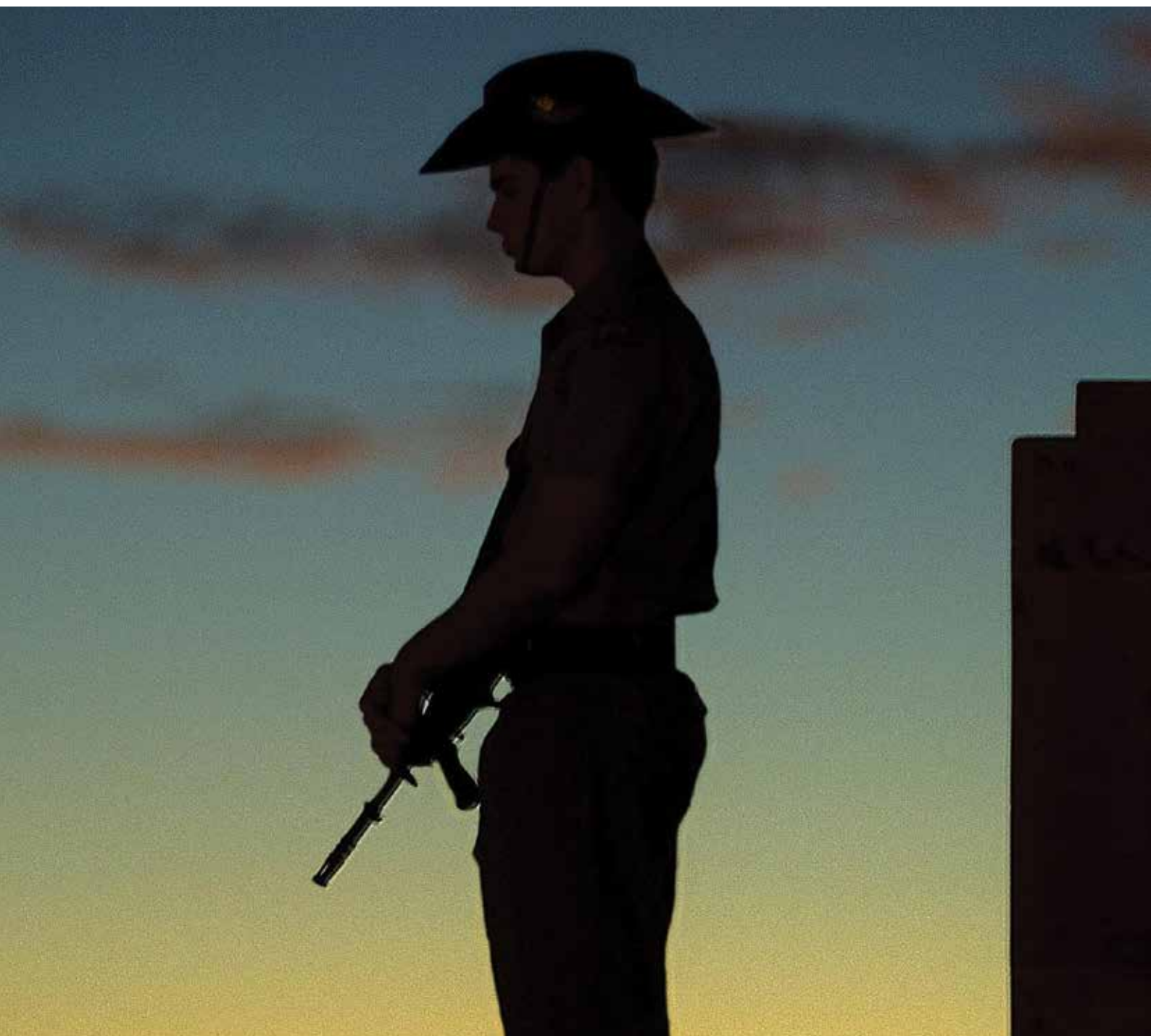


CROSSFIRE



THE MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIA † NUMBER 25 † JUNE 2014



Strength and Courage Seminar | AMCF Global Interaction
Kokoda Peace and Reconciliation Initiative



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Your contribution will help support the work of MCF within the Australian Defence Force.

contents

- 1 Chairman's Report
- 2 Christian Confidence in a Sceptical Age
- 5 National Day of Prayer for Defence
- 6 The AMCF Global interaction 2014
- 6 New Zealand MCF Conference 2013
- 7 The MCF Strength and Courage Seminar
- 8 Moral courage
- 9 Big Things and Little Things – A Practical Approach
- 12 Watch out! You are being watched
- 15 Defence Christians Dinner 2014 flyer
- 16 Application for Membership of MCF-A
- 17 MCF Centurions Application Form
- 18 Fight the Good Fight Seminar flyer
- 19 Jesus' Strength and Courage in Going to the Cross
- 22 Boundless
- 24 Psalm 2 - Giving Language to the Soul
- 26 Kokoda Peace and Reconciliation Initiative
- 29 Forum of Christian Military Ministries
- 30 Solid Rock Ministries
- 30 MCF-A Centurions
- 31 Staff Worker Report
- 32 Staff Worker Reflections
- 33 MCF-A Representatives and Contacts

From the editor...

Mr David Coleman

(david.coleman1@defence.gov.au)



Please send me a short story of your experiences as a Christian in the military and highlight what God has done for you!

Articles for Crossfire should be no more than 500 words long and focus on military Christian issues and experiences. Stories from operational service are especially encouraged.

Submissions should be in electronic format and will be subject to approval from the National Council before publication.

Photos are encouraged and should be of maximum resolution to ensure production standard.

Cover Image by: LSPH Yuri Ramsey. Anzac Day dawn service at Monument Hill in the city of Fremantle, WA.



Chairman's Report

LTCOL Jamie van Heel



Since the last Crossfire edition in mid June 2013, CPL Cameron Baird from 2 Commando regiment has paid the ultimate sacrifice on operations. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

GEN Hurley, the Chief of the Defence Force, is retiring from the ADF on 1 July at the pinnacle of his career. MCF has been fortunate to have GEN Hurley as our patron for the past six years. GEN Hurley has been an active contributor in this role, speaking at the Defence Christian's dinner, MCF Seminars and contributing articles to Crossfire magazine. We wish him well in his retirement and for the continued association he will have with MCF.

I'd like to thank the outgoing Council members: PCHAP Geoff Webb, CAPT James Feuillerade and FLTLT Scott Minchin for their service on the MCF Council. I'd like to welcome PCHAP Kevin Russell, WGCdr Alf Jonas and SQNLDR Aaron Downs who joined the Council in November 2013.

Lisa Thomas, our Staff Worker, has been with us for over 2 years now. She has been a great support to the MCF Council, keeping contact with the MCF regional POCs and the general membership. Lisa is working 5 days a week; however, we are currently only able to support her financially for 4 days per week. I'd like to increase her pay in the second half of this year to remunerate her actual hours worked, which will only be possible through the generosity of our membership.

MCF hosted the National Day of Prayer for Defence on 5 Apr 14. This was a spiritually significant event for Australian

Defence Organisation. The day focused on praying for the safety of deployed service men and women, their families, and those who have recently returned from operations. Additionally, prayer was offered for ADF culture, the implementation of the *Pathways to Change* strategy, Chaplains, and Defence senior leaders.

The ADF *'Faith Under Fire'* Course is a great resource for Defence personnel to understand from a historical perspective who Jesus was and to understand the concept of spiritual resilience. I encourage MCF members to become involved with their chaplains in leading this initiative and inviting their work mates to participate in the course.

The next Defence Christians dinner is scheduled for Friday 5 Sep 14 in Canberra. We are privileged to have Bishop Ian Lambert, the Anglican Bishop to the Defence Force, as our keynote speaker.

The MCF Seminar titled *'Fight the good fight'* is scheduled for Saturday 6 Sep 14 following the dinner. The MCF seminar intends to encourage and equip Defence personnel to fight the good fight in the physical and spiritual battlespace. We have a great list of guest speakers including Stuart Robert MP, Assistant Minister for Defence; Mr Lyle Shelton, Managing Director of the Australian Christian Lobby; and Stan Longinidis (former kick boxing champion).

Operational Fruitful Tree (MCF Strategic Plan) and the MCF Constitution are being reviewed and will be presented to the AGM on 5 Nov 14. MCF is seeking 100 of its members to be Centurions who will pray and support MCF financially. If you would like to be a Centurion please advise the MCF office on mcf.office@defence.gov.au.

The Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF) Global Interaction is being held in Capetown, South Africa from 30 Nov – 6 Dec 14. We are trying to raise \$10,000 to support delegates from the SW Pacific countries not as fortunate as ourselves. I will be attending with another eight Australian delegates and up to 10 delegates from the SW Pacific region.

2 Timothy 4:7

*"I have fought the good **fight**, I have finished the **race**, I have kept the **faith**."*



Christian Confidence in a Sceptical Age

Dr Greg Clarke



Summarised from the talk presented by Dr Greg Clarke at the Defence Christian's Dinner 2013.

Are you a sceptic of Christianity? Regardless of whether you call yourself a Christian or not, either way, you may be a sceptic of the faith.

You may be wondering: how much of this is true? How would I know? Has anyone thought deeply about a defence of the Christian faith? Or is Christianity going to crumble under the weight of a secular culture?

It's not a bad thing to be a sceptic, at least in the ordinary use of the word. It means you are a questioner, you think about things, you weigh up the evidence and you don't make up your mind too quickly. Surely that is a good thing when there are so many charlatans around.

But are you a sceptic in the philosophical sense?

Scepticism is both a Western and Eastern philosophical tradition. The West traces back to one Pyrrho of Elis (360BC), who after spending time in India, came to the view that we could know nothing for certain and that we should be at peace about this. The tradition of thinking that developed from his view says that knowledge is elusive, humans are frail and fallible, everyone disagrees on things like truth, beauty, right, wrong, and justice, and no one person has enough information to be sure of what they think.

It's a profoundly depressing thing to be at peace about! But I think we can all sympathise to some extent with this view. We have doubts, we know our minds are limited and we

find it hard to weigh up options. But is it correct? And how does Christianity cope if it is put under the microscope of Pyrrho's scepticism?

Given the nature of the discussion of religion that has been taking place in the West since the events of September 11 put religion back on the airwaves, can Christianity cope under the microscope of the Pyrrho's of our time: Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Laurence Krauss and any other critic of our times? Can anyone be confident in Christianity in this age of scepticism?

I hope to demonstrate why holding the Christian faith is one of the most solid spiritual positions you can hold.

People have been sceptical of Christianity since its founder walked the earth. To stick with our ancient figures, one of the earliest sceptics about Christianity, 2nd Century Greek philosopher, Celsus captures a feeling that many have today.

The teacher of Christianity acts like a person who promises to restore patients to bodily health, but who prevents them from consulting skilled physicians by whom his ignorance would be exposed. (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, Book III, 75)

In other words, isn't the Christian religion a crutch? Just like burying your head in the sand, not up-to-date with the research and living in the past. Isn't it a thing of darkness that prevents people seeing the light? Aren't Christians just avoiding the 21st Century and all we now know about our universe and how it works? These are fair questions and the very things people still ask today.

I want to at least begin to show you that these kinds of questions can be answered. That there are strong, affirming answers to the vast majority of issues people raise about Christianity and that sceptics actually need to explain why they are so sceptical. I will briefly address four significant questions that are raised regularly by those who are sceptical about religion and Christianity in particular.

Is Christianity fanciful?

The claim is made that Christianity is fanciful, irrational, that it is foolish to believe there is a God, or that Jesus Christ was the revelation of God, or that history is headed towards a day of reckoning when we will all be held to account. The answer to that claim has many parts, but in short it is a resounding NO.



Christian claims are based in the history of the New Testament, which can be examined and tested by anyone. They are among the most robust claims from the ancient world.

Christianity is based on belief in God, which is the commonly held reality of most people at most times in most places around the world. It can also be argued for philosophically with great force.

No better argument has yet come forth to explain why the universe is here at all, than the notion of an eternal Creator God. For the philosophically minded, in the past it was possible to suggest that the universe itself is eternal, but that is no longer possible. Science has shown that the universe had a beginning, so we are left with trying to explain *why* and *how* it had that beginning. Recently, the physicist Lawrence Krauss has made his name in Australia by suggesting that it makes sense to claim that the universe came from nothing. I'm not a physicist, but I understand his argument to be that there could be a state that has no particles (a vacuum), that the laws of nature might not be constant, and that there might be something more foundational than space and time. Therefore, from this condition, the universe has emerged and he calls that condition nothing and he claims he has done away with the need for God. However, the majority of science and religion experts I have read think he has just redefined 'nothing' and doesn't understand its philosophical meaning. In other words, the idea that an eternal Creator is the cause of the universe still has legs – strong ones.

Christianity is not fanciful, indeed it is very serious and it has been and still is the serious subject of study for philosophers, scientists, historians and theologians. It is amenable to rational scrutiny. And it stands up well.

Is Christianity immoral?

One of the major sources of scepticism today concerns the moral teachings of Christianity. Whether it is an issue of sexuality or of social justice, people fear that the Bible teaches immoral behaviour.

On most of these questions I find the average sceptic incredibly misinformed. Most of their claims about the moral teachings of Christianity simply aren't the case. They arise from 'flat-earth' Bible reading.

For example, let's consider the assertion that Christianity promotes slavery.

The Bible records slavery, but the direction of biblical teaching is freedom. It's true that slavery is part of the military victory activities of Israel, but is not endorsed as the desirable condition for anyone.

In the New Testament the concept of slavery is turned on its head by teaching that a slave has the same rights and status in God's eyes as a master. This is radical teaching and is the kind of teaching that leads to democratic rights for workers, control of employer power and is in some ways (as is the Sermon on the Mount) behind the development of the Union movement in Australia.

To claim Christianity is immoral is to stop short of a true enquiry into the Scriptures. When you do that you are captured by its vision of love, peace, justice and kindness. And the instructions of Scripture are to guide us into the good life.

Furthermore, I think I can argue that morality itself demands a personal God like the God of the Bible. Can you live a good life without religion? Yes of course. I know many good people who are not committed believers. Can you understand and explain what is good without religion? Probably not.

Religion provides a basis for moral behaviour, grounded in the idea that there is a way to live that pleases God and a way that does not. We struggle to establish why one action is considered *wrong* and another *right* unless we refer to the religious sphere.

For the record, the default position for Christianity is that all people are in fact bad. That is, everyone has fallen short of what they should be as a human being and fallen short of the way of life that pleases God. We are all in the same boat! We are what the Bible calls sinners, in need of mercy if we are to escape judgement.

Religion has been the source of most of our moral judgements, even if we are not ourselves religious. It is remarkable how often people refer to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount as the best possible expression of ethics and morality.

Is Christianity bad for society?

Without the Christian religion making a difference in public we just wouldn't have so many of the great elements of our society.

Care for those in need. Twenty three of the 25 top charities in Australia have a religious basis, most of them Christian. From the Salvos to Mission Australia to Vinnies to World Vision – they are all motivated from a Christian basis.

Hospitals are often founded or run by churches, which is why they have the names of saints; St Vincents, St Bart's in England, the oldest British hospital, or 'Mater' hospitals.

Institutions. Whether they are businesses or banks there is often a Christian story behind some of the iconic Australian



institutions; like Sanitarium Health Foods and AMP. They were founded to make their Christian beliefs public and to put them into practice.

The arts. If you take religion out of the arts there isn't much left. Have you noticed which Christmas carols really move you? It's the religious ones. By way of example, compare 'Jingle bells' with 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing!' Art in the form of painting is dominated by religious themes and the same is true of literature. I read an article recently by a film critic saying that he wished film-makers would start to use the Bible more in their storylines, because the Bible has the best stories!

Even that other taboo topic, politics—I can give you the Christian background to both the Labor and the Liberal party in Australia if you are interested. Religion has always been important in politics and should remain so. It shouldn't take over everything but it has to be part of the way we decide how this nation will be governed.

I can confidently say that the Christian faith has been a force for good in Australia, while also admitting its imperfect history.

I have tried to remove the sting of the major areas of scepticism, but there is still work to do. Removing the sting makes you negative, but Christianity has a trump card up its sleeve which tips the scales in a very positive direction.

The best argument for Christian confidence is Jesus himself.

Jesus was a man who clearly existed and only the most fringe historians suggest otherwise.

Jesus was known as a great healer and great teacher. There is ample evidence that Jesus was known not just by his followers, as a healer, a sage, and a rabbi (teacher) during his time and with a growing reputation in the century that followed. His teachings adorn the walls of our great buildings, the pages of our novels and biographies, the canvases of our art, the sayings of our culture. It was he who came up with 'Good Samaritan', 'turn the other cheek', 'man shall not live by bread alone' and many more.

Jesus showed up the hypocrisy of false religiosity. He cut the religious leaders of his day down to size and showed their religion was all display and no substance.

Jesus knew the meaning of sacrifice. He suffered an unjust death because he had a God-centred view of the world where his death was a meaningful sacrifice for the sins of the world. He demonstrated the meaning of sacrifice.



Jesus faced death squarely and triumphed. There is no-one else about whom this can be said. If Jesus rose from the dead as the New Testament teaches, then he is unique. The Christian hope rests on the firm foundation that from the earliest days after Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where his crucified body had been laid and found it empty, Jesus conquered death and ushered in a new era where death would no longer rule.

For me personally, it has been my encounter with Jesus through the powerful testimony of the Scriptures that has given me confidence. It is not that I have had a profound spiritual experience (though I know some have), it is not that I feel that there are no questions to answer (I still have some nagging, difficult questions - I'm still a sceptic) and it is not that my life has been made cosy and easy by being a Christian (I'm no martyr, but I've had difficulties).

My confidence comes from my knowledge of God through the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus. That knowledge is built firmly on the view that it is more likely than not there is a God and that the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible fit well with what it means to live a Good Life.

Christianity is neither; fanciful, immoral nor anti-social, indeed it is quite the opposite; it is believable, good, and constructive. From that position, if you can hold it with me, you might remain a sceptic, but you won't be apathetic. You might be a questioner, but you won't be an antagonist. You might be serious, but you won't be despondent. In short, you will have every reason to cast your lot in with Jesus Christ, whom the Bible describes in 1 Corinthians 10 as our "spiritual Rock".



National Day of Prayer for Defence

LTCOL Jamie van Heel

The 2014 National Day of Prayer for Defence was held on Saturday 5 April 14 with over 31 groups meeting to pray across Australia and internationally.

The National Day of Prayer for Defence is an annual event that commenced in 2011, for all Defence personnel and those in the community who have a heart to pray for Defence. We appreciate the commitment of many who gave their time to pray for the Australian Defence Force. The ADF needs your continued prayers to spiritually uphold the Defence Organisation to God in order to positively impact the lives of Defence personnel in these challenging times for Defence members, families, leaders and government. We also need prayer for wisdom and strength to make the right decisions to guide our nation into the future.

"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."
2 Chronicles 7:14

I visited Israel last year for two weeks. It was amazing to see the land where Jesus lived, performed miracles and finally, in obedience, went to the cross. Australia has had a rich heritage with Israel, God's chosen people, through our Armed Forces. On 31 Oct 1917 the town of Beersheba was captured as the result of a charge by the 4th Light Horse Brigade which covered some 6 km to overrun and capture the last remaining Ottoman trenches and secure the surviving wells at Beersheba. This was the first step in the offensive which six weeks later saw Jerusalem (God's holy city) recaptured.

Feedback was received from a number of groups. Their reports were summarised in the MCF newsletter and were a source of much encouragement. Next year's National Day of Prayer is scheduled for Saturday 28 March 2015. If you would like to be an MCF Prayer Warrior who will pray for Defence issues on a regular basis please email PO Olly Kaese (oliver.kaese@defence.gov.au).

Declaration over Australian Service men and women, inspired from Ezekiel Chapter 37:1-14 read by LTCOL James van Heel, Chairman of MCF.

Australian Service men and women hear the word of the Lord in Jesus name.

The sovereign Lord says to you; "I will make my breath enter you, and you will come to life. As my son Jesus had victory over death and the grave, I will open your graves, shine my light to expose deception, and deliver you from unbelief and the captivities of the enemy.

As you turn to me, you will know and love the truth that will set you free; as you receive me, Jesus, as your Saviour and Redeemer.

I will put my Spirit into you, you will live, you will know me, and that I am the Lord your GOD. Then you will say; "Christ is my hope. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

The Lord God Almighty, the Captain of the Host's Armies would say to His people;

"Submit whole heartedly to me, resist the devil and he will flee.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust the LORD your God and put your faith in me; love and worship me, meditate upon my word, praise God, and determine in your heart to obey me, and to follow my ways.

Thank me that I have called you. Stand up on your feet, enter into your inheritance and take your position to be a physical and spiritual army for my purposes.

I have gone before you. The mandate that I have prepared for you as part of the Great Southlands of the Holy Spirit, is to reach out to my covenant land and first covenant people Israel, so that my name might be glorified through you and magnified throughout the whole earth."



The AMCF Global interaction 2014

LTCOL Jamie van Heel



AMCF 2012, Brisbane

The Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF) holds a World Conference for its leaders and future leaders every 10 years. The next world conference is planned for

30 November to 6 December 2014 in Cape Town, South Africa - it will be known as the 'AMCF Global Interaction 2014' or 'AMCF GI 2014'. The South African Military Christian Fellowships (SAMCF) is hosting the world's Military Christian Fellowships (MCF), with the prayer that there will be more than 1,000 international military Christian participants from at least 150 countries and 600 South African military Christian participants. If you are interested in attending please check the website www.amcf2014.org

If you can't attend but would like to donate funds to assist delegates from countries within our region to attend, please make your tax deductible donation to MCF account BSB 803-205, account number 20514572 and label your donation with 'your surname AMCF GI'. The AMCF GI organisers are asking MCF members from around the world to consider donating one day's pay to support attendance of those delegates less fortunate than ourselves. MCF Australia are aiming to raise \$10,000 to support regional delegates.

New Zealand MCF Conference 2013

PCHAP, RAN Eric Burton

The New Zealand MCF met for its annual conference in October in Wellington. The group was small but enjoyed two days of great teaching and input. Al McKinnon of Military Life gave superb teaching on handling conflict and finding resolution. A thorough examination of scriptural material over two days left us all with a determination to be peacemakers in every way. The patron of NZ MCF is Vice Chief of the Defence Force – General Tim Keating and he spoke personally and movingly about the challenges for the military in time of constrained resources. He affirmed the absolute importance of faith in our lives especially with the pressures service life. Principal Chaplain of the NZ Defence Force Lance Lukin provided two memorable services with great praise times and moving stories of his time on deployment. His two stories reminded us of the transforming power of Christ in changing us into people with a 'future and a hope'. I attended this in the capacity of Vice President of the South West Pacific Association of Military Christian Fellowships and was glad I did.



The MCF Strength and Courage Seminar

LTCOL Jamie Van Heel

The MCF *'Strength and Courage'* seminar was the fourth MCF Seminar. The first was entitled *'Battlesmart'*, the second *'Faith under fire'*, the third *'Spiritual Bootcamp'*, and now *'Strength and Courage'*. These are all military themes that have significance for us in our spiritual lives. This seminar's theme was based on Joshua 1:9. *'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'*

I very much enjoyed watching the Bible mini-series and once again seeing Biblical characters and their journeys, challenges, triumphs and failures that we can learn from and apply to our lives.

There are many examples in the Bible of ordinary men and women displaying physical, moral and spiritual strength and courage to do extraordinary things. Abraham took his son Isaac to the top of Mt Moriah following God's request for a sacrifice, only to have God provide the sacrifice. Moses challenged Pharaoh to lead God's people out of slavery from the Egyptians; Joshua marched around the walls of Jericho seven times to see the walls come crumbling down; Daniel was spared his life in the lions den; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into the fiery furnace for not bowing down to false gods and miraculously survived; Deborah went into battle to help the Israelites throw off an oppressive Canaanite ruler; David courageously fought Goliath when trained Israeli soldiers would not; Jesus going to the cross when he knew that he could have called on a host of angels to release him from the Roman guards. Finally, the disciples were willing to lay down their lives for the sake of the gospel.

We know also of those biblical characters who, like us, knew what was right; however, in their own strength, fell short.

Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, King Solomon who chased after the pleasures of this life in his later years, Jonah who tried to escape from where God was calling him only to find himself in the belly of a whale. David who had an affair with Bathsheba, Judas one of Jesus disciples who betrayed him for some silver, and Peter who denied Jesus three times after promising he would die for him.

We see the transforming power of God through Saul who was intent on murdering Christians only to become one himself through his experience on the road to Damascus.

We were privileged to have a number of key note speakers to share with us on the theme of *'Strength and Courage'*. These included: GEN David Hurley, Commissioner Andrew Scipione, RADM Mark Campbell, Mrs Elka Whalan and Dr Greg Clarke. The following articles are a summary of their presentations at the seminar. Please read their articles and be challenged to increase your strength and courage in your physical and spiritual battlespace.



Moral courage

GEN David Hurley



Some of you may not know this, but I'm a tragic for the movie *Gladiator*. ...I really am. When I'm going on an international trip the first thing I do when I hop in my seat is to grab my briefcase, set up all my work, and then I search through the movie guide for whatever the equivalent is for the 'golden oldies' to see if they

have '*Gladiator*' listed there. I then select the first scene and watch that, and then I jump to the scene where they battle the 'hordes of Scipio'. I watch that scene and then I'm satisfied for the rest of the trip - I don't watch any other movies - I've done my bit.

If you read history and see the way the Romans fought and occupied, their value base wasn't what we might like it to be. However, right at the start of the movie when the three commanders are standing together and the message comes back that the enemy isn't going to surrender, they look each other in the eye, they give the Roman salute, and they say to each other 'Strength and Honour', which is their statement of values. Now, they may not live to those values, but it was their statement of values before they went to war.

That observation is very much in line with what we're going to talk about today, 'strength and honour'. Honour comes through the acknowledgement of courage, both physical and moral courage. That's what the Romans were basing their approach to their esprit de corps, unit morale, unit cohesion, upon. Today we understand quite clearly there is moral courage, and there is physical courage, and the two intersect at times and at times you could be called upon to exercise either or both.

As Christians, when we are challenged to act in accordance with our moral convictions, to display moral courage, we act when it's right and necessary to do so. I think the key message about moral courage is that we display it when there is a risk to us in doing so. We don't display moral courage because it's an easy thing to do. Moral courage presents a risk to us when we exhibit it. And that's why it's so important to us. In this world where self-gratification and material needs override many of our considerations in life, you are going to be asked to put your 'self' at risk, and that's what moral courage is about.

The Bible has many great examples of those who exercised moral courage. Look at Daniel. When the decree was issued that you were not to pray to God he went to an open window, knelt there, and prayed, in a way that was obvious to all. This was a great act of moral courage. He

was prepared to pay the price in the physical sense for that action once he was discovered.

We see Paul when he opposed Peter in his teachings. Now that was a difficult thing for Paul to do. He was a man converted from being the persecutor of Christians to being the voice of God, the conduit for God's word, and here was Peter who was part of the Twelve. Yet Paul had the moral courage to stand up and contest some of Peter's teaching and try to help people understand Christ's message.

There is also the example of when moral courage is not exercised, such as Peter's denial of Christ. Peter exclaimed at one meeting "We're all behind you," yet when it came to the crunch, his response was "I don't know this man". That is quite an easy position to find ourselves in, in life. Where we can on the one hand say, "That's okay, we support that position" but when we're asked to our face we'll move backwards a bit. How far depends on the situation.

Christ's life was full of demonstrations of moral courage as he took on the conventions and the teaching of the day. Not testing it through violence or conflict, but in an intellectual way, to have the courage to say; "No, this is what you should believe" and really contest that idea against the teaching of the day.

So for all of us this really is a daily challenge and particularly for leaders in any organisation where you have a strong set of values. This is very topical in our organisation today. We have a value set that we need to live to and lead too. As you have heard so often, 'the standard you walk past is the standard you set'. That's an act of moral courage, not to walk past, but to put your hand up and say something is wrong, to correct it or to report it. That's our Defence challenge.

Moral courage is in many respects a public affirmation of both your values and in our case as Christians, values based upon our faith. Sometimes, however, we think that it is all about us. As Christians, when we talk about moral courage we sometimes forget there's a well we can draw upon and for that reason we should not fear demonstrating moral courage.

I leave you with two bible verses:

"Since we have such a hope in Christ, we are very bold." 2 Corinthians 3:12

And:

"But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved." Hebrews 10:39

So we have within us, for us, talking for us, fighting for us and supporting us, God our Saviour who says; "Be bold, demonstrate moral courage, because I've given you the strength. You don't have to worry about it." That is an important message.



Big Things and Little Things — A Practical Approach

RADM Mark Campbell



The following article is based on RADM Campbell's presentation at the MCF Seminar in 2013

Introduction

ADF culture has improved enormously over the last 30 years and while there remains more to be done, Christians should be the 'salt' to assist and drive this change across the ADF. Being a good Christian in the ADF and today's world is not easy, but if you evangelise in God's strength, then anything is possible. I find it difficult being a Christian in the ADF, which is a very different organisation to the one I joined. The ADF leadership have done an enormous amount to change the culture and the values over the past 10 years, but there are still vast areas of darkness in the ADF. Christians have got to be that 'shaft of light' wherever we are.

Big Things in the Old Testament

Let's begin by talking about two biblical warriors – Moses and Gideon. These men both did big things, but were very reluctant and actually debated with God. I am really encouraged by the thought of the debates that Moses and Gideon had with God.

Exodus 3:11 But Moses said to God; *'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?'* Moses was comfortable. He had escaped from Egypt, found a nice wife, got himself a herd of sheep and a herd of goats - all that you needed in those days to be a rich man. So – 'God, thanks very much, good offer, very pleasant, wonderful,

but who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?'

Exodus 3:12a God said; *'I will be with you.'* This was God's assurance to Moses that everything was going to be OK and that is the thing I want everyone to remember.

Exodus 3:12b *'And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.'* Which they did and you all know the story, but I just want to briefly talk about the discussion or debate that Moses has with God.

Exodus 4:10a Moses said to the LORD, *'Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant.'*

I actually feel a bit like Moses. I did an interview with a journalist, he sent me the transcript and it took me two hours to rewrite it because I obviously don't interview very well. I can see where Moses was going with this.

Exodus 4:10b *'I am slow of speech and tongue.'* To which the Lord says: 'Hey, I gave those people everything' and he goes on to explain that he will bring Aaron, Moses' brother, in who will assist. (Exodus 4: 11-17) The debate continues on though.

Exodus 6:12 But Moses said to the Lord; *'If the Israelites will not listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me, since I speak with faltering lips.'* He's saying; 'It's just not going to work, I'm sorry.' This was a very big thing bringing a nation out of Egypt, wander around a bit, and then end up in the land flowing with milk and honey.

Let's consider Gideon now; Gideon is a favourite of mine. He also did big things. Gideon's campaign, from a military perspective, is just fascinating. He used less and less people to get more and more done and he ends up with only 300 men to save the nation. Imagine an invading force coming to take over Australia and with just a couple of hundred people, we get rid of them. That's the sort of context that Gideon brings. But again, God comes to Gideon and he utters those time-honoured words:

Judges 6:13 *'Pardon me, my lord,' Gideon replied; 'but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said,*



"Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?" But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.'

There were about four different nations that had invaded and were having a wonderful time in Israel at this time.

Judges 6:14 *The LORD turned to him and said; 'Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?'*

Judges 6:15 *'Pardon me, my lord,' Gideon replied, 'but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.'*

Gideon was a 'nobody' in Israel and even in his own family.

Judges 6:16 *The LORD answered, 'I will be with you.'*

And God will also be with us. A bit later on Gideon tests God. There are only a few examples in the Bible of God being tested and this is one of them.

Judges 6:36 *Gideon said to God; 'If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised — look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said.'*

And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew—a bowlful of water. But even that is not good enough for Gideon.

Judges 6:39a *Then Gideon said to God; 'Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request.'*

This is no 'request', it's a test for God, courtesy of Gideon.

Judges 6:39b *'Allow me one more test with the fleece, but this time make the fleece dry and let the ground be covered with dew.'*

I believe that this is encouraging for us as God ended up winnowing out his people and the ones that lapped out of the stream, 300 of them, in God's strength defeated the Midianites. 300 against what some estimates suggest is somewhere between 10,000 - 40,000. In a military context, God used Gideon and his 300 to sow discord and make the various enemies fight among themselves - very easy for God to do, but not so easy for man to do. It was an excellent military victory; God can do it and we can do it with God there with us.

Moses and Gideon are both very instructive and very encouraging for me. While it may be difficult being that shaft of light in a Defence context, these stories encourage me and they should also encourage you. Being a member of the ADF and being a member of society at present isn't that easy. When you use that strength and courage that God gives you and remember his strength, remember that you can be courageous – step out in faith.

I have some suggestions here for us in our daily life as a way of demonstrating to people around you how to be that 'shaft of light'.

Some Contemporary Suggestions:

Be a great example – A 'do as I say, not as I do' approach rarely works! If you are a great example for those around you, in everything, from the way you organise your travel to the way you talk to people, people will notice. You might be very senior to somebody, but that does not mean that you can talk down to them. You might be very junior to somebody else but you don't talk about them behind their back. These might seem like little things, but be a good example in everything you do. People notice how you act, and once you've identified yourself as a Christian, they notice even more.

Integrity – Be responsible for your actions, people watch. Integrity is very important and is one of the values of our Defence Organisation. Be accountable for what you do and say.

Humility – is even more important. It is really easy not be humble, but if we are humble it counts for so much. You don't have to shout, you can get your message across by being calm, quiet and humble – people will notice.

Take the time to know those around you – Be empathetic with people and take the time to understand and know them. My analogy here is if you drive to Sydney at 110 km/h you don't see much, you just blast down that freeway. At 15 km/h (I'm a mountain biker and this is an average speed during a long race), you'd see a lot more. If you walk around at 5km/h, you see even more still. When you slow down and take the time to actually talk to people, you learn things about people's lives, then you can use that to further God's kingdom.

Know yourself – You have got to know what sort of a person you are and how you relate to other people so that you can be a better instrument for God. If you know whether you are an encourager, a leader or an administrator; use that skill to further God's kingdom.

Give it 110% all the time – be enthusiastic, people really notice that. It is all too easy to just sit there and let things happen, but if you are constantly enthusiastic, you are one of the few people around who is.

Simple Things

Be able to say 'sorry' and 'I was wrong' – You will be the winner and you'll be amazed at how far that gets you with people. Saying; 'I'm sorry' helps because I'm not right all the time, nobody is.

Have a support network – have people praying for you and be able to bounce thoughts and ideas off Christian friends.



It doesn't matter who you are or what you do, everyone needs a support network and having people pray for you.

Your approach is important – Meekness is not a common attribute of Defence people, but being meek is good and it works. You can be quiet, pleasant and measured. You do not need to shout.

Manners cost nothing – Manners used to be taught but I don't they are so much these days, so sometimes you have to take on a training role and teach people manners and how they can be pleasant. You can be meek about it and say; 'Listen did someone tell you that it's a good idea to open a door for ladies or to let your seniors go ahead of you?'

Be grateful – for the things that people do for you. If you take the time to know people and build that relationship, when they do something for you and you are grateful for it, it builds up into a very pleasant environment that God can work in.

Let them know you are a Christian – Find some way to let them know. You point out; 'Actually I don't appreciate you saying that', 'My stand on this is...' or establish a boundary.

Draw a line and be consistent – It helps people understand you and it might help them understand why you are the way you are. People will respect you, but you then have to be very aware that you will be watched - very closely. That is accountability.

Anything is possible to God

We have lots of opportunities to demonstrate our Christianity in Defence. We have performance agreements with uniformed and non-uniformed people at least twice a year, sometimes more; that's an opportunity. Morning tea is another opportunity, as are counselling sessions, briefs, soldier's fives or whatever else. You don't need to 'Bible bash' or be Billy Graham, but if you think about it and plan, you can use these opportunities to effectively increase God's kingdom. Take the opportunity; anything is possible with God.

Testimony

Be that shaft of light in the surrounding darkness.

I just want to share a personal experience which is part of my testimony. It's a long story so I won't tell the all of it, but I came to Christ on the back of a warship on the way back from Gulf War 1. It was quite a tense period and difficult, but God managed to place me in a helicopter crew of 3 where the other 2 were Christians. I had been a religious person all my life, we'd done Bible studies but I still did not have a personal relationship with Jesus.

I was asleep in bed and, for those of you who aren't familiar with life on a ship, you don't use alarm clocks because

they disturb everyone around you. Instead, you work on a system of 'shakes'. You make sure the bridge knows that you need to wake up at a certain time and they come along and make sure you are awake – dragging you out of bed if need be! That's the routine we set up.

So I was in bed, sound asleep and I got a shake; 'You are required down on the flight deck.' Now as an aviator it's normal for me to be on the flight deck, but not when we are in the middle of the Indian Ocean sailing back after the war and in cruising watches with no flying planned. So I thought; 'Hmm, this is interesting.' I promptly went back to sleep because it wasn't a very good shake. Then came this tug; 'Sir, Sir, you are required down at the flight deck.' 'Ok, ok.' I said, but there was no one there. I hopped out and thought; 'Why on earth would I be needed out on the flight deck?' Regardless, I put my boots and flying suit on and went down to the flight deck. There was this lone person jogging around the flight deck on a sullen dark, grey morning. I thought; 'OK, so what now? I wonder if this has something to do with last night's Bible study? Nah, but it might be.'

It was just before 7 o'clock in the morning when all of sudden there was a hole in the clouds and the sun hit me and not many other parts of the flight deck. The flight deck is not a big place either. The words went straight into my head; 'You are mine and no one else's.' I thought; 'Whoa, OK, got it, right.' I went straight away and woke up my two Christian mates and said; 'All right, it worked.' They had been earnestly praying for this for 3-4 months, in fact, one of them had come to me not long before and said; 'What is going on, why can't you see?'

That is the short version of a long story. Since then, I've been a slowly developing Christian and, perhaps sometime so slow that God is frustrated, but we are working on it.

Summary

Big things are great, but it is the little things with God's help that will help you the most to be a good Christian in the ADF. If you think you can release China's political prisoners, then great. If God puts that on your heart, then I reckon you could do it. What I'm saying to you today is that a bunch of little things will be a good start. It will help your environment, the people around you and it will help God and his kingdom. So if you can be that shaft of light, like that shaft of light that hit me in the early morning gloom on the flight deck, then I think that will be a great thing. Where ever you are, God will be glorified by anything that you might then do. I've been a part assistant in bringing a few people to the Lord in the last few years and that's always a great thing. You don't always know and you're not always that person to actually bring them to the Lord, but you are at least a part of the process.



Watch out! You are being watched

Commissioner Andrew Scipione



The following article is based on Commissioner Scipione's presentation at the MCF Seminar in 2013.

I have been the Commissioner of Police in New South Wales for seven years. When I consider my career, the role of Commissioner of Police wasn't necessarily a goal that I had –

but looking back, God's plan is clearer now - I was placed into that position more as a ministry than as a job.

My family were what's referred to as 'ten pound poms'. My father emigrated from the UK and I followed with my mother and sister. We moved into the Western Suburbs of Sydney where I grew up as a young boy and had a wonderful time. My heritage is mixed - we came from England. My father was born in France of Italian parentage, Italian-French parents. Mum came from a little town called Lurgan in county Armagh, right on the border between Northern and Southern Ireland. We arrived in Australia knowing no-one.

We weren't a church family, in fact, I don't think I set a foot inside a church until I was about 10 or 11. I will never forget my introduction to church through some neighbours. A young couple of Christians moved in next door and when they moved in, they let everyone know they were Christians. They were youth leaders in a local Baptist Church two suburbs away. They would, from the very beginning, ask me to get involved. 'Do you want to come to church?' A young boy, I had no reason not to and I started going to Boys Brigade.

As I moved into my teenage years, I had the opportunity to get involved in a youth group. That youth group was probably what put me on the path that brought me to where I am today, to the role that I fulfil professionally and to the life that I live. My faith is the central component to that personal and professional life. At youth group, I saw young Christian men and women that didn't have it all together, but had something that I didn't have. They had a faith and whilst they were young in their faith, they still had something that I didn't have. I had the good fortune of being able to observe these people, to watch them, to see the young couple, to see whether they were the real

deal. And as a young man, I would ask the questions: 'I just wonder if they're as good as they say they are? Do they live the life that they profess to live?'

At 14 I made the decision to give my heart to Jesus after a youth Bible study night. I can still see the chair that I sat in when I made the decision. In all honesty there were other reasons for me to be a big part of that group. I learnt that youth groups actually have lots and lots of girls in them. There was one very special girl in there that I didn't realise how special she was because at that time I didn't really know she was that special, but she is, and she is with me today, my wife, Joy. It was a little while before we became an 'item', but Joy was one of the girls in that youth group who meant a lot to me.

After making the decision to become a Christian, I lost my dad three months later and I was left very alone – simply Mum and I – effectively we had no one else in Australia. I went from being a boy to a man overnight. Although I wouldn't know it then, I was so blessed that I had God there behind me. I mentioned my wife Joy and she made a very big impression on me. When my dad passed away, I remember she came to visit me, from memory; Joy came to the door and basically cried. It was as simple as that. But the care and the love, that stayed with me. We obviously became an item, we married when we were quite young and we've been blessed having been together 35 years now. God has truly blessed us.

I want to address: **'Watch out! You are being watched.'** Before I made that decision where I said, 'I give my heart to you, Lord', I watched other Christians. After giving my heart to the Lord and my father passed away, my mother watched me. Although she wasn't a church-going woman, after my father passed away she said 'I've been watching you and you're a different boy. Still trouble, still problematic, still a teenager growing up in the Western Suburbs of Sydney, but different than what you were.' Two or three years later she gave *her* heart to the Lord. Because she was watching, she was observing. I guess that was one of the things starting to emerge in my life, the importance of knowing we are being watched.

If you are a professing Christian, people are watching. As Christians we carry not just the Lord's name, but the brand of Christianity. And the responsibility to our Lord and fellow Christians. People are very quick to say, 'And there's another



problem, these people that profess one thing and do something different.' We all carry that. We carry the good name of the Lord, the Saviour and our Father. We need to make sure that we handle it with care, both in private life, in professional life, when the lights are 'on', and when the 'lights are out'.

After my father passed away I assure you that life went on. Like many, once I became a Christian, it wasn't simply a 'happily ever-after'. I was soon to be confronted with very real challenges. I went from being a boy to a man very quickly, almost over-night it seemed. As a 14 year old boy I needed strong male influence to teach me how to live this life, particularly as a Christian man. I was so blessed. The church that Joy and I were a part of had three or four really strong Christian men in it that mentored me; giving me all of the clues, all of the detail by the way they were living. I saw how to be a Christian man. They taught me how to be a man. They taught me how to be a husband. They taught me how to be a father. These Christian men were the role models in my life that I know made the difference. They were the men that taught me. The DNA had been torn away and there needed to be something to replace it. God saw to it. Those Christian men in my church made the difference. They adopted Joy and me into their families almost as their kids. Again, we were so blessed. Those men have gone home and one day I am looking forward to being able to say hello again and to fellowship with them in heaven. I can recall talking to one of those men in Calvary Hospital, almost on his death bed, and saying to him, 'Thank you. Thank you for what you invested into me because I'm reaping the benefit.' It's by God's grace and godly, obedient men investing in a young man's life that I'm well placed to be able to make good choices.

My career continued, but this isn't about my career, this is about what God has done in our lives. My career progressed and I have served in every rank in the New South Wales Police Force. I rose to the rank of Chief Superintendent at a very young age. I can recall taking a phone call from the then Police Commissioner, Peter Ryan, it was in 1997. He said, 'I want you to come into my office.' Usually that's not good. That's like CDF David Hurley calling up and saying, 'You need to be in my office at nine o'clock in the morning.' Not much good usually comes from those sorts of phone calls! I was called by the Commissioner personally and I had only met him once before. I went to his office and he asked me to be his Chief of Staff. At the time there was no guideline, no proforma, and no strategic guidance.

Originally, the plan was for a short term position, which extended to over three years. It was a wonderful opportunity to witness, to explain to the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force what I had been through. I recall speaking to the Commissioner before the appointment was announced as permanent where I said to him; 'Before you

make this permanent, you need to know a little bit about me.' I said; 'I'm sure you don't expect me to, but I need to tell you that I won't lie for you. I won't cover up anything for you. I'll never do the wrong thing by you. You won't catch me on the front page of the newspaper for some scandal because that's not the way that Joy and I live our lives. We are Christian men and women.' And he said; 'That's exactly why you are here.' I didn't know him. 'How did you know me?' I asked. He said; 'I reached back to the UK. You trained with some people in the UK years before and when I reached back they said, "There is a young guy down there that you need to have working for you." In fact it was an attachment to a military installation that the Commissioner reached back to. That was where he had received his information. People watch you.

Today, I'm the twenty-first Police Commissioner in New South Wales. My team is smaller than the ADF. I manage just over 20,000 people in the State of New South Wales. The NSW Police Force is a modern organisation, formed in 1862, the varying police services; border police, mounted police, Sydney night patrol, water police, all 'merged' into a force of 800 men, The police force was only men then. Today, of the just over 20,000 people, a third of them are women.

So why God would put Joy and me in this role, because what I do is not just about me, it is about us, this is our ministry. Joy gets the rough end of the deal as every medal I've ever had presented to me really should go first to her because she has had to endure me not being there. Me being there, but being absent because I'm on a phone or dealing with a crisis. Not by design, but by default, cutting her out of the show. Military families and wives I'm sure would see that because I know Police wives see that, particularly the higher up the corporate ladder you go.

So, why? How is it to be? Why should God put me in charge? As I said, I was just a kid who came here in a boat as a baby, now in charge of the biggest police force in Australia and probably in the Western World, the fourth or fifth biggest in the world when it comes to sheer numbers. I don't know. But God is the God of 'I don't know's'. He looks after those things, I don't need to worry, because that's his business.

I say to people and I say it with all sincerity; 'The job that I do is not about me. This role I'm in is not about me. This Police Force that I'm in command of is not mine, it's yours.' The community own the NSW Police Force, not me. I'll own it one day, when I hang up my uniform and take a pension, that's when I'll own it because then I'll become solely a citizen. That's when I'll have a guiding interest that comes from a desire for my state, my family to be kept as safe and secure as we can be. Until then, I'm in service to you. My organisation is in service to you. So the wonderful privilege that I get to lead 20,000 men and women to serve



you is second to none when it comes to my profession, my chosen profession as a Police Officer.

In service though, I can never lose sight of the fact of the one that I truly serve. It's the God that delivered me when I was a 14 year old boy. That had his hand on my life before I was born, before I knew him. He took me through the loss of a father. He took me through a marriage, which then grew into a responsibility as a father for my own children and he brings me to the point where today, I am the NSW Police Commissioner. I'm not a Police Commissioner who happens to be a Christian; I'm a Christian who happens to be a Police Commissioner. That will never change because long after I'm a Police Commissioner who's retired, I'll still be Joy's husband, I will still be a father to John, Ben and Emma, I will still be a member of George's River Community Baptist Church, I will still be a member of society and I'll still be forever indebted to my Lord and my Saviour.

In concluding I want to send a message to Christian men. Our biggest problem, your biggest problem, my biggest problem is right now in this day and age, in this wonderful country, in this world that we live in, we're not holding up

our end. We are letting down our families and we are letting down our communities. God calls us to be men of courage, the theme of this seminar - Strength and Courage. Before I presented at the seminar I was talking with Joy and she said; 'Strength and courage are joined by choice. You've actually got to choose to make that decision to be strong and courageous.' Where are the men? Where are the real men? Where are the men leading their sons, growing their sons, like those three or four men did for me when I lost my father, into the men that we are called to be? Where are they? I think there is more that we can do. We need to sort of 'man up' in Christ's name and understand that we do need to be strong, to be courageous, to lead our families. We do need to be there and cherish those wives that have taken our name and given their all to support us, particularly if you're in service like the ADF or in my profession.

The responsibility is great, but the strength to do it, the grace to make it happen and the support that you need is there. It's there and available to you. God will make it abundantly available to you and bless us all in ways that we probably have never thought possible.

MCF-A Groups

MCF has an interdenominational vision that focuses on Galatians 3:28, that we are all one in Christ Jesus. Groups may have a virtual community who keep in touch via emails or may meet regularly for encouragement and spiritual development. Every group is different according to the people on the ground at each location. The membership form is in this magazine. The MCF-A

Representative form can be downloaded from <http://www.mcf-a.org.au/index.php/about-mcf/support-mcf>

If your group is interested in having the MCF-A National Staff Worker come to visit, please email mcf.office@defence.gov.au so this can be added to the agenda.

MCF Small Group Code of Conduct

As a member of an MCF small group I will:

1. Respect the denominational differences of all Christians within the ADF.
I will not argue denominational doctrine or question denominational beliefs.
2. Allow all members of the group an opportunity to speak regardless of spiritual maturity.
3. Respect rank during MCF meetings unless invited not to.
4. Invite local Chaplains, and members of other Christian groups, to be part of MCF meetings.
5. In group studies respect differences in bible translation and interpretation. Studies of the bible are not to involve books or passages of the Bible that denominations contest.
6. Apply wisdom in the demonstration of Spiritual gifting where there is potential to cause offence to members present.
7. Respect the authority of the small group leader, regardless of rank and uniform.

(Current list of groups is inside the back cover)



You are invited to the
Defence Christians Dinner 2014

Friday 5 September 2014
"Fighting Phantoms"

Please join us if you have any association with Defence, as a military member, trainee, civilian, contractor or any interested family and friends, for a good night of food, interesting and inspirational speakers, and entertainment.

Everyone is welcome – so why not organise a table?



Keynote speaker
Bishop Ian Lambert

Bishop Ian Lambert commenced as Anglican Bishop to the Australian Defence Force on 1 July 2013 and was commissioned in the ANZAC Memorial Chapel of St Paul, RMC Duntroon. Ian is a graduate of RMC Duntroon. He was disciplined by his local Padre, which led to his acknowledging Jesus as his Lord and Saviour during a Character Leadership Course (at Gilbulla). Whilst still in the Army Ian commenced part-time theological studies at St Mark's National Theological Centre. On discharge, as a Major, he completed these studies and was ordained in 1995. Ian has since served in various roles throughout south-eastern Australia and the Solomon Islands.

Prior to his current appointment he was the Archdeacon for the South Coast and Monaro.

Ian is a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ, a great teacher of God's word and is passionate to see the Kingdom of God built in the ADF. Ian is married to Jill and they have 4 adult children.

Venue *(new and larger)*

Corinna Room 1
Canberra Southern Cross Club
92-96 Corinna Street
PHILLIP ACT 2606

Time

6:30pm for 7 buy beverages at bar
7pm – 10pm: Dinner & program

Dress

Smarter casual (eg. not jeans)

Booking details for Defence Christians Dinner

Register by Friday 22 Aug 14

Cost per person: \$60

Early bird rate of \$55 per person applies if paid by 15 Aug

Credit Card Online:

www.mcf-a.org.au

Electronic Funds Transfer to:

Bank: Defence Bank
Account Name: Military Christian Fellowship
BSB: 803205
Account Number: 20753492
Reference: D Your name

("D" identifies your payment as designated for the Dinner)

Cheque and Cash sales to:

Military Christian Fellowship
CP3-1-160 Campbell Park Offices
PO Box 7913
Canberra BC ACT 2610

Enquiries to:

MCF-A Staff Worker
02 6266 4950
mcf.office@defence.gov.au

When you register, remember to inform the MCF-A Staff Worker and please include:

For nametags: First and last name of each person and their guests attending

For updates: email and phone contact details

Dietary requirements and seating preferences *(optional)*.



Application for Membership of MCF-A

To ensure that members of MCF agree to the basics of Christian doctrine, applicants must, in accordance with the MCF Constitution, sign the following Statement of Belief. This Statement is based on the 381 AD Nicene Creed; the most commonly used statement of Christian faith in the history of the church:

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit He was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. I believe in one holy catholic (meaning universal) and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sin. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. I believe that Holy Scripture is inspired by God and is the authority in all matters of faith, teaching, activities and personal conduct concerning MCF.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ (or write 'I agree' if electronic copy)

Date: _____ Employee No: _____

Rank or Title: _____ Preferred First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Defence Site: _____ Building, Floor, Room Number: _____

Street: _____ Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____ Country: _____

Telephone: work () _____ Mobile: _____ Home () _____

Email work: _____ Email home: _____

I apply for Ordinary Membership: (tick one)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of the ADF: Army | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of the ADF: Navy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of the ADF: Air Force | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member of the ADF: APS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am an ex member of the ADF: Army | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an ex member of the ADF: Navy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am an ex member of the ADF: Air Force | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an ex member of the ADF: APS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am the spouse of a member of the ADF: Air Force, Army, Navy, APS (circle one) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am the spouse of an ex member of the ADF: Air Force, Army, Navy, APS (circle one) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am an accredited representative of a ADF philanthropic organisation: (which one) _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a civilian who currently works alongside ADF personnel at: (Location) _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a civilian who has previously worked alongside ADF personnel for at least one year at:
(Location) _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently residing in Australia and am a member/ex member of the Armed Forces of
(name of country) _____ | |

I am none of the above and apply for Associate Membership; therefore, I cannot vote at the AGM.

Return to: mcf.office@defence.gov.au or:

Dept. of Defence, Military Christian Fellowship-Australia,
Campbell Park Offices CP3-1-160,
Northcott Drive,
CAMPBELL ACT 2612

MCF Centurions make a difference in the ADF

Rank/Title: _____ Full Name: _____ Employee ID (if serving ADF or APS): _____

Mailing Address): _____

Town/Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Country: _____ Email: _____

As an MCF Centurion I:

- 1) Commit to pray weekly using MCF's prayer calendar.
- 2) Commit to financial support of \$10, \$20, \$50 or \$100 per fortnight.
 - ☐ I have made a \$_____ per fortnight allotment via DEFPAY to allottee WG0052.
 - ☐ I have arranged an auto transfer of \$_____ per fortnight to MCF's DEFENCE BANK account name: Military Christian Fellowship of Australia, BSB 803205, Account number: 20514572.
 - ☐ Find attached my cheque of \$_____ to cover one year's support.

Do/Do not (circle one) please contact me in 12 month's time to renew my pledge.

- 3) Agree to promote MCF by displaying MCF advertising provided to me in my local area and church.
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Military Christian Fellowship-Australia
CAMPBELL PARK OFFICES: CP3 -1-160
Northcott Drive
CAMPBELL ACT 2612

For further information ring MCF Staff Worker on 02 6266 4950 or email mcf.office@defence.gov.au

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We are aiming for 100 centurions to carry the Lord's work forward in MCF in 2014.



FIGHT 'THE GOOD FIGHT'

Military Christian Fellowship of Australia - Seminar 2014



Saturday, 6 September 2014

The MCF Seminar, Fight the good fight, will encourage and equip Defence personnel to continue to fight the good fight of the Christian faith. "Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses." 1 Timothy 6:11b-12 (NIV)

The MCF Seminar is open to anyone associated with the Defence community who would like to explore or review the challenge to fight the good fight so that they can be the people who, in obedience to God, can make a difference for the Kingdom of God.

Venue:

R1 Theatre
Sir Thomas Blamey Square
Russell Offices
CANBERRA ACT

Car park: Cnr Constitution Ave and
Sir Thomas Blamey Square

Details:

Registration 8.40 am for 9.00 am start
Lunch (Provided) 12.30pm
Close 3.00pm

Contact:

MCF-A National Staff Worker
CP3-1-160
Campbell Park Offices
Department of Defence
PO Box 7913
Canberra BC ACT 2610

Ph: 02 6266 4950

Email: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Website: www.mcf-a.org.au



The Honourable Stuart Robert, MP
Assistant Minister for Defence



LTCOL Jamie Van Heel
Chairman
Military Christian Fellowship



Mr Lyle Shelton
Managing Director
Australian Christian Lobby



Stan "The Man" Longinidis
Australian Heavy-weight kick boxer (Rtd)

(Note: Bookings for the Defence Christians Dinner 2014 are arranged separately)

Cost:

\$40 per person

Booking Details

Payment Methods Please complete your payment by **22 August 2014**

Register by Credit Card online at www.mcf-a.org.au

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Reference: S [Your name]

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BSB: 803-205 Account Number: 20753492

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Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

(See National Staff Worker address in contact information).

Either as part of the online registration or as an email **please provide:**

- Your name (include first and last name)
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Jesus' Strength and Courage in Going to the Cross

Dr Greg Clarke



The following article is based on Dr Greg Clarke's presentation at the MCF Seminar in 2013.

Courage can't always be seen. At times it is very dramatic and obvious, but sometimes it is the quiet courage of winning an internal battle, resistance, or a resolute mind. Sometimes it is the quiet courage that makes a difference, and Jesus often used this quiet courage.

Many films have been made revealing Christ's passion, particularly in recent times. Film directors sometimes add to the text of Scripture, which is sometimes useful, at other times not. It depends on what they add. But the Bible is very restrained in the use of language at times. Some of these movies focus too much on the violence, but the recent Bible series focused on the tension very well, and Jesus' courage was well depicted. This series was an amazing show of the scriptures on free-to-air television, watched by an average of 1 million viewers across Australia each week.

I want to draw four lessons from Jesus' passion, which includes the events leading up to his death and resurrection, but also the passion he has for doing the will of his Father. We will concentrate on four aspects of Jesus' courage as he went to the cross.

We are quite privileged at this point in Australian life to have so many prominent Christian leaders; whether it is the armed forces, some heads of universities, or the head of the Reserve Bank. It is a blessing to see leaders with whom we can identify who are helping to shape Australia as it is today. Let us remember to pray for these leaders, for God's

blessing on them and for God to make a difference through their life and witness.

Here are the four lessons or experiences of courage that we will draw on.

1. Jesus looked for a less difficult path (Garden of Gethsemane)

Jesus has full knowledge that he was about to be arrested, and he knew the pain and tribulation that awaited him. These events are recorded in all the gospels, but Luke's account draws out some significant points for us to consider.

Luke 22:39-54. This account is a fantastic dramatic of an incredible encounter. There is a lot that strikes me about this passage, but what is most significant is that he tries to find another way while conceding "...not my will, but yours be done".

It is a puzzle to unbelievers that surrender and death represent the path to victory. It looks like loss, the end, surrender and defeat. Jesus pleads for God to do it some other way. Celsus has picked up the tension here.

Celsus: "What god, or spirit, or prudent man would not, on foreseeing that such events were to befall him, avoid them if he could; whereas he threw himself headlong into those things which he knew beforehand were to happen?"

Here we have the most extraordinary display of Jesus' courage. He knew this was the way and he was willing to go through with it. Going out looking for conflict is not the Christian way. Christian priorities and joys are: peace, kindness, contentment and love. Jesus was not aiming to be a 'glorious martyr' as some religious leaders have done and if there was any other way to do God's will, he would have preferred it.

2. Jesus spoke truth to power under pressure (before Jewish Council and Pilate)

Jesus spoke the truth to power, not just before Pilate, but also the Jewish leaders who in many respects put more pressure on Jesus to compromise than Pilate did.

Matt 26:57-68 for Caiaphas and Council
John 18:33ff for Pilate



Concentrating on John's account of Jesus before Pilate, this is one of the great political encounters of the ancient world. We see Jesus against the Roman Empire; a genuine case of a small guy against an empire, but here the empire is scared. What is it about telling the truth that is so frightening? Probably because we all harbour lies and half-truths that we fear might be exposed by the truth. Here Jesus is naming the truth before Pilate. Jesus represents something far more powerful than the Roman Empire and there was something about Jesus and his integrity that made his threat valid.

Jesus did not compromise on the truth, regardless of his hearers or their power. We will sometimes come under pressure to compromise the truth; the pressure of compromising your faith for conformity, in order to avoid 'rocking the boat'. Our leaders may ask us to be immoral or we'll be pressured to keep our job by compromising and going with popular opinion.

Jesus stood before Pilate and claimed the higher moral ground. No matter what; he was going to be on the side of truth and courageously put to Pilate that the truth is more powerful than anything you can do to me.

The pressure of letting politics beat belief – it is massive, and particularly around election time. The powerful witness to truth might not have effect in your time, but will eventually win through.

We must be comfortable that we are already acceptable before God. If you make a mistake, like Peter did, get on your knees, repent and pray for the strength not to repeat it.

The truth will win out in the end, but maybe not in your lifetime. You may only experience hardship, but truth will win out and maybe others down the track will benefit from your stand for the truth.

3. Jesus remembered his neighbours in his suffering (the soldiers, the thief on the cross, his mother)

While enduring the intense suffering of the cross Jesus continued to put the needs of others ahead of his own. It is no wonder that so many chapters of the gospels are devoted to the events surrounding the cross; they are the key to the Christian faith. They are also fascinating for the minor characters that are around the cross, and here we will consider just three groups; the soldiers, the thieves crucified with him and his own mother.

Luke 23:32-43

John 19:25-27 for his mother

Firstly, let's consider the soldiers. The soldiers stood around the cross mocking Jesus and casting lots for his meagre belongings – it took courage not to hate them. Jesus, in the midst of unimaginable suffering, prays forgiveness for their sins committed in ignorance. Such empathy is a sure sign

of Christian confidence and confidence in the Father. The suffering servant was aware of the spiritual needs of others.

Next we'll consider the thieves who were crucified either side of Jesus. One of the thieves is insulting, the other acknowledges his own sin, the righteousness of Christ and asks for forgiveness. Jesus had the presence of mind to give hope to this man whose execution is in progress. Despite his own intense suffering, he was still relieving the suffering of others and looking out for their needs ahead of his own. The temptation is to look inwards in suffering and to become preoccupied with yourself and your own suffering. Jesus on the other hand can see beyond the suffering to the spiritual needs of those around him – that is something to aspire to.

Finally we'll consider Jesus' own mother. Jesus remembered, at this moment of his own greatest need, his own mother (John 19:25-27). This is such a beautiful moment of a son caring for his mother and ensuring her needs were met. A family was breaking as he was on the cross, there were needs that would still be ongoing, and he could still be of service at that moment – by putting together these two people he loved. Knowing the sorrow in his mother's heart, he sought to alleviate that suffering. The Christian faith is all about loving God and loving your neighbour, even in your suffering.

Jesus demonstrated the importance of understanding the motivations of others. The soldiers present at his crucifixion were ignorant and it really took tremendous courage not to hate them. The repentant thief on the cross had needs during his last moments and Jesus did not ignore them despite his own agony. Jesus' own mother would have had needs even after his death and Jesus made arrangements to ensure provision for her.

4. Jesus' final cries

It is interesting to note that the four gospels record Jesus' final words differently. This is not a threat to their accuracy, but demonstrates the different perspectives offered by each of the writers.

There are three:

"My God, My God why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34)

"I thirst." and then "It is finished." (John 19:28)

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

These three pick up different aspects of what is happening in the death of Jesus and they give us different expressions of Jesus' own heart at this point.

Mark picks up the agony in Jesus' heart of the Father's judgment; Jesus invokes the words of Psalm 22 in which, David throws himself at God's feet and asks, "You're giving up on me?" but by the end of the psalm he acknowledges that God is Lord in heaven and he will praise the name of the Lord. Whatever happens, blessed be the name of the



Lord. God's name is still to be praised, God is all in all, even in this great moment of judgment.

Luke picks up Jesus' faithfulness to the Father and his comfort and security that his future was assured and that as his body died, his spirit remained with God. That he could give himself confidently to God. Even enduring a terrible fate, he need not lose that confidence that God was in control. What a wonderful thing to know and be sure of at any time in your life when you are facing an ultimate moment of loss. You can commend your spirit, or the spirit of your loved ones to the loving God of the universe who's in control.

John's account emphasises a prophecy fulfilled, more particularly, the words of Psalm 69:21 "In my thirst they gave me vinegar". Jesus accepts the liquid on a sponge from the soldiers sword. He does it so the prophecy might be fulfilled.

Jesus had the presence of mind in that moment to remind everyone of who he is. He is the one they'd been waiting for, the Messiah, the one the Psalms and the prophets wrote about. He's the one who would fulfill God's plans through this activity on the cross to bring about reconciliation between God and man. It is a great moment of intellectual presence, to alert people to what is going on here – fulfilling that prophecy. At this moment, the plan is being completed for the salvation of the world.

How wonderful to remember where you are in the story, and that is the message for us – remember where you are in the story of the world, whatever you are facing. You as a Christian loved by God, are part of the unfolding story of God's interaction with the universe. You are not the centre

of the universe, what happens to you is very important to God, but you are not the centre of the plan, Jesus is the plan, God is fulfilling his plans for the world through Jesus. Whatever you are going through, don't lose that perspective in your mind, you are part of this bigger picture.

It may appear at this point on the cross that he's giving up, but in fact the opposite is true. Jesus is not losing his courage, he's expressing his confidence in God even when he feels forsaken. He knows who he is and wants you to know as well, he's part of an unfolding plan, just as you are. In the end, the work of Christ was the work of God and he surrendered to it right to the end, despite the tension and pressure he was going through. That is the kind of courage we need as Christians. We don't seek martyrdom, that is not what the Christian faith is like, but we do cling to God with security and comfort, knowing that he has us in the palm of his hand.

Let Jesus be an inspiration to you, but remember, you are not him. You will fail and you need forgiveness. God will use you, whether you triumph or fail – he is in control. We are forgiven sinners and we will continue to struggle to express this confidence that we can have justifiably in Jesus Christ our God. That's the beauty of Christianity: be inspired to do great things, with the safety net of a loving forgiving Father who will pick you up when you fail.

May God make us more and more Christ-like so we can be great witnesses to him in the world.

Summarised from the talk by Dr Greg Clarke, CEO of the Bible Society. www.biblesociety.org.au



Boundless

Mrs Elka Whalen



The following article is based on Mrs Whalen's presentation at the MCF Seminar in 2013.

One of the biggest problems in the world and the biggest thing that is weighing families down, men in particular, is simply their pride and their ego. Sadly, a thousand couples are filing for divorce every week in Australia. A thousand people, in Australia, are attempting suicide and the majority of them are young men. 8 out of 10 men are looking at pornography. Men do need to stand up. I feel so blessed and privileged, as a woman, to share about what you can do to raise yourselves to the next level and be a people of faith.

I was born and bred in Manly, Sydney to a Jewish Mum and Christian Dad. I was brought up in Sunday School, I started swimming training at the age of 4. At 9 I had the dream of swimming in the Olympics and then competing in Athletics. Although it didn't happen exactly like that, it was a big dream to have. By the time I was 16, the busyness of life had me drift away from God. Later, when I was 21, I saw a man who I went to school with who was a devoted Christian but somewhere along the way he chose the wrong path. When he was around 22 his life was threatened and at that moment he asked himself, 'Would God be happy with the way he lived his life?' God spared his life, but he spent a long time in hospital. From that moment he turned his life around, and is now working in the community helping people. Hearing his story, as one who had drifted away at the age of 16, I was at a point in my life where I was swimming and things were going really well; however, there was something missing in my life and I couldn't put my finger on it. It was in the middle of my swimming career when I was at the top of

my game, but I just didn't have contentment. There needed to be something bigger than the pool.

I decided to go back to church at C3 Oxford Falls. It was there that I walked not only in to the house of God with all the people cheering, clapping and everybody happy, but I noticed there was something really amazing, there was something that felt like home.

There is a great part in the Bible that says that if God can trust you with a little, he can trust you with a lot. (Matthew 25:21; Luke 19:17-19). People will watch your character, *particularly as a man*, when failure comes your way, when you do fall, when you do make a mistake. However, it is what you stand for, what you believe and who you are that makes the difference.

There are a few tough questions that I would like to ask you. Firstly: In the current position and the job you are in right now, if I asked you who you are, could you answer it? My second question to you would be: What is your gift and what is your purpose? Every single person has a different purpose and a different gift. Sometimes the hardest thing is finding out what that gift is and what that purpose is.

The most powerful attribute in your life are your words. Your words speak life. Out of your mouth comes your character, your heart and the type of person you are. The power of your words is often used most in times of crisis or when you are at the top of your game. Are you humble? Are you fair in defeat? Are you there when somebody needs you? Sometimes we need to fail. Too many people get to the point where they fail and either don't know how to get out of the pit they are in or dig themselves in deeper. You need to see failure as a path to success.

One of the greatest lessons my father ever taught me was through these words, "Elka, never compare yourself to anyone else. Be a first rate YOU and not a second rate somebody else." Nine months out from the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games I told my parents I wanted to try for the Olympics. They said, "Go for it." I went up to my coach and said, "I want to make the Sydney 2000 Olympic team." and she said to me, "Elka, you haven't even made a school final." I said, "I know I haven't, but I really want to give it a go." She said, "Why don't we aim for 2004?" I said, "Ok" and I walked out. Then came a pivotal moment in my career... I turned around and re-approached my swimming coach and said, "Narelle, I truly believe I can make these Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, but if you don't believe in me then I have loved my time with you, but I am



Boundless continued

going to have to go a coach who does." With that, I think she knew I was serious so she said, "Let's go for it."

What did I do? I made the decision to do year 12 over two years. I wanted to put 100% into my schooling and 100% into my swimming. My dad has always said to me, as did my mum, "You can do many things well or you can do one thing great, and if you are going to do something well, then do it 100% right." It was an interesting year as for me as a big year of risk, but sometimes the biggest risk you can make is not taking a risk at all. Too many people are scared of failure. You are going to make mistakes and you need to learn the lesson from failing. You can make a mistake once, but don't make that same mistake again.

I went on to the Olympics and achieved a silver medal. After the Olympics I was in a silver medal winning relay team. In 2001, in Fukuoka Japan, I set a world record in the 200m freestyle and probably one of the best moments in my life so far has been receiving that letter from FINA World Organisation, recognising me as the fastest female in the world and I held that from 2001 and 2004.

2001 for me was a real pivotal year and life really changed. I learned about GST and Super and lots of great things happened. I got to support my parents and my family and life was really amazing. It was at that time that I came to God because I realised that life had to be bigger than a swimming pool.

Marriage is so important, it is something that is so big on my heart. There are four things that I say always make up that perfect union:

- The first is you need to love somebody.
- My second point is that you need to be *in* love with the person that you are married to. There is a really big difference. I love a lot of people, but there is only one person that I am *in* love with.
- The third is they need to be your best friend. You know when you meet and the first couple of years are when you have lots of fun and games, but after nearly 35 years of marriage you also need to understand that one of the biggest things is going to come from mental stimulation. You need to have the ability to be able to talk openly and honestly about anything.

- And the fourthly, do they bring out the best in you?

They are the four tips that I always say to people about being married. You can't just be in it for love, there needs to be more than that as well.

Although I enjoyed swimming, I can't do life without Christ. It means the world to me. I am who I am now because of him. One of the biggest things I find is that there is a great athlete, and then there is a great champion. And this applies to all of you in your position as well. Don't just be great in your job, be great outside of your job as well. The right person will not only look at what you do in the office, but they will also look at you from the moment you clock off and you walk out as well. And when the lights go out, God is watching you all the time. I watch people who are amazing in the pool or on the track, but they have a foul mouth or they are not a nice people outside. Don't be a different person when you clock on to work and when you clock off. As my Dad said, "Be a first rate YOU and not a second rate somebody else."

If you were to finish life now and God asked you, "Who did you help, who did you serve, and did you give everything that you had?" What would you say? For me, any chance that I get to connect with, help and serve people and have a moment of relationship, I'm there. It's incredible. How can you bring light into where God has placed you? Who are you helping and serving and are you giving it all that you've got for God's kingdom purposes?



Psalm 2 – Giving Language to the Soul

PAC Kevin Russell



Introduction

Many Australians are reluctant to publically express their spirituality. Given this reticence, it is not surprising that many Christians have had little mentoring in expressing the matters of the soul, yet we uphold the notion that a well-grounded faith in the Lord Jesus

will assist us to strengthen our resilience to face personal challenges that may come our way. Our ability to 'Fight the good fight' (1 Timothy 6:11-12), that is, remain faithful to the Lord Jesus and holy in manner of life, is quite often challenged by not only the rigours of ADF life, but by the norms of society.

The five books of the Psalms in the Old Testament offer us a 'language of the soul'. A means to give expression to the very longings, disappointments, hopes and aspirations of our soul. Over the ages the psalms have been used in many ways, but mainly in prayer, both public and private, and to learn more of the ways of our God with his people.

For instance, the famous theologian of the Reformation, John Calvin said of the psalms; that it was as if he was re-reading his own life story.¹ Calvin moved easily between historical and theological interpretation and his personal application. The psalm writers' experience was a pattern for measuring and understanding Calvin's own experience.²

Many of us have a similar experience. We use the psalms to express our inner groaning and joy. How comforting it is to exclaim that 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble' (Psalm 46:1) and therefore we can take heed at the words 'Be still, and know that I am God!' (Psalm 46:10).

Before I take a look particularly at Psalm 2, I wish to make the following points about the psalms in general:

- There is a theology to the psalms;
- There is something definite in the language of the psalms – a certain black and whiteness;
- There is something incomplete about the psalms;
- Psalms, like all the Bible, should be read in conjunction with how other parts of the Bible treat them. That is to say, psalms add to the big picture of what God is doing in this world; and finally,
- The psalms give us a language to express what is going on in our souls.

In fact, psalms are the language of the soul. This language can help give us strength and resilience to enable us to fight the good fight. The psalms capture what is going on inside, giving expression to grief and sorrow, and to great joy. Psalms give us a way express the hope and trust we have in our God. Psalms are a means by which we can express our emotions and they can give us buoyancy to our souls.

What Psalm 2 is about

Psalm 2 is connected to Psalm 1 and forms the introduction. In Psalm 1 there is a stark contrast, Blessed is the person who delights in the law of the Lord. These people are like trees planted by streams of water, full of life, while the wicked are like chaff that will be blown away.

I read Psalm 1 as an *individual psalm*. I read Psalm 2 as a more *corporate psalm*. As I read it, the wicked of Psalm 1, are now the nations and kings that conspire in Psalm 2, or the nations and kings that conspire are the wicked of Psalm 1.

Similarly, the Lord's anointed of Psalm 2 is the righteous of Psalm 1.

Here is my breakdown of Psalm 2:

- **Verses 1 – 3 are about feelings.** The nations and kings of the earth conspire against God and his people, and the psalmist is crying back to God – Why? So when you're caught up in one of those situations, perhaps in the workplace, where you know that the people around you are deriding God and your beliefs, the things that you hold sacred and have that feeling of being violated as a Christian, then Psalm 2 is for you.
- **Verses 4-6 are about the heavenly reality.** We have a Lord in heaven who responds. The Lord in heaven will respond. In the psalm there is a reaffirmation that the King in Zion is placed there by God himself. Just as you have been placed in the place you are by God himself for his purposes. I comment a bit further about the King in Zion latter on. But I cannot escape the reality that the psalmist, who might have started off feeling a bit down, is gaining a sense of surety in his soul and the reality that God is ultimately in control is giving him some buoyancy of spirit.
- **Verses 7 to 9 speak of that buoyancy of spirit as the Psalmist can tell it out.** The psalmist has the confidence and desire to speak of what God has done for him and the heritage that the people of

¹ Herman J. Schaefer, *Calvin's Theology of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids; Baker, 2007), 27.

² Hassell Bullock, C, *The Psalms and Faith/Tradition in The Psalms: Language for All the Seasons of the Soul*, (Chicago Moody Publishers), 2013 53



God will have. Verse 8 reminds me of God's promises expressed in Genesis 12. The only difference here is that the psalmist can speak those promises back to God with a deep sense of conviction.

- **Finally, verses 10 and 11 are about wisdom.** The psalmist can say to those who conspire, "Look, you have a choice here, either to know God's anger, or to trust in him and find refuge." In this sense, Psalm 2 presents to us the same choice as Psalm 1.

Before I come back to reflect on how we might use this psalm, I wish to briefly reflect about what this psalm meant to the New Testament writers.

Psalm 2 and the New Testament

As I said early, verses 1-3 are about feelings, the kind of feelings that you may have when you find yourself in an environment where you know that notions of belief in God, or Christian values are being derided or trampled on.

When the early Christians began to experience persecution, they turned to prayer. You might remember the story of Peter and John going to the temple to pray. There was a crippled person begging. Peter responded to the beggar with the words, "Silver and Gold have I none, but what I have I give you, in the name of Jesus, stand up and walk." Well, after an evangelistic speech to the crowds they are arrested, brought before the council and given orders not to proclaim the name of Jesus.

Psalm 2:1-3 gave expression to their experience as they cried out to God in prayer. Acts 4:23-31.

Turn to this passage as Acts 4 is a good illustration of how the New Testament, in a number of places, uses Psalm 2 in particular and psalms in general. Just cast your eye over Acts 4:23-31.

My first observation is that the Holy Spirit is present in this gathering. The Holy Spirit is identified in the prayer as the one speaking through Psalm 2 to David. And in verse 31 it is God acting through the Holy Spirit prompting even greater Christian boldness. The means that the Holy Spirit used was to remind these early Christians of the scriptures. The Holy Spirit is God's means of firing up his church for God's mission in the world. And the Holy Spirit's promptings are always going to be consistent with God's word.

My second observation is the identification of God's anointed. In the first instance, those Old Testament worshippers in the temple who used the psalm at Coronation Services would have understood the Lord's anointed to be the various Kings, be it King David, or his successors. The early Christians and the New Testament writers accepted that, but went further. They realised, through the Holy Spirit, that Jesus is God's anointed. Those earlier Davidic kings were a foreshadowing of God's plan to send his Son into our world as King. So then, when Christians are trampled on by the world, it is not necessarily you who are being rejected, it is Jesus himself who is being rejected.

Other examples of New Testament use of Psalm 2 in particular is found in both the letter to the Hebrews and Revelation. I will focus on Hebrews. Hebrews uses a number of psalms to indicate that ultimately they point us to Jesus. But the very first idea in the letter to the Hebrews (1:2-3) uses the idea of Psalm 2:7 that Jesus is the one decreed by God as his Son. The confirmation that Jesus is God's son using the language of Psalm 2:7 also occurs at Jesus' baptism, found in Mark 1 and Luke 3, and when Peter recognises Jesus as the Messiah, Christ, anointed one, found in for example, Matthew 16.

Hebrews 5 uses Psalm 2 to remind us that Jesus as God's Son is our High Priest. Hebrews 5:5-10 is another important passage as the writer reminds us that God's Anointed is perfect and the source of our eternal salvation.

Psalm 2 and Us

Now let us think back on what Psalm 2 might mean to us. At the same time it is really important to remember that psalms give us a language for our souls.

Psalms can help us tie together our personal experiences and faith in the living Lord.

I understand Psalm 2 to be part of the introduction psalms in general. That is Psalm 1 sets a scene of righteous – understood as God's people, and the wicked, understood as those who oppose God. Psalm 2 suggests that the wicked oppose God's anointed but that they are foolish in doing so. That God has set his anointed in our midst. The rest of the psalms somehow reflect these themes as they give expression to loss and grief, persecution and opposition and also hope and joy and recognition of God's blessings and salvation for his people.

The New Testament writers use the psalms a lot to give expression to who Jesus is and the surety we have as Christians because we belong to Christ. Now I do not know what is going on for you all as individuals. Some of you may be going through circumstances where you wonder where God is. Others of you may find yourselves in a workplace where others deride you for your faith.

To me Psalm 2 is one of those psalms that gives us strength and confidence. Psalm 2 acknowledges the Lord in heaven and that ultimately it is the Lord God who is sovereign. The Lord God has established his Son and the wise will acknowledge him as Lord as the whole world belongs to him.

By now, you might be thinking, we are talking about the gospel that we are both blessed by and want to tell the world. Certainly, the early Christians in Acts 4 realised this as the Holy Spirit prompted them. Despite the circumstances we find ourselves in, God has sent his Son into the world. It is wise to serve him.

Psalm 2 can give us that language to express what is going on in our souls and finding means to express what is going on in our souls enables us to develop the strength, courage and resilience needed to fight the good fight.



Kokoda Peace and Reconciliation Initiative

PO Olly Kaese



PO Olly Kaese reports in 2 parts on his reconciliation trip to Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Kokoda Track 14-23 July 2013.

PART ONE

Healing the land began, as it often does, with divine connections between Bishop Clarence from the Southern Highlands, Chief Benjamin Ijumi of Kokoda and Pastor Walo Ani. On 11-15 May 2012 Protocol and a week of forgiveness and reconciliation was held at the Kebara Mission, Ward 7 of the Kokoda District, Oro Province, PNG.

Village to village visitation took place and the people responded with open hearts to the teaching that the land had become defiled by the sins of witchcraft, immorality, bloodshed and broken promises. There was agreement that the area should have been better with all the tourist and government money flooding in. There was a growing hunger for the Lord to cleanse and transform what was the original Kokoda.

A 'Healing the Land' prayer team of about 20 young people from Central Province walked the Track and stayed in Kebara, ministering for several days while items of sin were burned. Chief Ijumi called his whole family to a 'sacred' rock in the river where atrocities had been performed by his ancestors. There they repented, revoked the curse and prayed blessing on the women of the community as they worshipped the Lord. The people were encouraged to obey the word of God, church leaders repented and reconciled, Jesus was invited in to the area and Satan and his demons were driven out.

GOD'S WONDERFUL WORKS

After this significant time, we have seen and heard that in several villages quantities of gold are being found; hand-made guns and many witchcraft items were burned; home-made brew was given up; the Aid Post received a radio and was cleaned up, with a nurse in attendance; there is a commitment for funding from the Kokoda Track Association to build a whole hospital in August 2014 by the community, on the mountains. For the first time: paw paw, bananas, cucumbers and watermelon were growing; there were 20 kaukau runners instead of 4-5 as previously; taro was growing huge. There was also a 6-day crusade held in which all the churches came together. Many young people gave up their drugs there and at the end, a double rainbow appeared in the sky.

SANGI VILLAGE & REVIVAL

Whole villages began to live in peace and harmony and in the village of Sangi, from 1 January 2013 the Holy Spirit came upon them in Revival. As they said; "Jesus came to live with them!" They have been praising and worshipping God ever since and have seen 33 rainbows over the village altogether. As one pastor preached the glory of the Lord descended upon him in the form of a cloud. During the community worship times, Angels have taken away 30-40 children physically for anything from 1- 24 hours. The children are returned with a rush to banana trees (and sit there without the slender branches breaking) or to coconut palms, with the people watching for their return. One small child came back during the night when it was raining hard and said an angel had to help him down the trunk.

Sometimes it is too much for the kids to express what they have seen and heard but their main message from God is; "Get ready!" as he shows them heaven and hell. They told stories of their and others' sinfulness being covered, of speaking in other languages, like Chinese, of being taken to other towns in PNG, Australia and the U.S. to see the darkness in the world and the light in the church. They returned with the message that there is no time to enjoy the worldly life, the highway to hell is very busy, but the highway to heaven is opened wide. It is time to repent! Jesus is crying for his people, especially those in the church who continue to sin.

Andrew and Walo and others interviewed many of these children for several hours and were convinced of the



authenticity of what they had experienced, particularly because they were so different from the usual PNG shy village children who know nothing of the world outside. The children all spoke with a passion, clarity and consistency. They talked boldly and confidently with real zeal in their hearts. One had been taken to Sydney and saw the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, although he had never seen pictures of them. When he was asked how he knew, he said simply the angel told him! One was told by Jesus that 2 angels would take him to Milne Bay and there he saw covens of witchcraft and people with black teeth eating human flesh to gain power.

One child said; "When we saw Jesus, the light was so bright it turned our eyes inside out so the whites were at the back!" Another said; "Jesus' hair was sparkling and glistening and long" "The fruit was the best you have ever eaten and all different colours, but purple was forbidden". One said he was sitting beside Jesus and he got a fright because there was a very big Holy Spirit who came between them! One said that when you get taken, if you have sin in your head, it's like going through the eye of the needle and you fall back down.

PART TWO

HTL Conference at Kebara Mission Station Kokoda

On 13 July 2013 over 60 people, including Matthew and Solomon Edison, divided into 12 teams and began to walk the Kokoda Track from Owers Corner to Kokoda Village. They prayed for the 26 villages along the Track and reclaimed the land for the Lord. All arrived well before the National Remembrance Day, 23 July 2013.

Over the next week about 80 Central Province people, mainly the Karawa Men's and Boys' Fellowship (with Walo and Namana), representing 4 generations, flew to Kokoda by charter planes (many with testimonies of faith and provision). Pastor Nozomu Takimoto from Japan, 3 people from Goroka and Deryck and Nancy flew in to Popondetta to be followed later by Andrew Youngberry and Oliver Kaese from the Defence Force in Canberra. All were met personally by Chief Benjamin Ijumi and welcomed into the Kebara Mission station by traditional dancing. Extensive preparations had been made for the visitors by the building of long houses and the 7 villages of Ward 7 took it in turns to bring in huge amounts of food for the conference.

As the week began, the Central Province team was challenged to be pure in heart, to repent and be reconciled with each other. All came together for the official opening by retired Bishop Reuben of Popondetta who quoted the Scripture that had been prayed over the Toowoomba team - Isaiah 42:6-9. He said the war had not been theirs, PNG people had been confused and frightened, fleeing in all directions, but God had used the war to bring glory

to himself because his people had had to give everything to him. Now this event was a step towards what God had been keeping for Kokoda, towards the promise and vision he had given the people that had not yet been fulfilled.

All the PNG and Australian HTL leaders shared on suffering and service, on the word of God, unity of the body and on the strongholds that need to be broken for transformation to take place. There were many inspiring testimonies from the Karawa people who were still experiencing transformation of their village and who had come to prove the reality of what God was doing 7 years after the first HTL.

There was great rejoicing as the walkers from the track arrived, all with testimonies of God's grace as they had endured difficult conditions. There were only 2 minor injuries altogether and every group arrived earlier than expected.

Pastor Takimoto spoke saying it is now 71 years since the Japanese arrived at Kokoda and he believes that this is the time for the captivity of the PNG people to be ended and the promises of Jeremiah 29 to be fulfilled. Like the Babylonians, their 70 years of exile is over.

A time of repenting between PNG, Japanese and Australian representatives took place in the Anglican church where PNG individuals were able to share their grief over grandfathers who had been murdered and the many atrocities which had been witnessed by some of them as young children. Australians also repented of bringing guns, confusion to the people and hurting the land.

That night a spectacular sign was given when a third of the sky opened up over Kokoda, a great ring of clouds encircled a double rainbow around the moon and the people praised God for this special sign. The next day at the Reconciliation event when we were worshipping, again a huge rainbow appeared around the sun. Villagers in the area were amazed and excited.

The Kokoda event on the National Remembrance Day at Kokoda station had been the dream of Ps Walo Ani's heart for nearly 30 years. Led by Bishop Tavita Talanoa, local government representatives and Chief Ijumi, in a huge public arena, PNG, Japanese and Australians embraced in forgiveness and reconciliation. Pastors from all the churches in the area also washed their hands as a sign of cleansing and embraced one another in humility. Messages of hope and faith were shared, ceremonial dancing and feasting took place.

We know that the Kokoda journey has only just begun and that there is another chapter to be added to the book.

My Experience.

WWII ended in 1945. However, the physical and spiritual impact on the land and the people has become a generational curse on Kokoda and also Papua New Guinea that needs to be broken. Kokoda is unfinished business. The healing of the people and healing of their land is imperative and now is the time.



Kokoda to me represented a part of Australian history that will live forever in our minds. Australian troops fought the Japanese over the Kokoda Track until the Japanese were defeated in November 1942. Much blood was spilt on the Kokoda Track. Over 600 Australian troops were killed and about 1680 were wounded. Japanese casualties were considerably higher.

What I experienced at Kokoda and Kebara Mission Station during the National Remembrance Day event was a true testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit. To witness the transformation of lives affected by the generational curse of WWII and to see revival and the people of Kokoda being set free from the spiritual bondage that was imposed on them after WWII was a liberating experience. As a PNG born person, I was so humbled to take part in this special occasion. How great is our God!

I have walked the Kokoda Track numerous times over the years and I could only imagine how difficult it must have been to fight a war on such a steep and wet track. The rough conditions our service men endured, fighting against the Japanese on Kokoda during WWII was un-imaginable.

However, those memories of the past still live on in the minds and hearts of the people of Kokoda, Oro Province. Since WWII no-one has bothered to initiate peace and reconciliation on Kokoda soil. This was a strategic spiritual event to encourage and bless the people of Kokoda.

HTL ministries had already established a network of healing, discipleship and prayers along the track. This event was an acknowledgement of those achievements by those dedicated disciples of the Lord and I was thankful to be part of this event and to represent the ADF.

Meeting Chief Ben Ijumi & Fredrick Soka.

I was thankful to meet and greet the Chief of Kebara Village, Chief Ben Ijumi as I arrived at Kabara mission station. He welcomed me into the conference and village with a champion's greeting.

I was hoisted onto the shoulders of two younger men and walked right into the church where the conference was being held. A large crowd had gathered in the church so I was a bit nervous as we entered the building, but felt very honoured and proud to represent the ADF in this event.

After the HTL conference had ended, I returned back to Canberra, but kept in contact with Chief Ijumi. After some time I received a phone call from Chief Ijumi saying that he and Fredrick Soka will be attending a Kokoda commemorative service in Sydney a week prior to the MCF events in Canberra.

After further discussions with Chief Ijumi and his Australian sponsor, I thought that it would be a great opportunity to have them both as guests at the Defence Christians Dinner and Seminar event.

Both men were warmly welcomed into the Defence Christians Dinner and the MCF Seminar at Russell. During the MCF seminar, Chief Ijumi was welcomed on stage to greet the congregation, and wore his traditional head dress, carrying a large shell from which he sounded 3 times and sang a traditional native song in his language. The echo of his voice throughout the conference room was powerful and moving.

Grace and peace.



Forum of Christian Military Ministries

Everyman's Chief Commissioner Ken Matthews



It was Everyman's turn to host the 2013 annual Forum of Christian Military Ministries at EWS HQ Gaza Ridge Barracks Bandiana. We had the joy of hosting the following ministries: the Chaplains, Military Christian Fellowship, Association of Military Christian Fellowships, FOCUS Military Ministries,

Navigators, Everyman's Welfare Service, Red Shield Defence Services and Solid Rock ministries. Each ministry was provided an opportunity to share what their ministry had accomplished through 2013 and what it was planning for 2014. Prayer was offered for each of the ministries at the conclusion of the presentations.

Discussion was held regarding how we could undertake some activities together including the Defence Christians Dinner, National Day of Prayer for Defence and FCMM Bookmarks. We were quite privileged to have with us amongst the delegates Principal Chaplain Army Geoff Webb, Principal Chaplain Navy (Reserve) Eric Burton, and newly appointed Anglican Bishop to the Defence Force Ian Lambert.

Bishop Ian Lambert presented his challenging testimony at the FCMM evening dinner and the consensus amongst the delegates was that it was powerful. It demonstrated the enabling work of the Holy Spirit not only in the life

of Ian, but potentially also in the lives and ministries of all Defence Christians. After each of the delegates shared their passion and prayer needs, the FCMM closed with a great spirit of unity.

Our desire is to see all Defence ministries coalesce with a unity of purpose, whilst continuing to work away at our unique areas of outreach which we each possess. Pray that 2014 will be a great leap forward for Christian ministry in Defence.

The covenant between FCMM ministries is:

"Recognising that wherever two or three of us are together at one location, Jesus Christ is among us, we covenant to:

- Love one another
- Pray for one another
- Encourage one another
- Support one another
- Meet with one another
- Communicate with one another
- Coordinate with one another

The next FCMM is planned to be conducted in Brisbane in November 2014. It will be led by Red Shield Defence Services.

Forum of Christian Military Ministries Contact Information

Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

Equipping, encouraging and supporting Military Christians to build the Kingdom of God in the ADF.

02 6266 4950 | mcf.office@defence.gov.au
www.mcf-a.org.au

FOCUS Military Ministry

Building the Kingdom of God through people in the Military.

02 6262 6294 | office@focusmilitary.org.au
www.focusmilitary.org.au

The Australian Navigators

Spiritual Generations.

02 8814 5006 | nav_office@navigators.org.au
www.navigators.org.au

Solid Rock Ministries

Christian support groups for military wives/female partners.

0412 720 069 | solidrockmin@optusnet.com.au
www.mcf-a.org.au

Red Shield Defence Services

Welfare & Morale support with a listening ear.

Practical and spiritual support through God's love.
0407 830 488 | www.salvos.org.au

Everyman's Welfare Services

Living and Proclaiming the Message of Christ to Defence

02 6055 2988 | admin@everymans.org.au | www.everymans.org.au

Army Chaplains

Provide religious ministry and pastoral care to service members and their families.

www.army.gov.au/Army-life/Health-and-welfare/Chaplaincy-support

Air Force Chaplains

Provide religious ministry and pastoral care to service members and their families.

intranet.defence.gov.au/raafweb/sites/DGCHAPAF/ComWeb.asp?page=717

Navy Chaplains

Provide religious ministry and pastoral care to service members and their families.

intranet.defence.gov.au/navyweb/sites/DGCHAP-n/ComWeb.asp?page=120242





Mrs Julianne McMaster



"I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me (I am ready for anything and equal to anything through him who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency)."

Phil 4:13 Amplified

2014 has seen a massive change for Solid Rock. Janet Mumford asked me to consider taking on Solid Rock

and all I could think was saying; "NO!" I did not want to let her down. After prayerful consideration God clearly led me to say "yes"; "now is the time and I will strengthen you."

The verse for Solid Rock in 2014 is Phil 4:13. As we go through the stresses and strains of Defence life we need to be infused with Christ's strength. Infused means to be filled with something. We need to sit and soak in God's word, we need to be with other Christian women, we need to be praying for our families and living with this verse in the front of our mind as we do life. We can do life with Christ as our fortress and strength.

As we pack up and move again, as we find new schools, churches, sporting groups and friends. As we settle the family we need Christ at the centre of our lives.

Solid Rock is a place for Defence spouses or partners to be encouraged by others and God's word. This year we began our Solid Rock conferences. Townsville was 22nd March and Canberra was 5th April. Elissa Macpherson was the guest speaker and we had an opportunity to be refreshed both physically and spiritually. Those who attended were truly blessed.

I would encourage you to go to our Facebook page and find the details of the nearest Solid Rock to you. We meet at many different bases around Australia and the ministry is continually growing. We are excited about what is ahead and look forward to meeting with Defence partners to encourage and build inner strength with Christ. I encourage you to be strong and courageous in 2014.

MCF-A Centurions

We have not reached our goal of one hundred Centurions yet, but thank you to our generous supporters, both Centurions and Donors. Currently there are 50 Centurions: 42 listed below, with eight not published to remain anonymous. MCF also has 18 Donors. If you would like to become a Centurion, please fill in the Centurion form provided on page 17.

COL	Gary	Allan
Mr	Mathew	Allison
Mrs	Helen	Bielenberg
LTCOL	Russell	Bielenberg
WGCDR	James	Blagg
PO	Daniel	Bland
CHAP	Eric	Burton
CAPT	Katie	Chapman
LT	Jacob	Choi
MAJ	Gregory	Colton
CPL	Robert	Cosh
REP	Kenny	Delamore
SMN	Luke	Eglinton
Mrs	Rhonda	Farag
AB	Christian	Fehrenbach
WO2	Martin	Fisher
CPL	Timothy	Flitton
Mr	Sam	Hays
LTCOL	Alan	Howes
SMN	Nicolle	Jean
CHAP	Bruce	Johnson
Mr	Jon	Laird
Mr	Jason	Lilley
CAPT	Peter	Liston
CFN	Cam	Lovering
LCDR	Anne	Mena
MAJ	Marcaus	Muller
CAPT	Jack	Plimmer
Mrs	Jan	Plumb
CMDR	Tony	Roper
RADM	Trevor	Ruting
FLTLT	Joshua	Smith
CPL	Robert	Spiller
LS	Talei	Stoll
CHAP	Gary	Stone
LCDR	Dan	Sutherland
SGT	Darren	Thomas
CHAP	Troy	Urlichs
LCDR	Bruce	Vandepeer
LTCOL	Scott	Watkins
AB	Matthew	Watson
CHAP	Jason	Wright



Staff Worker Report

Mrs Lisa Thomas



MCF-A member's work at more than 73 Defence establishments around Australia. With around 40 MCF Representatives and Contacts, this means that nearly half of the bases and installations that have MCF members at them do not have an MCF contact on site. This is something that can easily be rectified. Where there is an MCF member, there could be a contact.

But you might say;

"What is the point of being a contact if I am the only member at this site?" Well, your name would go on the MCF-A website and at the back of the Crossfire magazine to let others know that there is a contact at your location.

The question may linger as to your suitability for such a role. How do you sort this? Go and see your local chaplain who may also know of other Christians in the area to connect you with. Or invite the local Chaplain to participate in your endeavours. They may be happy to become your alternative contact.

Then you might ask; *"What would I do if someone approached me about MCF-A?"*

As the MCF-A National Staff Worker, I have a lot of information that I could send you in paper form, or email to you as electronic copies. These can be passed on to enquirers. Ask me for the "Please tick list". The flyer is an A4 tri folded page so not an arduous amount of information. The membership form has the statement of belief on it.

The Crossfire magazine, also available to read from the website, is inspirational and brings the Defence Christian community together through the events advertised there.

"What do I do if someone is interested in MCF-A?"

You could start a weekly email that has a Bible verse to consider and begin a distribution list in your contact address book. If you and the enquirer have the time and inclination, you could arrange to meet weekly to discuss the verse or other Christian content. Or you could take turns to 'lead', which really means choosing the content for that day and guiding the reading and discussion. You do not need to have all the answers. The aim is to stimulate thought on things spiritual in an encouraging and safe environment, whatever the denomination of the members. There are also Bible study resources available on the MCF-A website.

After this, you may get into the swing of being the MCF-A contact and decide to be more proactive in getting members to join your group. You could sign the MCF-A Representative form to formalise your intention. The Defence Community Organisation holds annual welcome days around Australian bases. These events bring community organisations together to each host a stall to display their information and giveaways. Bring a chair, some MCF-A information and have a great three or so hours meeting the Defence Personnel and their families who have recently moved into your area. Check out the DCO event page on their website to know when the next event is at your location.



Staff Worker Reflections

Mrs Lisa Thomas

When I send out the monthly newsletter, previously called the Grapevine, I receive a lot of undeliverable notices and out of office messages. From the notices, I work out who I need to contact to get new contact information. From the out of office messages, I get the personal email and mobile information that I will use if ever I get an undeliverable notice and I take note of the long service leave and deployment dates. If you feel like you are being stalked, you are right. It is my job to continually update the contact information so that MCF never loses touch with you as you get posted around, move to the Reserves or even discharge out of the services. MCF-A membership is still free and has no end date. MCF-A is quite possessive of its nearly 700 members.

It is always sad when I have to move a member to the inactive area of the database. It may be because they unsubscribe as they move on to other ministries or endeavours in life. It is such a shame when I have to move someone just because the only contact I have for them is their Defence contact info and they are no longer there. When a member becomes a Reservist, I try to solicit their home contact information to prevent them vanishing from my horizon. Some of the 40 MCF Representatives and Contacts forward me information regarding the movements of the members at their Defence Installation. This is very helpful and I am thankful for it.

If you are a current member of MCF-A, then you should be receiving the monthly email newsletter. If you are not getting this, please contact me and I will send you a membership form to get your current contact information. I have been amazed to find out that some people thought they were still members, but were removed years ago as their contact information dated and became obsolete. The number of members has not altered much from the year before because although 52 members joined MCF, 49 others were moved to the inactive list. I wonder if these people even realize they are no longer MCF-A members?

When I visited DSTO Edinburgh, I participated in their usual group meeting. As there were over a dozen people attending, we broke into smaller groups to discuss the questions posed by that day's leader. They share the leadership of the group around so it does not become a burden to any one person. This is a great idea.

I stayed overnight at RAAF Base Edinburgh and attended the Defence Community Organisation's 2013 Welcome Expo there on the Saturday. The MCF contact from Keswick Barracks joined me and we met a lot of people as they viewed the many stalls. The MCF members at DSTO Edinburgh organised and ran a stall at the 2014 DCO event. Great work!

A visit to Keswick Barracks resulted in a member ordering a pile of Defence Christian Ministries pamphlets to hand out to the Cadets he trains periodically. I love to be able to send out our resources to people who can truly use them, not just store them away. Please be in touch and ask for the 'Please tick list' if you would like to receive some resources to give away to Australian Defence Personnel. Remember that the Faith Under Fire Course has its own website. This is still a great Australian ADF Course.

At the Defence Community Organisation Welcome Expo at Nowra, I had hoped to meet the contact from HMAS Albatross, but plans don't always work out. Instead, I met all the local Christians who popped in to my stall to say hello. I don't know if I gained any new MCF-A members that day, but instead I learned about the many and varied Christian ministries occurring there, from the Christian School teachers to the Vietnam Veteran with his motorcycle circle of contacts. I think we all encouraged each other. It was a great day.

If you have taken on an active participation role within MCF-A, such as a Centurion, a Donor, a Prayer Warrior, a MCF-A Representative or Contact – then I thank you. As many of our members move on to become Reservists and then Civilians, you may wonder how MCF-A will entice younger members to join. We have tried to address this with a Facebook page and with Twitter: @McOffice. I have been very wordy on these sites and have changed to using images from the world wide web. I am told there are no copyright issues in doing this, but I list the site where I find the picture to avoid any plagiarism. If you would like to join me as an administrator in Twitter or Facebook, please let me know.

MCF-A is linked on a couple of websites. If your Defence Installation or church has a website that MCF could be listed as a link, then please be in touch. mcf.office@defence.gov.au



GEN David Hurley, Mrs Linda Hurley and Mrs Lisa Thomas at DCO Welcome Expo at Nowra.



MCF-A Representatives and Contacts

MCF Representatives promote MCF-A, while MCF Contacts receive and reply to enquiries. The level of your participation is up to you. Representatives, Contacts, Members and participants can lead the study at the MCF-A group.

Members at each Defence installation are put in touch with each other. Some MCF-A groups remain in touch via emails, others meet regularly.

If it isn't already, your Defence installation will be listed here when you contact the MCF Office at mcf.office@defence.gov.au and nominate yourself as a Rep or a Contact. As Defence is a very 'moving' employer (as in postings), the names below often change - so please be willing to step-up and fill a vacancy. The leader of the group ensures that all members and those on their email distribution list are aware of the activities of the group and receive encouragement through their email contact.

Current vacancies exist at every Defence Base, Installation, Ship, etc that is not listed below! Please be in touch.

ACT

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LTCOL Jamie Van Heel
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NSW

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HMAS Creswell

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HMAS Kuttabul

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Patterson Barracks

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RAAF Base Williams

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WA

HMAS Perth

SMN Luke Eglinton
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HMAS Stirling

LCDR Dan Sutherland
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If your area is not listed or you are interested in starting a group, please contact the MCF Office at:
mcf.office@defence.gov.au
CP3-1-160
Dept of Defence
Canberra ACT 2600
02 6266 4950



*"God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble"*

Psalm 46:1 (KJV)

