

Welcome to our Spring 2018 newsletter. Thank you for taking a moment to browse the stories and to pray for the ministry. As the public debate rages over religious freedom, God is still very much at work in the hearts and minds of people working in the cities of Australia. There is much for which we can be thankful! - Peter Kaldor



Stuart meeting with Al in Sydney

From Hedonist to Disciple-Maker Stuart's Transformation

How does God transform a man who has lived his life consumed by the pursuit of pleasure? Stuart admits to having lived the most lavish of lifestyles. A senior banking professional operating out of New York and London, he travelled the world, frequenting the best restaurants and the best hotels money could buy. At 70, Stuart is a sharp man, bluntly honest and full of stories. He admits to 'trophy-hunting' a string of women over the years as his marriage dissolved before him. Right now, it seems, God is using suffering – the converse of pleasure – to bring about His good purposes in Stuart.

What led him to ponder if he was 'happy with the person he was? What made him ask the questions that eventually led him - so late in life - to Jesus? Conversations with his business partner Kevin helped him ponder the importance of faith. Eventually, Stuart came to the realisation that his life was 'soulless'. He accepted Kevin's invitation to a City Bible Forum meeting with senior businessmen of faith, and accepted an offer from Peter Kaldor and Al Stewart for personal mentoring to explain the Bible that he says "was absolutely pivotal."

After a lifetime of good health, a painful case of shingles has brought new suffering into Stuart's life. He has been forced to make changes to his lifestyle, to visit a doctor for the first time in decades. Notably, it has made him wrestle with the sovereignty and goodness of God. He is questioning why suffering is integral to faith. His desire



For the Love of God

City Bible Forum partnered with the Centre for Public Christianity to bring their latest documentary 'For the Love of God' to city workers in eight cities around the country. All screenings hosted by City Bible Forum included a special panel discussion with two or more of the film makers John Dickson, Simon Smart, Justine Toh, Al Douthwaite and Natasha Moore. In almost every location the events were a sell-out, attracting over 2,500 guests in total. The Melbourne event had a sell-out crowd of almost 400 people filling the ACMI Theatre at Federation Square. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with people noting the documentary to be "thought-provoking". The collaboration with the Centre for Public Christianity provided an excellent opportunity for the public discussion of faith.

to truly know and understand the God he worships is palpable and infectious. Stuart joined a church near his home where he was baptised last year. In considering if he is happy with the person he now is, he says, "I've now come to a place where I trust in Jesus as my saviour who forgives me. Times have been tough the last few years but I am glad my life took this turn. I am more content now than I have ever been." Stuart aims to spend the rest of his life in active discipleship - in turning others to Christ.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Events provide an entry-point for people to hear the gospel in a non-threatening format. Hundreds of events have been run this year engaging thousands of people. The below highlights a small selection. It is our hope and prayer that all events lead to deeper relationships with people that eventually lead people to meet Jesus in the pages of the Bible.



Far left:
Guests in Adelaide
Left: Michael Ramsden
with Adelaide City
Director Craig

Trust us its Christmas: Does Integrity Matter Anymore? Michael Ramsden

Even the Mafia have integrity. This was the claim made by international speaker Michael Ramsden as he spoke on the topic of 'Integrity' to over 200 people at The Pavilion on the Park in Adelaide, on July 3rd. Michael challenged the audience to think through the culture in which they live and how our social circles influence the honesty of our interactions. What is our purpose and reason for being? As professionals, do our efforts to please our customer-base

compromise our core values? Several guests said it was the best talk they have ever heard. City Director Craig Broman said, "The follow-through with friends and colleagues on a wider scale has been incredible – it has been a wonderful on-going evangelistic opportunity." One person invited to the event by a work colleague has since become a Christian, another has started attending church with their friend.



Far left:
Os Guinness with Andrew Smith in Sydney
Left:
Guests in Sydney

The Smith Lecture: Is There a Future for Humanity? Os Guinness

On Thursday 31st May, the 18th annual Smith Lecture was held at the Swissôtel, Sydney, with the highly-regarded Os Guinness as guest speaker. With over 300 people in attendance, Os painted a mixed picture for the future of humanity. Reflecting on past threats to human flourishing he referenced the bombing of Hiroshima, warning that the horror we now face is subtler, more insidious. Os argued we are now living in a society striving to make the perfect

human being. A society that increasingly disregards the welfare and interests of the weak in favour of the strong. Referring to the creation account in Genesis, Os affirmed the inherent dignity of every individual, because every human being is created in the image of God. So, is it too late? No, not yet. There is hope. He urged continued diligence in the fight to protect the sanctity of every human life.

RECENT TALKS AVAILABLE IN OUR LIBRARY

Michael Ramsden

Does Integrity Matter Anymore?

Max Jeganathan

What Does Real Success Look Like?

Markets, Materialism and the Search for Meaning

Al Stewart

The Quest for Meaning: False Trails & Answers

Find the Most Precious Jewel

Dr Luke Barnes

A Fortunate Universe

Stephen Lam

Crossing the Cultural Divide

Effective negotiation - Finding Compromise

Without Being Compromised

Robert Martin

Is There an Answer to Death?

Michael Jensen

Live at Peace

Sam Chan

Did you know that Jesus was friends

with the seedy and corrupt?

How to Survive the Daily Grind

Os Guinness

Is there a Future for Humanity?

A great selection of talks from our regular meetings, and our fortnightly radio show are also available. To access all talks go to: citybibleforum.org/library

ONE-TO-ONE BIBLE READING

We consistently see it is the word of God that transforms hearts and minds. This year City Bible Forum has appointed a dedicated staff member to promote the Word One-to-One Bible reading series to encourage and support more Christians to read the Bible with their friends and colleagues.

The resources are being used extensively and we are thrilled to see what God is doing in Brisbane. Each week we hear of another person saying yes to meet Jesus in the pages of the Bible. Two years ago, in Brisbane, we set ourselves a goal of engaging 100 people in Bible reading by 2019. To date we're at 49. In God's mercy, one-by-one people are becoming Christians.

Peter has been reading with Scott Pasley in Brisbane. He commented, "I think reading the Bible in its own



City Bible Forum staff member Scott reading the Bible with Peter (Brisbane)

context has helped clear up my misconceptions about popular views of the Bible. Reading the Bible has helped me be less stressed about things and has allowed me to see a new perspective on problems in life. I now have a better understanding of gratitude and forgiveness that I can use in my life. I have enjoyed getting inside the stories, going deeper, and getting more meaning about God's word."

EVANGELISTIC PRAYER TEAMS

Evangelistic Prayer Teams (EPTs) are groups of people meeting weekly or fortnightly to pray for opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus at work, while enjoying the fellowship and encouragement of other Christians. 735 people are involved in City Bible Forum EPTs all around the country.

Perth resident PJ has worked four different jobs in four years. Through her experience of workplace bullying, she remained steadfast in her faith, even witnessing God's intervention through the reform of colleagues in what was a particularly toxic team.

"I currently work with The Smith Family and am loving it. It is such an answer to prayer after a tumultuous couple of years in difficult workplaces," PJ says. "With the support of my prayer team, over time, God answered our prayers and gave me servant-hearted boldness and a series of

culture-moulding initiatives. He moved in a toxic workplace to restore good team relationships, leading to gospel opportunities."

Throughout the difficulties, PJ has always been part of an Evangelistic Prayer Team. As she has changed jobs and locations, she's been able to join new prayer teams near her new workplaces. She shared, "I'm so blessed that the EPT network exists the length of the CBD and beyond. I've been in EPTs for more than five years and I've been supported in prayer for grace, wisdom, and patience to love difficult co-workers and managers. God has been faithful in using me to bring His love, His light and the gospel to places of darkness."

In Hobart, by the grace of God we've started a new group for workers in the Salamanca area and seen some groups start to really flourish. As we

grow, our need for volunteer leaders increases and we see the limits of what staff can achieve on their own. These growing pains come out of the incredible blessing of a growing ministry. God has also blessed our EPTs with big and small encouragements – from the candid discussions of faith at work all the way to members bringing colleagues along to hear the gospel!



EPT member PJ (Perth)

If you would like to join or start an EPT in or near your workplace, contact us for more information and resources, or go to citybibleforum.org/ept.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SYMPOSIUM

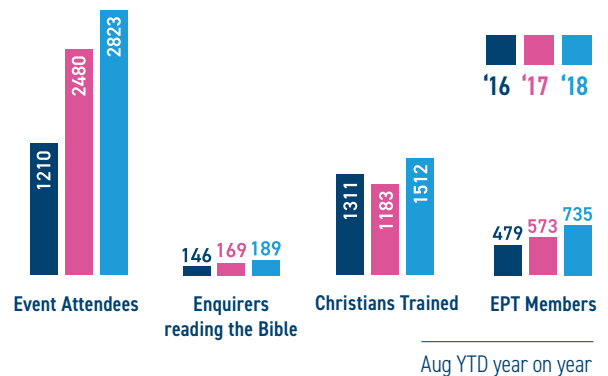


A symposium co-convened by the City Bible Forum, St Mark's National Theological Centre and the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture was held on October 24th in Canberra, with the aim of encouraging rigorous and respectful public discussion on religious freedom. This followed the recent selective media leak of recommendations from the as-yet unreleased Religious Freedom Review. Early feedback indicates that tensions are still well and truly alive with much interest for another symposium focusing on the rights and responsibilities of religious schools.

PROGRESS UPDATE

This year has been a particularly busy one with hundreds of events engaging more than 5,000 people across the country. We have seen steady progress toward our big goal of reading the Bible with 1,000 enquirers. Please pray that God will create more opportunities for people to explore the Bible in relationship with other Christians. Most exciting for us is seeing God at work in Brisbane with 49 people now reading the Bible one-to-one.







The number of Christians being trained in evangelism and discipleship has exceeded our expectations with approximately 1,500 people gaining new skills to aid them in sharing Jesus with their friends and colleagues. Our evangelistic prayer teams have also shown exciting growth with 735 people now engaged in groups. We have



been very pleased to share our team mate Sam Chan at numerous school, university, church and conference events across Australia and overseas. Sam has addressed over 3,000 people at such outreach events and trained over 5,000 in personal evangelism.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

There are lots of ways to get involved in the work of City Bible Forum in your city. Go to our website for more information or contact us to discuss your specific interest.

-  **Join or start an Evangelistic Prayer Team (EPT) or group in your workplace**
-  **Join an existing professional network**
-  **Invite a friend or colleague to an upcoming event or conference**
-  **Get trained in workplace evangelism or how to read the Bible One-to-One with a friend or colleague**
-  **Browse our website for access to hundreds of videos, podcasts and guides available for free download**
-  **Provide valuable financial support to help sustain the ministry of City Bible Forum into 2019**

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