



## Toward 2025

*Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in that you do. This is my command – be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*  
Joshua 1:8-9

God speaks to Joshua and gives him instructions on how to lead His people into the promised land. He did not say it would be a push over and in fact infers the opposite. Three times Joshua is told to be strong and courageous and he is also told to obey all the Instructions Moses gave him as well as to Meditate on God's Word and Instructions continuously.

So often we forget this in our day to day lives, things crowd in and God's Word gathers dust on the coffee table or bookshelf, we find ourselves beset with anxieties and issues, thinking we have to solve these issues ourselves we rush headlong to solve the next problems and wonder why we stay stuck in the pond of slough and despair.

Joshua is given the key to leadership, as are all the prominent people throughout the Bible as well as more modern people such as Billy Graham. Paul states in 2 Timothy 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* (KJV). Paul was a great one for study and exhortation and leaving the issues to God and he knew a thing or two about them and what we need to remember is God brought him through all of them until it was his time to return to God.

### **So what has this to do with the MCF?**

Over the next few years, I would like to see the Military Christian Fellowship (MCF) continue to be the place that people refer to for robust, rigorous and sound teaching, a place where Christians in the Australian Defence Force/Australian Defence Organisation (ADF/ADO) and beyond can continue to find the true path to the Way of Christ fearlessly and honestly articulated holding firmly to the Word of God as its foundation. To that end the intent is to continue to build on what MCF already has with more Bible Studies and resources to be made available to the Groups through the Website and the Office, and all currently available Bible Studies will be reviewed to ensure they are still appropriate and relevant for Groups today.

Small Groups are the keystone feature of the MCF and it is encouraged that these continue to be held within the bases over 'lunchtime' fellowships (meaning they may occur at *any time* of the work day and in *any format*) but we can also look to expand into more Family Support and Fellowship Groups that are supportive of the whole family unit so for those service members without a family locally these can become their Christian family as they are also encouraged to join a local church.

An emphasis on veterans and former members of the ADO is vital as these members can develop groups that are locality based with a longer term leadership providing support to the members and families as they post in and out of locations. This will involve a change of mindset to a whole of life rather than a whole of service, that is when someone leaves the ADO they do not fall off or out of the MCF. To that mind there will need to be a re-think about the MCF Reps which currently focus on – Navy, Army, Air-Force to instead Military, Australian Public Service (APS), Defence Industry, Veterans.

It is important to continue to develop stronger links between the MCF Reps, Group Leaders and the Executive and as such there will be more contact promoted between these two levels so that the MCF Exec is in tune with the membership and able to respond to the needs.

An even deeper relationship between the ADF Christian Chaplains, Defence Force Chaplains College (DFCC) and the MCF is desired and the Exec will be working to continue to enhance that relationship building on being even more mutually supportive.

There are a number of projects in place which will help lay the groundwork for the future. These are:

MCF Area Reps / Group Leaders Handbook      due mid 2022

MCF Deployment Booklet                              due late 2022

Members Feedback Project                            on going

Finances – I want us to commit these to God prayerfully, to lay them at His feet petitioning Him for the finances that are needed for the ministry to grow, so that we don't have to walk around and 'shake the can' but lean on Him.

Day of Prayers (online) – these have been successful in the past and over the last couple of years has increased overseas participation from many differing nations and I would like to see these continue and develop.

It is also important to continue to develop and build stronger links with those who are also working in the vineyard with us, labouring to bring God's life saving message, one group in particular is the Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF) which is the international arm of the MCFs bringing all MCFs around the world under one umbrella.

MCF dinners, BBQs, info days, weekend getaways etc – these need to continue to be developed and over the next few years be resourced even more. There has been some good steps forward and feedback from the Area Reps is vital to continue to grow these.

Finally, I would like to see greater representation in leadership roles by women, which can also include wives and mothers who support someone working in the ADF. At the moment the MCF leadership is very male dominated. I believe that we need greater breath of input so that we can minister more effectively to Defence, and former Defence members and families as a whole and have more diverse input to what is needed and desired to keep Christians in Defence connected and supported.

In Proverbs 2:8 it states *"He guards the path of the just and protects those who are faithful to Him"*.

To that end let us faithfully meditate on Him day and night.

Yours In Christ

Steve – MCF Chair