

A globe is the central focus, held by several hands of different skin tones. The globe shows the Atlantic Ocean and parts of Europe and Africa. A black compass rose is visible on the globe's surface. At the bottom, the pages of an open book are visible. The background is dark and out of focus.

GOSPEL FROM JERUSALEM TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

**Reading Plan
8th Apr - 17th May
2024**



OPERATION PROCLAMATION

AUGUST 2024

The Australian International Missions Team are inviting CRC Pastors, Leaders, and those interested in Missions to join one of the 7 planned short term mission trips in August this year, 2024.

Over the past years, many of the Nations of Africa have embraced the vision and mission of the CRC Churches International, and we have seen an increased number of churches opened, Bible Training Centres started, and many other ministries like schools, rescue homes, and medical centres, etc. pioneered.



In the past 5 years our CRC International Missions Bible College (IMBC) has trained over 3,500 students and supported them in their equipping for the ministry calling on their lives. The churches in Africa are asking for the sister CRC Churches in Australia to come and support the vision presented to the Australian CRC Churches, of seeing a “CRC presence in every nation by 2045”.

The Cry across the African CRC Churches is clear - they are working towards a “CRC presence in every nation of Africa by 2035”. Once they have achieved that goal, they plan to assist Sister CRC nations in reaching the other nations yet untouched.

For more info, speak to Ps Phil or your campus pastor

"The revelation of Your words sheds light, giving understanding to the simple." — Psalm 119:130

Welcome back. We pray you had a great Easter break. As we continue to focus on Revival, this term we will be delving into the book of Acts. A book filled with Revival, first on the day of Pentecost, in the temple courts and even on the road to Ethiopia.

The Book of Acts is a unique book in the New Testament. It serves as a transition between the Gospels and the Epistles. It provides an inspired snapshot of the post-ascension believers and the progress of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Acts shows that the Church of Jesus Christ is divinely established and spiritually empowered to proclaim the gospel and plant believing communities locally, regionally, and globally.

The message of Acts is "The Church of Jesus Christ is divinely established and spiritually empowered to proclaim the gospel and plant believing communities locally, regionally, and globally."

In fact throughout scripture we see how God has wanted to make His Word come alive through His church. It is through church history and current revivals we see God move in great power with mighty visitations. We are living through that now, and there's more to come.

The early church saw it. Read Acts! At Pentecost 3,000 were won in one day. Soon after that there were 5,000 more; then great multitudes of men and women. They had the reputation of turning their world upside down (Acts 17:6).

Missionary expansion continued to see it. For example, Patrick in Ireland and Augustine in England saw strong moves of God and thousands were converted with many signs and wonders reported.

As we go through this reading plan we will be looking at revival according to the book of Acts – one chapter at a time. We will then consider a revival or transformation that has taken place over the past 100 years of our history.

I pray as you read through this reading plan you may capture the Heart that God has for revival in our land.



Ps Phil

MONDAY 8TH APRIL – MISSION POSSIBLE!

READ Acts 1:1-8

What an awesome task Christ assigned to his disciples when He commissioned them to proclaim the gospel and make disciples of people from all nations. If such a significant mission was dependent upon the personal capacity of these few followers, then the Great Commission could be appropriately described as “Mission Impossible!”

Jesus assured his disciples of success by letting them know that He possessed all authority in heaven and earth and promised that he would be with them through to the completion of the assignment (Matthew 28.18-20). What a relief!

The book of Acts is the inspired record of how Christ kept this promise. By sending the Holy Spirit to indwell them, Jesus was not only with them, but his Spirit was also in them (v 8; John 14.15-18). As we journey through the book of Acts, we will be instructed and encouraged to live as witnesses of Christ, with the help of the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts teaches us that the Holy Spirit empowers every believer to fulfil the divine purpose given to us by our Holy Father as we operate in the authority of God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

REFLECT: Have you ever felt overwhelmed by something you know God has called you to do? Did you follow through in obedience? What was the ultimate result?

RESPOND: Choose a specific time that you will commit each day (for the next 29 days) to use this devotional guide in a personal journey through the book of Acts. Pray that God will help you honour your commitment. *Father, I want to be used as your witness to express the love of Jesus to a world in desperate need of hope and a sense of purpose. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit, O God, and give me daily opportunities to advance Christ’s kingdom.*

Move of God - 1739 saw astonishing moves of God in England. On January 1st the Wesleys and Whitefield and 60 others, Methodists and Moravians, met in London for prayer. The Spirit of God moved powerfully on them all. Many fell to the ground, resting in the Spirit. In February 1739 Whitefield started preaching to the Kingswood coal miners in the open fields with about 200 attending. By March, 20,000 attended. Whitefield invited Wesley to take over, and so in April Wesley began his famous open-air preaching (which continued for 50 years). The outcome of this move of God was to see the largest number of missionaries ever to be sent to all corners of the world.

TUESDAY 9TH APRIL – WHY DID JESUS LEAVE?

READ Acts 1:1-26

When we read of Jesus' ascension, we often quickly turn to ponder his return. When will he come back? As exciting as that question is, I believe that there is an even more profound question that needs to be answered first. It is one that is absolutely fundamental to the understanding of our faith; it is a question that I don't think I have ever heard anyone ask. Why did Jesus leave in the first place?

The answer can be found in Jesus' teachings and conversations during his last days. Before His death, Jesus commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel of the Kingdom to the ends of the earth, and He taught them about the Kingdom of God. Jesus spoke passionately about the Kingdom of God – the revolutionary kingdom in which God's rule defines how we live and act. Jesus gave us a critical assignment to build this kingdom. He taught his disciples about it, and He empowered them—and us—with the Holy Spirit.

Why did Jesus leave? In His own words Jesus said, *"I tell you that I am doing what is best for you. That is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave"* (John 16.7a). Jesus left us a mission to accomplish. He said He would return when our assignment was finished. The disciples, on fire for this kingdom-building mission, preached and taught Jesus' kingdom message, and they took the Roman Empire by storm. Today, twenty centuries later, the job Jesus gave us to do is not yet completed.

REFLECT: Why do you think Jesus left instead of simply bringing history to a close right then and there? What does the kingdom of God mean to you? How do you live out Jesus' mission?

RESPOND: As you consider what the Kingdom of God means to you, what do you see as your place on the front lines of the kingdom? Ask God to help you discover your role in building the kingdom in the 21st century and act on it. *Lord, give me the same passion for kingdom building that caused your disciples to change the world. Help me to order my life to be completely obedient to the mission you gave to your followers.*

Move of God - John Hunt, a pioneering Methodist missionary in Fiji, wrote in his journal about revival there in October 1845. The Spirit fell on the people in meetings and in their homes. There were loud cries of repentance, confession, long meetings, simultaneous praying aloud, and some being overwhelmed. Hunt's endeavours were the continuation of the move of God that had been poured out in England with the Wesleys many years before.

WEDNESDAY 10TH APRIL – WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

READ Acts 2:1-47

Have you ever thought about this Bible book's title: "The Acts of the Apostles"? These men and women were weak and imperfect human beings just like we are; some even smelled of fish! Yet the Holy Spirit spread the good news about Jesus everywhere through them, to Jews and Gentiles!

God is no respecter of persons! It was not their cleverness, intellectual prowess, or administrative genius that caused them to be successful in leading people a world away to the good news of Jesus; it was the awesome power of the Holy Spirit working in and through them. Today, that same indwelling Spirit is now ready to express Christ's love, grace, and power through every yielded believer.

Acts chapter 2 presents the apostolic church pattern for spiritual power in which we honour the work of the Holy Spirit. The life of the Church and the believer depends on the Holy Spirit within them. God says, *"Don't depend on your own power or strength, but on my Spirit"* (Zechariah 4.6b). Such a pattern also points out that we are to know the Scriptures. True faith is built on the unchanging, never-failing Word of God. Know it and believe it! We find that the apostles were willing to experience the love and strength of New Testament fellowship as they moved from house to house and in the temple. We have no power apart from God and we are to remember Calvary and the price that Jesus paid to grant us access into His family. Finally, the Church finds its power in praying always—in all places, for all people, and with all patience. We must never stop talking to God and obeying God's Word.

The Church was birthed when the Holy Spirit, promised by Christ, was poured into the lives of 120 believers (v 1-4). The result was an explosion of the gospel—empowered believers and a vibrant, growing Christian community attracting the lost with a Christ-centred message of hope and a lifestyle of compassion (v 42-47).

REFLECT: The Holy Spirit empowered the believers after a brief waiting period. Spiritual power comes from waiting in God's presence. Is the Spirit prompting you to wait before God? Peter's bold message resulted in 3,000 people believing and being baptized. Can God count on you to share the good news?

RESPOND: Acts chapter two begins and ends with the early believers being in one accord—in unity. Pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit will bring true unity to the Body of Christ in your city. This is the first step to the revival we need. No victory in the book of Acts can be explained apart from the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit.

Move of God - Jeremiah Lanphier, a city missionary, began a weekly prayer meeting in New York in September 1857. By October it grew into a daily prayer meeting attended by many businessmen. By March 1858 newspapers carried front page reports of over 6,000 attending daily prayer meetings in New York and Pittsburgh, and daily prayer meetings were held in Washington at five different times to accommodate the crowds. By May 1859, 50,000 of New York's 800,000 people were new converts.

THURSDAY 11TH APRIL – GIVE WHAT YOU HAVE!

READ Acts 3:1-26

The power of Pentecost heals the paralysis of the world. The wind of Pentecost carries the Church to people in need. The fire of the Spirit kindles warmth for others. The excitement and enthusiasm created by the Spirit motivates believers to be instruments for the healing of the world.

On their way through the Beautiful Gate of the temple to a prayer meeting, Peter and John met a cripple. The man was carried there by his friends to beg; Peter and John were led there by the Spirit to touch human need. Peter said to the man, “*I don’t have any silver or gold! But I will give you what I do have...*” (v 6). The hand was Peter’s, the power was Christ’s, and soon that cripple was walking, leaping, healed, and free (v 7, 8).

What did Peter have to offer to a man experiencing the brokenness of the world? You know, you can only give what you have. You can only share what you possess! Peter told the crowd what he did not have: material possessions (v.6), their own power (v 12), or religious piety (v 12). Then what did Peter and John have? Certainly they had compassion (v 4). They stopped when they saw the man in need and did not pass him by on their way to worship. They had holy boldness as they commanded the crippled man, saying, “*Look up at us!*” (v 4)

Peter was convinced that the exalted Christ was completely competent (“omni-competent”) to heal this man. The apostle knew that God’s people, through the years, were the beneficiaries of God’s miraculous, intervening power. Peter also had a conviction about Christ. He believed that nothing was impossible for Jesus to accomplish; that Christ was not a faded memory but a living power, the author and pioneer of life. It was this conviction that gave Peter courage—courage to offer Christ alone to the cripple, and courage to confront the crowd with the truth (14-19).

REFLECT: Who are the crippled around you? Can you see their faces? Who comes to mind right now? With such staggering need, it is easy to be discouraged, overwhelmed, and to remain silent. Remind yourself that what you have to offer is the exalted Christ who is completely able to save to the uttermost.

RESPOND: Take a few minutes to recall how God has intervened in your life and praise Him for how He has demonstrated His power. Encourage someone who is struggling with life’s difficulties by sharing your testimony and by telling them that what God has done for you through Christ, He will do for anyone, anywhere. *Father, in the name of the exalted Christ, lead me, in the power of the Spirit, to where hurting people are, and let me extend to them the simple invitation, “Jesus is the source of life for you.”*

Move of God - During September 1857, the same month the prayer meetings began in New York, four young Irishmen commenced a weekly prayer meeting in a village school near Kells. This is generally seen as the start of **the Ulster revival of 1859** which brought 100,000 converts into the churches of Ireland.

FRIDAY 12TH APRIL – JUST TELL THEM!

READ Acts 4:1-37

In this chapter, Peter and John find themselves arrested and standing before officials of the highest Jewish court in the land. They had angered the religious leaders by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ: His death, burial, and resurrection. And they had healed a man who had been crippled from birth. Now they were being asked, *“By what power and in whose name have you done this?”*

I am sure while they were standing there Jesus’ words were ringing in their ears. *“...because of me you will have to stand before rulers and kings to tell about your faith... When you are arrested, don’t worry about what you will say. You will be given the right words when the time comes. But you will not really be the ones speaking. Your words will come from the Holy Spirit”* (Mark 13.9, 11).

What a great reminder for us today. We are called to be witnesses of the good news of Jesus Christ. When we are doing what God has called us to do, our words and actions will draw attention. When asked, *“By what power and in whose name have you done this?”* – don’t beat around the bush, just tell them. Then be ready for the Holy Spirit to give your words a voice.

We live in a world that desperately needs to know the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Don’t be fearful to speak or doubtful that the Holy Spirit will help you speak. As the Holy Spirit gave Peter a voice, He will do the same for us. Peter’s words rang loud and clear. *“This man is standing here completely well because of the power of Jesus Christ from Nazareth...”* (v 10b). In addition, Peter, emboldened by the Holy Spirit, went on to say, *“Only Jesus has the power to save! His name is the only one in all the world that can save anyone”* (v 12).

As you witness for Christ many may oppose you, but the ones who believe will be eternally grateful that you were not afraid to speak. Just think, as a result of Peter and John’s boldness, the believers in the Lord grew to about 5,000.

REFLECT: Have you found yourself being challenged about believing in Jesus? Have others tried to intimidate you into remaining silent?

RESPOND: As you continue your journey through the book of Acts, highlight or underline each verse where God helped His people to stand in the face of opposition.

Move of God – In 1859 the same deep conviction and lasting conversions revived thousands of people in Wales, England and Scotland. One tenth of Wales became new converts. Charles Spurgeon, the Baptist prince of preachers, saw 1859 as the high water mark, although he had already been preaching in London for five years with great blessing and huge crowds in a church where people prayed continually and had seen continual growth.

turningpoint
Missions Expo
14TH APRIL

Ps Divakar is coming to visit **turningpoint** churches in April.

During his time here, all **turningpoint** campuses will be focusing on Missions, and taking up an offering for the various missions they are involved in



**Indian & Sri Lankan
Culture Night**

14th April | 6PM

1785 South Gippsland Hwy, Cranbourne



MONDAY 15TH APRIL – THERE’S NO STOPPING US!

READ Acts 5:1-42

Paul told Timothy, his protégé, *“Everything in the Scriptures is God’s Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. The Scriptures train God’s servants to do all kinds of good deeds”* (2 Timothy 3.16, 17).

In this chapter of the book of Acts, we find that Paul’s statement about the uses of Scripture holds true. In the opening narrative, we discover that God knows the secrets of our hearts and He has power to openly correct and rebuke, as He did in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. God’s desire is always for truth in our inner being. God thoroughly equips His people to do what He assigns, as He did for the apostles by ushering in the kingdom with miracles (not magic) and equipping them to do good works.

We find that although our training in righteousness may result in good works for the poor, the needy, the sick, and those whose hearts long to see God in practical ways, it sometimes causes others to become jealous. They hatch plans to do us harm as a reward for the good works we do in the name and power of Christ. Before His departure to heaven, Jesus told His followers to expect hatred from the world. The apostles faced prison, but even there, God’s power was at work in the circumstance. They were persecuted, but God gave them victory, allowing them to rejoice that they were chosen to suffer for Him.

God’s power was so strong that even one of the council members who had the power to kill Peter and the others, backed away from such action against the apostles’ preaching. God allowed this man to speak an awesome word of truth: *“... if God is behind it, you cannot stop it anyway, unless you want to fight against God”* (v 39). There is no stopping God’s child who is in God’s perfect will because of the presence and power of God himself!

REFLECT: Am I open to the Scripture’s teaching and the work it does in me and through me? Am I serving in obedience to God’s will and am I being filled and prepared by God’s Spirit?

RESPOND: Ask God to reveal areas in your life that need transformation. Submit to His will, and humbly follow His lead in living out his Word.

Move of God - From October 1904 Evan Roberts, in his twenties, formerly a miner and blacksmith, saw God move powerfully during the Welsh revival in answer to his and others’ persistent prayers. 100,000 were converted in Wales during 1904-5. Churches filled from 10 a.m. until after midnight every day for two years, bringing profound social change to Wales.

TUESDAY 16TH APRIL – HEART OF A VOLUNTEER...

READ Acts 6:1-15

What quality of service do the poor deserve? It's a shocking question. We expect our pastors to craft soul-stirring presentations week after week. We expect worship to be musically excellent. But what about our outreach to the poor? What standards of excellence do we require there?

I love the fact that the Early Church demanded the best when it came to serving the least. Stephen led the first New Testament relief and development ministry, but he wasn't a volunteer who was arm-twisted into filling a slot. He had to earn the privilege of serving the poor. He had to demonstrate a Spirit-based pattern of living. That's excellence! He had to exhibit God-given wisdom. Excellence again.

It only makes sense. Stephen and the team needed to work across cultural boundaries. They needed to implement an efficient mass feeding program. And they needed to represent Christ in the process. What's more, they never viewed it as a second-rate mandate. It was a noble platform for service right alongside the faithful sharing of the gospel.

Never view ministry to the marginalized as easy work performed to a standard of "good enough." When it came to caring for the poor, the Early Church put their best people on it. It's no different today. Are you up to the privilege?

REFLECT: Have you ever considered the quality of care the poor need? Have you thought about the kind of people who are called to serve them? And how important is godly character when it comes to sharing food, digging wells, or restoring lives?

RESPOND: Ask God to broaden your thinking when it comes to giving, serving, and caring for the poor. Ask Him to create a character in you that's worthy of the task. *Father, you know what hurting people need. Give me the vision to see what needs to be done. And build my character so that it's worthy of the people you want me to serve—even if it costs me everything, just like Stephen.*

Move of God - William Seymour began a Mission at Azusa Street in Los Angeles on Easter Saturday, 14 April 1906 with about 100 attending, both blacks and whites. It grew out of a cottage prayer meeting. Revival there drew people from around the nation and overseas and launched Pentecostalism as a worldwide movement.

WEDNESDAY 17TH APRIL – GOD’S PERSONAL SPACE

READ Acts 7:1-60

In one of the most dramatic courtroom defences of all time, Stephen answers the charge against him by calling on evidence already known very well to everyone at the trial. His detractors charged that Stephen spoke against their Temple in Jerusalem and against their customs and interpretations of the law God had revealed through Moses.

In 52 short verses, Stephen rehearsed to the court many of the great events recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, focusing especially on the lives of four godly people—Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David. In each of their lives they had experienced God’s profound presence – and they had been faithful in the life changes God provided – largely outside the holy land, and entirely outside the Jerusalem Temple. The point was clear: from the earliest Hebrew history, God is powerfully, personally present everywhere. And, under His leadership, customs always change. These four Hebrew men and other godly people were also rejected by those close to them.

Stephen’s faithful re-telling of their own story so upset and angered the religious leaders conducting his trial, that they killed him. Nevertheless, his defence so pleased God, that Stephen was given a vision of Jesus “*standing at the right side of God!*” (v 56). Stephen was right: in life and in death we are always in God’s Personal Space (GPS). Hallelujah!

REFLECT: Where do you think God dwells? In church buildings or in the whole universe—including the places where you live, labour, or enjoy leisure? Can we feel God’s presence everywhere? Can we be faithful anywhere?

RESPOND: Ask God to help you acknowledge Him wherever you are, and to be faithful to Him. In four different places today, thank God that it is His space—God’s Personal Space (GPS). You do not need to close your eyes to tell Him. Take a moment to share this divine experience with others! *Gracious God, thank you that my family, friends, and I are all in your personal space. Please help me to know your personal presence – your GPS – as did Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Stephen and so many other men and women.*

Move of God - Revival in Korea touched the nation in 1907. Presbyterian missionaries, hearing of revival in Wales, prayed earnestly for the same in Korea. 1500 representatives gathered for the annual New Year Bible studies in which a spirit of prayer broke out. The leaders allowed everyone to pray aloud simultaneously because so many were wanting to pray. That became a characteristic of Korean prayer meetings. Revival continues there now.

THURSDAY 18TH APRIL – THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY

READ Acts 8:1-40

The chapter commences with a string of potent threats – Saul’s animosity, Stephen’s murder, terrible suffering, dispersion of the Church, and the incarceration of men and women. But, in verse 4 what the world means for evil, the Lord turns to good. What is intended as a setback becomes a door for remarkable ministry.

As a result of persecution, the scattered disciples – Philip in particular – go *“from place to place telling the good news”* (v 4). Without design or strategy, the first believers begin to fulfil Jesus’ mandate to preach the gospel *“in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria and everywhere in the world”* (Acts 1.8).

Philip is sent not only to unorthodox Samaritans, but also to an Ethiopian eunuch. As a result of Philip’s boldness, outsiders experience the kingdom of God via preaching, healing, exorcism, Scripture and baptism (both of water and of the Holy Spirit).

We can draw great encouragement from this text. At the macro level, we simply cannot see what the Lord sees. Rather than plunge into despondency, we should ask the Lord for spiritual eyes to see opportunities. Perhaps, we should spend more time with our families. Perhaps, we should pursue additional professional seasoning. Even as our heart aches, we should be asking questions like, “Lord, what are you trying to teach me? How should I change? In what direction are you taking me now?” In physical pain? The Lord used even those potential threats to birth opportunities.

REFLECT: How do you view the difficulties that sometimes enter your life? Are they more of a threat than an opportunity? Remind yourself that mere positive thinking won’t make difficulties disappear nor will it negate pain. Rather, we are to take a different path, simultaneously embracing sorrow and joy, the cross and the resurrection.

RESPOND: Ask the Lord to show you opportunities even when you are in a bad situation. *Father, thank you for spreading the good news via persecution; for redeeming good from evil; for undergirding faith through pain; and, for developing our character by means of difficult situations. Give me eyes to see your sovereignty, compassion, and grace.*

Move of God - The Holy Spirit fell dramatically on a small prayer group of 8 people in Argentina in 1948, and their church immediately exploded with many signs and wonders and healings. Some converts in that move of God were in Bible College in June 1951 when the Spirit fell on them there. The college prayed for 4 months with intense weeping, and many astounding prophecies including that the largest stadiums in Argentina would be filled soon for Christian meetings. That happened in 1954 with the visit of Tommy Hicks. The largest stadium seating 110,000 was filled for weeks as 300,000 made commitments and hundreds were healed each night for three months.

FRIDAY 19TH APRIL – PASSIONATE SERVICE!

READ Acts 9:1-43

Before Saul's conversion, his quest for fulfilment of his purpose drove him to persecute Jesus' followers relentlessly. Armed with a strong belief in his mission, this young man had an all-embracing need to satisfy his passion. Saul – his name before his conversion when it was changed to Paul – was not only a Jewish scholar but also a devout Pharisee who was determined to kill those who left traditional Judaism and followed the teachings of Jesus.

What a joy to know that the story did not end there. While on his way to Damascus, through the grace of a loving God, Saul's journey led him to meet the God he was persecuting. This encounter on the Damascus Road was no ordinary meeting, but a blinding experience by the supernatural God who had a purpose for Saul's life. Saul's miraculous conversion led him to embrace his new destiny and his new name. His journey into ministry began immediately with a passion far greater than he had at first!

Not only does Saul experience a dramatic change, but we also find a changed Peter, who before Pentecost was timid, faithless, and uncertain of his commitment to Christ. Peter is now filled with the Spirit, preaching, teaching, healing the sick, and even supernaturally raising a woman from the dead. Oh the joy of knowing your purpose and walking in it with bold, passionate confidence!

REFLECT: Are you passionate enough about your salvation to take a stand for righteousness, despite painful persecution and opposition? Do you sometimes find yourself doubting the power of God to believe Him for situations and circumstances that seem hopeless in your eyes?

RESPOND: Take the time to think about the sacrifice Christ made for your salvation when He went to Calvary. As you bow in obedience to God's power that lies within you, it will become easier to passionately serve those who are lost in sin. Don't give in to discouragement, stand firm on God's Word and be assured of His ever-abiding presence. *Lord, help me to be passionate about my God-given purpose by totally depending on your power and trusting in your Word.*

Move of God – In 1944 a meeting took place at Ballarat Victoria with Ps Leo Harris and Ps Thomas Foster. As they opened up new revelations of scripture they felt the call of God to set up a new church movement. In 1945 Adelaide Christian Centre was pioneered by Ps Harris, becoming at the time the largest Pentecostal church in Australia. Ps Harris was used by God to found the movement now known as CRC Churches International, which now has over 2000 churches around the world. Ps Harris also established the foundations for the first Pentecostal school in Australia. He started a Bible College that is still training many for the service of God.

Happy Birthday

turningpoint Lyndhurst

16

Celebration Service
28th April | 10 am

empow·HER LADIEScamp

2024

DATE

Fri 17th May - Sun 19th May 2024

LOCATION

CYC The Island
41-53 Church St, Cowes



SCAN TO BOOK

Revive us again that your people may rejoice in you **Psalm 85:6**

turningpoint
CHURCH



MONDAY 22ND APRIL – CONNECT OUR DOTS!

READ Acts 10:1-48

This narrative illustrates a sovereign Holy Spirit stirring up, then responding to the personal prayers of a sincere seeker, and a saint, in separate venues, and imparting to each the grace to obey. This is our holy God's supernatural style at its best! It is proof positive that He values the prayers of each person. Cornelius was fervent in his seeking. An angel drops in and announces, *"Now send some men to Joppa for a man named Simon Peter"* (v 5). Peter, intent on a quiet moment of rooftop prayer, was hungry, and, as it turns out, sleepy. A vision, a voice rouses him: *"Three men are here looking for you. Hurry down and go with them. Don't worry, I sent them"* (v 19b, 20).

When we're earnestly connecting to God and His purposes, He "connects our dots" and opens doors for the gospel. The result? Open door, open hearts. Peter announces the good news, and while he was still speaking *"...the Holy Spirit took control of everyone who was listening"* (v 44).

Note that it took the Lord three attempts to get through Peter's grid. We're all human, hard of hearing, and in need of multiple "pokes." So, in your prayer journey, follow the example of this seeker and saint; lean into your relationship with Yahweh Shammah ("he who manifests his presence in a place"), and listen more attentively. Then resolve to follow the flow of the Holy Spirit, being open to share God's marvellous story, and watch Him do what only He can do.

REFLECT: Read Acts 10 again. Take a moment to ponder what could happen if you were increasingly attentive to the ways and whisperings of God's Spirit and obeyed His promptings. Think about the Corneliuses in your world. Ask the Lord to show you which ones are seeking, and when and how God might lead you to share the gospel message.

RESPOND: Ask the Lord to give you a "rooftop revelation" that leads and empowers you to advance the gospel to a specific person in your world. Watch with anticipation. *Lord, stir in me today a deeper hunger for supernatural power in my witness. I'm open to your stirrings and divine appointments. Give me the joy of partnering with you to lead souls into your kingdom.*

Move of God - God moved upon Timor in 1965. At night people heard the sound of a tornado - wind and flames above the Reformed Church building which prompted police to set off the fire alarm. Healings and evangelism increased dramatically. Hundreds of thousands were converted. About 90 evangelistic teams were formed which functioned powerfully with spiritual gifts. The first team saw 9,000 people converted in two weeks in one town alone. In the first three years of this revival 200,000 became Christians in Timor, and on another small island where few had been Christians, 20,000 people became believers.

TUESDAY 23RD APRIL – GOD ENCOURAGES!

READ Acts 11:1-30

We see God at work in the lives of Peter and Paul. In each instance, God provided encouragement as they sought to serve Him. Members of the Jerusalem church were spreading rumours that Peter had been associating with Gentiles—the “wrong” type of people. Even back then people liked to gossip! Some finally did the right thing and confronted Peter about the rumours. Peter explained that God gave him a vision to encourage him to share the gospel with those who were not Jewish (in other words, the “wrong” type of people). As if that were not enough confirmation, as soon as the vision was finished, three Gentiles came to Peter saying that God had sent them to hear the gospel. Upon hearing the gospel message, they gave their lives to Jesus. The Jewish Christians who confronted Peter were moved by God’s encouragement to Peter, and now understood that salvation was offered to all people, not just to one race or people. Hopefully, they also stopped gossiping!

It is at those times that the persecuted Christian should seek guidance from God’s Word. It is important that Christians continue to be obedient to God, who sends encouragement and signs to keep them on the right path.

This leads us to the second example, that of Saul. So many people in the city of Antioch gave their lives to Jesus that they started a church. The Jerusalem church therefore sent Barnabas (his name means “son of encouragement”) to Antioch to encourage this new church. In fact, it was at this very city that those who followed Christ were first called “Christians!” Barnabas was so overjoyed by what he found at Antioch that he travelled to find a relatively new believer named Saul. Together, they taught the Word of God to the Antioch church to ensure that the new believers would grow properly in their faith. This encouragement and mentoring from Barnabas helped Saul to mature and later become a missionary.

REFLECT: Is there something that the Lord is encouraging you to do for him? What is keeping you from being obedient?

RESPOND: Pay close attention today and this week as God provides direction and encouragement for your life. Pray especially for someone who will come alongside you to provide spiritual guidance. *Heavenly Father, thank you for giving me guidance as I live my life for you. May I always be true to your Word.*

Move of God - In the late 1960’s Ps Leo Harris, the founder of the CRC, released a book titled “Operation Outreach”. It became a blueprint for many Pentecostal churches that were trying to understand how to start New Testament churches. Ps Harris outlined that for Revivals to be sustained, believers needed to have strong Bible believing churches established, with Pastors, Elders and Deacons, with the teaching that EVERY believer is a saint and is to learn to minister in the church. During this time the number of churches across Australia doubled within a period of 5 years.

WEDNESDAY 24TH APRIL - UNDER ATTACK

READ Acts 12:1-25

The earliest disciples faced epic onslaughts from all sides. King Herod Agrippa sought to annihilate Christianity and led a massive assault against the Lord's followers. It pleased the Jews to see James martyred and Peter on trial for violating Jewish customs. Suffice it to say that the earliest disciples were being picked apart and their future looked quite bleak.

When we are under attack, it often looks hopeless in the natural and it can feel very isolating. Peter and the Lord's followers faced dire circumstances, but God showed them that He was still in the battle with them. As Christians, we must never forget that we operate under magnificent spiritual dynamics that can turn any defeat into an encouraging situation. One of our most effective weapons is prayer. Just as God sent an angel to liberate Peter from jail, the army of the Lord will deliver you, too, when you continue to operate in righteousness. We serve the almighty, all-powerful, all-wise God. Whatever you are faced with cannot trump Him!

Although you may not fully understand all that is happening around you, rest assured that all things work together for the good of those that love the Lord (Romans 8.28). Be reminded today that you are not in the battle alone. Listen to the words of Jesus: *"I will be with you always, even until the end of the world"* (Matthew 28.20b).

REFLECT: Do you believe that Jesus leaves you when you're under attack? Do you know that we have a Good Shepherd who does not leave His sheep to the wolves, no matter how big the pack seems?

RESPOND: Always pray and walk humbly into the battle with the truth as your defence. Keep reminding yourself that God has no intentions of abandoning us when we are under attack. *Father, we know through your Word that no situation is too hard for you to handle. Lord, remind me of that truth when fear attempts to seize me and my circumstances seem overwhelming. Help me to walk in your love and give me the courage I need to finish the day well.*

Move of God - In the early 1960's of Pastor Barry and Rosalie Silverback moved to Papua New Guinea in partnership with the Foursquare movement. In 1972 the CRC set up its own base in Port Moresby with a Bible College and new church plant. In the 1980's God moved, and hundreds of new churches were established in all provinces of PNG. To date there would be around 600 churches in PNG, with the Bible College now training up missionaries to send to all corners of the world. The Western Highlands of PNG had a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the 1970's. Many were saved. Many were delivered from evil spirits. Many were healed. Many churches were planted and grew rapidly.

THURSDAY 25TH APRIL – GOOD NEWS SPREADS!

READ Acts 13:1-52

Has God ever surprised you while you were worshipping Him? It is amazing what can take place when we are worshipping God. It was certainly so for Paul, and Barnabas as the Holy Spirit invaded their worship by declaring that they should be set apart for the work to which He was calling them. Their colleagues responded by fasting, praying, placing their hands on them, and sending them off.

As they travelled significant distances by land and sea, they gave themselves to the calling of ministering to the Jews who lived in the various cities where they were led by the Spirit to visit. Then came the major surprise. It was not on their agenda or in their plans. The Holy Spirit interrupted them with a new plan and a new major focus. They were now called to share the Word of God primarily with the Gentiles. The prophecy of Isaiah 49.6 was being fulfilled: *“I have placed you here as a light for the Gentiles. You are to take the saving power of God to people everywhere on earth”* (v 47).

As a result, the Word of the Lord spread through the whole region (v 49). And now the Word of God is available to all people of all nations as it continues to spread!

REFLECT: How has the Word of the Lord spread to you and your city? To your family and loved ones? To the various ethnic groups of your city and community? How is the Lord using you to help spread his Word? How are you making yourself available to God?

RESPOND: Ask the Lord to give you the courage to spread His Word to others. Begin to seek out new or creative ways to do this. *Help me, dear Lord, to see the possibilities around me to share you and your Word. Many people are coming to my city from all over the world. Help me to pray for my neighbours, to love them, and share your Word with them.*

Move of God - The Jesus Movement exploded in 1971 among hippie and counterculture youth in America in the early seventies. Thousands were baptised in the ocean. Vital new groups like Calvary Chapel led by Chuck Smith emerged and multiplied rapidly. Newspapers of the movement included the Hollywood Free Paper which grew from a circulation of 10,000 to over 150,000 in two years; Truth merged with Agape and printed 100,000. Right On! grew from 20,000 to 100,000 circulation.

FRIDAY 26TH APRIL – THE USELESSNESS OF IDOLATRY

READ Acts 14:1-28

Have you ever been atop a mountain? Looked out at the vastness of the ocean or the immense amount of sand on the shore? Tried counting the stars at night? Creation is always meant to direct you to the true object of love, adoration, and worship, who is the all-loving, all-powerful God.

Why does God bless humans with food, shelter, and the beauty of earth and the universe? Paul and Barnabas encountered a tumultuous mob who wanted to worship the creation rather than the Creator. The apostles rightly directed the mob's attention to the all-knowing, all-wise Creator of the universe, giving God due honour and glory.

God gave us food, shelter, beauty, and yet we worship the creation rather than the Creator and provider of those blessings. It is idolatry when we worship creation, for we are settling for less than God's great plan for us. We need to direct our affection and adoration to the Creator who redeemed us for Himself for all eternity. As we strive to do this, God gives us grace and strength for this difficult task!

How does one truly worship God? The healing of the crippled man demonstrates the concept of true worship. God used this weakened man (his creation) to bring glory and worship to Himself. In this process, the Lord graciously chose Paul and Barnabas to exemplify God's might and power. God wants your life to exalt Him because He has done great things for you by rescuing and redeeming you. The apostle Paul understood this; he wrote, *"God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honour God"* (1 Cor 6.20).

REFLECT: Are you worshipping something or someone other than God, your Creator? It may not be an idol or a Greek god like it was in this chapter of Acts, but is it a relationship? A secret sin? An addiction? Gossip or hatred?

RESPOND: Allow God's Spirit to help you redirect your heart's affection to Jesus who died on a cross for your eternal salvation. Ask God to refocus your mind so you can truly worship and praise the Lord.

Move of God - In 1979 John Wimber began pastoring a fellowship which his wife Carol had begun in their home. Their Vineyard Fellowship grew rapidly with their prayerful worship, powerful evangelism and a growing healing ministry. On Mother's Day in May 1981, a young man gave his testimony at the evening service and called on the Holy Spirit to come in power. Revival broke out at that service as hundreds were dramatically filled with the Spirit. In the next four months they baptised 700 new converts. The church grew to 5,000 in a decade and commenced many other Vineyard fellowships.

MONDAY 29TH APRIL – WELCOME AT GOD'S TABLE!

READ Acts 15:1-35

The increasing number of Gentiles who put their faith in God after hearing the preaching of God's Word was a cause for great joy and celebration. Yet we are told it was also a cause for grave concern to those Jews who believed that Gentiles should not be considered part of the household of faith if they were not circumcised according to the Law of Moses. This dissension caused the apostles to hold a council meeting in Jerusalem to discuss the issue. When Peter took the floor, he reminded the group that it was God's saving action, through the Holy Spirit, that brought the Gentiles to faith. It was a new move of God, a new revelation, an outpouring of grace that did not require restitution or ritual to complete it. It was the finished work of Christ on the cross at Calvary that allowed Gentiles to draw near to God. Christ's sacrifice was absolutely enough. It needed nothing more! God had accepted the Gentiles and had performed signs and wonders among them because of their faith in Him and not because they followed God's Law.

Let's look around in our own faith communities. Are we using religious rituals to keep out those who would come to faith in God? The apostle Paul tells us clearly, *"You were saved by faith in God, who treats us much better than we deserve. This is God's gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own"* (Ephesians 2.8). Thank God for grace; it makes us all welcome at God's table!

REFLECT: Are there people who are being ostracized from fellowship in your house of worship or community because of their ethnicity, social status or past? In what ways can you reach out to them? Do you believe that God's grace is available to them?

RESPOND: Think of ways to bridge the gap between the people who are excluded and those in your faith community. Meditate on Peter's words (v 9) and reflect on how God's grace was extended to you. *Lord, let me not be an obstacle to those who are trying to reach you. Rather, let me be a stepping-stone that leads them to salvation.*

Move of God - The church in China continues to see God's strong move amid great persecution, torture and killing which still continues. David Wang tells of a pastor imprisoned for over 22 years who left behind a church of 150 people scattered through the hill villages in northern China. On his release in the 1980s he discovered the church in that area had grown to 5,000. Three years later it had trebled to 15,000. Evangelists who saw 30-40 converted in each village they visited in the eighties now report 300-400 or more being converted in their visits. Some villages are experiencing a visitation of God where the whole village becomes Christian.

TUESDAY 30TH APRIL – MIRACLE AT MIDNIGHT!

READ Acts 16:1-40

Miracles still happen! This passage recounts a threefold miracle. First, we see two men beaten unmercifully, locked up in prison in the inner ward, their feet fastened securely, their legs forced into a cramped position, and their future uncertain because of the ire of the authorities and racism of the people. Yet, these men are praying and singing! That they are praying is not surprising. There is nothing miraculous about that. But singing? The entire prison heard their singing. Who knows what hardened criminals were in there? The prison walls echoed with songs of praise, a strange sound in such a grim environment.

Next, there is a violent earthquake that makes even the very foundation of the prison shake. What an earthquake! Paul and Silas's singing in that cell were more than stone and mortar could take. Yet, the roof did not cave in, the walls did not collapse. Instead, the prison doors burst open, and every prisoner's chains fell off and, the jailer was shaken out of his indifference and careless pride.

The jailer, assuming that all the prisoners had fled, was prepared to take his life when a voice in the darkness declares, "...*Don't harm yourself! No one has escaped*" (v 28). It was a miracle! Can you imagine Paul and Silas rejoicing in suffering, then every door opened, every chain became undone, every prisoner was released by an earthquake, but more than that, every single prisoner was restrained from running away? The jailer, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, asked Paul and Silas how he could be saved, and they led him and his entire household to the Lord.

REFLECT: Is it your midnight hour? Are you going through a tough time in your life? Do you need a miracle because nothing you have tried seems to work?

RESPOND: If you have been praying for a miracle for some time, add singing and praising the Lord to the equation. Turn up the volume! Praise the Lord like Paul and Silas did in the midst of their suffering. God will turn your tears of sorrow into tears of rejoicing. The miracle is what happens in us, not what happens outside of us.

Move of God - Revival has been spreading in the Pacific Islands, especially in the Solomons since the 1980's when God moved powerfully in the nation, especially in meetings with Ps Barry Silverback and the CRC churches. The Spirit came in power, producing deep and loud repentance, much confession, signs and wonders, and transformed churches. Many CRC teams have gone from the Solomons to many other countries, sparking many other revivals. While in the Sepik lowlands of northern Papua New Guinea a visitation of God burst on the churches at Easter 1984, sparked again by Solomon Island workers. There was repentance, confession, weeping and great joy. Stolen goods were returned or replaced, and wrongs made right.

WEDNESDAY 1ST MAY – JESUS REIGNS!

READ Acts 17:1-34

The world experiences suffering every minute of every day, with no end in sight. There are billions of people who have no knowledge of Christ and the hope He can bring to their wretched lives. Many seem to ask, is anyone in charge? The book of Acts declares, using one case study after another: Jesus is in charge! Flowing from the opening drama of Jesus' ascension (and coronation), each chapter paints for us implications of Christ's on-going rule at the Father's right hand. Day after day, place after place, person after person, we discover that Jesus actively reigns overall.

Acts 17 provides two examples: In Thessalonica, Jesus' reign is manifested through the impact of Paul sharing with others that Jesus is the Messiah (God's "anointed one" who rules forever). Luke reports that the good news that Jesus' reign is active is "*upsetting things everywhere*" (v 6) by overturning the status quo. In Athens, Paul wraps up his lecture to Greek intelligentsia by declaring that God "*has set a day when he will judge the world's people with fairness. And he has chosen the man Jesus to do the judging for him*" (v 31a). At that time, everyone will have to acknowledge Jesus' supremacy. Therefore, Paul warns, we need to submit to Christ's saving lordship now in ways that reflect how we will submit to Him as judge when He returns.

We can follow Jesus with absolute confidence because He remains the hope of the earth and of our lives, and because without interruption, Jesus reigns!

REFLECT: Where have you seen evidence of the reign of Jesus recently? In what areas of your life do you want to witness more demonstrations of Christ's supremacy? What are you asking God for specifically?

RESPOND: Jesus is above all and overall. Ask God to prepare you to see Jesus' kingdom manifested here on earth in your daily life. *Father, I rejoice that your Son's reign brings fresh hope to my world and to my generation. Manifest more of Jesus' power in my walk with Him. Let me experience His reign like the refreshing showers that come in spring.*

Move of God - In the 1980s Christians in East Germany started to form small prayer groups of ten to twelve persons to pray for peace. By October 1989, 50,000 people were involved in Monday night prayer meetings. In 1990, when these praying people moved quietly into the streets, their numbers swelled to 300,000 and the wall came down. Then in 1990 a bloodless revolution freed Mongolia from Russian rule. Within two years more than 500 people became Christian in that formerly resistant nation. A young girl was the first in her area to accept Christ. Now churches are growing in Mongolia where there were none before 1990.

THURSDAY 2ND MAY – “I AM WITH YOU!”

READ Acts 18:1-28

We live in a fast-paced environment where there is so much movement everywhere we go, especially in the cities in which we live. There is rarely a dull moment. Our cities are run by the drive to earn money, power, and prestige. As God's people, He has chosen us and given us opportunity to believe, share, and display the message of Christ in our cities.

Paul's heart was for God's message to be told to the Jews and to the Gentiles. His desire was to share the message of Jesus with the people of Corinth. Because that was his goal, Paul didn't allow anything to hold him back, even when he was rejected. I can only imagine how Paul must have felt; abandoned by the people to whom he had devoted himself. However, the Lord encouraged Paul in a vision by reminding him that God was with him and he would experience no harm. It was all Paul needed to refresh his mission in Corinth (vv 9, 10). The people there needed to hear the good news and because of Paul's willingness to listen to the Lord, many accepted Christ.

This message of hope was so important to Jesus that it became the calling on Paul's life. Let us not be afraid to reach out to our city or doubt the outcome of our efforts. Let us believe the words of Jesus—that He is with us and that He is in total control. Let us be thankful for the city, town, and country we live in and not be afraid to share God's Word that has the power to change the hearts of all people.

REFLECT: How do you typically respond to the fast-paced life in the city in which you live? Do you act like the crowd does or do you take the time to stop and allow God to remind you that He is with you, and your city, even in the hard times? Do you become discouraged when you are rejected for sharing God's message or are you steadfast in your resolve to share Jesus with others?

RESPOND: Ask God to direct you to issues in your city that may offer opportunities to evangelize. Spend time praying and fasting about this. Find time to share the message of Christ with those that God has placed around you in your neighbourhood and at work. *Lord, thank you for your Word and for your constant reminder that you are with us always. Make us “doers” of your Word and not spectators, so we may reach our cities the way the apostle Paul was able to. Give us a persistent, compassionate heart.*

Move of God - Revival swept Cuba in 1988. One A.O.G. church had 100,000 visitors in 6 months! In central Cuba a miraculous healing in one church led to nine days of meetings in which 1,200 people were saved. The pastors were imprisoned, but the revival continued. In another church over 15,000 accepted Christ in three months. In 1990 an A.O.G. pastor whose congregation never exceeded 100 meeting once a week suddenly found himself conducting 12 services a day for 7,000 people. Missionaries were expelled from Burma in the 1960s but the church continues to grow. A baptismal service at the Kachin Baptist Centennial Convention in 1977 saw 6,000 people baptised in one day.

FRIDAY 3RD MAY – THE GREAT COMMISSION!

READ Acts 19:1-41

As we read this passage, we are fascinated by the multi-faceted methodologies used by Paul to evangelize. First, he came across believers who were aware of the baptism of John but were ignorant of Christ's redemptive work. Rather than belittle them, Paul was able to connect their limited knowledge of salvation to the full scope of redemption through Christ's resurrection. This resulted in them being baptized in the name of Jesus and in the Holy Spirit! This is a model of how believers can help bring people with limited knowledge of the Christian faith to a more complete faith in Christ.

Later, Paul found common ground with people in another city, so he went into a synagogue to reason with the Jews. When he wore out his welcome, he took the Lord's followers and lectured in a hall for several hours a day (in the style of the Greek philosophers). Paul was very successful this time because, within two years, everyone in that region of Asia heard the Word of the Lord.

God also extended Paul's ministry by performing miracles with handkerchiefs and aprons taken from Paul's body, so that the gospel spread even when he wasn't physically present! The lesson is that when we are faithful and do our part to spread the gospel, God will bless and multiply our efforts for His glory.

REFLECT: Do you take advantage of the opportunity to share a more complete gospel with your neighbours who have limited knowledge of the Christian faith? When you face opposition or have little success in sharing your faith, do you easily give up or do you ask God for a more creative way to bring forth the good news? Do you rely upon your own wisdom, or do you depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit to win the lost?

RESPOND: Look for an opportunity today to share your faith with a neighbour, building upon anything you have in common in regards to faith in God, so that you can bring them into a more complete understanding of salvation in Christ Jesus. *Lord, thank you for giving us creativity and wisdom that enable us to share our faith. Give us the insight of the Holy Spirit so that we can skilfully communicate the Word of God to those you divinely assign to us.*

Move of God - Christians in Iran have recently grown in number from 2,700 to over 12,000 according to Abe Ghaffari of Iranian Christians International. An additional 12,000 Iranian Christians live in Western nations. Disillusionment with harsh Islamic law has opened Iran to the Gospel. Harvest then began among the Kurds who have been hounded into refugee camps where Christians have helped and comforted them. The first Kurdish church in history has resulted. Many Kurds are open to the Gospel.

MONDAY 6TH MAY – SPENDING YOUR LIFE...

READ Acts 20:1-38

How we spend our lives reveals how we value the impact of the gospel of Christ on our lives. Those who value Christ will spend his or her life in a particular way. Paul reveals this in his farewell words to the Ephesian elders saying, “...I don’t care what happens to me, as long as I finish the work the Lord Jesus gave me to do. And this work is to tell the good news about God’s gift of undeserved grace”. The Holy Spirit directs him to go to Jerusalem, with only one thing being clear to him. He will suffer and be jailed. With persecution imminent, Paul asserts that the true value of his life is tied to how he spends his life in furthering the kingdom of God.

Paul challenges us to examine how we value our own lives by how we choose to spend our time, especially during periods of great trial and opposition. Paul encourages us to use our time pursuing the assignment of God upon our lives, telling others about the love of God, and remaining faithful to God’s Word.

REFLECT: How have you spent your life in the past month? Has it been spent pursuing God’s assignment and calling? Who have you told about the love of God recently? What challenges to your faithfulness to God and the claims that God makes upon your life do you experience?

RESPOND: Ask God for power to overcome the challenges to being faithful to God’s claim upon you as you seek to pursue His assignment to tell others about His love. Be intentional about pursuing opportunities to tell others about Christ. *Lord, thank you for those who spent their lives telling me about your love. By your Spirit, empower me to spend my life faithfully telling others the good news about your wonderful grace.*

Move of God - The church in the Sudan is suffering under Islamic edicts. Missionaries are expelled, pastors imprisoned, and Christians persecuted. Despite the persecution there has been phenomenal church growth reported, especially in the south and the Nuba mountains region. A church leader wrote from Asaba, Nigeria, in 1992, telling how their church had increased from 700 to 3,200 within 6 months. A team of just over 100 went on outreach, first in Sokoto State where they started 5 churches involving 1,225 converts within 3 months. Then they went to Bomu State where 3 branches were planted with over 1,000 converts in all. Many Moslems were converted in spite of severe persecution.

TUESDAY 7TH MAY – FAITH WALKERS...

READ Acts 21:1-40

Paul experienced love demonstrated by affection, care, and never-ending support from the Body of Christ as he made his way to Jerusalem. We see genuine hospitality expressed toward Paul by the believers. Paul records it this way: *“But when the week was over, we started on our way again. All the men, together with their wives and children, walked with us from the town to the seashore. We knelt on the beach and prayed. Then after saying good-bye to each other, we got into the ship, and they went back home”* (v 5, 6).

The Christian life was never meant to be a solitary or lonely life. We each have a mission to fulfil; but, like Paul, we are surrounded by others who love us and speak into our lives. Paul was never alone on his entire trip. Hospitality extended beyond food and a bed at the house of Phillip where Paul received a prophecy of coming events. None of the believers wanted Paul to experience these prophesied hardships (even death). However, when Paul declared that God’s will was being done, they submitted to him and to God’s purpose. In spite of their fears for Paul’s safety, the believers accompanied him to Jerusalem. Even in the midst of conflictive situations, the “faith walkers” were able to come together for a greater purpose. In this case, Paul was given the opportunity to testify to a wider audience than any of them would have ever imagined.

REFLECT: Are you connected to the Body of Christ where you give and receive affectionate support? Do you allow others in the Body of Christ to speak into your life? Do you find it hard to be mutually submissive?

RESPOND: Take time to list the names of fellow “faith walkers” around you. After you have listed them, offer a prayer of thanksgiving for each of them. Plan to call each one of them and thank them personally. Better yet, call one right now. *Father, thank you for my brothers and sisters in Christ who are part of my “fellowship of faith walkers.” Thank you for their willingness to speak into my life and spur me on to good works and walk with me through difficult circumstances.*

Move of God - The church in previously resistant **Nepal** in the Himalayas is growing steadily. David Wang tells of a former Lama priest nicknamed Black Bravery, who has been an illiterate pastor for 15 years. By the nineties he led 43 fellowships with total of 32,000 people. Another pastor in a remote area has 40,000 Christians in his region. Most conversions in Nepal involve casting out demons to set people free. Eric Alexander of the Bible Society in **India** wrote in 1993, 'I was in Amedabad in the month of February and was delighted to see a great revival in the Church there. I was surprised to hear that 30,000 people have accepted the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour in the Diocese of Gujarat (Church of North India). Thousands of new converts, thousands and thousands!'

WEDNESDAY 8TH MAY – ARE WE ZEALOUS?

READ Acts 22: 1-30

By definition, the word “zealous” means to be ardently active, eager, devoted, or diligent. Saul was sold out to the cause of persecuting the believers, but God intervened. “...*a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed...*” (v 6b). We can be going about our life and in a moment a “suddenly” can happen. Your destiny may be revealed to you. Or you may be the Ananias who God is asking to get out of your comfort zone to take on an assignment.

I find it very interesting that Saul was not put into darkness but was blinded by the glory of the light. When Saul did what the Lord told him to do, he began the journey of his destiny with the zeal for the right thing God had for him. We must understand, however, that even on that journey, life happens, and things are not always easy, just as they were not for Paul. Yet, at all times the Lord was with Paul, and in a similar fashion, He will be with us.

REFLECT: Are you open to God? How would you respond if God suddenly interrupts your life? Take a moment and consider what things you are zealous about? Are they things of which God would approve?

RESPOND: Ask God to give you His eyes so you may see people as He does. Ask for God’s help in being obedient, even in the little things you are called to do. *Father, today I choose to be zealous about the things of your heart. Help me to be obedient to what you are asking me to do, and to speak to those who you put in my path today, because who knows what their destiny is for your kingdom.*

Move of God - In the 1990s **turningpoint** first visited Southeast India to support a small work in the city of Visakhapatnam. We were touched by what we saw God doing. On our second visit we could see the potential in Ps Divakar. So, linking with another church, we soon saw their church base built for Harvest Fellowship India. Over the following years we helped commission the starting of a Bible College; a few years later a children’s home was started. Currently over 600 churches have been started as a result of the training the students have received in the Bible College, and over 130 churches under the government of Harvest Fellowship India.

THURSDAY 9TH MAY – “DON’T WORRY!”

READ *Acts 23:1-35*

This passage comes on the heels of Paul choosing to follow God’s leading toward Rome, despite the predictions of trials and suffering that he would have to endure to get there. Paul has done nothing morally wrong – he has only preached Christ and Christ’s work in his own life, and yet he stands on trial before his own people who want to have him killed.

At the hands of the Jews in this passage, Paul is ridiculed, shown contempt, and plotted against – all while doing nothing more than trying to be faithful to the God he serves. In the midst of the pandemonium that ensues among the Jewish Sanhedrin that is now divided, even the Roman commander is afraid that Paul will be torn to pieces (v 10).

Can you imagine how violent this dispute was for the commander – a trained Roman officer – that he would fear for Paul’s life? And it’s during this period of uncertainty and struggle, that the Lord reassures Paul by telling him, *“Don’t worry! Just as you have told others about me in Jerusalem, you must also tell about me in Rome”* (v 11). These are the words that God gives to Paul in the midst of great difficulty, stress, and the unknown – “Don’t worry!”

REFLECT: What’s one area in your life where you currently feel stressed, helpless, and fearful? Imagine the Lord saying to you, “Don’t worry!” How can these words change your outlook or approach? What else might God be trying to say to you through those words?

RESPOND: When you are feeling anxious or afraid about anything today, take the time to say the words, “Don’t worry” as you consider how God might be working in you and through you in that particular situation. *Lord, you control my life. Help me to trust and obey you in every circumstance. Remind me not to worry, and to know that you reign over all things.*

Move of God - The CBNTV (Christian Broadcasting Network) 700 Club reported 6 million conversions in their work worldwide in 1990. Reports indicate that more Muslims have come to Christ in the past decade than in the previous thousand years. 'New believers are immediately tested to a degree incomprehensible to us. Many are imprisoned and some have been martyred by governments or relatives. Yet the persecution seems only to strengthen their determination and boldness. In one country, where all Christian meetings are illegal, believers rented a soccer stadium and 5,000 people gathered. Police came to disperse the meeting and left in confusion when the Christians refused to leave.

FRIDAY 10TH MAY – TOUCHED.

READ Acts 24:1-27

Have you ever seen people who have an encounter with God, but remain unchanged in their sin and unyielded to God? The apostle Paul had been falsely accused of being a troublemaker and a ringleader of a wild sect of the Nazarenes, desecrating the temple, and stirring up riots among the Jews. When Paul was brought before Felix the governor, Paul presented his case with clarity and logic, declaring his innocence while giving public testimony to his faith. When Felix heard Paul's testimony, although he had an accurate knowledge of the believers, he put off making a decision regarding Paul's innocence. Instead, he sent for the apostle repeatedly, hoping Paul would offer him a bribe. Felix listened as Paul reasoned about faith in Christ, and the governor even trembled with fear when Paul talked about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come.

In the face of opposition and persecution, Paul remained strong in faith, unwavering in his stand for Christ. Paul allowed God's love to flow through him as a messenger to Felix. No doubt the governor felt the impact of Paul's words but he did not yield to the wooing of the Holy Spirit. What mercy was shown to Felix to hear again and again from the man of God, but sadly that mercy he rejected. Although he called for Paul often, Felix never trembled again. His heart had become hardened.

REFLECT: How do you respond when the Holy Spirit quickens His Word to your heart, bringing conviction to some area of your life? Do you put off responding to God for another occasion? Remind yourself that it is possible to be touched by the Spirit of God and remain unchanged.

RESPOND: Ask God to give you a heart that is quick to obey the promptings of his Spirit. *Lord, thank you that you love me enough to deal with my heart and the issues that need to be changed. May I ever be sensitive and responsive to you at all times.*

Move of God - From May 1993 the **Christian Outreach Centres** in Australia have experienced a strong move of the Spirit, with much repenting, and many resting in the Spirit or drunk in the Spirit for hours, or days. Many have received visions and prophetic insights, including young people and children in the schools. Beginning at the headquarters in Brisbane it spread to their churches. It brought a new zeal for evangelism and outreach. Similarly Christian Outreach Centres overseas, especially in the Pacific, are experiencing powerful moves of the Spirit and rapid growth.

MONDAY 13TH MAY – A LIFE WORTH DYING FOR.

READ Acts 25:1-27

Acts 25 opens with a new sheriff in town, and with him, new hope that an innocent man might go free. The corrupt Roman governor Felix had detained Paul for two years, expecting Paul to offer him a bribe to obtain his release. Then, when that did not happen, Felix decided to hold Paul even longer as a favour to Paul's accusers.

When the new governor Festus arrives, he promptly agrees to hear Paul's case. Imagine the nervous energy that gripped Paul, the globetrotting evangelist, after two years of house arrest. Yet, any hopes of freedom are promptly dashed when Festus recommends two more kangaroo courts, as additional favours to Paul's accusers.

Paul then appeals to Roman justice and demands his trial should move to Rome. That's when he openly declares: *"If I had done something deserving death, I would not ask to escape the death penalty"* (v 11a). Most of us have never been wrongly imprisoned on trumped up capital charges. But consider afresh Jesus' invitation to take up our cross daily and follow Him. Or Paul's own letter to the Romans when he admonished them to offer their bodies to God as living sacrifices (Romans 12.1). Roman citizens understood the very idea of being a living sacrifice to be a contradiction. To place a live bull on an altar, for example, one risks being impaled or worse. Sacrifices generally refuse to go quietly! Yet, that's the type of sacrifice Paul wants us to offer God, the very same one he heeds in Acts 25 when he confidently declares a willingness to die for the Gospel he both preached and lived.

REFLECT: What things in your life "deserve death" and need to be crucified on your cross today? How can you embrace, as your own, Paul's willingness to die to such things? What sacrificial step can you take today in your journey to everlasting freedom?

RESPOND: Perhaps as you reflect, you're reminded of a bad attitude or haughty lips or a lustful eye. Whatever it is, to sacrifice that thing requires action. Pray and ask God to help you surrender any negative behaviours in your life. *Thank you, Father, for loving me enough to trust me to voluntarily surrender, by your grace, those things that stand between us.*

Move of God - Reinhard Bonnke's organisation continues to have massive healing evangelistic crusades in Africa, often with hundreds of thousands attending in the open air. In February 1995, in spiritually resistant Ethiopia, up to 115,000 attended his meetings daily. In five days more than 100,000 made commitments to Christ and as many were filled with the Spirit and thousands received healing. Around 10 million a year are becoming Christians in Africa.

TUESDAY 14TH MAY – WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED?

READ Acts 26:1-32

The apostle Paul, in Acts 25—26, is confronted with false accusations from misguided, disobedient, religious leaders, unjust, politically motivated government officials, and high-ranking rulers. Paul doesn't use his platform to berate the Pharisees and Sadducees. He doesn't use the limelight before Festus to speak about political injustice. He doesn't use his 15 seconds of fame with King Agrippa II and Queen Bernice to point out their incestuous relationship. Instead, Paul tells them all about the risen Christ!

Every social circle provides ample temptation to vehemently argue current religious, moral, political, and economic issues. And, in many cases, a good debate can be healthy and constructive. However, these temptations are often the bait of the enemy to derail building God's Church and sharing His message of new life in Christ. Consider the community you influence, and the mandate given to the believers in the book of Acts. The current crises of our day were just as familiar to the first-century church. Yet, the solution remains the same—obey the command of Jesus: *"Tell others what you have learned about me!"*

REFLECT: What platform has God given you from which to share his Word? Are you inclined to share with a stranger or new acquaintance the story of Jesus and His influence in your life; or do you feel much more comfortable talking about current affairs? Do you feel a tug on your heart to be more concerted in your efforts to share the message of new life in Christ? What do you think provokes these feelings?

RESPOND: Ask God to give you the courage and leading to share with others what God has done in your life. *Lord, thank you for what you have done in my life. Help me to use the "superb" platform that you have given me to share the good news with others.*

Move of God - An estimated 12 million people a year are becoming Christian in **China** now, with unprecedented moves of God's Spirit, healings, miracles, and visions of Christ. In the eighties a teenage evangelist reported on 30-40 people being converted when they preached in a village. Now they report on 300-600 being converted in a village. Evangelical Christians numbered 1 million there in 1950. Now estimates exceed 100 million, with over 12 million becoming Christians each year now.

WEDNESDAY 15TH MAY – SHIPWRECK LEADERSHIP.

READ Acts 27:1-44

Paul was a prisoner aboard a ship bound for Rome. The ship had already encountered adverse winds, and November storms were looming. Speaking from experience—he had already been through three other shipwrecks—Paul warned the crew of impending danger. But as men in charge often do, they ignored him.

Their attitude was a costly mistake. The crew did all they could to keep the ship afloat; they even threw their cargo overboard to lighten the load. Despite their best efforts, it seemed all would be lost – including their lives.

When no one else knew what to do, Paul the prisoner became Paul the captain. He stepped forward, first with a word from God: “...*you will be safe. Only the ship will be lost*” (v 22). God had promised deliverance, but Paul also provided practical leadership. In all the confusion, he could have escaped, avoided the Roman court, and his story would have ended very differently. But instead, he readied his shipmates for the demands that would come at daybreak. He led them to end their fast and eat. Before long, everybody felt better and more resolved to face the storm.

Just as God had said, the ship was a total wreck, but all on board made it safely to shore. The soldiers successfully delivered their prisoners. Later, Paul was tried and executed, never to taste sweet freedom again. The storm and shipwreck showcased Paul’s character. Even the worst storm could not hide God’s purpose revealed through Paul’s practical leadership. This prisoner, one without position or status, was the most valuable leader on the ship. He knew how to hear from God and to act on his faith.

REFLECT: How do you react when those with authority overrule you? Are you a leader that steps up when the heat is on? Would others say your leadership mostly benefits you or those around you?

RESPOND: Use the principles from Paul’s “shipwreck leadership” account to grow in your leadership over the next year. Plan the steps you will take this week to begin that process. *Father, grant me the resolve to speak truth even when those in charge aren’t listening, and the courage to lead, even in adversity, for the welfare of others. Remind me that in so doing, I am being faithful to my calling as a follower of Jesus.*

Move of God - The *Jesus* Film, based on Luke's gospel, has been seen by an estimated 503 million people in 197 countries, and 33 million or more have indicated decisions for Christ as a result. It has more than 6,300 prints in circulation and around 356,000 video copies. The world's most widely translated film, *Jesus*, has been dubbed into more than 240 languages, with 100 more in progress.

THURSDAY 16TH MAY – GOSPEL IS PROCLAIMED!

READ Acts 28:1-31

Americans love a good story of perseverance under trial and victory against the odds. The story of the hard-working immigrant who comes to America penniless yet overcomes obstacles to rise to prominence and prosperity moves our hearts no matter how many times we hear it.

The extraordinary story of God's servants overcoming all odds to proclaim the gospel of Christ begins in Jerusalem and ends in Rome. The Church expands greatly, propelled by the power of the Holy Spirit. As it grew, the new converts are filled with the Holy Spirit which inspires their preaching, prophecies, dreams, miracles, healings, and ability to deliver others from demonic forces. They undergo myriad trials, but, through it all, their courage remains strong. The last chapter of the incredible narrative of the birth of the Church displays once again the power of the Holy Spirit when Paul heals the father of Publius the governor, and all the sick on the island of Malta.

Paul and his entourage make it to Rome where he preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Jewish leaders. The response he receives is limited. Yet, once again, the Gentiles respond more positively. Paul is not deterred by this because the last verse of this extraordinary book of Acts highlights Paul's relentless proclamation of the gospel, with great boldness, to all who would listen.

REFLECT: If you have never placed your hands on someone while you prayed to God for their healing, what holds you back? What gave Paul such boldness to persevere in preaching the gospel to all who would listen even after he encountered such resistance?

RESPOND: Ask God for faith to believe him for the miraculous and for courage to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. *Lord, thank you for what you've done and continue to do through your servants, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to the praise of Jesus Christ. I surrender myself to your service and the expansion of the kingdom of God.*

Move of God - Evangelist Rodney Howard-Browne has led meetings in the eighties and nineties with hundreds of thousands touched afresh by the Spirit of God and many thousands converted. That has sparked powerful moves of the Spirit in thousands of churches, including the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship since 20 January 1994. An estimated 100,000 visited that church in 1994 and the revival continues. Over 7,000 churches in Great Britain have been reported to have experienced this current blessing, including a Brethren church on which the Spirit fell one Sunday overwhelming the people, who then found themselves praying in tongues.

FRIDAY 17TH MAY – THE ACTS 1:8 ASSIGNMENT

READ Acts 1:8; 2:43-47; 28:30, 31

For the past 29 days we have journeyed together reading, praying, and living the book of Acts – the fascinating eyewitness biblical account of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church! Our hope has been to ignite our nation and world by living out God’s Word through our congregations and organizations, in our small groups, and as individuals. Our prayer has been to see our cities and communities transformed for God’s glory!

Throughout our journey, we have been learning to live the story that will continue to be told until Christ returns. The disciples first preached the story with power in Jerusalem and the result was amazing!

Acts concludes by stating, *“For two years Paul stayed in a rented house and welcomed everyone who came to see him. He bravely preached about God’s kingdom and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ, and no one tried to stop him”*.

God’s Word is not meant just to inform us but transform us. We are called to put God’s Word into practice – to become “doers of the Word” – to live God’s Word. Acts 1:8 declares, *“But the Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world.”*

REFLECT: Is God calling you to be one who will tell others about Him? Look around your state, city and community. Identify where your “Jerusalem,” your “Judea” and your “Samaria” would be.

RESPOND: Ask God how you can put into practice the lessons God is teaching you through your journey through the book of Acts. Pray that God will empower you as you live out God’s Word and live as Christ’s witness. *Father, use me as you see fit. Grant me opportunities to share the gospel with those who are marginalized and those who believe they have it “all together.” Let me be willing to share practical examples of your compassion and your grace in service to those who need it.* We pray that the Lord will thrust us out into His harvest.

Move of God - In 2017 **turningpoint** first visited Southeast Africa to visit friends in Uganda. Being horrified by the false teachings and the rise of cults across Africa, **turningpoint** started a small training centre. The following year we graduated 38 students. Now in 2024 we have seen some 3500 students trained, with some students going on to plant up to 10 churches. The training has continued to now grow, offering - CRC739INT Card Award in Safeguarding Individuals, CRC740INT Ticket Award in Children and Young People’s Ministry, CRC741INT Permit Award in Healing and Freedom, CRC742INT Certificate Award in Christian Ministry and Theology, CRC743INT Diploma Award in Christian Ministry and Theology.

turningpoint Cranbourne

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Pastor Norma Cayzer
Sunday Services: 9am, 11am, 6pm

turningpoint Frankston

The Chapel, 51/ 325 Nepean Hwy,
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Pastor David Owens
Sunday Service: 10.30am

turningpoint Seaford

224 Seaford Road,
Seaford
(03) 9785 7229
Pastor Marg Aeschlimann
Sunday Service: 2pm

turningpoint Rosebud

Rosebud Guide Hall
Cnr Jetty Road & Morgan Street,
Rosebud
(03) 5910 4802
Shane Foreman
Sunday Service: 2pm

turningpoint Filipino Outreach

Facebook turningpoint
Filipino Outreach ** (see link below)
turningpoint Filipino
Outreach Online *** (see link below)
0437 860 597
Cynthia Quiambao
Sunday Service: 2pm

turningpoint Lyndhurst

Marriott Waters Community Centre
25 Boland Drive,
Lyndhurst 3975
(03) 9773 5551
Pastor Sandra Tennison
Sunday Service: 10am

turningpoint Koo Wee Rup

335 Rossiter Road,
Koo Wee Rup
(03) 5997 2217
Pastor Sean LaBrooy
Sunday Services: 10am, 6pm(Fortnightly)

turningpoint Lilydale

197 Main Street,
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(03) 9735 4419
Pastor Phil Cayzer
Sunday Service: 10am

turningpoint Morwell

81 Princes Drive
Morwell
(03) 5996 3048
Pastor Steve Franklin
Sunday Service: 10am

turningpoint Officer

Function Room
Comely Banks Recreation Reserve
125 Bridge Rd,
Officer VIC 3809
(03) 5997 2217
Pastor Tony O'Connell
Sunday Service: 10.30am

** <https://www.facebook.com/turningpointFilipinoOutreach/>

***<https://www.turningpointchurch.org.au/filipinoonline>

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