



Lawyers' Christian Fellowship Newsletter

www.lawyerschristianfellowship.org

January 2004



Opening of Law Term Services 2nd February 2004

Sydney CBD

St James Anglican Church, King St, Sydney at 10.30am.

Parramatta CBD



The rebuilt St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta at 10.30am.

Dr Ross Clifford, Principal of Morling College, will address the Parramatta service. Dr Clifford is the author of "Leading lawyers look at the Resurrection" and "Riding the Rollercoaster"

Temporary Web Address

We have resorted to our old website address while the new one is upgraded

www.lcf.pnc.com.au

R.E.S.T.

Reminding us of the acronym used by Rev Michael Corbett-Jones at an LCF weekend away—T.A.T.S.—Tired All the Time Syndrome, Bruce took us through another acronym - R.E.S.T. at last year's Christmas function. It is symptomatic of our times that we have lost the art of resting. We continue to fill our lives with more and more activity. Even our holidays are busy. We have lost the ability to just stop and rest. But the sort of rest that Bruce encouraged members to take up was not just rest from something but the rest that God promises in Scripture. A resting in God's peace.

Bruce suggested that to rest in God's peace we need to:

Release

Embrace

Stop

Trust

Release

To properly rest we need to release bitterness, anger, anxiety. If we do not then we may stop from our activity but when we do we will still be consumed by our feelings. We will never know peace while we hang onto bitterness and anger. We need to forgive. Ironically, often the person who benefits most from forgiveness is the forgiver. Bruce challenged us to stop and reflect on those we need to forgive.

Embrace

The Psalmist tells us: "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will grant you the desires of your heart" (Ps 37:4). We need to embrace the desires of our hearts. For Bruce this meant pursuing theological study and working in conflict resolution. For many it will mean continuing as Christian lawyers. It is important however to stop and

Congratulations.

In 1980, Malcolm Fraser was Prime minister, John Lennon was assassinated and Jimmy Carter was the President of the USA, Margaret Thatcher was in power, the Iron Curtain was intact and Ken Handley QC became Chancellor of the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church. On 9 December last year the now Justice Ken Handley QC resigned from his position as Chancellor after 23 years of distinguished service. Archbishop Peter Jensen commenting on Justice Handley's retirement as Chancellor said "His advice to me is always careful, reasoned and godly."

Justice Handley's successor as Chancellor is another Fellowship member Michael Orpwood QC who is retiring from his position as Parliamentary Draftsman for the New South Wales Parliament.

search our heart and seek out our passions, gifts and desires - those things we feel God calling us to pursue. We need to answer that call, thank God for it, pursue it and delight in it. We must make room in our busy lives for these desires. That may also mean that we have to give up some things to make more room in your life for the desires of our heart.

Stop

Recalling the wonder of lying in bed with his son Lachlan as they heard the first cicada of the summer lead off a whole cicada symphony as they shared the magic of that moment together, Bruce encouraged us to take time out to stop and take in the beauty of God's creation. So often we miss the creation racing over the surface of the planet because we are too busy to just stop and observe the beauty of a moment - whether it be something in God's creation, or a special moment shared with a loved one.

Trust

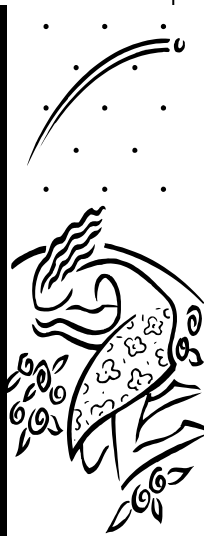
Quoting John Eldredge in his book *The Sacred Romance* Bruce said:

"When we hear the phrase "trust totally in God" most of us probably sigh, hearing it as one more requirement that we have never been able to live up to. But what if we were to listen to our hearts, and hear it as a need to faint, a need to lay down our "doings" and simply to make our needs known to Christ, and rest in Him?"

Reflecting on a life threatening illness that his son Lachlan faced, Bruce shared how he and his wife Helen had experienced the loving faithfulness of God through that time of trial, and encouraged us to truly know that we *can* trust Him, even when things are very difficult. We can rest in Him and He will take our burdens.

Jesus calls to each one of us: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt 11:28).

Bruce's prayer was that for each of us, in the midst of this the busiest time of year, we might come to Jesus the great lover of our souls and find out rest in Him.



Jeffrey Archer's Prison Diary

A Prison Diary Volume 1—Hell by Jeffrey Archer. McMillan 2003.

Like many Australians I paid little attention to the circumstances that lead to the incarceration of the author and British Lord, Jeffrey Archer. I have never been a fan of his fiction and was surprised to find this diary of Archer's first twenty two days of incarceration an entertaining and compassionate read.

For Archer it is really a look at life from the other side and he compassionately relates the dilemmas faced by his fellow inmates and the humiliation he experiences as a 60 year old man who has enjoyed the finest life has to offer. There is much humour and warmth in this book. Archer laments that he was one of those members of

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Parliament who touted the get tough on crime line and throw away the key policy of the Thatcher government. Now from the other side he sees the real problems in prison - drugs and he sees the futility of putting someone on remand for failure to pay fines with someone who is awaiting sentence for murder and is leaning on the fine defaulter to intimidate a witness on leaving prison. His prison experience however is not the norm - how many prisoners are asked to stop signing copies of their book because they have now all disappeared from the library. Similarly his "name card" on the exterior door of his cell also regularly disappears as it is souvenired by other prisoners.

While Archer professes no particular faith he does consider the chaplain both earnest and a force for good in the prison system. Ironically the first sermon Archer hears is on Cain & Abel (the title more or less of one of his early books).

While pompous and self indulgent at times Archer does leave readers questioning whether prison is really the best we can do to reform those who go off the rails.

A word of warning that some of the language and descriptions of crimes are strong and would attract an "R" rating if they were portrayed in the cinema. Archer does however apologise for the language but feels it necessary where he quotes someone and he does warn readers when gruesome detail is coming up. It is also pointed out to Archer and related in his book that other prisoners tend not to swear as much around "me Lord" because they do not want to come out looking bad in the book. For Archer disciplined writing is his sanity saver while incarcerated and for several of those incarcerated it is the opportunity to tell their story and hope that someone will listen and it will make a difference.

I look forward to the next instalment which is sub-titled "Purgatory" with the third about his experience in open prison to be subtitled "Heaven".

Steven Nicholson

Last year's Christmas function speaker was Bruce Burgess a masters of theology student at Morling Theological College and principal of Bruce Burgess Lawyers.

