



VISION NEWSLETTER

A publication of

Vision Ministries Inc.

Mobilising Australians for Jesus

“Alive In Christ” Vol. 2 No 73 and Newsletter
From Bishop Harry Westcott & Rev Jeffrey Evans

THE FATHERS HEART

“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.” Luke 15:20

This verse from the parable of the prodigal son, spoken by Jesus to the Pharisees and scribes after their persistent complaints about the company that Jesus was keeping, is incredibly revealing regarding the nature of the Father and the foundations of the Kingdom of God. The imagery contained within this verse is astounding and incredibly challenging.

“But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him...”

What a picture of faith, hope and expectation. In my mind’s eye, I have this image of that no matter where the father is, or what he is doing, his eyes are constantly returning to the path his son must travel to return home. What are we looking for? What do our eyes constantly return to? It would seem to me, that for many, our eyes are not on the lost or those made destitute by prodigal living. Our eyes are on our own selfish desires – constantly looking for a blessing, success, power, anointing and recognition – our eyes rarely stray from ourselves. The father could have allowed himself to be consumed by despair, heartache and a crushing sense of failure – and I’ve no doubt that these emotions visited him – but he still chose to watch the road knowing that his son would return! How incredible is the father’s love! For when “he was still a great way off...” - most of us make judgements about where people are at – and even make it sound spiritual by saying “They are close to the kingdom”, but the father saw his son when he was a great way off – oh, that we may have faith to see even when they are a long way off.

Jeff celebrating his 40th Birthday on family holidays in Forster, NSW.



“His father saw him and had compassion, and ran...” The son is still a long way off, but the father saw him and had compassion. How far have we moved from that place of compassion both corporately as churches and as individuals? Do you see the world as an evil place full of sinners and retreat to your own safe place of personal salvation and righteousness that leads to judgement and fear or do you see the world through the eyes of compassion looking not with fear or condemnation but faith love, and grace, expecting the opportunity to participate in kingdom transformations with individual lives and communities? How can we have strayed so far from ambassadorship to the gatekeepers of righteousness - policemen, judges and executioners rather than advocates, servants and mediators? The father ran.... He saw, was moved with compassion and ran. What a picture of the heart of the Father!!! The father didn’t make a hesitant step forward, he didn’t think of his own position, his own heartache or his overwhelming disappointment in his son – he simply ran to him... Hallelujah!! What a Father we have!!

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How can we reach what we fear? James Baldwin an American civil rights leader once said, *“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced”*. Dear friends I believe it is time that we returned to the foundations of the Kingdom – Its time we faced our religious rhetoric, our ivory towers and our golden calves and found our hearts stirred into action by compassion, our eyes focused again on the things that our Heavenly Father deems as priority - PEOPLE! May we as Gods people emulate the father of the prodigal son and see those Christ came to redeem plucked from prodigal obscurity and restored to the Kingdom of Gods amazing love!

May 2009 be a year of Harvest for the Kingdom of God. May your family find reconciliation - May your prodigals return home and may your eyes see the world as that of the Father – in Jesus Name!

Much love and blessing to each of you our faithful and fruitful friends.

Jeffrey

UPCOMING MINISTRY:

- **4 - 5 April:** Missionary guest: **Amee Glass** from Alice Springs.
 - **10 - 12 April:** **Easter at Mamre**
 - **18 - 24 April:** South Australia Camp Meeting **"Cherith Brook" Morgan:** This is the third Camp Meeting Hosted by **Rev Graham and Julie Amber** at their property "Cherith Brook" on the beautiful Murray River near Morgan. It is a fantastic venue and Caravans and Tents are most welcome. Registration is free but numbers need to be known. So please contact Graham and Julie on 08 8337 8955 or email: gjamber@chariot.net.au
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- **19 – 21 June:** **Ladies Weekend:** More details forthcoming in future Newsletters about this uplifting weekend hosted by Doreen and Rebecca
 - **28 May - 8 June:** Harry & Doreen ministering in **New Zealand**. Ministry schedule will be published in future newsletters.
 - **5 - 8 July:** Harry & Doreen in Adelaide for **"Revival Now"** with **Pastor Bill & Heather Nott** hosted by **"Liberty Family Church Adelaide"** For information about "Revival Now" Please contact the Liberty Family Church office on: 08 8295 2110
 - **17 - 19 July:** **Men's Camp** Mamre Farm with Special Guest **Ps Jim Abberton:** Pastor Jim Abberton has been ministering to men for over 20 years. He has worked at Lithgow's Maximum Security Prison as a Senior Prison Officer for 19 years. In that time he has observed both Officers and Inmates search for answers to what life is really all about. He has witnessed the physical, emotional and spiritual decline of countless men who have simply given up and placed life in the too hard basket. Disappointments, failed dreams and broken promises amongst other things eventually lead men to think that there is simply no way out of the mess they are in. **NOT SO.....**say's Pastor Jim, who meets with men from all levels on a regular basis. *"I am a strong believer in seeing men reach their full potential as GOD MEN, Men need to relate to men before they will ever communicate with God. They want to know that you're a regular everyday bloke, who works hard and plays tough just like they do before they enquire about the God you serve"* Pastor Jim now leads the Foursquare Churches Men's Ministry in New South Wales, as well as ministering in his local church at Lithgow where he has a leading edge Men's Ministry.
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- **3 - 8 October:** **Old Fashioned Revival Camp Meeting** - Mamre Farm

HARRY'S WORD:***Fearless Faith In A Painful Valley***

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (psalm 23:4).

Living the Christian life amid the turbulence of worldwide traumas probably unknown in our lifetime, reveals just how strong and fearless our faith in God has to be if we are to overcome the tests that obviously loom before us. Every test will not necessarily be financial, but in our extremely materialistic society they will be real. Other tests can be very personal, such as the sudden loss of a loved one which can produce a pain far greater than bankruptcy and unemployment. "Loss" in any part of life is the one plan we hope insurance companies will take care of, but when hearts are broken, no policy outside of "peace with God" can ever suffice.

If you haven't walked a valley like this before, allow me to share two simple truths that I pray will lift and encourage you as we view the clouds around the world beginning to rise on the horizon right before our eyes. Firstly, if you haven't yet realized that **"Faith is a Fight"**, then know it is real now! In this "great southland of the Holy Spirit", or is it, "the long weekend"? Or, is it "The next party with our mates"? For far too long Australian Christians have had it too easy when compared to others in developing lands that have experienced hardship and persecution because of their faith in Jesus Christ. I truly believe, when the going is tough, we are to dig deeper into our personal walk with God where our "faith" becomes **substantial** (Heb: 11:1).



"Doreen & Harry with Doreen's family (L to R: Harry, Peg (sister), Doreen, George (brother) & John (brother in law) at the "Cleft of the Rock" where Toplady sheltered with his horse in a violent storm and was inspired to write the Hymn "Rock of Cleft for Me". (absent Narelle). In Avon near B"

Secondly, our faith has to be **"fearless"** as is often said "we fear nothing but fear itself"! No matter how deep, sad, lonely and painful your valley might, your victory is sealed when you walk through it without **"fear"**! David said it plainly "I will fear no evil"; John Wesley's covenant saying was, "The best of all God is with us". So, if God is for us, who can be against us? Know this then, nothing, and no one, can drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us! So with the Holy Spirit in us and with the world seemingly against us, I am absolutely sure that nothing can get between us and God (Romans 8:31 – 39).

Please comfort one another with these words.

In His Grip

Harry †

Just some family news! We enjoyed celebrating our Granddaughter Talitha's engagement to Kirk in Sydney on the 17th January, 2009. They are getting married on the 11th July in Penrith.



FINANCIAL:

“Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.”

(Deuteronomy 15:10 NRSV)

Another year of God ordained Christ centred ministry is before us and we are incredibly thankful to the Lord and to each of you, *for our faithful and generous partners*, in this mission of **“Mobilising Australians for Jesus”**. Your generous and ungrudging support allows us to fulfil the Call God has on Vision Ministries and as you pray about your continuing support of Vision Ministries in 2009 we pray that you have found the Lord faithful for your previous liberality towards the Ministry.

As in previous years we always ask for a special one off donation of \$30 to help cover the Newsletter expenses. So we thank you in advance for your willingness to help us cover the costs of this newsletter that serves as a way in which we can keep in touch with you all as well as getting the message of the Kingdom out across the nation.

May you find the hand of God Almighty moving in your life “blessing your work and all that you undertake” – In Jesus Name.

With much thanksgiving and gratefulness – *Jeffrey*



**MAKE SURE YOU LOCK THE 2009 CAMP DATES INTO YOUR DIARY
3rd Oct to 8th October, 2009. It will be the 20th Anniversary of Camp Meeting at Mamre!!!**

Three ways you can give regularly into Vision Ministries Inc.

1. Use the return envelope provided and send it to our office.
2. Have your credit card debited on the first day of each month
The offering slip enclosed will help you in this regard
3. Use the automatic banking facility - details as follows

**Vision Ministries Inc. BSB & Account No: 032-022 / 930926
Westpac Banking Corporation - Surry Hills Branch - 547 Crown St, Surry Hills**