

NEWS FROM DAVID AND GRETA

DECEMBER 2019

We hope that you will take a moment to read what has been happening in our ministry recently and be encouraged. The Perspectives section also contains a vital message that we need to hear for the New Year ahead.

The front of Life Church in Christchurch was filled with under 35's. We then asked all those over 35 to come and pray for them, which they did lovingly. Afterwards, we asked the under 35's to pray for the older ones. One woman writes, *"I had tears as we prayed for our young adults.... my 21-year-old daughter was so blessed by the woman who prayed for her. And to be prayed for in turn, was so encouraging too."* It was a very meaningful moment of the generations honouring one another, at a time when the devil is attempting to create generational divisions (think boomers versus millennials and so on). God is raising up an army of potent young influencers in the coming decade of the 2020's and those who are older need to champion and help them.

During October and November, we ministered in nine churches:

- Church Unlimited, Kaitaia, Northland
- St Paul's Anglican, Auckland city
- Eastgate Baptist, East Auckland
- Church Unlimited, Auckland city and West Auckland
- Life Church, Christchurch
- Living Well Church, Rotorua
- Coromandel Elim Church
- Grace Vineyard, Christchurch.

We also spoke at four leaders' meetings, a Bay of Plenty New Life pastors' regional, and conducted an equipping seminar. What a privilege to visit so many truly Spirit-filled churches across different church streams, meet many wonderful leaders, and invest in the next generation. Ministering to pastors and leadership teams has become a joy to us in recent years. These people do a wonderful, yet demanding, job. Strategic teaching and personal prophetic words from the Holy Spirit bring fresh joy and strength to them, and gives something back to those who are giving out all the time.

HEALING TESTIMONY

Numbers of people have been healed in recent months. Here is an email from a person who said that he had suffered from night cramps mildly for ten years and severely for the past two years: *"You may recall that you prayed for healing for the cramp that I used to get in my shins and feet at night-time. It has been two months now, and whereas the pain I used to suffer from time to time at night was excruciating (about 9 on a scale of 1-10), I have not experienced any since then...not only that, but I have not been taking any Magnesium supplements that I used to take to reduce the incidence of cramp occurring."*

.... church member, Causeway Church, Mangawhai

ITINERARY FOR DECEMBER-JANUARY

December 1: New Day Church, Orewa, Auckland. Sunday meetings.

December 8: Freedom Church, Waihi Beach: Leaders' plus Sunday meetings.

December 15: Home Church, Golflands, Auckland. Sunday meeting.

January 19: Eastgate Christian Centre, Howick, Auckland. Sunday meetings.

January 26: Church Unlimited, City and West. Sunday meetings.

PERSPECTIVES

I remember the day well. I was in my early thirties, pastoring the Wellington City Elim Church, and sitting on a hospital bed about to have a biopsy on a sizeable lump I had discovered in my body. As I waited nervously, I opened my Bible, turned to the reading for that day (I followed a guide that allowed me to read the entire Bible in a year), and read Psalm 41:1-3, *"Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble. The Lord will protect him and preserve his life...the Lord will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness."* How incredible that of all the words in the Bible, those were the ones I read that day.

The biopsy later showed that I had Hodgkin's Disease, a type of cancer of the lymphatic system. There was an eighty percent chance of recovery with chemotherapy, and there would be eight months of treatment. It was a very dark year but because of that scripture my wife and I stood in faith for a positive outcome. Many people prayed for me, and at the end of the year I was pronounced in remission, and have been clear ever since.

I often wonder what I could have missed out on if I was not diligent to read my Bible each day. The apostle John once wrote, *"I write to you, young men [and women], because you are strong, and **the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.**"* (1 John 2:14). Is it any wonder that Satan works overtime to weaken God's word in young lives, any lives for that matter?

Today there is an epidemic amongst many western Christians, young and old, who do not bother to read their Bibles, or who are too distracted by work or leisure to do so. Evidence of this is found in the increasing numbers of Christians who feel that abortion, gender fluidity, gay marriage, evolution, belief in the nonexistence of hell and so on, are all acceptable. Taking their cues from an increasingly liberal culture, they no longer have a biblical worldview. Jesus warned that in the last days the devil, appearing as an angel of light with clever sounding arguments, would try to deceive even the most committed believer.



Commenting on two high profile leaders abandoning their faith, John Cooper, lead singer of the Christian rock band Skillet, recently said: ***"It is time for the Church to rediscover the preeminence of the Word. And to value the teaching of the Word. We need to value truth over feeling. Truth over emotion. And what we are seeing now is the result of the Church raising up influencers who did not supremely value truth who have led a generation who also do not believe in the supremacy of truth."***

“Brothers and sisters in the faith all around the world, pastors, teachers, worship leaders, influencers ... I implore you, please, please, in your search for relevancy for the Gospel, let us NOT find creative ways to shape God’s Word into the image of our culture by stifling inconvenient truths. But rather let us hold on even tighter to the anchor of the living Word of God. For He changes NOT.”

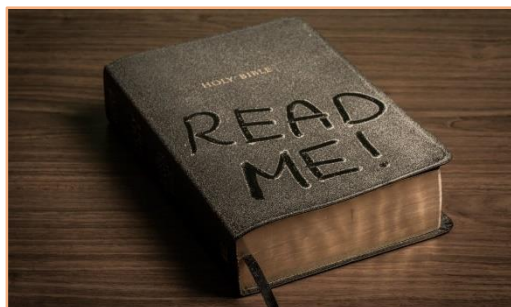
Now the Bible is not some legal document to police people’s beliefs and behaviour. Rather it is for our good as 2 Timothy 3:16 says: *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.”* Jesus himself said that people cannot live by bread (material things) alone, **but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.**

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to two of his disciples and explained all the Old Testament scriptures about himself to them. Imagine having a personal bible commentary from Jesus! Afterwards, they said to each other, *“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”* (Luke 24:32)

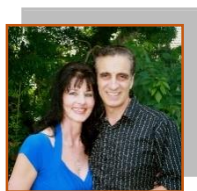
That is what God wants for us – that our hearts burn with faith, love, and encouragement on the journey of life. We **can** have a personal bible commentary with Jesus, through his Holy Spirit. If we open our Bibles he will open the truth to us.

May I challenge you as we soon enter a new year and a new decade?

Make a commitment to read the Bible every day, even if it’s one chapter or ten to fifteen minutes a day. May I even challenge you to read the Bible through in a year? An internet search will list numerous reading guides that will help you to do just that. You will never regret the investment. Greta feels strongly that, in the current climate, God is calling us to be Champions of Truth in our generation. He is looking for those who will not compromise but have the courage to stand for truth and ***“speak the truth in love.”*** (Ephesians 4:15) The question is will we be such champions?



Blessings,



David and Greta

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