



JUNE 2010 ISSUE 127

The ENCOURAGER

EVANGELISE EQUIP EDUCATE

Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust



A further visit from the Joy Fellowship in Canada

“BUT I SAY...”

Devotional by John Anderson



I was reading Matthew chapter 5 when I noticed a theme in some of Jesus' statements. It seems Jesus was taking delight in surprising people with what He said. Jesus quoted what had been said previously and then quickly followed that with a 'BUT.'

We see it first in verse 21: *"You have heard that it was said..."* Jesus quickly follows this with, *"But I say..."* Again in verse 27: *"You have heard that it was said..."* and again Jesus says, *"But I say."* This happens four times between verse 21 and verse 34!

It got me thinking that often people say things about us, or a situation we are facing, but we should find out what God says. It may not be the same thing! If God has said something to you, hold onto it. Don't worry about what others may say or what the situation around you looks like - God will have the final word.

Moses was told by God at the burning bush to *"Go... I will be with you."* In the following months, there were a lot of people who doubted that what Moses was doing was right. But he had heard from God Himself and in spite of the odds, God's words were proved to be true. God makes a similar promise to us in Hebrews 13:5 *"I will never leave you or forsake you."* Even if it feels like you are all alone, God will be true to His word and never leave you.

Others may say, "You're useless, you'll never amount to anything." But God says, *"I know the plans I have for you. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you a future and a hope."* (Jer 29:11)

When I was sick after my brain haemorrhage doctors said I wouldn't survive. My wife held onto words the Lord had spoken to us just weeks before. And God's words to us turned out to be absolutely true! It's so tempting to listen to what everyone else says, but how much wiser we'd be to listen to what God says.

So I urge you - listen to what God has to say to you.

A LONG-TIME DREAM IS REALISED

It has long been a dream of mine to see a Christian camp run for children with disabilities, as I know it has been for Hugh and Di Willis. My Mum works for Children's Bible Ministries, and I grew up going to their camps in Raglan. Despite this it had never crossed my mind that CBM would run such a camp, but I talked to Mum about the possibility of such a camp and she joined me in praying that it would happen. She shared about this at CBM where she works, and I was thrilled when she told me that it had been put on their agenda to discuss at their up coming retreat. When this took place the staff were unanimous that this was an area of ministry they wanted to pursue.



So in March this year, my dream became a reality. I helped CBM to run our first 'Kids Connect' camp for children with physical disabilities in conjunction with CMWDT. Although our numbers were small, the camp was a great success. The children were aged 9-16, and had a range of disabilities with the majority having a hearing impairment. Each small group had at least one buddy, and it was fantastic seeing everyone interacting so well and forming new friendships. There was an inspirational message on the life of Louis Braille, and the Gospel was shared through a Bible story. Everyone had lots of fun, with team sports, craft, quad bikes, orienteering on a wheelchair-accessible track and a camp fire at night.

We also had great feedback about the camp from parents and caregivers:

"I hope I can come again next year."

"I would like to thank you and your team for all the great effort you all put into a great camp at the weekend which was really enjoyed. I haven't seen Gino so happy for a long time."

Our next camp is booked for the 25th – 27th of March in Auckland. If you are interested in more information, contact CBM info@cbm.org.nz or CMWDT office.

Kirsty Anderson



ACTION PHOTOS FROM THE KIDZ CAMP

(left) Rapt attention at a teaching session



(clockwise)
Success at getting the quoit in the hoop

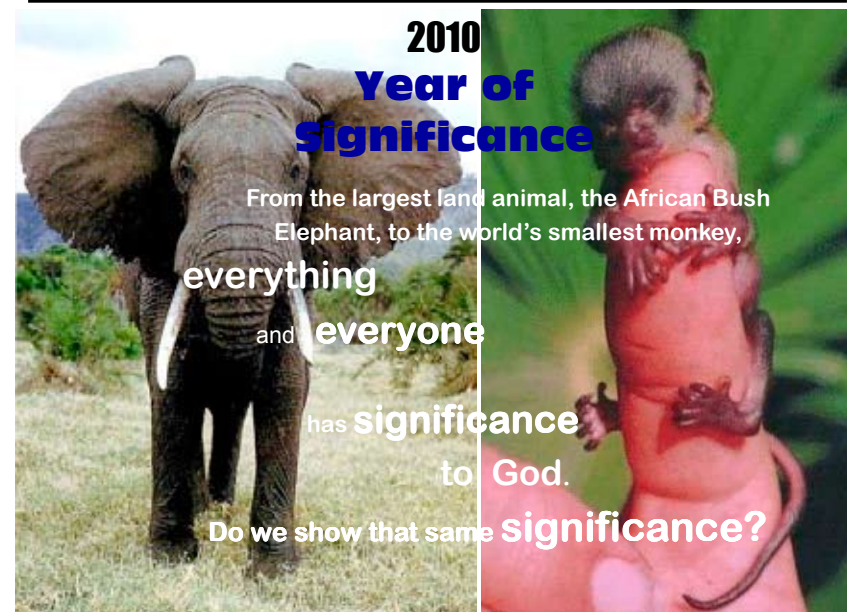


Signing one to one



Lost in concentration in the craft activities

DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY 20TH JUNE 2010



CALLING ALL PASTORS

Do consider doing something in your service on this day. If you ring the Centre we will send you a booklet that gives many ideas on different things you could bring into your programme. If there is no space in your service on the 15th it is fine to hold this day on another Sunday. The main Auckland service is shown below, with many CFFD teams taking part in churches throughout New Zealand, but it is important that churches throughout our land, large and small, have at least some item that recognises the talents of people with disabilities and the part they need to be given in church life.

JOIN US...

And

@ **48 ESMONDE RD, TAKAPUNA**
(just over the bridge!)

SUNDAY 20TH JUNE 2010 2.15 - 3.45pm
Afternoon tea follows

in Celebrating Significance

Run by Christian Ministries With Disabled Trust,
Auckland Christian Fellowship For Disabled
Contact 636 4763 or jeanette@cmwdt.org.nz
for any further details

Hosted by Harbourside Church

LAUNCH OF Luke14

AND MUCH

WHAT “THE CENTRE” HAS DONE FOR ME

In browsing through entries in the book displaying photos and greeting cards of the 30th celebration of the ministry of the Trust, we were intrigued by the entries and reproduce some of them here.

The Centre was a safe place to be, like a family. There were guidelines for behaviour, and wise people to turn to for counsel. This was the place where I learned to be free to worship our Lord. At the present I am serving in other places, but I think of CFFD as my home - the place where I grew up and was nurtured in my faith; a place where I felt free to fail, never condemned, but encouraged to learn from my mistakes and grow as a result.

The Centre has been my sanctuary, a place of love, caring, acceptance, growth and wonderful friendships. Thank you for sowing an incredible seed of transformation.

The Centre helps me because I see people there who are worse off than myself. I find helping others helps me. It brings me closer to Jesus.

Brendon Grace has been a great encouragement to me. He is not able to speak, but with his big GRIN, he lights up any room just as he does at the Centre.



CMWDT NATIONAL CAMP 2010

**At Totara Springs Matamata
22nd to 25th October 2010**

THEME : SEASON OF SIGNIFICANCE

All welcome - do come - give it a go!
You'll be blessed whether or not it's your first time or you've been before.

COSTS: Adults \$140.00, but \$130.00 if paid in full before 1st September
11 - 14 years \$100.00
5 - 10 years \$70.00
Under 5 - Free

To register contact: Andrew McLay
1/28 Mannering Place, Hillcrest, North Shore City 0627
Email: cmwdtcamp@gmail.com Phone 09-480-0076

If you cannot come would you consider...
sponsoring someone struggling to afford the camp fee?

THE USHER

An elderly woman walked into the local country church. The friendly usher greeted her at the door and helped her up the flight of steps. “Where would you like to sit?” he asked politely.
“The front row please,” she answered.
“You really don’t want to do that,” the usher said “The pastor is really boring.”
“Do you happen to know who I am?” the woman inquired.
“No,” he said..
“I’m the pastor’s mother,” she replied indignantly.
“Do you know who I am?” he asked.
“No,” she said.
“Good,” he answered.

The canyon tragedy that claimed the lives of six teenagers and their teacher shocked the nation, but through it all the faith, Christian witness and lack of bitterness displayed by Andy Bray, the father of Natasha (one of the victims), in interviews on radio TV and the newspapers, gripped the nation.

SUCH BOUNDLESS ENTHUSIASM AND REAL JOY

The recently released book, *Treasures in the Darkness* gives a fascinating insight into Andy Bray's life's journey that has helped to mould him into the man that he is today. After reading it Murray Thom said, "It has made me appreciate afresh the many obstacles and setbacks that he has overcome, and yet he lives with such boundless enthusiasm and real joy. His life continues to be such an inspiration to me, and what a great role model he is to so many as a wonderful husband and father. Ian Grant said, "Everyone loves a fighter who doesn't quit ... this book gave me a heart and mind tune-up."



At 21 Andy was leading an adventurous life that suddenly came to a screeching halt when while out on a ski trip with his fiancée, Pam, he felt incredibly weak and collapsed on the snow. It was some time before doctors succeeded in diagnosing the cause - kidney failure. When we get a cold we sometimes feel pain in our kidneys, just normal back pain. That's the infection passing through our kidneys, but occasionally, maybe once in 10,000 times, instead of passing through in the blood stream it actually attacks the kidneys. And this was what had happened to Andy. Both kidneys were being permanently destroyed. The seriousness of it was not immediately apparent, and he and Pam pressed on with their almost completed plans for marriage. Pam was, like him, an adventurous outdoors sporty type. After the marriage Andy's condition worsened and he was put on dialysis – 3 times a week and 6 hours at a time at the hospital, sometimes even eight.

One day after 4 years of marriage Pam said they needed to have a serious talk. Andy was completely unprepared for what he was about to hear.

"I don't want to be married any more" she said.

Shock was the first emotion I felt. Did she really mean it? It was the last thing I expected her to say after all we had been through.

"I can't do this any longer," she continued. "I married an outdoors man, a sportsman, not a kidney patient.. I love you like a brother, Andy. I don't love you like a husband. And this just isn't what I expected marriage to be like."

Nothing would change her mind, but she did stay long enough to teach his parents how to carry out dialysis.

Andy was not a Christian. When he was young he had hated church, because as he said, *"it was all about memorising boring rites and liturgies, mumbling through old-fashioned hymns, and listening to the monotone drone from the pulpit. It had all seemed a boring waste of time."* But this view was to change when he met up with Nikki, a fun-loving attractive woman from England. Andy was now a director of a leading design business, and Nikki, a representative of a paper firm, called to offer seats to his company at an international tennis tournament. Andy recalls he spent more interest in talking with her than he did in looking at the tennis. He had long since determined after the pain of the past he would never get married, but he was intrigued by her faith as they continued to meet. Nikki made it clear that as she was a Christian and he wasn't, she was not interested in it being anything more than good friendship, and Andy was also very happy with this, but as he got to know her better he wanted more and more to have the faith that she had. Shortly before this he had been given a second transplant, this time it was successful, and as he pondered on the fact that the new lease of life he could now enjoy had come as a result of another family's grieving, he started to question the meaning of life and saw that his life style to date had often been selfish and self-centred. He accompanied her to church, and one day, with the pastor after the service, he felt compelled to give his life to Christ. Nikki was overjoyed when he broke the good news to her.

Andy continues, By the time we got engaged we both had a strong desire to make our marriage "soar", but we knew the odds were against it. We knew that we needed to do everything we could to ensure that our marriage would make it. We made a commitment to each other that every year we would go to some kind of marriage course. Having been through one divorce there was no way I could bear another.

Just after we hit our two year milestone Nikki showed me a brochure advertising a Family Life Marriage Conference in Auckland. "I don't think so" I said. "I can't imagine it's any good." I had in mind a low budget, disorganised operation run by a



couple of geriatrics. “Just give it a try” Nikki said. Inwardly groaning, I finally agreed to go because I’d made a commitment to her. One of the speaker couples on a video shown were a young couple with six kids who were struggling with the pressures of marriage and family life just like all of us. He was clearly a man of conviction who was humble enough to share his mistakes. He was extremely humorous. Some of the situations and stories he shared were so funny because they were so true to our lives, too. After only one session I was hooked. I kept thinking, “This is something everyone needs to hear!” We were learning new things every day. We thought we had a good marriage, but Nikki and I acknowledged that day that we were living well short of what was possible. Without realising it we had been trapped in our culture’s mindset of materialism, selfishness and independence, not knowing we had been setting ourselves up for failure. I wanted to fly to the USA where the couple came from and join Family Life right then.

It wasn’t long before Nikki and I became involved with organising and helping promote the conferences. Helping throughout a conference was an awesome time for us. We were active and busy, and we were seeing how God was using these events to change lives and marriages.



They thought about doing Family Life full-time, but Nikki said, “We can’t. We need to make a living.” Andy asked himself, “Would he be willing to give up a lucrative salary, a company car and all the trimmings, for a life in ministry?”

Finally one day Nikki felt the Lord was saying to her, “Stop holding back.” She came to Andy and said, “If this is something you really want to do, I’ll trust that God will provide for the family. So began a ministry that they are heavily involved in, with Andy as the Director. Little did they know the huge hurdles with Andy’s health they were still to have to overcome. The book deals in detail with these, but here we might mention a few:

A first kidney transplant had failed to take, it simply had rotted inside Andy before it was removed. and although the second one mentioned earlier worked well for many years, it eventually stopped working and Andy was back into the daily grind of dialysis

treatment. This was a particular worry to him after what it had contributed to the first marriage break-up. He determined that Nikki would not have to be involved, and became one of the first to successfully master giving the treatment on his own. The discovery one Boxing Day of a lump on his body proved to be a cancerous fast acting tumour, and one so serious that it caused the oncologist to suggest it would be as well for Andy to get his will and other affairs sorted out. Surgery seemed to be successful, but 6 weeks of radiation followed to ensure it didn’t come back. The many drugs he needed to take for the kidney treatment made his body susceptible to skin cancers that had to be cut out, and in one session alone, 22 were removed.

After several years of being on dialysis a strange and severe itch began to develop under his arms. Scratching was only partly successful as the itch was in his blood, and he could hardly concentrate at work nor could he sleep at night. It was discovered that his parathyroid glands were over producing calcium. An operation to remove all but one of these glands was carried out successfully. It had not been expected to cause any great difficulty, but after the operation a brain clot in his brain caused a stroke and then a second more severe one occurred. He was paralysed down the left side of his body and couldn’t speak. The next weeks were some of the darkest of his life. Eight weeks of rehab followed, where, ever so slowly, he relearned many of the simplest tasks we all take for granted. Returning home, during the weeks that followed, he began to notice incremental improvement in the use of his arms and legs. Every little step that allowed him to gain back his independence was like a celebration because each little task took so long to master.

(The Words in italics are taken directly from Andy's book.)

A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST

Here’s a prayer you could pray if you’d like to begin a personal relationship with Jesus today.



*Lord Jesus, I invite You into my life.
I believe You died for me
And that Your blood paid the price for my sins.
I now turn from everything I know is wrong.
Thank You for the gift of eternal life.
By faith I receive that gift,
And I acknowledge You as
My Lord and Saviour.
Amen*

POSSIBILITY NOT DISABILITY



In January 1974 I had a diving accident that left me a quadriplegic. Prior to that I had just completed my first year studying Chemical Engineering. When I tried to resume studies in 1975 it was clear that a life of handling chemicals was out of the question.

I tried a number of other avenues, but didn't have success. At the end of 1980 I was still sitting around at home doing very little with my time, and gradually becoming more depressed and withdrawn. There didn't seem to be many options open for me.

It was at this stage that my pastor intervened in my life. He came around to see me one day, and he was very

straightforward and to the point in his comments to me. He bluntly told me that he was sick of seeing me sit on my bum doing nothing.

He asked me if I might be interested in Bible College, and this sounded like a good idea to me. So he took me along to meet the Principal at the Bible College of Victoria (BCV), and in 1981 I began part-time theological study, which later turned into full-time degree studies over four years, which was then followed by twenty-two years on staff at BCV!

As I reflect on this, it was initially brought about by one person, my pastor, who was prepared to see past my disability and to encourage me to give something a go. And then there were key people at a Bible College who knew nothing about me but were prepared to take a chance.

BCV was not very wheelchair friendly and still isn't, but they were open and welcoming to the possibilities and challenges that would come.

While I know there are leaders in churches and other organizations who have a pre-determined view on what someone with a disability can or can't do, I thank God for people like these, who didn't dwell on the obstacles, but the possibilities!

Ric Mallard

I ASKED GOD FOR A CHALLENGE

I became paralysed after I rode my bike into the back of a stationary four-wheel drive.

At that time I was very fit and athletic, playing elite sports. I went to church, but my faith was very up and down. The night before my accident I was at youth group. During the night I had a moment alone, and I asked God to prove Himself to me and give me a challenge. Then the next day I broke my neck.

I don't believe in coincidences. I believe me breaking my neck was an answer to prayer. And I'm very thankful for it.

People might look at me and think, "Poor guy. I feel so sorry for you." But through my disability I have learnt so much more about God. How can I be sad?

Look at Job and Paul in the Bible. Their reliance on God was very real because of suffering. I feel the same. My reliance on God is very real. Without it I'd be lost. I asked for the challenge and He answered it. I could be left with angry, hurt feelings and ask why He doesn't heal me, but in fact what He has done is bring me closer to Himself because of my reliance on Him. You can't be anything but thankful for that. Sure, there are frustrating things because of physical limitations, but the closeness with Him gets you past all of those things.

After my accident I realized that God wants everything of us, not bits and pieces. So lying in my hospital bed, I prayed, "God, obviously I can't do this by myself – I need Your help."

And He has helped me, and used me. There's a verse in Habakkuk in the Bible that says, "I will do in your day something that you would not believe even if you were told." This has come true for me on two counts. Firstly, I never believed I would become a quadriplegic and it happened. And secondly, I never believed that as a quadriplegic I would run a national company and speak to lots of churches, but that has happened too.

Dale Sheppard

*The mighty oak was once a little nut
that stood its ground*

THE FOLDED NAPKIN...

A Truckers Story

I try not to be biased, but I had my doubts about hiring Stevie. His placement counsellor assured me that he would be a good, reliable busboy. But I had never had a mentally handicapped employee and wasn't sure I wanted one. I wasn't sure how my customers would react to Stevie.

He was short, a little dumpy, with the smooth facial features and thick-tongued speech of Downs Syndrome. I wasn't worried about most of my trucker customers because truckers don't generally care who buses tables as long as the meat loaf platter is good and the pies are homemade.



The four-wheeler drivers were the ones who concerned me; the mouthy college kids travelling to school; the yuppie snobs who secretly polish their silverware with their napkins for fear of catching some dreaded 'truck stop germ'; the pairs of white-shirted business men on expense accounts who think every truck stop waitress wants to be flirted with. I knew those people would be uncomfortable around Stevie so I closely watched him for the first few weeks.

I shouldn't have worried. After the first week, Stevie had my staff wrapped around his stubby little finger, and within a month my truck regulars had adopted him as their official truck stop mascot.

After that, I really didn't care what the rest of the customers thought of him. He was like a 21-year-old kid in blue jeans and Nikes, eager to laugh and eager to please, but fierce in his attention to his duties. Every salt and pepper shaker was exactly in its place, not a bread crumb or coffee spill was visible when Stevie got done with the table. Our only problem was persuading him to wait to clean a table until after the customers were finished. He would hover in the background, shifting his weight from one foot to the other, scanning the dining room until a table was empty. Then he would scurry to the empty table and carefully bus dishes and glasses onto his cart and meticulously wipe the table up with a practiced flourish of his rag. If he thought a customer was watching, his brow would pucker with added concentration. He took pride in doing his job exactly right, and you had to love how hard he tried to please each and every person he met.

Over time, we learned that he lived with his mother, a widow who was disabled after

repeated surgeries for cancer. They lived on their Social Security benefits in public housing two miles from the truck stop. Their social worker, who stopped to check on him every so often, admitted they had fallen between the cracks. Money was tight, and what I paid him was probably the difference between them being able to live together and Stevie being sent to a group home. That's why the restaurant was a gloomy place that morning last August, the first morning in three years that Stevie missed work.

He was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester getting a new valve or something put in his heart. His social worker said that people with Downs Syndrome often have heart problems at an early age, so this wasn't unexpected, and there was a good chance he would come through the surgery in good shape and be back at work in a few months.

A ripple of excitement ran through the staff later that morning when word came that he was out of surgery, in recovery, and doing fine.

Frannie, the head waitress, let out a war hoop and did a little dance in the aisle when she heard the good news.

Marvin Ringers, one of our regular trucker customers, stared at the sight of this 50-year-old grandmother of four doing a victory shimmy beside his table.

Frannie blushed, smoothed her apron and shot Marvin a withering look.

He grinned. 'OK, Frannie, what was that all about?' he asked...

'We just got word that Stevie is out of surgery and going to be okay.'

'I was wondering where he was. I had a new joke to tell him.. What was the surgery about?'

Frannie quickly told Marvin and the other two drivers sitting at his booth about Stevie's surgery, then sighed. 'Yeah, I'm glad he is going to be OK,' she said. 'But I don't know how he and his Mom are going to handle all the bills. From what I hear, they're barely getting by as it is.' Marvin nodded thoughtfully, and Frannie hurried off to wait on the rest of her tables. Since I hadn't had time to round up a busboy to replace Stevie and really didn't want to replace him, the girls were busing their own tables that day until we decided what to do.

After the morning rush, Frannie walked into my office. She had a couple of paper napkins in her hand and a funny look on her face.

'What's up?' I asked.

'I didn't get that table where Marvin and his friends were sitting cleared off after they left, and Pete and Tony were sitting there when I got back to clean it off,' she said.

'This was folded and tucked under a coffee cup'

She handed the napkin to me, and three \$20 bills fell onto my desk when I opened it. On the outside, in big, bold letters, was printed 'Something For Stevie.'

Pete asked me what that was all about,' she said, 'so I told him about Stevie and his Mom and everything, and Pete looked at Tony and Tony looked at Pete, and they ended up giving me this.' She handed me another paper napkin that had 'Something For Stevie' scrawled on its outside. Two \$50 bills were tucked within its folds. Frannie looked at me with wet, shiny eyes, shook her head and said simply: 'truckers.'

That was three months ago. Today is Thanksgiving, the first day Stevie is supposed to be back to work. His placement worker said he's been counting the days until the doctor said he could work, and it didn't matter at all that it was a holiday. He called 10 times in the past week, making sure we knew he was coming, fearful that we had forgotten him or that his job was in jeopardy. I arranged to have his mother bring him to work. I then met them in the parking lot and invited them both to celebrate his day back.

Stevie was thinner and paler, but couldn't stop grinning as he pushed through the doors and headed for the back room where his apron and busing cart were waiting. 'Hold up there, Stevie, not so fast,' I said. I took him and his mother by their arms. 'Work can wait for a minute.. To celebrate your coming back, breakfast for you and your mother is on me!' I led them toward a large corner booth at the rear of the room.

I could feel and hear the rest of the staff following behind as we marched through the dining room. Glancing over my shoulder, I saw booth after booth of grinning truckers empty and join the procession. We stopped in front of the big table. Its surface was covered with coffee cups, saucers and dinner plates, all sitting slightly crooked on dozens of folded paper napkins. 'First thing you have to do, Stevie, is clean up this mess,' I said. I tried to sound stern.

Stevie looked at me, and then at his mother, then pulled out one of the napkins. It had 'Something for Stevie' printed on the outside. As he picked it up, two \$10 bills fell onto the table.

Stevie stared at the money, then at all the napkins peeking from beneath the tableware, each with his name printed or scrawled on it. I turned to his mother. 'There's more than \$10,000 in cash and checks on that table, all from truckers and trucking companies that heard about your problems. Happy Thanksgiving.'

Well, it got real noisy about that time, with everybody hollering and shouting, and there were a few tears, as well.

But you know what's funny? While everybody else was busy shaking hands and hugging each other, Stevie, with a big smile on his face, was busy clearing all the cups and dishes from the table.

THANK YOU LORD FOR THE TRIALS THAT COME

I sometimes wonder "how much more?
What else have You, Lord in store?"
But yet I should not wonder why,
For as I look at times gone by
I know it's always times like this
That You would put me to the test
And draw me closer to your heart,
More blessings than You can impart.

So thank You for the trials that come
And in them all "Your will be done".
If I don't know the trials and pain
That sometimes You allow,
Then how can I begin to know
How others often feel,
And help them praise Your name.

I complained because my arms were sore,
But then I stopped and looked at Yours.
I saw them hanging on that tree,
I thought – You did all that for love of me
So I should not complaining be
But rather look at You and see –
My trials are naught compared with Yours –
Those nails, those stripes, those awful thorns.

So thanks, again, for trials that come
They bring me closer to the Son
The One who died upon that tree,
For love of me, yes, even me.

Yvonne Hammond

This poem takes on greater significance when one realises that Yvonne, a long standing member of CMWDT, has increasingly suffered through the on-going effects of myasthenia gravis, cancer and her husband dying.

FROM JONI EARECKSON TADA...

Dear Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust friends...

Someone asked me the other day, "What is the biggest struggle most disabled people face?" I had a ready answer. "Himself," I answered, "or herself, as the case may be." It drew a funny look, so I explained, "When you have a disability, it screams for your undivided attention. It is very hard not to be constantly thinking about yourself and your own needs."

It's true. The constant aches and pains of arthritis or spinal chord injury, the daily maintenance of a wheelchair, or trying to find attendant care... all of it demands attention. These things can force a disabled person's focus inward. And so, the greatest challenge to people with disabilities is to keep pushing beyond the limitations to care about the needs of others.

This is why I am so grateful for my friends at Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust. This ministry focuses on helping people affected by disability look beyond themselves to the needs of others – especially those whose plight is more critical than their own!

The Message paraphrases Philippians 2:4,5 this way, *'Put yourself aside and help others. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a hand. Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of Himself. He had equal status with God, but didn't think so much of Himself that He had to cling to the advantages of that status.'* Friend, in 2010, keep looking outward... keep lending a helping hand... don't cling to your own wants and wishes... put yourself aside and help others in the name of Jesus!

THE STROSS CHRONICLES

Joy Newcomb, the author of "Involuntary Joy", is the mother of Stross, a teenager with disabilities. She has her son's second grade teacher to thank for the innovation that most positively affected his learning. The teacher created a notebook to keep Stross up to date while he was out of school with an illness. Joy said, "I started calling them 'The Stross Chronicles'. Anybody at school who wanted to talk to us wrote in the notebook."



"He has one until this day and the teachers enjoy it just as much as we do. When he was young, what it allowed us to do was not keep reinventing the wheels. When he was doing maths, once they figured something out or if we had an 'ah-ha' moment, it was shared. We're always doing the same thing at home and school. I think that is invaluable. It demands that all involved focus on the child individually, and encourages focus on strengths and abilities. Teachers can then approach the lessons in that way" says Joy.

Years and volumes of "The Stross Chronicles" later, Stross graduated from high school last June.

To purchase Joy's book, go to www.involuntaryjoy.com

When you feel like giving up, think of this man...



OVERCOMING OFFENCES AND HURTS AND PREVENTING THEM FROM OCCURRING

There is a saying that the only things in life that are guaranteed are death and taxes! But Jesus also said in Luke 17:1 *"It is impossible that no offences should come"*, but He goes on to say "but woe to him through whom they do come."

So what are some of the things that can happen to people that may hurt or offend them: mocking, unkind words, betrayal, being overlooked, being misunderstood etc.

When we are offended we may well feel hurt, angry etc. It's OK to feel hurt, we aren't robots, and sometimes we are genuinely sinned against. Remember Job. He didn't say "I'm fine, I'm fine"... no, he cried out to God. He chose not to turn away from God.

There are times when it is right to let the person know that what they did was offensive and wrong, and how it made you feel, but let's concentrate more on how to deal with the emotions, both at the time and also long after the offence has happened.

Firstly, we need to realise that "offences will come!" Of course when this happens we often feel we are the only one who has been hurt like that, or the only one going through that particular situation right then.

God allows us to go through many tests in our lives. People hurting us or our being offended are two of those tests. When this happens we have several ways we can react:

- We can get angry.
- We can feel sorry for ourselves. This can make us feel great for a while. We look around and it seems everyone else's life is rosy, and we imagine they have never been through a trial in their life.
- We can go over and over the situation in our mind.
- We can harden our hearts. This is often where people say to themselves, "I am never going to... allow myself to love someone again... or trust anyone... or go back to that place... or talk to that person again."

These may seem minor responses, but unfortunately it is just what the enemy loves, and once he finds an opening into our lives he's not content to leave us with minor emotional feelings, he then works to get us into a worse state.

The next levels of emotions are: bitterness, revenge, depression and anxiety. Sadly the offended then becomes the offender. We cannot have bitterness or revengeful thoughts in our life without them affecting others. Maybe not straight away, but these things grow like a weed. The Word says in Hebrews 12:15 *"See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled."*

Also, when self pity turns from being the emotion which makes us feel good and justified, to depression or anxiety, then we end up hurting ourselves further.

So what is the key? Many have heard of Viktor Frankl, a concentration camp survivor who went on to write books about how people had responded to the dreadful abuse in the concentration camp. . He wrote, "We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in numbers, but they offer sufficient proof that **everything can be taken away from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.**"

- Our first step is to choose a reaction when an offence occurs. We can either:
 1. Start a downward spiral of being offended... self pity... anger... bitterness etc or
 2. Say, I am making a choice now not to let this become part of my life story.
- The second step is choosing forgiveness. This is as much about setting yourself free as letting the other person off the hook. Remember, they are an offended, hurt person passing on an offence to you. Often we have to forgive again and again, even over the same situation, because the enemy doesn't want to give up the battle for your downfall.
- Third step – Choose restoration – you can choose to make things right, or if not practical because of location or time (it may have happened years ago), set them right in your heart.
- Fourth step – Get help, whether it be pastoral or professional, we can't do life alone and often need a hand to work through our pain and issues.
- Fifth step—Start feeding your mind with good things, the Bible of course for starters, but download good teaching, eg, Joyce Meyer is wonderful as she talks so much about the battlefield of the mind. If you aren't a reader or can't read there is so much out there on CD or i-pod.
- Sixth step – Surround yourself with positive, good speaking people. It's important not to talk negatively about people and situations. Anything else might feel good for a while but will not solve the hurt and bitterness inside.

And the most important step of all – pray.

THE PRAYER THAT MOST CHRISTIANS AVOID

This is a further extract from David Peters book “Hope”.

God is good and what He does is good. And there is a good that God works in adversity that is profoundly great – the gift of fellowship in His sufferings. *“I want to know Christ,”* said the apostle Paul, *“and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow to attain the resurrection from the dead.”*

Many believers happily pray to know Christ and the power of His resurrection; not so many pray to know the fellowship of His sufferings. What does this mean? How is it possible to partner with Christ in His sufferings? I once thought that it meant we would know His closeness when we suffer, and He would comfort and empathise with us. That is true, but only half the story. Some years ago I became aware of what the fullness of this means.

For some time, the sense of loss caused by my wife’s illness, had overcome me. My mind drifted back to the summer of our wedding; it was as happy a day as any I have experienced, when sickness was a world away and my wife Jane exuded health. It saddened me that she could now no longer walk, or hold my hand as we strolled on the beach, or stand and minister with me. I had prayed for healing many times, but one day, in my pain, cried out, “Lord, I want my bride back!” What happened next sliced straight through my self-pity.

Jesus spoke to me. Into my mind came words that were so clear, they seemed audible. He replied, *“I know what you feel – I want my bride back too!”* I suddenly felt the ache in His heart for the church. She is His bride, purchased with a great price. In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul said, *“I promised you as a pure bride to one husband, Christ. But I fear somehow you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to Christ, just as Eve was deceived by the serpent.”* While Jesus loves His church as she is, it pains Him when she is weak or has lost her first love. He wants a healthy bride – one that is empowered and radically in love with Him. As such we will better radiate Him to a world that has lost its way, a world He deeply cares for. In that moment of revelation, I realised He understood my distress, and in some small way, I understood His. I knew an intimacy with Him in our mutual pain, which I had never experienced before. This was the fellowship in His sufferings.

Pain can be a gift that allows us to glimpse God’s heart, listening for the things that grieve Him. However, instead of hearing His voice, we can be deafened by the

loudness of our pain. Many walk away from this opportunity of intimacy, so focused on their own suffering, that they fail to feel His. It is not that the Lord wants to minimise our distress or overlook it. In fact, the book of Hebrews says, “We do not have a high priest who is unable to understand and sympathise and have *feeling with our weaknesses and infirmities.*” Rather, it is as one pastor said, “Every situation of pain is an invitation into the heart of Jesus.”

Whatever we are suffering, Jesus suffered more. He knows. He will walk with us. He will share secrets with us. We will discover things about Him we would not learn in any other way. When we fellowship in His sufferings in this way, we get to know Him better. This gives meaning to the painful things we may go through in life. I will never forget what He said to me when I cried out to Him. It has brought an intimacy I could know in no other way. That alone has made the pain worth it.

A SURPRISE CALL FROM A SOLICITOR

We were greatly surprised when a solicitor got in touch with us to tell us that Helen Lyons had left us a bequest. We weren’t surprised that there was a bequest, for a number of people have recently left us bequests, and in fact these are a tremendous life blood to our ministry enabling us to tackle large projects such as taking on a much needed worker at the Centre, purchasing a van or contemplating repairs to the building. The surprise was that it was the first we had received from a person with a disability.

Helen had suffered from multiple sclerosis for many years and we had spent many hours with her, taking her to meetings, visiting, telephone calls to encourage her and husband Les. But it was so thrilling that she had wanted to bless our ministry in this way.

With this magazine we are enclosing a **BEQUEST BROCHURE** we have just put together on bequests. So many people die without making a will, and decisions then have to be made about their money that could be well away from what they would have wanted.

Making a will is a sure way to ensure your wishes will be carried out, and leaving some of the money to a charity you believe in can bring huge blessings to that charity well after you have passed away.

This brochure will give you many helpful hints and answers to questions you may have.

A MIRACLE IN MY LIFE

My name is Debbie Fenton, I am married and have 2 dogs. I have Charcot Marie Tooth - a neuro muscular condition, Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Arthritis, Gout, Diabetes and Asthma, and have been in a wheelchair for about 15 years. I suffer a great deal of pain every day, and it is dealt with by morphine and neuro pain relief.



I first got diagnosed when I was 20 years old and was told I would have 5 – 7 years to live. When I didn't die, the doctors said I would be in a wheelchair within a few years. Well that didn't happen either, and here I am, years later. I kept working even though my body was deteriorating, I didn't give up on myself or God.

I kept walking as long as I could, with one stick and then two. Even though I fell a lot I tried to hang on to what I had for as long as I could. I was 35 years old before I got a manual wheelchair and only used it for shopping and for trips out like going to the zoo or something that took a lot of walking. I had to start to weigh up my quality of life as walking took a lot out of me, and of course the damage I was doing every time I fell was irreversible.

So I started using my wheelchair more and more often. I have not let this get in my way of life and doing things. I have done papers at Waikato Polytech and passed Business Communications, Business Computing, Management Fundamentals. Through Open Polytech I studied Commercial Law.

I also have spent many years in volunteer work such as CAB, Women's refuge, Cervical Screening for women with disabilities, Support Line, Civil Defence, Welfare training, Drug Arm and Outreach Therapy Pets.

Life isn't always peachy, there are times life really sucks, there are times I don't want to get out of bed, or my pain levels are so high I become the most grumpy person you could meet, you can ask my dogs. If I get grumpy and yell a bit my dogs back out of my bedroom and hide in the lounge. My little dog, if he is on my bed, he walks along the edge of the bed to the end, then jumps off and runs under the bed, and won't come out.

I try to find things that I love doing like gardening and growing my own vegetables and fruit, there is nothing I like better than going into my garden and picking fresh fruit and veges, it is most satisfying to complete something from beginning to end. I do art, I

also sew for myself and friends. I find it give me confidence to go out in the world and take it on. I believe life is what you make it, and nothing is impossible, especially in walking in faith with Jesus.

I have had many miracles happen in my life and have been so blessed walking with the Lord. I would like to share one of the miracles the Lord has done recently in my life. Last year my immune system began to crash and I found that if there was any infection or virus going around I got it. By November I was starting to feel very sick.

I was having problems sleeping, was getting very tired, and my pain levels increased, so my neurologist and one of my doctors thought if they increased my pain relief I would get some sleep and everything else would start to fall into place. He increased my medications to 35 tablets a day.

In early November I picked up an upper respiratory track infection, so my GP put me on antibiotics and prednisone to help me breathe, which increased my tablet intake to 43 tablets. This went on to the end of December. Thing didn't improve, they got worse.

Through all this I had been suffering with boils, horrible puss heads over my face and body, and lumps starting coming up over my body, I had a headache that wouldn't go away, my eyelashes and hair were falling out and I had a constant metallic taste in my mouth. I became malnourished as food didn't stay in my body long enough for nutrients to be absorbed. My body was swelling and my pain levels became excruciating, and I was having trouble breathing. I was only sleeping around one hour at night in 5 – 10 minute increments at a time.

By early New Year all I could do was fall into bed. Three weeks on into January I couldn't get out of bed due to so much pain, and couldn't talk as it would cause my breathing to fail. I didn't think I would come back from this, so I started to plan my funeral. I got to the stage I just wanted to go Home to Jesus, so I prayed to the Lord: "Lord please tell me what is wrong with me, and if it can be fixed please show me what to do or please take me home."

That night I had a dream, I was in a helicopter up in the sky, it was the most beautiful blue sky I had ever seen with white fluffy clouds. A voice said to me, your life is spiralling out of control and you will die. I looked around to find there was no pilot, and the helicopter started spiralling out of control to the earth. The voice then said



Debbie and Guy

“Stop the pills and you will be alright”. I realised that Jesus was answering my prayer, and then the helicopter righted itself and I was back up in the awesome sky with an amazing peace.

My morning routine is to take my blood test to check my sugar levels and then take my insulin and then my pills. When it came to my pills I looked at them and remembered what God had said to me “Stop the pills and you will be alright”, so I flushed the pills down the toilet. I know the medical profession would cringe with horror. I know how dangerous it is to stop morphine or any neuro pain relief pills, You need to slowly decrease them over a period of time so you don’t suffer withdrawal symptoms and side effects, but I was absolutely convinced that Jesus had spoken to me.

It has now been 4 months since I flushed my pills. I have had one boil in that time, I don’t have a headache, I can breathe without problems, my eyelashes have stopped falling out and I didn’t get any withdrawal systems at all. My pain levels have halved, I am feeling the best I have ever been in years and am sleeping up to 5 - 6 hours a night, and I haven’t slept that well for years.

I had an appointment with my diabetes doctor a few weeks ago and told her my testimony. She asked me if I was depressed, and when I said no she started asking questions to do with psychosis to see if I had schizophrenia because of the voice I had heard. After 15 minutes she realised I was none of the above and started her normal check-up with me. She checked the blood test I had several days prior to my appointment and found my glucose levels were optimum. She then checked my glucose and insulin log book, (I need to test my levels several times a day before I take my insulin), she realised I had come down from 150 units a day to 80 – 70 units and she said I was on the lower side so I could drop my insulin some more.

Through all this I found comfort in prayer and my Bible. Each time I picked up my Bible I would ask Jesus to show me what He wanted me to read for the day. There are many scriptures that help me get through. One special to me is:

1 Peter 5:6 - 10 (NIV) New international Version

Condolences to the family and friends of
Jean Ballingal and Bertine Zimmerman.

PAYROLL GIVING

Introduction

Payroll giving is a scheme that gives employees the opportunity to donate to approved donee organisations of their choice direct from their pay and receive an immediate tax credit for payroll donations. Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust is an approved donee.

Not all employers offer payroll giving, so please check with your employer first.

How does the tax credit work?

If a person has been giving \$30 a month to CMWDT and decides to increase this amount to \$45 a month, if he or she then registers for payroll giving then they get an immediate tax credit of \$15 so that the amount deducted from their pay is not \$45 but \$30, i.e. the amount they were previously sending to the Trust. Of course at the end of the financial year they will no longer get a rebate from the giving mentioned above.

Note: An individual’s tax credits for payroll donations can’t exceed their tax for that period.

What information does the employee give to their employer?

If you want to join the payroll giving scheme, you need to provide your employer with the following information:

- Name of the donee organisation - CMWDT
- Amount of the donation you want to make
- Pay period, or periods, you want the donation to be made, and
- The Trust’s account details. The CMWDT bank account for payroll giving is: 01-0142-0029706-06. You are free to change the frequency and amount at any time at your discretion.

It would be wise to also let the Trust know the amount, frequency and start date.

The heaviest thing you can carry is a grudge

THE PHILIPPINES CFFD RETREAT

First of all a huge thank you to all of you who so generously gave over \$3,000 at the last 2 National CMWDT camps to make our PCFFD retreat possible.

Ptr. Tito Sangco, the guest speaker at our last retreat in 2008, gave a Power Point presentation entitled "The Man With Lam Feet" from II Samuel 9:1-13. He has a real heart to encourage and lead special people in the knowledge of God. He carefully introduced Mephibosheth and the kindness he received from King David. He clearly emphasized our similarities to Mephibosheth having a disability, but highlighted the reality of God's love to everyone. We loved his kindness, and his invitations "to taste and see that the Lord is good". His testimony was a living proof for each of the camp participants.



Here are some of the lives changed through the camp:

There were 2 to 3 particular worship songs we purposely sang every meeting, and 26 year old Pinky De Galicia was very touched by the song that tells about the faithfulness of God to His promises and that we can cling our hope to the God who loves us.

Pinky has a mild hearing impairment which she acquired when she was 10 years old (through infection in her left ear after sand got in). She can talk to us normally by closely reading our mouth. Her husband died of a heart attack in February and she is now in the difficult situation of who will take care of her and her 5 year old boy since she doesn't have work (she's a high school graduate). She tried to have a small street business selling fish balls so that she can keep her son with her, since her own family cannot support her.



The local social welfare office encouraged her to join our camp. It was her first time to this kind of meeting, and she felt the comfort of God throughout the meetings. Her face became brighter and she felt that God gave her strength and new hope that He will always be with her. Please pray that we can follow her up and encourage her to attend a Christian church.

It was the 2nd time for 19 year old Jayson De Silva to attend our retreat. At the age of three he was accidentally hit on the spinal chord by a bullet, and after a further 4 years, his feet got affected, he was hospitalized and one of his legs had to be cut off.



In spite of his disability and the not easy life of being different to others, he strove hard to finish his high school education, but was unable to continue his first year college in computer course due to being so far from school and the lack of finance. He felt discouraged that he wasn't able to help himself, but he still hopes and dreams to continue school, finish a course, and have a family of his own. He was so happy to attend our retreat again. The message about Mephibosheth and about the kindness of God gave him some realization that God is preparing something better for his life not only in eternity but in this life at present.



Eleanette Elisura, seen here with Leslie Dela Ganar, is 26 years old. She has Congenital Limb Deformity. Despite her disability she has finished Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, and works as a Social Worker Assistance and a focal person for people with disabilities. She highly appreciated PCFFD staff for having a heart for disabled, and all the encouraging words and acceptance they received at camp gave her a

big impact. She was very thankful to all of us for such organizations as PCFFD and CMWDT in reaching out to the marginalized in society. During testimony time. Lenny learned so much about surrendering our lives to God and continuing to entrust our lives to Jesus. When she saw our deaf participants, she was so thankful that God has a way of reaching them through sign language. She thanked God that she can talk words of encouragement in spite of her disability. She has a long experience of struggles in life, suffering the ridicule of people, and being looked down on by others. But she was very thankful for her parents who loved her and encouraged her to finish school.

URGENT: Ruth Beale still needs sponsorship for 3 Philippines staff members. Her contact details are:
39 Durham Crescent, Epuni, Lower hut 5011. Ph: (04) 934-6785

JOY FELLOWSHIP VISIT NZ FOR THE FOURTH TIME

It seemed very strange to have such a visit without Joy Gregory, now in Heaven, who first made contact with our ministry and then developed the friendship so brilliantly in the years that followed, but it was a fun-filled 12 days with so much packed in a day at the Centre, three days at the Joy Ministries National Camp, a walk on two of Hugh Willis's wheelchair tracks, a ferry trip across the harbour to Devonport, amongst others. What a blessing it was to have this team, led by David Hayward! The camp theme was "What would Jesus do?", and the team presented the messages through speaking and singing, but mainly by short skits. These were a graphic illustration of how not to act in a situation, and how Jesus (and we) should act. They acted out the right way and the wrong way before asking people to say which of the two was the right way. After acting out Jesus washing the disciples feet and the Good Samaritan, this led to going shopping and helping someone who hadn't enough money. Clearly they taught from the Word how we need to be loving, patient and understanding just like Jesus, and to make the right decisions. They also taught a signed song, and one member, Nick, shared his prayer journal.



Dave Hayward, leader of the group



80 year old Joan Leu leads the group on the bush walk



The group performing one of their skits

Contact Addresses

Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust
PO Box 13-322, Onehunga,
Auckland 1643, New Zealand
Phone 09-636-4763, Fax 09-636-5307
Email Address: info@cmwdt.org.nz
Web page: www.cmwdt.org.nz
The Centre, 173 Mount Smart Road,
Onehunga, Auckland.
Magazine Editor and Ministries Director
Hugh and Di Willis
87 Deep Creek Rd, Waiake,
North Shore City 0630, New Zealand

CFFD Branches or Contacts*

Northland - Jacqui Gardner	09-438 4952
Auckland - Jean Griffiths	09-525 5415
Coromandel-Hauraki	
- Don Watson	07-862 7174
Hamilton* - Atheline Morris	07-855 7008
Bay of Plenty - Ken Miller	07-579 3003
Eastern Bay of Plenty*	
- Claudia Barnes	07-304 9343

Hawkes Bay - Joan Parker	06-877 8026
Taranaki - Beth George	06-758 7295
Manawatu - Lyn Spencer	06-357 0045
Wellington - John Hawkins	04-569 9096
Nelson* - Lyn Harris-Hogan	03-547 2337
Christchurch - Dave Palmer	03-365 5715
Dunedin	
- Patsy Appleby - Morrison	03-482 2505
Southland* - Mike Hamill	03-217 2665

Ministries

Emmanuel -	
Nigel & Penny Shivas	09-846 2046
Joy Ministries - Dianne Wall	09-576 5908
Branches in Auckland (3 areas),	
Whakatane, Hawkes Bay, Taupo,	
Masterton, Blenheim	
Torch -	09-636 4763
Carers - Cheryl Schischka (husbands/wives)	
	09-424 1382

LOTS OF FUN AT THE AUCKLAND CAMP



Team exercise building a bridge out of paper



Enthusiastic participation



Working together



Country and Western dancing



The organizing committee



Conga

If you would like to help with our costs you could send a donation to:

CMWDT P.O.Box 13-322, Onehunga, Auckland 1643

I wish to give \$ for the magazine

\$ for general running costs

Name.....

Address.....