

Welcome to the 2015 Spring/Summer National Newsletter!

City Bible Forum is a mission organisation reaching city workers with the good news of Jesus. In this edition of our newsletter, we focus on the different ways we have recently tried to connect with city workers.

Our teams across Australia have been busy organising and hosting events for Christian workers to invite their non-Christian colleagues to. These outreach events vary in scale, but all lead to the same goal: they create great opportunities for personal conversations about Jesus with individual workers. So far this year, our partners and staff have engaged with hundreds of non-Christians through our various activities, with many indicating an interest to explore Christianity. Interspersed throughout this newsletter are stories of partners and staff following up interested enquirers with new 1-1 bible studies that we profiled in our last newsletter: *The Word 1-1*.



“Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Colossians 4:5-6

Perth

In August 2015, almost a full-house of 75 workers and their friends attended Perth's intimate dinner event *Blood, Sweat & Treason*.

Visiting African cricketer Henry Olonga shared how he was the youngest player and first black man to represent Zimbabwe. During the 2003 World Cup, he and another player made a brave protest against the unjust Mugabe regime in his homeland. This led to government accusations of treason, the loss of his sporting career and enforced exile in the UK.

“My faith is a stabilising influence in my life and gives me hope in times of trouble... God helped me to understand that winning isn't everything... God can be found if you look for him... My faith has given me the impetus to continue after cricket.”

More than 25% of the audience were new contacts who are being followed-up by the Perth team.

“This was a fantastic evening. Really well organised and such a great time. Hearing from Henry Olonga was truly inspirational.”

Rose-Anne, Perth

“Excellent speaker, well presented. Thankyou for the opportunity.”

Hermand, Perth

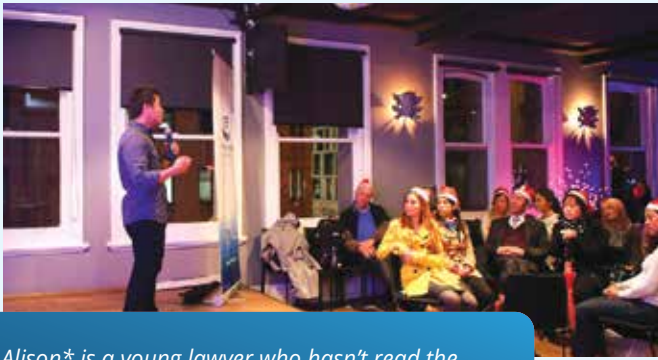
“Great venue, good dinner and excellent speaker. Thank you.”

Gwyn, Perth



*I have been reading **The Word 1-1** with 2 women working in the city on a weekly basis at lunch times. One of these women came along to a City Bible Forum event previously. I have seen a positive change where both felt more confident in asking questions. It has been a joy to see how their faces light up from the truth revealed through God's Word.*

Sophia, Sydney



My friend Alison* is a young lawyer who hasn't read the bible before. We had brunch on a Saturday and read the first chapter of **The Word 1-1**. I was amazed at how much she understood and her insightful comments. She suggested that we do it again sometime and asked great questions about life and faith.

Grace, Sydney

My colleague Jack* and I have been reading **The Word 1-1**. When we were reading the first study (John 1:1-18), he kept asking "Who is the Word? It is Jesus, right?" Once he discovered the answer and what Jesus brings, his eyes opened widely with excitement.

Arnold, Sydney



Sydney

Almost 100 city workers and their friends ventured out on an icy Sydney night to our event *Christmas in July*.

Food and musical entertainment in a warm venue were followed by Sydney staff member Sam Chan speaking on *3 things Hollywood teaches us about Christmas*:

"Life is more than eating, sleeping and paying the bills... That's why Jesus came, so we can give up everything and follow him... When it comes to saving ourselves we are hopeless. That's why God sent his child to save us."

More than 75% of the audience "liked" the event or said it was the "best night ever", with 15% being new contacts who were followed up by the Sydney team.

Melbourne

The Melbourne team host a fortnightly pre-recorded radio interview *Logos Live* with a live studio audience.

Christian workers are encouraged to bring their non-Christian colleagues. Earlier in the year, the series *Time Poor Soul Rich* explored the elusive Work/Life Balance with guest Anne Winckel:

"Every day is a gift. Life is short. We don't know when we will die. God is present in the ups and downs of life... God's love is the most soul-enriching thing... I want God to be part of my work."

These radio interviews attracted an average studio audience of 15 with more than 10% being non-Christian.

The delayed broadcast reaches an estimated average audience of 30,000 across Melbourne airwaves.

"Great job – a good balance of work and bible content, application and theory/theology."

Carney, Melbourne

"Good conversation and reflection, thanks!"

Ray, Melbourne

"Good timing and length, very encouraging session talking about a real world topic/issue."

Winston, Melbourne



I had brought a friend Daniel* along to several City Bible Forum events across multiple years, including one on the Resurrection. He always said he liked them. But I struggled to take him the next step and read the bible. When I showed him **The Word 1-1**, he said, "This looks great!" We are now 4 studies in and still going.

Malcolm, Melbourne



*Names changed for privacy



*I'm an American immigrant teaching six Chinese immigrants in a major Australian bank about Jesus. We have been using **The Word 1-1**. We have new people coming each week. Two weeks ago we gave Steve* his first bible. He had never studied the bible before and was hearing about Jesus for the first time. He was excited about coming back for more next week.*

Russell, Sydney

"Thanks: tonight was great! It was an easy invite for my non-Christian mates to come along. I was able to share my testimony with them."

Will, Sydney

"Thanks for a fantastic, relaxed night: really well-organised. It's easy for people to get colleagues at work involved."

Cathy, Sydney

"Great punchy talk, great message! Cozy, fun atmosphere. Delicious food!"

Richard, Sydney

I invited my mate Grant to the Sydney Lunchtime Forum & he's been coming all year, despite his busy schedule. Soon afterwards, I started reading **The Word 1-1** with him on Saturday mornings. In August, I was excited that he prayed to become a Christian after we read John 3. We're now reading Ephesians together.*

Geoff, Sydney

Adelaide

In July 2015, more than 300 workers attended our event *A Necessary Evil*.

Visiting Canadian theologian John Stackhouse (former lecturer at Regent College, Vancouver) spoke on the topic of Suffering in the context of the bible:

"God was willing to suffer for us to give us a fresh start... God can intervene in suffering. He is not indifferent to our suffering. Suffering is not pointless... Christians don't believe that death is the worst thing that can happen to them."

John shared personal experiences with suffering during the interactive Q&A session that followed the talk. More than 10% of the audience were new contacts who were followed-up by the Adelaide team.

"We brought friends to A Necessary Evil. They're close to faith and I was wondering how to best support them. They're also likely to come to our church, so this'll be a good opportunity needing lots of prayer!"

Rhonda*, Adelaide

"I had a good chat with my friend on the tram home after A Necessary Evil and he's interested to explore Christianity further."

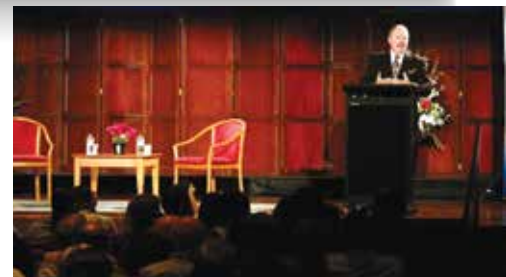
Patrick*, Adelaide

"Last night's talk by John Stackhouse was on exactly the conversations we had over dinner just before... God speaks into our needs so clearly it's amazing!"

Narelle*, Adelaide

My friend Albert has been reading **The Word 1-1** with me since the start of the year. He's not sure who Jesus is yet but he's keen on figuring out whether or not he's the real deal. He's recently started coming along to some of our City Bible Forum events.*

Shane, Adelaide



**Names changed for privacy*

Brisbane

Throughout 2015, the Brisbane team has been running weekly Tuesday Lunchtime Forums in the CBD for Christian workers to invite their non-Christian colleagues.

From July-September, the series of 10 talks *What if God were one of us?* focussed on Jesus coming to earth as a Man in John's gospel:

"Into darkness comes a man who claims to be the light of the world... Jesus is the eternal goodness of God revealed... Through Jesus we get to know God personally... Wouldn't that change everything?"

These talks attracted an average of 13 people with 15% being non-Christian.

"For a couple of years now I've brought a colleague to the Lunchtime Forums in Brisbane. As well as just being a good reason to get together, going with him gives me opportunities to discuss the talk with him afterward, and this in turn leads to other conversations."

Trevor*, Brisbane

"Hearing the Lunchtime Forum every week is refreshing and necessary for our self-absorbed culture. This has led me to a bigger view of God and a deeper conviction to tell my colleagues about Jesus."

Bill, Brisbane

"The Lunchtime Forums are a great way to hear biblical truths from godly people. I'm encouraged during the working week by fellow followers of Christ and challenged to be a disciple of Jesus in my workplace."

Garth, Brisbane

I've been praying for Tanya in our Evangelistic Prayer Team for a few years. Recently I introduced her to **The Word 1-1**. During our 2nd meeting, I shared that I don't worry about my future because I know God's in control of my life. She said, "Yes! I'm interested in that!" It's been such a thrill to see God's Word excite her heart.*

David, Brisbane

I've been meeting with Tony before work this year using **The Word 1-1**. It's been great to meet Jesus in the pages of the Word. Tom has been deeply impressed by Jesus as a true leader of men. For me personally, I've been confronted with Jesus who won't accept our attempts to domesticate him.*

Scott, Brisbane

*Names changed for privacy

Please pray

- Praise God that many people invited non-Christian friends & colleagues to our events
- Praise God that these events generated many opportunities for gospel conversations with workers
- Praise God that several workers are now reading the bible 1-1 to find out more about Christianity
- Pray that these workers will discover who Jesus is and respond to his love
- Pray that our conversations would always be full of grace and seasoned with salt
- Pray that we may be able to wisely answer the bigger questions in life asked by non-Christian enquirers

Contact us to join, pray or support our work:

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Perth team: perth@citybibleforum.org Sydney team: sydney@citybibleforum.org National team: info@citybibleforum.org