



eNews September 2022

Losing your way

Caving is an activity that can be rewarding however it's quite stressful, particularly if you lose your way. This can be done through a number of ways – first you have no idea and have never been there before but decide to go caving. Second you have followed someone before a couple of times then decide you can do it yourself, without checking the maps or taking them with you. Some years ago I was called down to one of our local cave systems as a number of people had done just that – they abseiled in and then could not find the link between the cave systems to get out. Also they had not taken the necessary equipment to get from one system to the next. I was able to abseil in and take them out quickly, they were in fact clustered next to the exit not realizing that it was there. Caving takes practice. Knowing how to interpret the maps and knowing the right equipment to take also takes time and practice.

Thus it is with being a Christian. We have to have the right equipment (Armour of God - Ephesians 6), know your map (the Bible) undertake the right training (fellowship with other Christians). It is being able to link your head and your heart. Paul speaks of this regularly when he tells people to guard their minds (Philippians 4:6-7) and to study the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15). Like caving, and many other skills, if you do not practice the skill then you will lose that skill. If you don't study God's Word, have fellowship with other believers in the Way of God, accepted Christ as your Lord and Saviour and receive the Holy Spirit, then you are setting yourself up to fail as a pilgrim through life. John Bunyan in his 'A Pilgrim's Progress' explores this and shows what happens to people who pretend to be Christians, or who start off well however get lost. Jesus speaks of this in the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23).



One of the reasons I feel people lose their way is, in our society in current times we have lost our sense of awe at God's mightiness and fear of the consequences of not following His Way. We are more focused on striving to reduce sin to something acceptable rather than be concerned about the ramifications of not following God's Way, which is highlighted in the parable of the Wheat and Tares (Matthew 13:24-30).

Our head knowledge will keep us going when our heart (emotions) let us down, just as our heart, filled with God's love and Spirit, will keep us going when our head knowledge is low. The two are important and the longest journey we ever take is the journey of the head to the heart or the heart to the head. We need these to be connected to be able to survive the pilgrimage ahead. An example of this is once when leading a group through the caves my heart gave way (I became fearful and my claustrophobia began to overwhelm me) however my head was able to remind me that I knew the way, the dangers, the issues and all had been previously overcome, as well as that I had a responsibility not to fail the group and to bring them through the experience safely.

We have the assurance that Jesus has already been through all this before us and if we keep focused on Him and following His Way He will lead us through. So when your heart fails you, use your head to look up to Jesus.

Reflection by MCF Chair Steve Neuhaus who also suggests reading Psalm 139 (Photo by [Rohan Makhecha](#) on [Unsplash](#))

MCF Dinners/BBQs in 2022



Last chance to buy tickets to the Defence Christian's Dinner – Vic (at Puckapunyal)

Friday 9 Sept - Everyone everywhere is most welcome - [Book Tickets and info](#) (You don't need to be in Defence or Vic to attend – tickets booked by 2nd Sept if possible for catering. Contact the MCF Office if you need more time to book.)

MCF Sausage Sizzle - Canberra Saturday 5 Nov at St John's Church, Reid – the church and museum will be open.

Come any time between 11 and 2. More details closer to the date. Everyone welcome.

MCF AGM - Save the Date

MCF-A 2022 AGM online – 14 Nov @ 7pm AEDT.

Exec are trying out a new way to do the AGM to be more inclusive for all MCF members across Australia.
More info to follow closer to the date.

FCMM gathering last month

(Forum of Christian Military Ministries – in Australia)

The MCF-A Exec met with representatives from our FCMM partner organisations on Tue 4 Aug at the Solid Rock Headquarters in Canberra. The FCMM is made up of the following 7 organisations: Association for Christian Conferences Teaching and Service (ACCTS), Everymans Welfare Service, FOCUS Military Ministry, Military Christian Fellowship (MCF), Navigators Military Ministry, Red Shield Defence Services (RSDS) and Solid Rock Ministries (SRM).



Representatives were present from Everymans, FOCUS, MCF, Navigators, & SRM, with apologies from RSDS & ACCTS who were unable to attend. We also had representatives from Did You Know Education, the Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF) and Bible Society Australia (BSA) who have been and continue to be very supportive of MCF and our work in Defence.

The meeting was a great opportunity for fellowship and to

share what each of the respective ministries are doing and how God is working through their initiatives, committing each to prayer as we went. The meeting was to facilitate better communication and working together constructively so that we are coordinating rather than duplicating our efforts for maximum effect in building the kingdom of God. It was a great time of encouragement as we shared, discussed and prayed for each other in relation to how God has been working on our respective spaces. Detailed notes of the meeting are available on request. So if you wish to read more about the discussion and a summary of activities of each of the organisations represented, contact Julie at mcf.office@defence.gov.au.

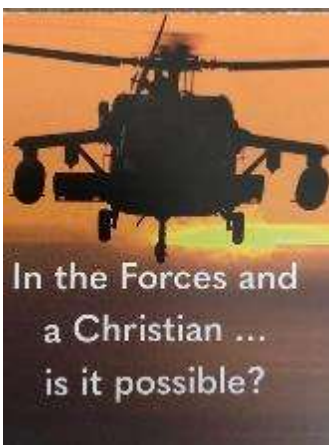
The FCMM has a covenant, signed in Aug 2016 in which we promised to make every effort to work together and pray for one another that through our collective effort, Jesus Christ might be glorified. Consideration was given to whether this covenant should be updated to better reflect current relationships and initiatives. A series of questions was developed for further consideration before the next meeting of the FCMM, expected to occur annually. These questions are intended to focus our efforts on how we can better work together and face the challenges of Christian ministry, proportionately in Defence.

The encouraging discussions ended with PCHA Andrew Lewis (DG Chaplaincy – Navy and MCF Chaplain Rep) providing an update on what is happening more broadly across the chaplaincy space in Defence.

It was a great opportunity and we'd encourage you to continue to prayerfully support the work of MCF and each of its FCMM partner organisations.

Blessings, David Coleman (MCF-A Secretary)

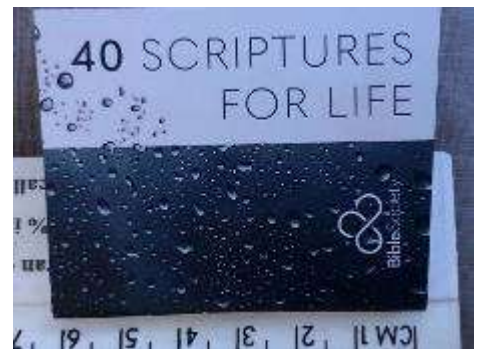
Exciting new material from MCF and Bible Society



The MCF-A Exec are excited to announce, hot off the press, a revamped old MCF flyer – 'In the forces and a Christian...is it possible?' and a small, palm sized booklet (especially designed for use on the Sallyman and Everyman trucks, as well as elsewhere) called – '40 Scriptures for life'. Much thanks goes to Bible Society Australia for the designing, printing and also donating these resources, along with thanks to all who worked on these. MCF Reps will be informed about how to get these, as the MCF Office only has a limited supply. Please make sure your Chaplain is

aware of this material.

All enquiries can be made to mcf.office@defence.gov.au



Other items

Have you posted or moved house? Are you deploying, away from home for a long time?

Posted or moved, please update your details [HERE](#)

Deploying or on a long exercise? MCF-A would love to support and pray for you while you're away. Let us know at: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Membership

[Membership](#) is free and **open to every Christian**. If you've not had an association with Defence or you don't identify as Christian you can be an associate member via the same link.

Donations

MCF is supported almost entirely through freewill donations by members and supporters. Please look at Supporting MCF in prayer, with your time and through [financial support](#). (Direct debit preferred – details at right side of the webpage link)

Note that donations (over \$2) to MCF-A are tax deductible.

Prayer requests

To put forward prayer points for inclusion in the calendar please email the MCF Prayer Coordinator Dr Brendan Pell: brendan.pell@dst.defence.gov.au

You can also send through **urgent prayer points** that are sent on confidentially to the MCF Prayer Warriors, or enquire about becoming an MCF Prayer Warrior, by contacting Brendan.

Contacting the MCF Office

PHONE: 02 6132 7845

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