

The monthly newsletter of the Royal Oak Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Miracle on the Mountain

It was Sunday, 16th of September 2001. I was skiing Mt Hutt in the South Island with some friends. I stood at the top of the South Face of Mt Hutt ready to tackle the steep run in a criss-cross slalom pattern. I remember jumping sideways to

useless and I was falling too fast to stop myself. As I tumbled, a ski instructor below me saw my plight and intercepted me. He tried desperately to arrest my fall. But I still feel 300m, the length of three rugby fields. Miraculously, I live

I fell 300m, the length of three rugby fields, and miraculously live today to testify to God's grace.

start and saying to myself, "Here we go!", and within seconds I was tumbling, disoriented, skis and poles flung aside. With rising panic, I accelerated helplessly down a one kilometre face of snow, ice, and exposed rocks. I remember my desperate attempts to stop my slide as I was instructed to, digging my elbows and heels into the snow, but to no avail. My left wrist was already broken and

today to testify to God's grace. I broke my left wrist, my nose and my neck in two places (C6 & C7). My hamstring was badly torn, and I sustained internal injuries and suffered severe bruising all over my body. But the injury that has had the most impact was the brain trauma I sustained which has left me 36% disabled. Through my ordeal, I prayed God would take me because I didn't want to die a long

Right - Debra Beckett



painful death. When it was over and I realised I would live, I said to God I would rehabilitate then dedicate the rest of my life to the advancement of His kingdom. Before my accident, I was a secondary school teacher, teaching Maths and Outdoor Education. I was about to join YWAM (Youth with a Mission), because I have a passion for Jesus. I did a nine month stint with YWAM in the Philippines, and wanted to do more. I was born and raised a Christian, first as a Presbyterian then a Pentecostal. But I was disillusioned with church. It
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Spring Has Definitely Sprung



These lovely photos taken by Lelane Fourie in early October, show new life around Auckland as Spring arrives for 2009. Although unseasonably cold recently, it's wonderful to see God's creation renewed with the arrival of warmer weather. All this new life reminds us that although we're nearing the end of time, and the world as we know it, God is still in control and His ultimate plan, to return us to Him, is still on track. New life is renewed hope and a reminder of the bright and endless future ahead. Praise the Lord!



Church Family Updates

Staying Connected & Celebrating our Fellowship



Nancy Tanuvasa-Jenkin

On Sabbath 16th of October Nancy Tanuvasa-Jenkin announced she was leaving Royal Oak Church to worship with her husband Ross, at the Pakuranga Church. Nancy and Ross are much loved members of our church family and will be greatly missed. Ross moved to Pakuranga for personal reasons and Nancy shared her time between churches because of her office as Worship Coordinator at Royal Oak Church. Sadly, we concur with your decision Nancy, and know that you will continue to serve God in your new church family. Our loss is Pakuranga's gain, both in gaining Ross and now Nancy full-time. May the Lord continue to richly bless and keep you both as you help grow His work in Pakuranga. Sadly, Nancy also lost her brother in the Samoan Tsunami disaster.

Special Music Feature

Sabbath 16th October also featured special music with Carol Spence, Geoff Beissner and Yvonne Parlane leading out in our congregational singing, then Geoff featured again with Jene Parilla when they sang a beautiful rendition of the old favourite, 'Search me O God'.

We're so blessed to have so many talented and willing people in our church family, who bless us all with their talents.

During offering, Diane Fraser (organ) and Rosalind Burnett played a magnificent arrangement of the song 'Because He Lives' by Bill and Gloria Gaither, for the offering.



Photos from the top right:-

Carol, Geoff and Yvonne lead out in singing.

Jene and Geoff sing 'Search me O God'

Diane on the organ

Rosalind on the piano



It was wonderful to catch up again with Des Cameron and two of his daughters, Heather and Delwyn. Des and wife Colleen, and their children - Murray, Heather and Delwyn, are past members of our Royal Oak Church family and have been attending other Auckland churches in recent years. Des was a deacon and Colleen a deaconess, and the children were involved in various church programs and activities, including Pathfinders. Des work in Sanitarium's electrical department and is a valuable member of their team.



Delwyn Cameron and her dad, Des

Former Teachers Visit

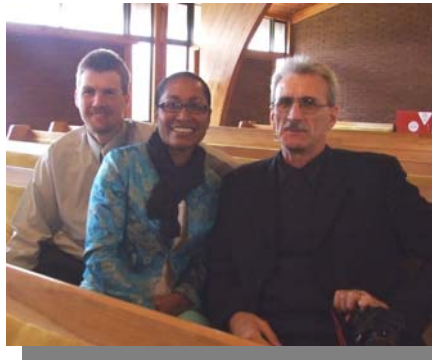
PRAYER CORNER

It was great to have a visit from Danny and Lidua (pronounced Lindua) Brooks, former teachers at our high school in Mangere (ASDAH), on Sabbath 10th of October. Danny and Lidua are now living and working in Christchurch and were in Auckland to visit family.

Both Danny and Lidua taught senior classes at ASDAH and were involved in both school and church activities. Danny sang bass for the Day-7 male choir (based at Papatoetoe Church), and both Danny and Lidua toured with Day-7 to Tahiti in 2004, where Lidua sang a supporting role in their three fund raising concerts.



Above - Danny and Lidua with two former students, who are part of our church family, Newton Fernandez (left) and David Mouat (right). Below - Danny and Lidua with Dion Fourie who also taught senior classes at ASDAH.



Please pray for;

Tsunami Victims, in Samoa and other islands that were hit following the 8.3 magnitude earthquake. 150 deaths in Samoa alone, even some of our church families. Please pray for the Lord's strength and comfort to fall on them. And if you can, offer some help in some way to those grieving the loss of loved ones.

Pastor Geoff Garne, who is recovering after surgery. He fell and broke his leg. Please also remember his wife, sister Olwyn, in your prayers.

Our Students both secondary and tertiary, who are entering the exam season for the end of third term, leading up to the end of year exams next term. Remember their need and be supportive of them in our church family as well.

Our newly baptised family members who need to know they're needed in our church, both as valuable members of our family and as joint-servants in the Lord's work. Be encouraging, affirming and supportive.

Our discouraged members - and there are probably more than we know. Please stay in touch with someone you may have noticed no longer attends regularly. Let them know they're missed, and if they're willing to share, then take the time to listen. Share a prayer, and let them know you care.



INTRODUCING... Rosanna Walton

by Nathan Reynolds

Over the past few months you may have noticed a new young, friendly and enthusiastic youth has been attending the Royal Oak church. For those of you who have not yet had a chance to meet her, I had the privilege of interviewing her on Saturday. Rosanna is a young Aucklander who is currently studying at Auckland University. She is studying Geography and Environmental Science. She has a great interest in how our beautiful planet has been put together. She has two brothers and one pet. During her younger life she attended Halsey Drive Primary school which is located in Lynfield. For her high school years she attended Lynfield college.

Rosanna had been introduced to Christianity when she was quite young and used to attend Sunday school as a young girl. In her early teens she

attended youth groups, but mainly for social reasons as she could meet many of her friends there. Her interest in Christ grew when she was visiting her boyfriend in Christchurch early this year. She attended one of the All Power seminars that Leo Schreven was conducting down there. Just one night of his seminar sparked an enthusiasm to learn more. She was told about Royal Oak church by a pastor in Christchurch and decided to check us out! Since that time she has thoroughly enjoyed learning more about the Bible and more about what we believe. She is now also attending Friday night Bible study at Milca's house and is really enjoying the in-depth studies that take place there. You may have noticed Rosanna singing up the front of church during our recent Youth Service which happened on the 10th of October, she said "I really liked the Higher Higher song!", a.k.a. "Cast your Burdens".



Rosanna Walton (right) and Lily Feng, two beautiful young women in our Royal Oak Church family

Adventurers Visit Ambury Park and Farm



Above - the kids loved the rabbits in their hutches. Below - Christine Fourie led a small band of students and helped with their learning. Right - Diane Fraser with her small group of followers.

Our Royal Oak Church Adventurers Club visited the Ambury Park Reserve and working farm on Sunday 18th of October. Ambury Park is in Mangere Bridge. Visitors are welcome to touch and feed the animals, and the children had a great time experiencing a little of the country life in the city.

Some animals weren't ready to be touched, like the peacock, but the fluffy ones, like the spring lambs, were quite happy to snuggle nest to their enclosure and let you pat them while they relaxed.

Afterward, some of the children were given small animals, like snails, to care and look after for two weeks, as part of their Adventurer honour.



Christmas Boxes Delivered

A great big thank you to all those who contributed this year. Our Royal Oak Church family gave 41 Christmas boxes this year - what a great effort everyone, thank you. Thank you also to Diane Fraser who organised this mammoth

effort, then collected all the presents, and delivered them to the Operation Christmas Child warehouse in Henderson. At the warehouse, the gifts are checked, sorted in the age and gender, then packed into container ready for shipping.

Although it may cost us a little time, money and effort, the joy and love that the children feel is priceless. Well done Royal Oak!



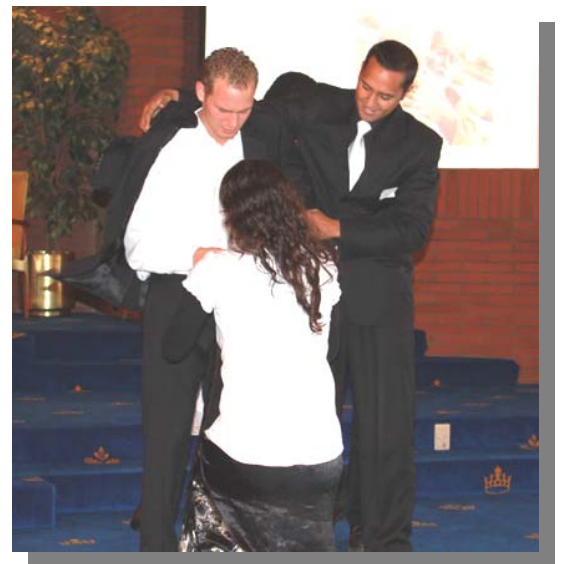
Left - Connor guarding the Christmas Boxes in the back of his mum's car, and right - just some of the many Christmas Boxes at the warehouse in Henderson.



YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE THE LEAD IN YOUTH SERVICE



October 10 and our youth stepped up to take our main church service, and what a service it was. From the start, it was different. It was well organised and polished and the delivery was exceptional. Beginning with congregational singing followed by a multi-language prayer that reflected our broad ethnic origins as a church, then a polished sermon presentation by Ben Reynolds illustrated by sporadic sketches acted out by the young people. The program also included our children who presented a lovely item.



Their message centred around the well known story of the Prodigal Son, and more specifically on the nuances of the cultural and traditional insensitivities of the son toward the father and family.

Ben's key thought; "As the Prodigal Son made his way home, prepared to forego the status of a son and become one of the hired servants, he realised that he was fully dependent on his father's mercy." The high standard of thought, preparation and delivery by our youth bodes well for our church family, and we need more such services from our young people. Well done!



Photos from top;

Song leaders during Praise and Worship, Ben Reynolds, our main speaker, Nathan, Joshua and Fallon acting out the story of the Prodigal Son, and the children singing "Jesus loves me this I know".

Soon to be Married.... Glen & Amanda

by Catherine Bichan

How did you meet and where?

We first made contact online and then went out for a date where we went to Mission bay for fish and chips. And it carried on since then.

When did you know you were interested in each other romantically?

We connected straight away and found we had a lot in common.

How has premarital counseling gone?

Amanda: I really enjoyed it. It's been good getting to know more things about Glen even though I know him pretty well already. It's been good to talk over some things that perhaps we wouldn't have covered if we didn't do premarital counseling.

Glen: I really enjoyed it! I learnt even more about Amanda. Daniel was a great counselor. We also discussed personality traits and some of the habits each of us have which has helped us understand each other even more than we currently do. I've recommended it to my other friends that have just got engaged.

When and where are you going to get married?

We are getting married toward the end of October at a lovely venue near Gordonton. Amanda's family are from Hamilton and mine are from Auckland, so the two families will be meeting each other in the middle.

Are you going to do anything special for your wedding?

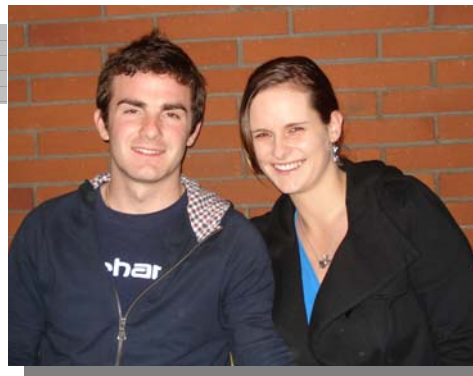
We will be getting married. Our wedding day will be the most special day of our lives. We'll be celebrating it with our close friends and family, with many that have traveled half-way across the world to be there with us.

What kind of wedding are you going to have traditional or non?

A traditional wedding. We have a big bridal party though because we've got so many close friends. We are getting married at a venue with gardens and pastor Marty Luke from Hamilton Church will be marrying us.

What are you going to do for your honeymoon?

We'll be going to Great Barrier Island for a week during December. We've got exams almost straight



Glen & Amanda

after the wedding so we won't be able to run away as quickly as we'd like.

What counsel would you give to a single person who would like to find a life mate?

Amanda: Hang in there and wait for the right person.

Glen: Be yourself and don't be afraid to ask someone out for a date. The worst that can happen is that they might say no

Where are you going to live after you're married?

Amanda: Auckland but we'd ideally like to live in a smaller city that's less suburban.

Glen: Auckland for now, but it would be nice to live in a smaller town some day. Maybe the South of France?

Soon to be Married.... Matthew & Catherine

How did you meet and where?

We meet in Wellington, in our first year of university. We both stayed in the same hostel (we shared a wall, to be exact). Matthew was from New Plymouth, and Catherine was from Palmerston North.

When did you know you were interested in each other romantically?

Matthew: I would say, very soon after laying eyes on her.

Catherine: It took me about 2 years to actually figure out my feelings for Matthew. We were great friends, and did everything together. He was, and is, my best friend.

How has premarital counseling gone?

Matthew: It's been an interesting

experience, but as we already had a firm foundation to our relationship, it wasn't overly challenging, or difficult.

Catherine: I've found it so exciting. It's been great learning about each other, and having prior knowledge reaffirmed. It's been such an awesome experience, and the fact that we did it together... I think it's actually made us even closer. It was great having Daniel and Nerida taking us through it all; we had a real life couple as an example. It really was a great experience.

When and where are you going to get married?

We're getting married at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in New Plymouth, Friday 13th of November. We would have loved



Catherine & Matthew

to be married in Royal Oak Church, but our families are too far away for that to have worked well. But if anyone's in the neighbourhood on Friday the 13th... we'd love to share the day with you. Ceremony starts at 1:30pm.

Are you going to do anything special for your wedding?

The wedding, itself, will be special. (Continued on page 7)

Miracle on the Mountain (con't)

(Continued from page 1)

became more like a self-help Sunday club. I prayed for God to show me the 'Acts 2' church of today that was more about truth than a home group.

I attended a Ross Patterson seminar on Biblical Discoveries and Prophecy which was advertised in Challenge weekly, and that whetted my thirst for more, especially as I'd visited three of the four sites he talked about. I decided that whichever church was teaching these truths was indeed the church with the truth. I wasn't prepared when I was told it was the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I attended my first Adventist church in November last year and after getting answers to all my questions, decided that this was the true church, the church with the truth. I attended the second half of Leo Schreven's Christchurch seminar

then in April this year attended his All Power seminars in Auckland, hosted by Royal Oak SDA Church. This is how I've come to be part of the Royal Oak Church family. I really appreciate the Seventh-day Adventist church's holistic view on faith, the Bible, Health, Family, Education, and it's worldwide focus. A highlight of my life was a recent trip to the site of the Ark in Turkey, organised by Anchorstone International and Discovery News. It just reinforced that I'd found the truth.

I also really appreciate Royal Oak Church; Pastor Daniel's Biblical teaching, the encouragement in my Christian walk, the health message taught by Nerida, the strong sense of family and our church lunches as a time of fellowship and sharing, especially as I live on my own. It's been eight years since my accident, and I've had miracles

happen to me along the way. I've learned to walk again, then to run again, and I've even gone on to complete my first marathon, the New York Marathon in 2006.

I draw lessons from my fall that parallel Paul's life and I'll leave these as a lingering thought with you.

Paul fell down - I fell down the mountain. Paul was blind for 3 days - I'm recovering, even after 8 years. Jesus sends Ananias to Paul - I attended the Discovery News seminar that started my search. The scales fell off Paul's eyes and he saw the truth - I discovered the Adventist church as the church with the truth. Paul received meat - I've been blessed with understanding of the Word. Paul preached Jesus and Him crucified - I am ready and keen to minister to the Glory of God's Kingdom.

Matthew & Catherine (con't)

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But we're going to spend the day with family and friends. And we're very lucky to have Pastor Daniel doing the honours.

What kind of wedding are you going to have traditional or non?

We would like to keep the atmosphere and significance of the wedding traditional, but we'd also like to add our own twist and personality to it.

What are you going to do for your honeymoon?

We're not 100% sure just yet. It'd be nice to get away somewhere, but we're just not sure.

What counsel would you give to a single person who would like to find a life mate?

Matthew: Never stop looking for The One, and when you've found them, never give up.

Catherine: I would say, discover who you are first. You need to be genuine to yourself. Then you can be open and honest with another person. Oh, and read. There are a lot of good books out there about relationships.

Where are you going to live after you're married?

Probably in Auckland for a little bit, but hopefully somewhere a bit more secluded, after that.

CAUGHT ON CAMERA

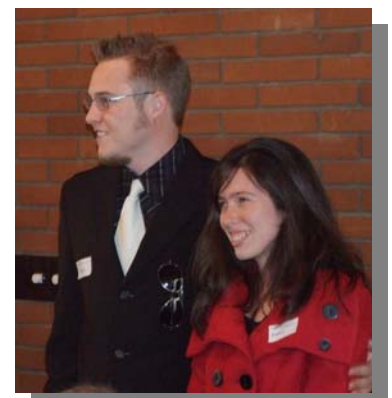


Above - Lovely to see Anna-Marie with her baby and partner. Congratulations and welcome home.

Below - Also great to see Matthew Davidson and his girlfriend. We hope to get to meet her via Connect next time.



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The Law of God

Ben Reynolds

“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully” (1 Tim. 1:8).

This passage of Scripture tells us something very important. The law can be a good thing, but it can also be a bad thing. What? How could God’s law possible be bad? Well, the law doesn’t actually change, but it’s what you do with it that makes the difference. In this study, we want to look at the law in general, and then we’re going to look at how the law is to be used “lawfully.”

The REAL Law

Many Christians have often missed the Law for the laws. In their sincere and earnest attempt to keep the 10 Commandments they have neglected the *real* Law. I will never forget the shock I received when I realised that the 10 Commandments are not the real Law. This dawned on me when I asked myself, “Did God ever have to tell the angels not to commit adultery?” (I’m not even sure they can!). Or did He ever have to say to them, “Honour your father and mother?” Probably not. So what then is the real Law? Jesus answers this very question in Matthew 22:36-40. “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Here we find the Law behind the laws – LOVE.

Paul speaks likewise in Romans 13:8-10. “Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.” He then goes on to list part of the 10 Commandments and then says, “and if there is any other commandment, they are all summed up in this saying, namely, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ Love does no harm to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

Now some people think that since love is the fulfilling of the Law, they can forget the 10 Commandments. Don’t be silly! Jesus said that all the

“Law and the Prophets” spring from the great principle of love. If I love God, I will naturally keep the first four commandments because I won’t want to worship anyone else; I won’t want to worship idols; I won’t take His name in vain; I won’t want to neglect His Sabbath. Likewise, if I love my neighbour, I will naturally be keeping the last six commandments because I won’t want steal people’s stuff; I won’t covet what others have; I won’t be unfaithful or untruthful and so on. You see, love to God and to our neighbours is the centerpiece of Christianity. It points us to the Law behind the laws and reveals to us the motivation for keeping the commandments – because we love God and love our fellow man. Keep in mind, love is something that is proactive, not inactive. Too often when we think of the Law, we think of all the things we can’t do. But the true Law is about the good things that we *can* and *should* do. One writer has said that “A religion which consists in *thou shalt not*s is bound to end in failure.” That is why we must look behind the laws to the real Law and see that it consists, not of refraining, but loving, and in doing so, the refraining will simply become the byproduct of a loving relationship to God and others.

The PURPOSE of the Law

Now that we understand the real Law, let’s move on to briefly look at the purpose of the law. Before sin entered the world, Adam and Eve naturally lived the law of love. But once sin came in, it caused us to naturally do the opposite. From the Fall through to the time God called His people out of 400 years in slavery, the law had been so long forgotten that God had to tell

them not to do this and that, by speaking audibly from Mt Sinai and also writing what He had said in stone (Ex. 20). This

became the moral standard for God’s people. But later on, man had glorified the law to the point that they thought it could bring them salvation. This is why we find Paul combating against this idea so much in his letters, such as Romans 3:20, “No one will be justified by keeping the law.” So then, what is the purpose of the law? Why did God give it to us?

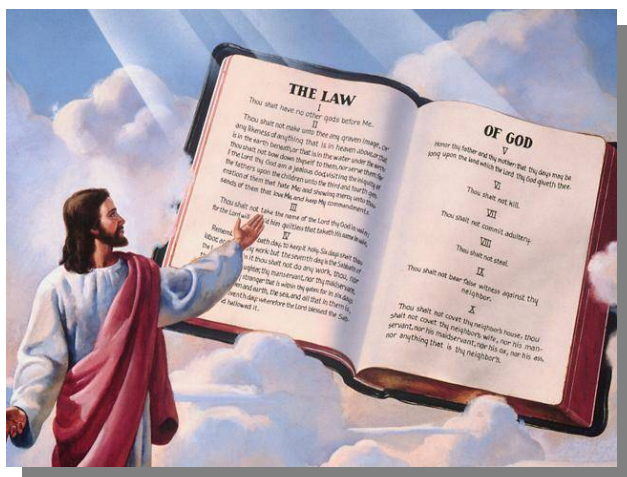
First, the Law of God is an expression of His character. How are we to know what God is like? Look at the Law, as we did earlier, and there we find love. 1 John 4:8 demonstrates the truth of this when it says that “God is love.” How silly it would be to say that the Law is done away with? If that were to happen, how would we know what God is like?

Second, the Law reveals sin. “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ‘You shall not covet.’” (Rom. 3:20; 7:7). Elsewhere, the Law is compared to a mirror. It reveals to us our lost, sinful condition (James 1:23-25). The law is an expression of God’s character and this is why when we look at it, we see in it a reflection of how far short we are of that perfect character.

Third, the Law points us to Jesus.

After seeing God’s character and how far we have fallen from grace, the law drives us to Jesus. He was the Law of love personified. He is the only One who has kept the Law perfectly – after all, it is a reflection of Himself! No matter how hard we might try, we cannot keep the law to be saved. We are saved totally, exclusively, definitively by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8-9). Whenever we fall, the law tells us that we have failed. Our only hope is in being led to accept the forgiveness of our sins at the foot of the cross. Paul paints

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Buzz Lightyear Helps Teach a Lesson

(Continued from page 8)

a similar picture when he speaks of the law as our “tutor,” that leads us to Christ that we might be justified by faith (Gal. 3:24).

Much more could be said on the purpose of the Law. But it must be emphasized again, that the Law is not a *method* of salvation, but it is a *standard* for holy living. This is the true meaning of our opening text, “the law is good, if it is used lawfully.” The law is to reveal to us God’s character; it’s to reveal our own sinful character; and by doing so, it will drive us to Jesus. It is our standard for living lives of holiness for God, not for gaining salvation. We keep the Law not to be saved, but because we are saved. Jesus says that our love towards Him will be demonstrated in our loving obedience to Him (John 14:15).

Some may object and say that we are not under the law, but under grace. That’s true, but you know what? Grace is nonsense without the Law. If we don’t have the Law, we don’t have sin. And if we don’t have sin, we don’t need grace! This is why the Law is so important. It reveals our lost, sinful state and why we desperately need a Saviour.

Still others may think that those who keep the Law are in bondage and that it is restrictive to their happiness. But let me ask, If I kept the law of the land, am I going to be locked up in bondage or am I going to be free? If I keep to the speed limit to avoid getting a traffic fine, am I going to be happy or sad? You see, the Law is not in any way a burden or restriction to our happiness. In fact, in one place the Bible calls it the Law of liberty (James 1: 25; 2:12). It is there for our own good; in a similar way the law of the land is in place to protect us.

Let’s conclude our study on the Law with the Bible’s own conclusion. In Revelation, God’s people are described as “those who keep the commandments of God” (Rev. 12:17; 14:12). The reason why I believe in the importance of the Law is because those who follow God right to the end, will be those who keep it. Jesus also describes His followers in the same way by getting back to the heart of the matter, “By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another” (John 13:35).

**“Love is the fulfilling of the law”
(Rom. 13:10).**

During our children’s story recently, Buzz Lightyear was instrumental in teaching our children about heroes, when Angelia Reynolds told the story of David. David’s bestest toy and most favouritest hero was Buzz Lightyear. When David played as Buzz, he would shout, “To infinity and beyond!”, then he would jump up and run around as though he was flying. But one day, as he was playing at grandma’s house, David jumped off grandma’s stairs and landed hard, hurting himself.

So what was the lesson Buzz Lightyear taught our children? We need to be clear who our real hero is. We need to know that it’s OK to have heroes, but that if we’re

going to copy any hero, the only one worth being like is - Jesus! The children were enthralled while Angelia told the story of David, and when Angelia finished her story she asked them, “Who is your hero?” The children were clear who their real hero is, and that’s Jesus. A very creative way to teach our children a very important lesson, one we’re confident they’ll remember because Buzz Lightyear helped to teach them the lesson.



Angelia Reynolds holds her listeners enthralled with the help of Buzz.



LONG LIVE THE QUEEN!

FROM OUR EMAILS FILE

Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2002. That is 50 years as monarch of Great Britain and the head of the Commonwealth. In case we forget the significance of this great service to her subjects, these photos of her with eleven past and living world leaders should remind us of her dedication and sense of service, something we are unlikely to see again in this world. Long live the Queen!



With President Obama



With President G. W. Bush



With President Clinton



With President G. Bush



With President Reagan



With President Carter



With President Ford



With Prime Minister Heath and President Nixon



With President & Mrs Kennedy



With President Eisenhower



With President Truman

An Old Chinese Proverb

An elderly Chinese woman had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole, which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

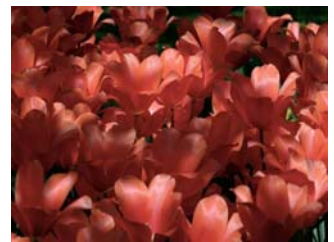
For a full two years this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do.

After 2 years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream.

"I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The old woman smiled, "Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table.

Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house." Each of us has our own unique flaw... But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them.



THE OLD CROWD

An older gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and he insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation. As he was about to get the anaesthetic, he asked to speak to his son.

'Yes, Dad, what is it? '

'Don't be nervous, son. Do your best and just remember, if it doesn't go well, if something happens to me your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife.'

Aging:

Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

The Family Tree of Vincent Van Gogh

Been around a long time but here it is again....

His dizzy aunt
 The brother who ate prunes
 The brother who worked at a convenience store
 The grandfather from Yugoslavia
 His magician uncle
 His Mexican cousin
 The Mexican cousin's American half-brother
 The nephew who drove a stage coach
 The constipated uncle
 The ballroom dancing aunt
 The bird lover uncle
 The fruit-loving cousin
 An aunt who taught positive thinking
 The little bouncy nephew
 A sister who loved disco
 And his niece who travels the country in an RV

Verti Gogh
 Gotta Gogh
 Stop N Gogh
 U Gogh
 Where-diddy Gogh
 A Mee Gogh
 Gring Gogh
 Wells-far Gogh
 Can't Gogh
 Tang Gogh
 Flamin Gogh
 Man Gogh
 Way-to-Gogh
 Poe Gogh
 Go Gogh
 Winnie Bay Gogh

I saw you smiling . . .

there ya Gogh!



POINT OF VIEW

Mark Ryan

Mid-October and TVNZ screened an award winning two part mini-series called Impact. It was on Wednesday nights.

The story is a science fiction tale about a brown dwarf (a dead star), hitting the moon and changing the lunar orbit, bringing the moon closer to earth and threatening all life on the planet. It causes phenomena like gravitational decay, causing objects and people to become weightless and float around in the air for short periods before crashing back to earth.

As a story it was a fascinating watch, although I didn't get to watch the two episodes all the way through. (Too much else happening in life to spend two hours watching TV.)

As a scientific concept, it was even more fascinating because it's unprecedented and therefore only a 'best guess' scenario as to what might happen if the moon were to change its orbit.

The idea though, made me think about this issue on several other levels, and to ask questions.

Mathematical Probability

If such an event was possible, and the potential is definitely very strong that it could, why hasn't it happened already? In the expanses of space, with its unnumbered meteors, asteroids, planets and stars, the probability of such a catastrophic event happening must be very high, and yet it hasn't. Why?

Astronomical Precision

The story raises the question of just how precise the orbits of the celestial bodies are. If the moon's orbit around the earth were to change even by a fraction of a degree, it would throw off the balance of the gravitation forces

controlling the speed, orbit and timing of the moons path, such that we could not predict what would happen. The moon could drift closer or further away from earth, ee don't know. And that's because the laws governing these movements are so precise and unchanging. And that's just for the moon's orbit around earth. The same precision applies to earth's orbit around the sun, and all the other celestial movements throughout space. The precision is too accurate to be random and suggests some over-arching controller or intellect. Yet science cannot accept there's a designer, only that we don't know yet. Why? Without a creator, there should be no order and no precision; only chaos. And yet??

The Answer Within

It seems the entertainment industry is struggling to find fresh ideas for entertainment. The most popular genre on TV at the moment seems to be police dramas, then science fiction and then the occult. In each case, it's the people who solve the problem and save the day.

This mini series is science-based conjecture outside what we know, but interestingly continues to look within, to humanity, for the answer. It would appear, at least to the entertainment industry (and I suspect to the wider secular communities of the developed world), that the only salvation for man is man himself. Regardless of whether the catastrophe is man-made or outside his control, I guess it's a natural human

reflex to try and solve it on our own. And that's to be expected I guess, except that at some point, we need to accept there are things and occasions when we just don't have the answers within, but that our salvation is from outside of ourselves. Where is the search for new ideas going to lead? It appears more into the occult. Perhaps a cinematic depiction of the Second Advent? Unlikely. Too religious and controversial, and yet there is no problem with depicting witches, vampires and the like. Why?

Looking to the Heavens

Since early last century, interest in space has steadily increased as technology has improved and we learn more about our universe. Meanwhile, our planet struggles to survive; running out of fuel, food, water and room to dump our waste. Our population explosion is going to make scarce resources even more scarce and create competition for air, water, food, fuel and so on.

Man is looking to escape the gravitation grip of this world and migrate to another planet. As a Christian, it seems ironic that that's what God offers to do for humanity, at least for 1,000 years, then return us to this planet, which He made for us. There is no other world or planet for us, but this one. The one God created specifically with all the precision and resources to sustain us. So why do we, humanity, continue to look inward? Why can't we see that we're doomed if left to our own devices?

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I REALLY LIKE YOUR BIBLE, DAD ... HOW DO YOU TURN IT ON?