. We can let go of concerns about material stuff. Instead we can depend on God who is all powerful, loving and can supply our needs.

This doesn't mean we should think of God as our butler and cook. He is God and it would be extremely foolish to think of Him in such a narrow way. We should think of God in every aspect of our lives and entrust our lives to Him with devotion.

God does provide for our needs, but problems arise when we crave things.

Two lines from C.T. Studd's poem 'Only one life' point us in the right direction.

*Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

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Sunday, 22nd May – Rev. David McDonald – Don't waste your time in the church



Some people would understand tonight's sermon title to mean 'church is a waste of time so don't go'. Others would interpret it as 'Church is so important that we should not waste a moment'. The second group interpreted the title correctly.

1 Corinthians 3 starts by stating that the Christians of Corinth were not yet mature in their faith. Paul mentions their allegiance to different Christian leaders as an example of that immaturity. He points out that the different leaders are merely servants of God. They do their God appointed tasks but God is responsible for the growth in the Church, not them.

Christ is the foundation of the Church. There can be no other. Everyone must build on that foundation and we should do it with care as the quality of what we do will be revealed. Our building must last for eternity. Let us build each other up.

We, the Church, are God's temple and His Spirit dwells in the Church. It is sacred.

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David McDonald, while chatting to me after the service at which he preached, commented on the prayer points in the news sheet concerning the chaplains we particularly support and their work. He went on to mention that he too is a chaplain - to the A.C.T. Brumbies rugby union team.

He was happy to tell us a little more of that role.

A number of Brumbies players are of polynesian ancestry and so have had some Christian teaching and involvement as they grew up. As with any community, Brumbies players range from having active faith to little or no knowledge of the Christian message. David told us that one player had actually sung at our Christmas Carols as part of one of the choirs.

David, as do the other chaplains, plays an important role in a community that may otherwise have little interaction with the church.



We are glad to add him to the list of chaplains for whom we particularly pray.

Rev. Phil Anderson - Army & A.C.T. Emergency Services chaplaincies

Rev. Owen Chadwick - Universities chaplaincy

Rev. Steve Lindner - Campbell High School chaplaincy

Rev. David McDonald - A.C.T. Brumbies Rugby Union team chaplaincy

Rev. Peter Nelson - Institute of Sport chaplaincy



Please remember Phil, Owen, Steve, Dave, Peter and their chaplaincy work in your prayers.

Services over recent weeks have included the following:



Mr. Mark Warren



Mr. Phillip Ng



Mr. George Huang



Mr. Brett Hillam



Rev. Phil Anderson



Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan



Pastor Steve Prior



Rev. David McDonald

Sunday 3rd April – Mr. Mark Warren - How to live as a Christian
 Sunday 10th April – Mr. Phillip Ng - The truly good life
 Sunday 17th April – Mr. George Huang - The fall of Jericho
 Sunday 24th April – Mr. Brett Hillam - A Forgotten God
 Sunday 1st May – Rev. Phil Anderson - Not as the world gives
 Sunday 8th May – Rev. Dr. Campbell Egan - Mothers' Day 2016
 Sunday 15th May – Pastor Steve Prior - Storing treasures for eternity
 Sunday 22nd May – Rev. David McDonald - Don't waste your time in the church

Coming Up

Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesdays at 2-30 pm.
 All welcome - contact Joyce for more information
 Studying John

Wednesday Bible Study Group

Wednesdays at 5-00 pm.
 Catering for Uni. students. contact John or Howard for more information
 Studying Acts

Friday Study Group

Fridays at 2-00 pm.
 All welcome - contact John M. for more information
 Studying John

Prayer Meeting

3rd Monday of each month, usually at Marie's.
 All welcome

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Coming Services

We meet at **Holy Trinity Finnish Lutheran Church, Cnr. Gould and Watson Streets, Turner**



Rev. Peter Nelson



Rev. Michael Pailthorpe



Rev. Paul Tabulutu



Mr. Robert Nicholls



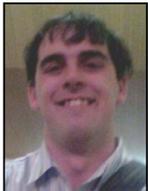
Mr. Roy Dallos



Mr. Jude Simion



Rev. Owen Chadwick



Mr. Adrian Summers



Mr. Roy Dallos



Rev. Peter Nelson



Mr. Ken Mansell



Mr. Revin Blanchard



Rev. Jangwon Seo

Sunday 29th May at 5pm – Rev. Peter Nelson (Church Anniversary)
 Sunday 5th June at 5pm – Rev. Michael Pailthorpe
 Sunday 12th June at 5pm – Rev. Paul Tabulutu (Communion)
 Sunday 19th June at 5pm – Mr. Robert Nicholls (Christian Blind Mission)
 Sunday 26th June at 5pm – Mr. Roy Dallos
 Sunday 3rd July at 5pm – Mr. Jude Simion (Barnabas Fund)

Sunday 10th July at 5pm – Rev. Owen Chadwick (Communion)
 Sunday 17th July at 5pm – Mr. Adrian Summers
 Sunday 24th July at 5pm – Mr. Roy Dallos
 Sunday 31st July at 5pm – Rev. Peter Nelson (+ Finns)
 Sunday 7th August at 5pm – Mr. Ken Mansell
 Sunday 14th August at 5pm – Mr. Revin Blanchard
 Sunday 21st August at 5pm – Rev. Jangwon Seo