

THE EDIFIER

VOLUME 27

CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH DAY)

MAY 2021

What can ministry look like here in Australia in 2021 amidst the current climate of COVID fear and uncertainty, and how can we better meet the challenge of effectively planning and facilitating church life across this great country? These are good questions to wrestle with!

We are all gifted in various ways as we're led by the Holy Spirit, and all of us might better embrace the current challenges when we experience the epiphany that perhaps we were "born for such a time as this!"

Australia is a large continent populated with just 25 million people. The distances and circumstances from east to west that separate brothers and sisters in Christ are enormous. Many faithful people in our church community live great distances apart, and where significant weekly Sabbath fellowship isn't readily available.

Thankfully, there are resources that can help, such as online Bible Studies, Zoom meetings and livestreamed Sabbath worship services.

We must firstly avail ourselves in the Lord's field and purposes by using whatever resources, time and opportunities we have in the name of Jesus to minister His Word, to reach out to each other, and serve using the gifts given to us.

Who are you in Christ, being led and formed by the Holy Spirit? Moreover, what does it look like for you personally? What resources and opportunities has God already given you?

For some time now I've pondered on how to better facilitate pastoral visits, not having to rely on the unpredictability of current airline travel (having experienced several flight cancellations), but instead to travel by road. For me, this trip would be on two wheels!

Thus, in mid-April, I left home near Perth where I live, and rode for six days by motorcycle across Australia, arriving in Sydney just in time for Sabbath worship services.

Of course, I joked that this was the longest and most arduous trip that I've ever travelled to church services for! (Aren't we all sometimes tempted to think it too inconvenient to travel across just a few suburbs?)



Church services and the ensuing fellowship in Sydney was absolutely wonderful, where we all experienced the love and affirmation of God's good work and grace among us.

All in all, by the time I arrived back home in Perth, I'd had the blessing and joy of visiting with brethren in 17 different households throughout NSW, VIC and SA, and travelled just over 8500km during those three weeks.

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Few, if any, had experienced a pastoral visit by motorcycle, and any novelty soon gave way to hugs, cuppas, warm and engaging conversations, prayer together, and special moments of shared fellowship.

I really enjoyed the fellowship shared with brothers and sisters in Christ. Some had questions which were theological and doctrinal in nature. Others shared their testimonies related to past church experiences. I was able to explain more about the Church of God (Seventh Day) in Australia. Yet others shared their long-time connection with our church community. Many expressed profound and enthusiastic appreciation for our livestreaming of Sabbath worship services.

And, in all conversation, I felt a strengthening of the ties that bind and a deep, affirming encouragement, expressed in hugs, prayers and blessings.

In Adelaide, for the final Sabbath during the trip, I again really enjoyed the fellowship, hospitality and love of the church there.

I must admit that physically, as I get older, it was a harder ride than what I remembered previously – but definitely worth it!

Of course, I enjoyed the quiet of solitude and silence that such a trip affords, weighted by prayer and reflection, and interspersed with fellowship and ministry all the way. I'm thankful for the prayers of so many, having experienced the umbrella of God's providence, protection and favour.

During the trip, I slept under the stars, in motels and blessed by the overwhelming hospitality of godly and loving people.

This ministry also reached out not only to those called and chosen in Christ, but also to those many more I met along the way. I really enjoyed a level of fellowship which included the many helpful and friendly strangers who were amazed to learn of a pastor riding across this vast country!

Many stopped to ask about the bike's registration plate of "MESSAGE". It was a natural segue to begin to share the gospel. I explained that:

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5 NKJV)

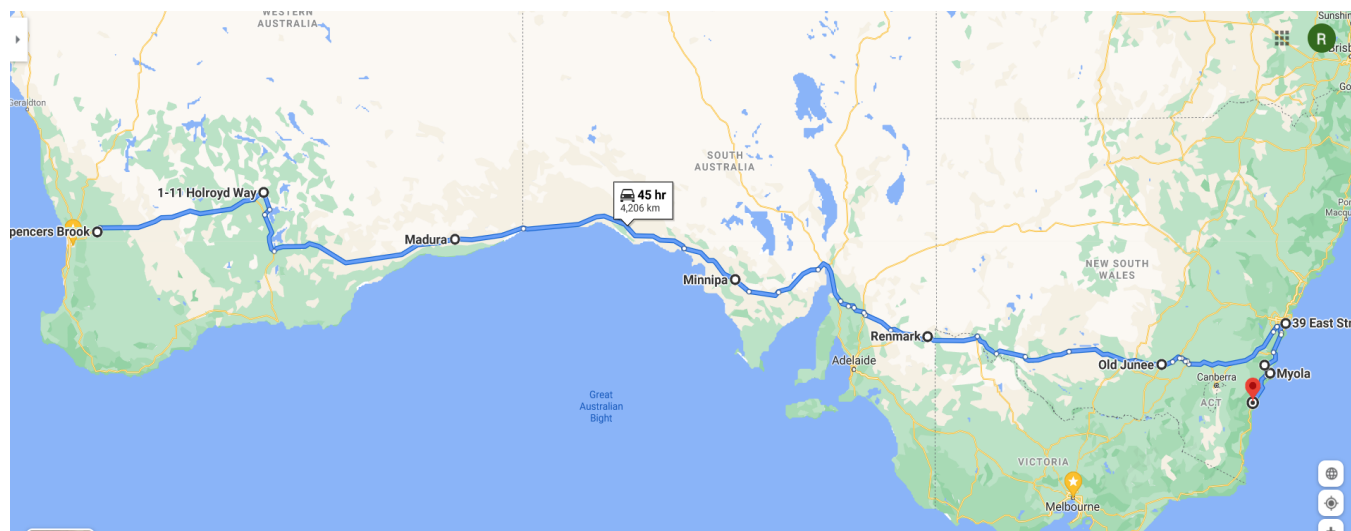
that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:3 NKJV)

Dozens of strangers stopped me to tell their story, to learn of my trip. One couple offered accommodation; others listened with avid interest to the gospel message, and all wished me well on my travels and ministry.

If news, media and education portray Australia as an unsatisfied, unthankful place amidst turmoil and entitlement, the feeling I experienced from the average person in the street who stopped to chat was one of favour, kindness, helpfulness and generosity.

The harvest is indeed plenteous. And, more than ever before, I sense an urgent need for willing labourers! Ditto Jesus' words.

The three weeks spent on pastoral visitation were a powerful snapshot of what ministry can look like amidst the uncertainty of the times in which we live. But by God's grace, we can all look forward to participating in God's amazing and consistent work among us all.



Continued from page two

Australia was originally named by a Portuguese explorer as “Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo”, meaning “The South Land of the Holy Spirit”. May we always be courageous enough to “think outside the norm”, listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and use whatever resources, opportunities and time we have to serve one another and be among those “who were also born for such a time as this!” May we truly be a people then of the Holy Spirit.

I also give credit for the wonderful support of my wife Rebecca in helping organise and plan the trip, and thank all for their prayers and blessing.

Together we give God the glory and praise!

Written by Pastor John Klassek



A video blog of this ministry trip is available online at:

<https://www.message7.org/2021/southland-vt.html>

Editor’s Note: It was a huge effort by Pastor John to ride his bike across four states, (8500 kilometers) to visit brethren and to supply pastoral care where needed!



A Prayer For Inner Strength

Dear God,

Please give me the strength to face the day and to see the many blessings that it contains.

Give me the courage to walk on, no matter how long the path or how many turns the road holds.

Guide my thoughts so that I walk in love and peace and with gratitude stamped on my heart.



Ramblings of the Claury

A Dying Saviour – Oxymoron?

The sceptic may well wonder how a dying saviour can save anyone. Indeed those who passed by Jesus on the cross mocked *he saved others, himself he cannot save*. Dying saviours, however, are not so unusual.

In London's Postman's Park, people who died after saving others are remembered in The Memorial to Heroic Self-sacrifice. For example, one memorial reads, *Mary Rogers – Stewardess of the Stella March 30, 1899 – self-sacrificed by giving her life belt and voluntarily going down in the sinking ship*.

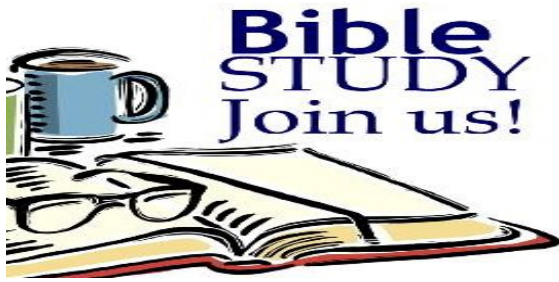
It's not unusual to have a dying saviour and it should not have given cause for many of Jesus' fellow Jews to reject him since their own scriptures predicted the Messiah's sacrificial death (e.g. Daniel 9:25-26, Isaiah 53 & Psalm 22). What is unusual though is to have a risen Saviour. Of the major religions, only Christianity boasts an empty tomb for their leader.



It's unique in history to have such a well-attested-to death and resurrection of an individual who was dead for a significant time. The Bible records there were over 500 witnesses who saw Jesus alive from the dead over a period of 40 days after his very public death. Post-resurrection, some even ate and talked at length with him. Their words can be believed as they would not have been willing to in turn sacrifice themselves for a resurrection lie they'd made up.

It's not strange to have a Saviour who sacrificed himself, but it does show we have a very loving and committed Saviour. The great news is – He's alive!

Written by Pastor David Kidd



Each Tuesday night

We continue our "Faithful" series by turning to one of the New Testament's most beloved characters, Simon Peter. In these studies we will see what a faithful disciple looks like as we follow the Master with His most passionate and impulsive student.

If you would like to join the bible study, and receive the study notes each week. Please send your email address to:

office@cog7aus.com

STARTING TIMES

WA 5.30 pm

SA 7.00 pm

Eastern States 7.30 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9931362668?pwd=RGN4NU5ySFR4eGRXMUE2MVdPUHhxQT09>

Meeting ID: 993 136 2668

Password: Church2020



THE ONE

The One who placed the stars in space
Makes snowflakes like soft spun lace.
The One who puts the sun to bed
Counts the hairs upon our heads.

The One who carved the awesome Alps
Sat the small child on His lap.
The One who fragrances the flowers
Keeps the world by His power.

The One who is called Judah's lion
Took on Himself a servant's mind.
The One whose strength knows no defeat
Stooped to wash His servant's feet.

The One who is the first and last
Pled that the cruel cup might pass.
The One who is the great I Am
Became the sacrificial lamb.

The One whose days are without end
Bled and died for sinful men.
The One who formed men from His breath
Rose from the grave...conquered death.

The One who keeps us in His care
Knows our thoughts and hears our prayers.
The One to whom our hearts must sing
Jesus our Lord, our God, our King!

Deanna Malawy

Locking down with God

The Ten Commandments have always been important to Christians, not for earning salvation (which is impossible), but as God's standards to live by. One of them is particularly important in guarding our relationship with God and fellow believers.

It's also really important for our physical, mental and spiritual health, and, as lockdowns around the world have shown, can provide benefits for the environment too, because if the full intent of it was kept, most institutions and enterprises would be shut and most activities stopped for 52 days a year. Many of us would have heard of the significant environmental effects of just 8 weeks of lockdown!



The commandment I'm referring to invites us to celebrate the seventh day as a rest day and a holy day. God also blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy at creation (Genesis 2:1-3). It was therefore not just to be a special day for the Jews because it existed way before the 'Jewish nation' even commenced.

The New Testament emphasizes the importance of God's laws being written on our hearts. The book of Revelation twice refers to followers of Jesus as keeping God's commandments and the faith of Christ. Given this, and acknowledging this is the key commandment designed to bless us in our relationship with God, why not embrace and cherish it?

Please email churchofgodsllove4@gmail.com for a free booklet highlighting the reasons for continuing to 'lockdown' in close relationship with God, the great blessings associated with such and the simple and joyous way of celebrating Sabbath.

*Written by Pastor David Kidd
New Zealand*

Youth Corner

We don't know much about Jesus' childhood. We do know that when Jesus was 12, He and His family went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. On the way home, Mary and Joseph noticed Jesus was missing and returned to look for Him. They found Jesus in the temple complex talking with the teachers there. The teachers were amazed at His understanding and insights. This Where Was Jesus Crossword Puzzle is about Jesus in the temple as a boy.

Where Was Jesus? Word Search

Find the words on the list that are hidden in the puzzle. The words can be left to right, up and down, or diagonally.

P	I	S	I	T	N	U	L	L	A	F	A	C	P	D
A	N	T	G	G	L	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M
S	O	R	E	R	S	E	C	T	E	M	D	I	O	O
S	U	L	L	A	M	C	J	N	S	E	Q	U	P	S
O	O	N	S	E	Q	U	I	O	C	I	L	L	L	N
V	R	E	F	A	T	H	E	R	S	I	R	I	E	R
E	A	O	R	E	M	O	L	O	R	E	I	T	E	T
R	U	M	I	N	E	N	D	R	E	T	P	T	V	E
I	T	Q	U	E	S	T	I	O	N	S	S	H	O	M
T	I	O	N	S	E	D	E	U	G	I	A	M	V	P
L	M	A	R	Y	A	T	E	A	C	H	E	R	S	L
T	U	E	D	O	R	O	R	E	D	E	L	I	Q	E
Z	R	I	T	E	C	F	E	U	G	A	I	T	V	U
L	A	O	R	E	H	F	E	S	T	I	V	A	L	R
T	W	E	L	V	E	N	D	R	E	T	A	T	V	E

FATHER	JOSEPH	PEOPLE	TEACHERS
FESTIVAL	MARY	QUESTIONS	TEMPLE
JERUSALEM	PASSOVER	SEARCH	TWELVE

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Luke 2:41-52





Light for Life

Esther 8:9 is the longest verse in the Bible.

The full Bible has been translated into 532 languages. It has been partially translated into 2,883 languages.

The Bible doesn't mention how many wise men visited Christ, only that they brought three types of gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

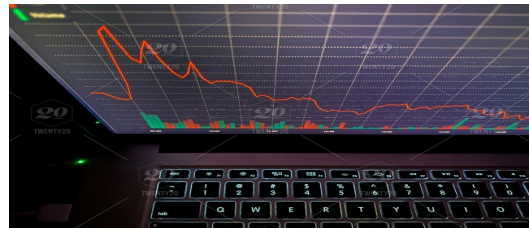
Nearly all of the villains in the Bible have red hair.

There is a total of 365 verses that tell us to fear not! One for every single day of the year!

A total of 185 songs in the Bible.

Psalm 119 with 176 verses.

Psalm 117 it only has 2 verses.



Facing the Future Without Fear

Business Failures. Layoffs. A shaky stock market and weak economy, It's not hard to find things to be anxious over today. If it's not national crises, a variety of everyday problems can disturb us.

If you find that fear or anxiety of the future immobilizes you, try overcoming it through the simple act of remembering that our Heavenly Father who created you controls your life!

[Please send for the free booklet.](#)

["Facing the Future Without Fear"](#)

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Postal Address: P.O. Box 29, Tanunda SA 5352

Web Address: www.cog7aus.com

Editor Phil Kordahi

Assistant Editor David Kidd