



# Transforming Sydney Newsletter December 2014

TRANSFORMING  
SYDNEY

Welcome to the eleventh edition of the newsletter for Transforming Sydney. The focus for prayer this month is on the sphere or domain of Sport and Recreation.

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Note: articles in this Newsletter reflect the opinion and witness of the respective authors, which may or may not align with your own; consider this with Ephesians 4:1-7 in mind.

Now we are in the so-called 'silly season', when people suddenly stop being obsessed with ways to distract themselves from the multitude of pressures of living the busy modern life, to doing all those things that have been pushed away or suppressed for the rest of the year: giving, sharing, spending unusual amounts of time and money on and with colleagues, friends and family (and self of course). Not such a 'silly season' after all.

According to the Oxford Dictionary there are 2 main definitions of "recreation" in English:

[1] Activity done for enjoyment when one is not working. Origin is late Middle English (also in the sense 'mental or spiritual consolation'): via Old French from Latin *recreatio*(-n-), from *recreare* 'create again, renew'.

[2] The action or process of creating something again. Origin is early 16th century: from re- 'again' + creation. (From <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/recreation>)

So go ahead - invest in the people around you and those in need: we're all family forever after all.

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From January, this newsletter will also incorporate the National Prayer Strategy for the Ten Domains  
[www.tendomains.org](http://www.tendomains.org) & <https://www.facebook.com/groups/10domains/>

We pray you have a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

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## Sport and my walk with God

By Matthew Williamson

I have been playing football since I was very young like most kids do. By the time I was around 10 years old I became a goalkeeper and I suddenly fell in love with the sport; I had a desire to play professionally one day.

Around this time Helen Ivceovich was prophesising at an event in Manly, my parents decided to take me along and I ended up getting a prophecy. I was told that I would speak to many people about God in locker rooms all around the world and as I heard these words I realised that God would use me through my talent in football to reach people for his kingdom. So I decided to pursue football and I had the ego to do it, as mum said 'I acted like I was God's gift to football.' I was selected for a representative team in under 11's and from there I played for Manly United for the next couple of years.

Though by the age of 14 I occurred a setback in my career and although I made into a rep team out west at the same level I noticed that my ego and my confidence was depleted. I started to get anxious before games and all I could think about was making mistakes. I then broke my hand early in the season for the second time in two years and the recovery for this time was a lot longer. I ended up having a good season though after my injury fully healed, but I

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## Sport and my walk with God (...continued)

was then faced with another setback: being dropped by this team.

I was then club-less and could not find a club, it was here that I considered quitting football and I almost signed with a very low division team just to play, but me and my mum kept praying and asking for answers and I don't think without the courage my mum gave me to continue on that I would be still be playing football at a high level. God then delivered and I was called up by a team I had trailed with two weeks prior (to sign with). Although the team was in the division below where I had played the previous year I was still very grateful to have a club. I started off really well in this new club but my anxiousness from the season before was still very much present and the thing with

*...the thing with anxiety is even though you think it's not having such a large impact, it does. Coaches notice you and too much anxiety stops you from performing to the best of your abilities due to constant stress of failing. I was causing myself to be overtaken by fear.*

anxiety is even though you think it's not having such a large impact, it does. Coaches notice you and too much anxiety stops you from performing to the best of your abilities due to constant stress of failing. I was causing myself to be overtaken by fear.

As the season went on we won the championship and were promoted to a higher division. Due to the coach telling me I was signed I decided to stay with the club, but when trials were over I was dropped

and again faced another setback. I kept asking God, what I had done or what I wasn't doing that was causing me to constantly fail. I then remember mum telling me how God doesn't give us more than we can handle and that it is just the devil challenging my faith. I remember mum showing me James 1:12 *"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him."* This scripture basically laid out what was going to happen if I kept at my football.

After weeks of searching I found a club again in the same league. I had a great season at this club, but again I continued to be anxious and almost did not believe in what I was doing, so even though we had won the grand final I was dropped from this team after the season was over. By this time I realised what was wrong and instead of feeling sorry for myself and wondering what went wrong, I got myself up and I got into another team straight away.

I had realised what my problem was: it wasn't lack of talent, it was my lack of love for the sport and my lack to do well and to want to become a professional. After experiencing so many setbacks I had unconsciously told myself that I didn't really want to play professional football and in doing this I lost my love for the sport.

So in the next season I totally focused on enjoying what I did and getting that love back for the sport, and by the end of the season I wasn't dropped and I decided to aim for a higher division. I got help for my anxiety problem, and I made it into an U20 premier league 1 team which is an age group above and I have been asked to trial for a national youth league team after training with an A league team.

I have my love back for football again and I am loving life and although I have not started evangelising through my football yet, I believe now that all my areas are in place and as I start to develop my relationship with God, he will reveal to me how to do this.



Matt Williamson in goal



The **Centre for Public Christianity (CPX)** is a not-for-profit media company that offers a Christian perspective on contemporary life. We seek to promote the public understanding of the Christian faith by engaging mainstream media and the general public with high quality and well-researched print, video and audio material about the relevance of Christianity in the 21st century.

Check latest events here <http://publicchristianity.org/about>

## Christians in Sport - 10 tips to help you pray more

(Originally posted 11/11/2014 on Christians in Sport - [www.christiansinsport.org.uk](http://www.christiansinsport.org.uk))

Here are 10 tried and tested ways to remember to pray more:



1. **Prayer card.** Write three names of people you are praying for on the back of a prayer card (you can get one from any Christians in Sport staff member or contact the office for one and we'll pop it in the post) and put it in your wallet/purse or on your mirror so that you see it all the time. When you see it, remember to pray for your friends.

2. **Prayer journal.** It's great to keep a prayer journal for the group. Each time you meet and pray write down who you pray for and what your prayers are. It can be an amazing encouragement to look back and see how God has been at work and also a challenge to keep investing in and praying for people, and not to give up on them.

3. **Pick up a stone.** On one side put the names of your friends in sport from your prayer card. Put the stone on your pillow and when you move it each night and put it back each morning, pray for the people on the stone! Remember that God is mighty to save!

4. **Photos.** Put photos of your friends on your wall, or as wallpaper on your computer or phone. When you see the photos pray for them.

5. **Plan.** One reason we don't pray is because we don't plan to pray! Think about each day and plan when you'll put time aside to pray (it might be different each day but work out a weekly plan).

6. **Group prayer.** If you meet as a group it is good to have a club/team focus each session, in which you all spend time praying for one person's club in the group. That person can explain a bit about the club they play in, what the atmosphere is like, what the players and manager/coach is like, what temptations there are etc, and any specific requests that they have.



7. **Texts/calls.** Whenever someone rings you up or texts you, why not pray for them? Once you've finished the call or replied to the text thank God that he made them and loves them!

8. **Fast.** Why don't you decide to fast for a period each week (maybe 1 or 2 meals or the TV or something else) and use the time to pray for your friends.

9. **String.** Have a piece of string and tie it somewhere so you'll see it each day (sports bag, somewhere in your room, steering wheel of your car!) Every time you see the piece of string pray for your friends on your prayer card.

10. **Daily routine.** Do you pass a tall building or landmark? If so whenever you see it look up and remember that God reigns. Pray that He would reign in your life and in the lives of your friends in sport.



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Genr8 partners with schools in the recruitment, training, supervision and ongoing professional development of School Chaplains.



This ensures the placement of high quality Chaplains who are well equipped to support young people and strengthen local communities.

Transforming Sydney is partnering with Genr8 to bring awareness of the role of Chaplains and the need for SRE teachers.

For more information and how to help please go to

<http://www.genr8.org.au/>

## Come Again

(Written by D. John Yates, 30 November 2014)

**Awakening** Isa 64.1-9; Ps 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Cor 1:1-9; Mark 13:24-37

### Introduction

I cannot recall a sermon topic which has been more of a challenge to my own spirituality than this one. With teaching on the Second Coming of Jesus occupying about 10% of the New Testament this subject is obviously very important to God. Unfortunately the Church tends to swing between immature extremes as far as the Return of Christ is concerned.

As an impressionistic new believer attending a Pentecostal Church in the 70's we were taught that the Cold War would lead to Armageddon and the End of the world. Reading *The Late Great Planet Earth*, a book that sold 28 million copies, I heard that Jesus would come back before 1988 and I felt very scared. What about this recent picture of a happy looking African riding a bike with a huge poster "Jesus Is Coming Back" on its handle bars. He is much closer to the spirit of the New Testament than most of us sophisticated Westerners. Jesus repeatedly says in the book of Revelation, "I am coming soon" (3:11; 22:7, 12, 20). Hebrews takes it as a matter of fact that believers are "eagerly" awaiting the coming of Christ (Heb 9:28; cf. Tit 2:13).

The gap between these biblical affirmations and our contemporary experience is huge, Australian Christians regularly recite the Creed "He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead", but what practical difference does this testimony make to our lives. When was the last time someone asked you why your life is "different" from the average and you gave an answer in terms of your hope in the Second Coming (1 Pet 3:15)? John's pastoral exhortation should hold our attention; "And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not *shrink from him in shame at his coming.*" (1 John 2:28). Ambitions to see the kids/grandkids grow up are real, plans to enjoy retirement and travel are real, study and work goals are real etc. but the Return of Jesus to End the world just doesn't seem real. The Lord warned us that coldness towards his Return would happen.

### Time

Let me start with a very perplexing scripture; "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (Mark 13:32). Jesus normally talks confidently of his knowledge of the Father (John 5:20 cf. 15:1; Matt 11:27), but here he explains the Father has intentionally not revealed to him the time of his Return. Jesus is deeply longing to come back cleanse to end all suffering and sin and to perfect his Bride the Church (Eph 5:25-27; 2 Pet 3:11-13; Rev 19:6-10; 21:1-4); yet he remains in submission to his Father about the secret timing of his Return. Whilst it is foolish to attempt to calculate the time of the Second Coming, to get on with life as though it can never happen in our lifetime is just as unwise; and this is the problem of our Church today

***Ambitions to see the kids/grandkids grow up are real, plans to enjoy retirement and travel are real, study and work goals are real etc. but the Return of Jesus to End the world just doesn't seem real. The Lord warned us that coldness towards his Return would happen.***

### Awake

Christ warns us of the urgent need for watchfulness; "33 Beware, *keep alert*; for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, *keep awake* - for you do not know when the master of the house will come...36 or else he may *find you asleep* when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: *Stay awake.*" (Mark 13:33-37). The sort of alertness Jesus has in mind is clarified by the story of the disciples in Gethsemane.

"34 And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and *keep awake.*" 35...he threw himself on the ground and prayed...36..."Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." 37 He came and found them sleeping; and he said..."...Could you not *keep awake* one hour? 38 *Keep awake* and pray that you may not come into the time of trial..." (Mark 14:34-38).

Every Sunday we pray "Save us from the time of trial" but like the disciples asleep in Gethsemane if we are not on alert for the return of our Master we have already submitted to temptation. Spiritual slumber is a surprisingly everyday affair. Jesus said, "in Noah's day. 38 ...before the flood, the people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage... 39 People didn't realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man returns." (Matthew 24:37-39). The sudden judgement of God will come on people, not because they are murderers, robbers or rapists, but simply because they are too preoccupied with the cares of this life to care about Christ's Return as Judge (Mark 4:19). Let me put the importance of anticipating Jesus' Return in another way.

Knowing he faces martyrdom Paul writes; "there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on the day he returns, and not only to me but also to all who have *loved and longed for his appearing.*" (2 Timothy 4:7-8). Paul loves and longs for the Return of Jesus because it will mean the marvellous completion

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## Come Again (...continued)

of the purpose for which God created the world. As a young man the search for the meaning of life nearly drove me crazy, especially when I had been drinking. But then I met Jesus, and the reason why I was born, studied, then later married, worked, had children, ministered and so on was revealed. Jesus came, suffered, died, rose from the dead *and is coming back* so that we might share in the eternal love that he has enjoyed with the Father from eternity (John 17:23-26). If most of the Australian church functions as if there was no Second Coming it is because we do not know the deep heart of God. To go deeper with God we must understand God the Father as the ultimate answer to everything.

### Father

The speaker in Isaiah who so boldly cries out to God; "Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down," does so at a time when it seems like the anger of the Lord has settled on stricken Israel. Instead of throwing his hands up in despair this man of faith appeals to the most fundamental relationship we can ever have with God; "But now, O LORD, *you are our Father*; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." (Isa 64:1, 5, 8). As in Isaiah's day, the deepest revelations of God as Father come to us when our circumstances suggest he has abandoned us.

Whilst the disciples fell asleep in Gethsemane Jesus prayerfully remained on guard and met the Father in a marvellous way. Though his grief was so great that he felt he was dying then and there he addressed God in an exceptional way, "Abba! Father!" "Dear, dear, Father!" (Mark 14:34, 36). Jesus knew that the Father had sovereignly set the painful circumstances and time of his death just as he has marked the exact time of his Return (Mark 13:32; John 3:16; Gal 4:4; Acts 2:23). The sovereign Father, who alone knows why we have been waiting 2000 years for Jesus to come back, is known in the intimacy of "Abba" in the midst of terrible (apocalyptic) trials when the whole world seems to be in convulsion and all outward evidence, the evidence of terror, violence, disease and neglect, suggest that God is full of anger (Isa 64:5, 9; Ps 80:4). The deep human conviction that God is an angry Father explains Jesus' prediction "will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? 8 I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man returns, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:7-8)!

Peter long ago prophesied of the times in which we live; "scoffers will come in the last days...saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."" (2 Peter 3:3-4). People just get on with life as though this world will go on and on and on because there is no one coming who will bring justice to the earth (Acts 17:31).

### Spirit

Praying last Wednesday here in church I came across this scripture which speaks directly to our struggles to sense the importance of the Second Coming. "29 Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up ...so that what you say will do good to those who hear you. 30 And do not make God's Holy Spirit sad; for the Spirit is God's ... guarantee that the Day will come when God will set you free." (Eph 4:29-30). Negative thinking and speaking grieves the Holy Spirit so we cannot sense his joy and anticipation in revealing to us the reality of the Return of Christ. The Bible story culminates in these words addressed to Jesus; "The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come."" (Rev 22:17). No one who has negativity, resentment, bitterness or anger in their heart can ever hear the Spirit's happy voice calling out to Jesus to *come back*. Our Church is full of people whose traumatic life experiences are blocking a spontaneous spiritual longing for Jesus to Return. Let me list some traumas.

Unless you have already received a miracle of inner healing; if you have suffered domestic abuse your heart will not thrill at the prospect of being eternally married to Jesus; if you have endured verbal abuse the thought of having Christ's thoughts filling your mind will not be inspirational; if you have had the trauma of sexual abuse the notion of unlimited intimacy with Jesus cannot excite you; for those who have suffered physical abuse the thought of losing all control over your own when the Lord returns life is not a happy one. A few of us are openly aggressive people, others are simply passively aggressive, some of us are angry at God for not rescuing us from a terrible situation, a few are enraged about what is happening to others and there is no one to defend them. Many regular churchgoers deep down feel that the Father of Jesus is disappointed with them and have no desire to meet him at the judgement. All these natural human responses to pain cut off the inspiring revelation of the soon Return of Christ.

***No one who has negativity, resentment, bitterness or anger in their heart can ever hear the Spirit's happy voice calling out to Jesus to come back. Our Church is full of people whose traumatic life experiences are blocking a spontaneous spiritual longing for Jesus to Return.***

Since I believe that God is always speaking to us through current events I need to say something about the Phillip Hughes tragedy. The mass national outpouring of grief is a sign that our deep national ethic of a "Fair Go!" has been radically challenged. Aussies believe if it's not fair it's not right and therefore it should never happen. It's just not fair that talented young people die. Christians must with boldness proclaim that much of life isn't fair, on the surface it does not look like God is fair, and the only guarantee that fairness will prevail is that Jesus is coming back to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

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## Come Again (...continued)

That Jesus will Return full of the righteous anger of his Father to cleanse the world of all that is abusive, destructive and unfair is a core part of the gospel (2 Thess 1:5-10; James 1:19-20). A gospel which encourages the followers of Jesus by these words to live with supreme confidence; "you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor 1:7-8).

### Conclusion

That Jesus is coming back soon is measureless good news and the only real hope for a world smitten by suffering, terror and death. When Paul wants to explain to the Church how it is "that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope" he expounds the Second Coming (1 Thess 4:13). Our ability to impart hope in the midst of suffering has fallen a long way since Paul's day. After the 9/11 disaster there was a spike in church attendance in America, but within six months there were less church-goers than before. Why? Because the Western Church has lost the power of the hope of the Return of Christ (1 John 3:2-3). We are like a Bride who does not expect her Groom to turn up at the altar, like an abused person not expecting justice from a Judge or like an innocence person anticipating they will be declared guilty by a tribunal. God's entire reputation as holy and just rides on the Return of Christ. At the end of Revelation, a book which with unique power tells the story of the vile abuses of human history and the trail of bloodied injustice flowing from persecution, there arises a great and unified reply from the saints of God to the words of Jesus. Our Lord says, "Surely I am coming soon." The Church replies; "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20).

If you know you love the Lord and also know that your desire to see him come back is weak, we need to ask him to send his Spirit so that we really and truly want him to come back soon. And for those who amongst us who have no interest at all in the proclamation that Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, we will pray for you, for you are in imminent danger of a lost eternity.

Grace, John.

*I need to say something about the Phillip Hughes tragedy. The mass national outpouring of grief is a sign that our deep national ethic of a "Fair Go!" has been radically challenged. Aussies believe if it's not fair it's not right and therefore it should never happen.*

## Jesus ... the Life Transformer

### Tadiwa

Tad is a beautiful 31 year old African woman. She grew up in Zimbabwe in a loving and caring Christian family but at a young age, she was sexually abused by a family friend and by a cousin. Tad managed to shut out the memories of abuse during her childhood, but as she approached her late teens she began to recall the events and feelings of hate and anger began to surface towards God and towards herself for what had happened.

After finishing school in Zimbabwe, Tad came to Australia to attend University and it was at this time that she made the decision to completely turn her back on God and walk away from everything she'd been brought up to believe. She started to make really bad decisions and began drinking and taking drugs, which led her to a place of complete loathing. She was forced to do things she would never have thought possible in an effort to support her drug habit and she became trapped in this cycle of hopelessness.

Meanwhile, her parents were earnestly praying for her. She would have arguments with her Mum over the phone as she tried to talk sense to her daughter and encourage her back to God, but Tadiwa would have none of it. Eventually though, Tad reached rock bottom and she knew she couldn't go on this way. Although she had people around her, they were living similar lives and her world felt empty and cold ... she was totally lost. Her Mum had told her about a Christian show on TV called "Your Best Life" with Ps Phil Pringle so that night, Tad decided to turn it on. She felt stirred by the message and she felt God's love as He began to gently draw her close again. She picked up her Bible and started to read the Scriptures and hope filled her heart. The following weekend Tad visited the church. It was a big step but as she entered the doors she knew she was 'home' and she didn't have to run anymore. The struggle was over as she said the prayer of salvation and found peace and healing back in the arms of Christ. She knew her life would never be the same again and she wept tears of joy as God replaced beauty for her ashes.

A few weeks later Tad enrolled in Bible college and recently completed her first ministry trip to the Philippines where she worked with young woman who had escaped the sex trade. She has a dream to move over there and work in the area of human trafficking. Tad said, 'I just want to pass on the same love and healing that I got from God's House and see others lives transformed like mine'.

Jeremiah 29:11: 'for I know the plans I have for you' says the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope'.

This Christmas, let's remember to be thankful for God's great love and redeeming grace. He sent His Son so that all might know the hope of glory i.e. Christ in us. What a wonderful reason to celebrate!

*Written by Julie Cummings*

*Please visit our Beyond Community Page: <http://www2.myc3church.net/node/105>*

## Prayer & Mission Summit Australia 2017

(by Bjorn Schmid, all scriptures quoted are in the New International Version unless otherwise noted)

### Summit Progress

I am pleased to report that on Thursday the 4th December, the Oversight Committee for the Summit met for the first time. The leaders reaffirmed the vision for the Summit, discussed how we can articulate the vision to the wider church community, and determined that the Summit will now be in 2017, not 2016. Please pray for us to have wisdom and engagement with the whole church. We will be meeting again in February to work through the details of the Summit and hopefully we can release some more details thereafter.

### Christmas vs Money

Seriously, what so you think the world would be like if we all loved and followed Jesus and obeyed His simple commands to us?

If we all lived as God meant us to live, would there be a need for locks on our doors? Would we need Police or military? If the power of the Holy Spirit was manifested in all of us, would we even need hospitals or doctors, or would there only be health advisors instead? Poverty would and depression be non-existent as all would be concerned that no-one in our global family is without or unloved. Children would be safe everywhere and live in total confidence that they live in a world community that treats them as unique and cherished individuals, but also teaches them of our responsibility to always acknowledge, not man, but God as our just and loving Father. Parents would also never fear for their Children and marriages would be places of total trust as husbands and wives will know that they will always be faithful to each other and to God. What else can you imagine?

*All the believers were together and had everything in common. [Acts 2:44]*

Above all, there'd be no need for money.

Think about it: what is money? The Oxford Dictionaries definition of money in English:

**money**

**NOUN**

**A current medium of exchange in the form of coins and banknotes**

(<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/money>)

“A current medium of exchange”, i.e. it is a means of trading for goods or services using the denominations that are provided by a common financial system. As most of you would be aware, bartering was the early means of trading and this practice is still carried out today in less-developed areas of the world, but for the most part money has replaced bartering for practical reasons (e.g. it's hard to carry round enough chickens to pay for a motorcycle, and the seller can only eat so many chickens unless he plans to barter them for something else). Whether you use money or bartering, the principle is always to exchange goods or services of equivalent value.

The currency of love has a very different value system - ask any serious parent if they expect an equivalent value back from their children for that they've spent on them: their answer would be “No”, at least for the reason that their parents also did not expect to be refunded for their own upbringing. Parents do however expect to be acknowledged and respected - they advise, reward and discipline their children because they only want them to do well in life.

God our Father has also paid for us

*No one can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for them - the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough - so that they should live on forever and not see decay. [Psalm 49:7-9]*

*For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. [1 Timothy 2:5-6]*

*...You are not your own; you were bought at a price... [1 Corinthians 6:19-20]*

God also does not ask us to repay the price of His son - He gladly came to earth, became ‘a little lower than the angels’ (Hebrews 2:9) and paid our ransom with his death in order that we could be restored to Him. It doesn't stop there - He still offers us so much more (1 Corinthians 2:9 etc.) All he requires from us is our obedience in love.

You can't collect love and use it to control people because love is always given freely. You can't exchange it into another currency because there is nothing of equivalent value. You can't buy it from shops because it is only available from one source: God Himself. Christmas is about love incarnate; love made flesh and born in a barn.

To all who read this; grace and peace to you from our ever generous Father in heaven and Christ Jesus His son.

***We pray you have a great time with Jesus and His family on this celebration of His incarnation - Christmas 2014.***

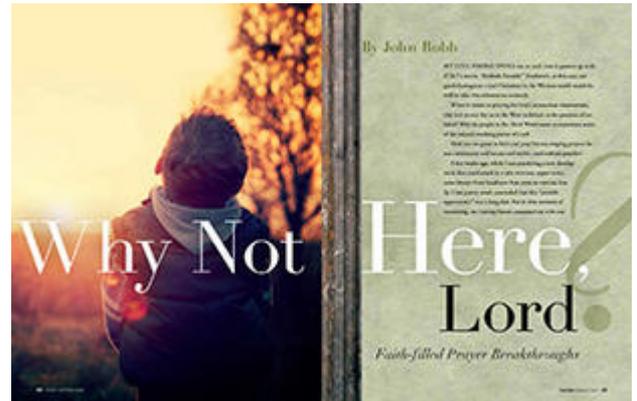
## Why Not Here, Lord? Faith-filled Prayer Breakthroughs

(By John Robb, © 2014 Prayer Connect [www.prayerconnect.net](http://www.prayerconnect.net), extracts reproduced by permission)

My cell phone spurs me on each time it powers up with AT&T's motto, "Rethink Possible!" Marketers, in this case, are good theologians—and Christians in the Western world would do well to take this exhortation seriously.

When it comes to praying for God's miraculous intervention, why is it so easy for us in the West to default to the position of unbelief? Why do people in the Third World seem to experience more of the miracle-working power of God?

How can we grow in faith and pray history-shaping prayers for our community and nation and world—and rethink possible?



A few weeks ago, while I was pondering a new development that could result in a new ministry opportunity, some friends from Southeast Asia came to visit my family. I had pretty much concluded that this "possible opportunity" was a long shot. But in that moment of wondering, my visiting friends presented my wife and me with a beautiful pewter wall piece etched with the words, "Nothing is impossible." I had jumped to an unbelieving conclusion. And their gift was a loving rebuke.

### Assume the Possible

Why do we so readily assume that things will not go our way or that they're impossible to attain? I can hear the Lord saying to me as He did to His slow, unperceptive disciples, "Where is your faith?"

Our same visiting friends had been in Myanmar in 2010 to help launch the Children in Prayer movement in that much oppressed nation. And in January 2011, I had the privilege of joining hundreds of ministry leaders for a second, similar effort. Out of those two events, an estimated 40,000 children mobilized to pray for their nation.

Nothing seemed to budge in Myanmar—spiritually or politically—until the children began to intercede. Then, in short order, the whole nation seemed to shift. The military junta, which had dominated the land with an iron grip, released political dissidents from prison, including the Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. Greater economic freedom was granted. Reconciliation efforts suddenly began between some of the ethnic groups that the government had been fighting for many years.

Political news commentators did not know how to explain such a precipitous turn-around in a nation so long accustomed to tyrannical oppression. But the prayer ministry leaders believed that "God's secret weapon," the prayers of children, were a major factor.

When I was with World Vision, an international humanitarian and childcare organization, we witnessed the same phenomenon. As director of prayer ministries, I asked field staff in five countries to have the children in the program pray for their very poor communities for one year. All of us were astonished by the miracles that occurred in those communities where the kids were praying for specific needs: the infrastructural changes, such as digging wells and establishing new clinics, resolving community splits, the healing of people with terminal illnesses, and the prevention of terrorist invasions in the places where the prayer was happening!

Staff people asked if we could renew the children's prayer effort for another year. After a second consultation, people recited an even longer litany of miracles to the wonderment of all. The Children in Prayer (CiP) effort spread by word of mouth to 20 national offices, and later about 50 of our World Vision national offices continued developing CiP efforts. Even after I left World Vision, the prayer movement spread beyond that organization with an estimated 75–80 countries supporting CiP efforts. This is all to the glory of the Lord who loves the prayers of children!

### Learn the Children's Secret

Why are children's prayers so powerful? How can they serve as a model to us more skeptical, slow-to-believe

(continued next page)

## Why Not Here, Lord? (...continued)

adults?

Jesus taught that He has delegated authority to believers so we can even bring Satan down in our communities and nations. Jesus said He saw Satan “fall like lightning from heaven” and that the authority of Jesus will enable us to “trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy” (Luke 10:18–19).

Moments later, Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, was rejoicing as His people overcame the devil and brought deliverance. He joyously praised the Father for revealing these things to “little children” (v. 21). Apparently children have a greater openness to receiving such a revelation from God. The implication is that His adult disciples will be slower to grasp such a reality unless they cultivate the same childlike hearts. In other places, Jesus said that the Kingdom of God belongs to people who are like children, and that we adults should seek to be like them (Matt. 18:2–4, 19:14). Why? Because adults tend to be encumbered by the baggage of doubt, fear, and wrong belief systems that keep us from simply trusting God to do what He promises to do.

We have become captive to a materialistic and non-supernatural worldview. We may not realize how deeply we have become affected by this corrosive influence. But if we ignore God’s promises to do the impossible (if we will simply ask, trusting Him like small children depending on their parents), it is as if we, in effect, have taken scissors to Scripture.

I believe this is a major reason why serious and persistent prayer is not on the agenda of most Christians and ministry leaders in the West. We live in a material world seemingly controlled only by laws of nature, so we have imbibed the idea that prayer makes little or no difference.

Humanism’s teaching that “man is the measure of all things” has also crept into our thinking. Both are false philosophical teachings that cut off the realization that God is the One in whom “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

### **Believe We Can Change History - Get Desperate**

It has been my great privilege to be part of numerous national and international prayer initiatives throughout the world for more than two decades. Over and over again, my colleagues and I have witnessed the stupendous works of God when His people have prayed in unity, together releasing their faith. To His glory, history has literally been reshaped through these efforts!

Many of these prayer initiatives have happened in war zones where insoluble ethnic conflicts, full of atrocities, ground on for years—where all hope had been lost.

In every case I can remember, such history-changing prayer initiatives have been characterized by the participants’ sense of true desperation. Circumstances of war, suffering, or corruption seemed overpowering and impossible to change—by human means. Christ’s people were driven to seek the Lord with all their hearts, realizing there was no other hope.

Of course, this is exactly what our God is waiting for us to do as well. He said, “If . . . you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut. 4:29). I believe this is the kind of desperation God wants us to cultivate in the West. Because everything here is usually predictable, comfortable, and convenient, we are often blind to dangers that threaten us internally and externally, spiritually and physically.

It is time to wake up, becoming both vigilant and desperate in praying for the Lord’s transforming breakthroughs. Let’s “rethink possible” and trust Him to do as He promises—far beyond all we can ask or think—in our lives, communities, and the entire world!

*JOHN ROBB is chairman of the International Prayer Council.  
He is also a member of America's National Prayer Committee.*

*Complete article is on Prayer Connect magazine:*

**[www.prayerconnect.net/magazine/issue-18-faith/why-not-here](http://www.prayerconnect.net/magazine/issue-18-faith/why-not-here)**

*I believe this is a major reason why serious and persistent prayer is not on the agenda of most Christians and ministry leaders in the West. We live in a material world seemingly controlled only by laws of nature, so we have imbibed the idea that prayer makes little or no difference.*

## Praying for the Persecuted Church

*"We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" [2 Corinthians 4:8-9]*

Donate now to *Christmas Care Egypt 2014* and other initiatives to help, love and encourage persecuted Christians by providing Bibles, ministry tools, medical aid and advocacy at [www.vom.com.au/make-a-donation](http://www.vom.com.au/make-a-donation)

**Voice of the Martyrs**  
Servants of the Persecuted Church

**Christmas Care  
EGYPT 2014**

Bringing joy to children of the persecuted church

For \$25, you can give a Christmas gift to a child of the persecuted church in Egypt.

### Why Christmas Care?

Christian children are unavoidably vulnerable victims of persecution, experiencing trauma, grief, hardship, and attacks because of their faith in Jesus. By sponsoring a Christmas Care pack, you can share the hope and joy of Christmas with children who are targeted for their faith

See [www.vom.com.au/news/2013-christmas-care-report](http://www.vom.com.au/news/2013-christmas-care-report) and [www.vom.com.au/news/the-impact-of-christmas-care](http://www.vom.com.au/news/the-impact-of-christmas-care) for more information.

### INDIA: Christian Community Attacked by Mob of Hindu Radicals

A crowd of more than 100 Hindu extremists have attacked and beaten a Pentecostal Christian community in Udumalpet, the southern state of Tamil Nadu, on 16 November.

The Reverend K A Sathis, pastor of Konkil Marthoma Church, and four church members were hospitalised in serious conditions. Some attackers even followed the victims to the hospital, threatening them and attacking them a second time.

Before breaking into the church, where the community was holding a prayer service, the radical group destroyed more than 20 vehicles parked in the church yard. Once inside, the militants attacked those present, desecrated the altar, burned the Bibles and broke musical instruments.

Sajan K George, president of the Global Council of Indian Christians (GCIC) has already asked for protection for the Christian community of the state from the National Commission for Human Rights, the chief minister of Tamil Nadu and the Minister of Interior of the Central Government of India.

Source: ICC, Asia News

### Prayer Points

- ♥ Pray for God's healing Spirit to come upon Reverend Sathis and those injured.
- ♥ Pray the Lord will protect this community as they recover and rebuild in His name.

(continued next page)

## Praying for the Persecuted Church (...continued)

- ♥ Ask the Lord to give the congregation the strength and grace they need to love and pray for their persecutors.

### LAOS: Christians Purged and Arrested

The animism practised by Laos' ethnic minorities requires constant appeasement of spirits. When villagers become Christians and stop participating in sacrifices and rituals, animists consider this a serious threat. Fearful and angry, animist villagers drive Christians from their homes and farms, expelling them from their village and leaving them destitute.

Six ethnic Hmong families (25 individuals), recently driven out of their village in central Laos, are desperate to return. The district governor, Thongsam, has agreed to investigate.

Also, seven ethnic Hmong were arrested in Laos' far north-west on 2 November after they became Christians. Five were released after renouncing their faith, while the two who refused to recant were imprisoned. Laotian prisons are squalid and torture is routine.

*Source: Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin*

#### Prayer Points

- ♥ Thank the Lord for the faithfulness of these families who have lost much for Christ's name's sake; pray they will be able to return home safely and have the opportunity to share the Gospel with the rest of their village.
- ♥ Pray the Lord will strengthen and sustain the Christians in prison; pray for their release.
- ♥ Ask God to build up the faith of those who renounced their belief.

### CHINA: Christian Prisoner Soon to be Released

Former bookstore employee Wenxi Li is currently scheduled for release from a Shanxi province prison on 18 December.

Wenxi Li, from Beijing, had travelled to Shanxi province to help local Christians open a new bookstore. Police raided the new business and confiscated hundreds of books. On 19 December 2012, Wenxi was asked to come to a police station to retrieve the \$6,000 worth of books that police had seized. When he arrived, he was immediately arrested and sent to prison. Wenxi was denied bail and sentenced to two years in prison on 17 June 2013.

The family is cautiously optimistic that he will be released on schedule. Since his transfer to his current prison a few months ago, he has received better treatment and has been allowed to make sporadic five-minute calls to his family. His wife, Cai Hong Li, says he sounds encouraged and is in good health.

Though she hopes he will rest, she told VOM staff Wenxi Li is passionate about the bookstore ministry and will likely want to return to ministry as soon as he is released. Cai Hong asks for prayers for her husband's release as well as for her own health. The imprisonment has been difficult for her.

While in prison Wenxi shared the Gospel with other inmates and several became Christians.

*Source: Voice of the Martyrs USA*

#### Prayer Points

- ♥ Pray there will be no delay in Wenxi's release. Once released, pray the Lord will help Wenxi and his family overcome their time of trial and separation.
- ♥ Pray the Lord will direct the path of Wenxi in his future ministry work.
- ♥ Thank the Lord for Wenxi's faithfulness; pray the new believers in prison will grow in their understanding of the Lord and go on to witness to others.



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## The Canberra Declaration 'A Wake-Up Call to Aussie Christians'

- **Are you concerned about the direction our society is going today?**
- **Do you fear for the future of our children and grandchildren?**
- **Is there anything we can do about it?**

**Yes, there is!** A Call to Christian Conscience has been going out loud and clear from the Canberra Declaration for four years now. But more Aussies need to hear this call so that they can play their part to protect the Christian values our nation was built upon.

The Canberra Declaration ([canberradeclaration.org.au](http://canberradeclaration.org.au)) is an 856-word statement which calls Australians to protect:

- ♥ **Religious Freedom,**
- ♥ **Marriage and Family and**
- ♥ **Human Life.**

These cherished Australian values are, as stated in the Canberra Declaration, *“in large measure founded on the Judeo-Christian belief system”*. But sadly, these are also the values that are being attacked and undermined on many fronts in Australia and throughout the Western world. The last sentence calls all like-minded citizens to support and sign the Canberra Declaration *“for the future of our nation, and for our children’s future”*. To date it has been signed by over 50,000 Australians.

### A Call of Christian Conscience

The Canberra Declaration was drafted by a cross-section of Christian leaders. It was first read out on 23 July 2010 on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra. Because of threats to redefine marriage it was released with a sense of urgency just four weeks before the 2010 federal election.

The original visionaries were inspired by the 2009 Manhattan Declaration of the USA. Like the Manhattan Declaration, the Canberra Declaration is a document by Christians, to Christians about the great need to appreciate and no longer passively take for granted Judeo-Christian values in our nation. And like the Manhattan Declaration the Canberra Declaration is described as *‘a call of Christian conscience’*. What does this mean?

Simply put *‘a call of Christian conscience’* is *‘a wake-up call to the Church’*. The Canberra Declaration is a wake-up call and rallying cry for the Church to actively protect the Judeo-Christian foundation which has made Australia a great place to live.



### The Hour is Late

Nine years ago one of Australia’s best-known geological landmarks made a big splash! It was a grey day when one of the Twelve Apostles suddenly and unexpectedly collapsed into a heap of rubble.

The Canberra Declaration uses the word *‘undermined’* in the first four sections and the word *‘erode’* in the Conclusion.



(continued next page)

## The Canberra Declaration (...continued)

Many Australians are only now suddenly awakening to the realization that the Judeo-Christian foundations of our society have drastically eroded and are in danger of collapse.

### A Call to Pray and Act

The Canberra Declaration, as a call of Christian conscience calls Christians who have signed the Canberra Declaration to pray and act through its Good News Updates. And so signees to the Canberra Declaration are often asked to write to politicians or make submissions to Senate inquiries.

The Canberra Declaration acknowledges that Western civilisation, which was built on Judeo-Christian foundations, has been in steep moral decline. This is not all due to merely social, cultural, political and philosophical forces. We must see the battle as spiritual. The apostle Paul wrote,

*“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).*

To this end we also encourage prayer through supporting the National Days of Prayer and Fasting which call Australians to repentance. The first National Day of Prayer and Fasting ([nationaldayofprayer.com.au](http://nationaldayofprayer.com.au)) had its beginning at the ‘Second Canberra Declaration – Prayer and Strategic Planning Consultation’, held in Parliament House on 28 February, 2011. The four National Days of Prayer and Fasting and the three 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting ([40daysofprayer.com.au](http://40daysofprayer.com.au)) held since then have been strategic opportunities to positively and powerfully address the three focus areas of the Canberra Declaration.

### A Life and Death Struggle

With God’s help and in partnership with Christian organisations we need to vigorously contend for our religious freedoms, for the institution of marriage and our families and for the sanctity of human life.



**The Culture of Light and Life** is represented by the thriving bushland on the left. It represents a way of life that is based on the truth that all human life has been made in the image of God. The Canberra Declaration states that every human life; male or female; young or old; perfect or imperfect, is precious in God’s eyes and has equal value from conception to life’s natural end.

**The Culture of Darkness and Death** is represented by the burnt forest on the right. It represents a way of death that is seen in the deliberate taking of human life through such things as abortion, euthanasia, destruction of human embryos, murder and suicide. These manifestations of death are Satan’s way to destroy those who are made in the image of God.

**The advancing fire line** in the photo is where the Culture of Darkness and Death is overtaking the Culture of Light and Life.

The Canberra Declaration, as a call of Christian conscience, encourages Christians to resist the engulfing flames of satanic lies and practises with the truth of the Word of God, with prayer and with acts of love. We believe the fire can be extinguished. And when the billows of dark smoke have blown away then a new forest can be planted!

### More Signatures Needed

Four months ago we launched a **Double Our Numbers Campaign** with a target of 100,000 signatures by our fifth anniversary on 23 July 2015. More signatures means more people receiving Canberra Declaration Good News Updates. This in turn means more people praying and acting in response to the different issues that we highlight.

(continued on Page 14)

## The Canberra Declaration (...continued)

More and more these issues relate to religious freedom on which all Christian values depend. So much is at stake!

Please read and sign the Canberra Declaration here.

<http://www.canberradeclaration.org.au/index.php/the-canberra-declaration/read-the-declaration>

Our prayer is that God by His Spirit will use the Canberra Declaration as an on-going call of Christian conscience to our Christian leaders and our fellow citizens. We need to warn Australians, and especially our leaders, about the folly of undermining our Judeo-Christian foundations and the wisdom of protecting and promoting these. In this way the Canberra Declaration can be a rallying point for Christians all across Australia to pray and to trust and to obey God for a transformed Australia.

*(Written by volunteer, David Rowsome)*

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### Canberra Declaration

Email: [with1accord@outlook.com](mailto:with1accord@outlook.com)  
Website: [www.canberradeclaration.org.au](http://www.canberradeclaration.org.au)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pages/Canberra-Declaration/140676265957734](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Canberra-Declaration/140676265957734)  
Twitter: [www.twitter/CanberraDeclara](http://www.twitter/CanberraDeclara)  
Instagram: [www.instagram.com/canberradeclaration](http://www.instagram.com/canberradeclaration)

### National Day of Prayer & Fasting

Email: [info@nationaldayofprayer.com.au](mailto:info@nationaldayofprayer.com.au)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nationaldayofprayerandfasting](http://www.facebook.com/nationaldayofprayerandfasting)

## Stan Longinis, World Champion Kickboxer

### Presented by Angela Pulvirenti on ABC Inside Edge

*By Bjorn Schmid - my notes from Inside Edge - Episode 7 "Stan Longinidis & Grant Barker"*

*(The original episode was broadcast on ABC News 24 at Sunday 2 February 2014, 20:31.)*

#### Stan (about facing negativity):

"My plan was to become Australia's first world champion and put Australia on the globe of kickboxing. When offered a contract to go to Los Angeles, to what was then the most famous kickboxing stable in the world, I showed my friends the contract; the pessimism around me, I couldn't believe it and I was going to bed at night hearing all these negative voices in my head: 'You're not big enough for a heavyweight.' 'You don't kick hard enough.' 'You don't have the killer instinct.'

"But as a young man brought up to make Christ my best friend, I would hear this quiet voice in my spirit that would say, 'If you have faith in me, you can conquer anything.'"

#### Angela (on reconciling violent sport with faith):

People might think there's a contradiction having such an emotional soul as you have, the faith you have, the loving family you have, and then kicking and punching the living daylights out of people?

#### Stan (in response):

Yeah it sounds very contradictive in many ways. God has a lot of women and men of faith sometimes in strange places and dark places. I can share my relationship with Christ with a lot of hard men that probably wouldn't want to listen to anybody else but because of my achievements in my sport they're prepared to hear what I've got to say. I like to think I get special assignments from God to go to dark places.

**God has a lot of women and men of faith sometimes in strange places and dark places.**

*You can find out more about:*

**Stan the Man** [stantheman.com.au](http://stantheman.com.au)

**Inside Edge** [www.abc.net.au/news/programs/inside-edge/](http://www.abc.net.au/news/programs/inside-edge/)



# MEDIA RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Marriage & Divorce in 2013

The statistics for 2013 relating to Marriage and Divorce for our nation have just been released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Whilst the estimated resident population grew by a little over 0.4m from 2012 to 2013 the number of marriages decreased by 3.5%. That is 118962 marriage in 2013 against 123244 in 2012. This gives a fall in the crude marriage rate from 5.4% to 5.1% marriages per 1000 estimated population. Interestingly the statistics also reveal that whilst the majority of couples, 91123 or 76.6%, who were married in 2013 cohabited prior to marriage whereas in 2012 there were 95673, or 77.6% of, couples who cohabited prior to marriage.

Sadly, for the church, the proportion of marriages performed by civil celebrants has increased now standing at a figure of 72.5% which is a far cry from 20 years ago when the share of civil celebrants was only 42.1%. It is also interesting to note at this point that in the ABS November 2013 issue of Social Trends 22% of Australians reported 'no religion' in the 2011 census two decades previously this was 12/13% the Christian Church has certainly lost some ground!

2013 saw that the majority of brides (81.3% in 2012 this was 80.8%) and grooms (79.7% in 2012 this was 79.2%) had not previously married. Also there was a negligible increase in the median age at marriage of 0.1 years for both male (now 31.5 years) and females (now 28.5 years). Whilst it can be said that people are still choosing to be married there is that rate of cohabitation hiding behind the figures.

Turning to divorce, there is a decrease in numbers 47638 against 49917 and with the previously mentioned estimated increase in population this has meant a fall in the crude rate of divorce from 2.2 to 2.1. These divorces affecting some 41747 children under the age of 18 years. The total costs to the children, their parents and families let alone the nation are really incalculable, it is hard enough to come to \$ costings but recently Minister Kevin Andrews said "with the cost of long term marriage and relationship breakdowns costing individuals \$60,000 on average"(Daily Telegraph 3/08/2014). In July 2014 News Corp undertook an "analysis of information from the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Social Services, shows that this financial year alone the government will spend \$12.5 billion on support payments to single parents, including family tax benefits and rent assistance. Another \$1.5 billion will be spent on the administration of the child support system, while the cost to taxpayers from family disputes in Australian courts is \$202 million." (News.com.au 6/07/2014) All adding up to more than a 14 billion cost per annum.

It is time to start rebuilding marriage, yes there is still the need to defend marriage but there is probably a greater need to rebuild marriage! From what we see in the media and what we hear people speaking it seems many hold a distorted view of marriage. This is probably strongest in young adults and is reflected in the levels of cohabitation before marriage – a 'beta testing' of marriage. The view could be summed up as being "a romanticised vision and understanding of marriage...an affirmation of romantic love between two willing people and some sort of commitment" and unfortunately this sort of reduced understanding has spilled over into parts of the church.

How do we counter this, how do we start rebuilding marriage? A good starting point is to increase our teaching on what love and marriage means in the context of God's word and society. This should be done in all parts of the local church and all age groups. Then also look at how to be pro-active with practical and relevant ministry for those who are married. Start the re-building of marriage now and then celebrate, honour marriage and marriages in the national celebration Marriage Week, 13 – 19 September 2015.

ISSUED BY:

Marriage Week Australia <http://www.marriageweek.org.au>

Date: 26 November 2014

## Holy Spirit

(By Ps Jonathan Darma)

In the beginning God created heaven and earth. God's unity display the creativity on earth as it is in heaven. Let us experience this unity by introducing the HOLY SPIRIT. Jesus said in John 14:26 that the HOLY SPIRIT, whom the Father would send in Jesus' place would teach us All Things, and bring to our Remembrance All Things that Jesus said to us.

This is what I call the 'ADVANTAGE MOMENT'. In John 16:7 it is clearly stated that it is to our ADVANTAGE that Jesus goes away; for if Jesus do not go away, the HOLY SPIRIT will not come to us; but if Jesus depart, Jesus will sent the HOLY SPIRIT to us.

The HOLY SPIRIT is our "Along Side PARAKLETOS" Who will stand by us giving us strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. The same Power that raised Jesus from the dead, is the same Power that has been sent to us, which is "Christ in you the Hope of Glory". In John 20:22 Jesus breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the HOLY SPIRIT". The ADVANTAGE MOMENT is not only for them, but FOR US, this mean you and me. So it is fitting FOR US to respond to our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ who said: Receive the HOLY SPIRIT!!! Are you ready?

I invite you to journey with me into this Supernatural Dimension of the ADVANTAGE MOMENT. In the creation time, Genesis 2:7 we read: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils THE BREATH OF LIFE; and man became a LIVING SOUL". The breath of Life could also be called the SPIRIT OF LIFE.

The ADVANTAGE MOMENT is when God imparts to us, who are hungry and thirsty after righteousness, HIS HOLY SPIRIT. Luke 11:13 "... **how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!**" So the ADVANTAGE MOMENT is given to those **who ask**. You need to want HIM (Holy Spirit of the Living God revealed the Father's finished work) and you need to have that hunger and thirst after righteousness at all time.

Matthew 7:7-11 7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

Why wait, ask our heavenly Father to give you the Holy Spirit so that the ADVANTAGE MOMENT will be your portion again and again and again.

**What is this ADVANTAGE MOMENT for me?** Acts 1:8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The ADVANTAGE MOMENT is POWER to be witnesses. Matthew 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven".

**What is this ADVANTAGE MOMENT for me?** 1 Corinthians 14:2 "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. Acts 2: 1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." One of the ADVANTAGE MOMENT that is available to us is the opportunity to begin to speak with other tongues and when we speak with other tongues, we do not speak to men, **BUT TO GOD**. This is the best communication available on earth as the devil can not understand what we say, so this is the best ADVANTAGE MOMENT that we can experience in the land of the living.

**What is this ADVANTAGE MOMENT for me?** Jude 20 "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit," The ADVANTAGE MOMENT is the building up of ourselves in our most holy faith. The Governmental Authority of God's Supernatural Kingdom is held by the Word of the Living God, so the ADVANTAGE MOMENT is the sustaining prayer life where the Faith atmosphere from the Word of God operates. When we live in that atmosphere of God's Faith, our lives are flourishing in order to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.

**What is this ADVANTAGE MOMENT for me?**

Isaiah 61:1

(continued next page)

## Holy Spirit (...continued)

*“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,  
Because the Lord has **anointed** Me  
To preach good tidings to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;”*

Luke 4:18

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,  
Because He has **anointed** Me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,[a]  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;”*

The anointing that break the yoke is our **ADVANTAGE MOMENT**.

So send I, you with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. John 20:20 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” Jesus has ordained you John 15:16 King James Version (KJV) 16 "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and **ordained** you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you".

So this is our **ADVANTAGE MOMENT**. One Chance, One Choice and One **MOMENT** and now it is for **YOU** to **ASK** our heavenly Father who gives the Holy Spirit, beyond measure to those who **ASK**. One **MOMENT** of **ADVANTAGE** with the **HOLY SPIRIT** of the **LIVING GOD** is available for us while we are here on earth as it is in heaven. It's worth the asking. Give it a go, give it a chance. Taste and See that the Lord is good all the time, all the way and always.

Moreover, let us enter into the Most Holy Place to worship God in the Holy of Holies and experience this **ADVANTAGE MOMENT** in greater measure. Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **We** also need the ingredient of the **BLOOD** of **JESUS** who is the prerequisite to enter the Holy of holies.

The Samaritan woman had an encounter with Jesus in John 4:20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." John 4: 21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father". John 4: 24 "**God is Spirit**, and those who worship Him **MUST worship in spirit and truth**.”

The **ADVANTAGE MOMENT is the prerequisite to all who worship God**. The **ADVANTAGE MOMENT is always to go hand in hand with the WORD of GOD, in spirit and truth**. The Word of God, the Written Word, which is called 'Logos', is effectively active as our 'Rhema' the anointed Word on earth as it is in heaven. The **ADVANTAGE MOMENT** will give us access to the highest peak, apex and summit of our prayer life, like Jesus had when He woke up early in the morning and spend time communicating with his heavenly Father. Psalm 24:3-4 3 "Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has **clean hands** and a **pure heart**, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully".

Luke 24:49 "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but **tarry** in the city of **Jerusalem** until you are endued with power from on high.”

So this “**tarry**” which mean to stay longer than intended until the **ADVANTAGE MOMENT** overwhelms your life. This is also one of the ingredients to "Taste and See that the Lord is good". And why do we need to wait in the city of Jerusalem? It is because God's Word is the source of this journey of **waiting patiently**. Isaiah 40:31 "But those who **wait on the Lord** shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint".

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you". You are marked for God's **ADVANTAGE MOMENT** so keep on praying in the Holy Spirit at all time.

Thank you for all who support me on this journey.

God bless you abundantly.

Kind Regards :)

Ps Jonathan Darma

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<http://gbimacquariepark.org.au>

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## Daily Prayer Calendar for January - *Pray for Families*

- 1 Our governments to respect, promote & protect family life.
- 2 For those in government to ensure that they make time for their spouse & family & to be involved.
- 3 For Godly leadership in the family.
- 4 That fathers would model love, faithfulness, respect & commitment to their wife both within the family unit & outside.
- 5 For those families where distance separates family members.
- 6 For Godly order in Christian families – First God, then spouse, then children, then work and finally everything else.
- 7 Christian families to model love, commitment, sacrifice, support and loyalty, being those missionaries to others who look to them as role models.
- 8 Christian men to learn & understand their responsibility for spiritual leadership & take up that role.
- 9 Fathers to be honoured & respected - society acknowledging fathers' important role in providing for & guiding the family.
- 10 For wives to understand & respect their husbands, loving them in response to their love and teaching their children by their example.
- 11 For children to be taught to honour & obey their parents & respect those in authority.
- 12 For an attitude of gratitude in families.
- 13 For parents actively to be the moral gatekeepers for their children.
- 14 For strength, wisdom and patience for parents.
- 15 For forgiveness & conflict resolution to be demonstrated by parents & modelled to their children.
- 16 For the family home to be a sanctuary where harsh words are eclipsed by words of encouragement, where members are allowed to fail knowing they are loved unconditionally.
- 17 For family entertainment to demonstrate the benefits of family life where spouses are committed to each other & attentive to their children.
- 18 For those homes where violence is experienced and family members abused.
- 19 For the families of those in the police force.
- 20 For those family members who are involved in substance abuse.
- 21 For those families where a member has been incarcerated.
- 22 For those families which are debt ridden and unable to handle their own affairs.
- 23 For those families who have become financially insecure &/or homeless.
- 24 For the families of those in church leadership.
- 25 For those families which lack a father or a mother.
- 26 For the salvation of unsaved family members.
- 27 Christian families to pray together & for each other – regularly.
- 28 For the families of those members of the Defence Force.
- 29 For those families which have experienced divorce and are dealing with parent's access to their children.
- 30 For those families which have a physically &/or mentally disadvantaged member.
- 31 That they would schedule in regular times of family fun, regardless of their circumstances.

Prepared by Ann Outred from Marriage Week - [marriageweek.org.au](http://marriageweek.org.au)