



THE MISSION



Everyman's Ministry in the United Arab Emirates

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Hello again from the Ridley's! It has been a busy quarter and much has happened since the last update. I returned home from the Middle East and hit the ground running. I have returned to my normal work with 8/9 RAR, we moved house and church and we just returned from a road trip down to Victoria (hence why this letter is a bit overdue). We are travelled down the East Coast of Australia with a mix of Everyman's work plus a holiday in which my best friend from my childhood, Todd, got married to Angela. Todd was my best man at our wedding and I was the best man for his! We visited Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Whittlesea, Marysville, Melbourne and Frankston.

Out with the 'new' and in with the 'old'

Like all my previous trips overseas they have times when they seem to drag out but when you get home they seem to have gone by so quickly, this trip was no exception. My replacement Jon from the Salvation Army (pictured right) arrived and the jokes quickly turned to the age difference between myself and him and rather than the base getting a 'new' version of me they were getting an 'older' one (hence the title). Jon and I got along well, he also was a grunt back in his day and he was also very keen to fight the good fight of the faith for the Lord. Since I left Jon has been working out at the gym (one of the benefits of being in a closed camp means you can work on your fitness a lot) and he has lost a lot of the excess weight he was carrying, I'm sure his wife



will appreciate that! My time in the U.A.E. was great the things that I saw the Lord do were amazing and He went beyond what I expected but I really should have expected no less from our Father. It was good to be able to see a side of the Defence Force that I had not seen before, you could say that it was much cleaner in terms of not being out in the rain, mud and other elements. It was of course very challenging to be away from Claudia but we were able to talk every day on Skype and that definitely helps, but it was all worth it in the end to be able to work for the Lord and serve the men and women of not only the Australian but of the U.S., British, New Zealand, Dutch and Italian Defence Forces too. On the left is a picture of me being awarded a medal for my service, however, I know the true reward is the one thing only Christ can give - eternal life!

New Life in Christ†



I mentioned in my last newsletter about 'The Lamp Light Project' course that I was running and the course went really well. I met amongst other people Fred and Scott (pictured left). We became very close during our time and we met daily to study the word and talk about the Lord. Fred had a very interesting background and had been involved with just about every religion you could think of. Scott was brought up going to church but was struggling giving his all to Jesus. After a number of great conversations and also reading of the word of God, one night Fred asked if we could pray together and we went to my office and he confessed a life of sin and knew he had to repent of these things, we prayed and he asked The Lord for forgiveness for a life of sin. Fred was a new creation in Christ! We had already planned to go to the beach a couple of days after that and I knew that it was not a coincidence, we went down first thing Friday morning and I baptised Fred in the sea. I noted that following that Fred

looked physically different, he was alive with the Spirit of God! Praise the Lord! After returning Scot and I were talking and he had not been baptised either and so after some discussions he decided to get baptised too, we both went back to the same beach and he was baptised also! Another exciting story was Ryan and Jonathan who worked in the gift shop on base called 'Aladdin's Cave' I met them and both of them had been raised Catholic but neither of them had read the Bible, I was able to give them both Gideon's NT Bible's and they were able to read them during their quiet times at work. Pretty soon the Lord began work in them and they both came to understand the gospel message. One day Jonathan asked me what 'born again' means he said "do I have to go back inside my mother?" I opened the Bible to John 3 for him to read he was gob smacked! I shared why he needed to get born again. The next day Ryan was out the front of the shop and he said under his breath "Thank you Lord" when suddenly another Filipino man came to him and asked him if he was born again! He then proceeded to tell Jonathan and Ryan why they needed to get born again! The Lord brought that man to confirm what I had already told them! When I came back they were both ecstatic about the same message coming to them from two different people in a short time and I told them the God sent that man because they both needed to be born again! This man invited them to come to his church which happened to be in the same neighbourhood that Ryan lives in! Jonathan mentioned that his wife was also reading the Bible but finding it difficult because of the English when suddenly we met Gina (pictured right) who was also a Filipino and a Christian too and she gave a Filipino Bible to Jonathan and also invited them to come to the church and Bible study that she was attending and it turns out to be in the same neighbourhood that Jonathan lives in! Jonathan came to the Lord at the Bible study, praise the Lord! I have kept in touch with both of them and continue to encourage them in the faith via Facebook and I pray that they will both continue to follow the Lord! I also had the opportunity to attend Gina's church which was a beautiful home church.

...I tell you, there is joy in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who repents" - Luke 15:10



Sharper Than a Two Edged Sword



In my last update I mentioned Rey and his church and how they visit the communities of the workers who come to Dubai from all over the world. These workers live in pretty difficult conditions and are not treated the best so Rey's church goes and visits them bringing food and conducting Bible studies with whoever will come. Rey mentioned to me that Bibles were very expensive to purchase in the U.A.E. and initially Claudia sent over some Bibles that were not being used. My brother in the Lord, Juan-Pierre or J.P. for short is currently doing his degree at Bible college in Australia and as a



part of his course he received a \$400 voucher for an online bookshop in Sydney to buy Christian paperback books to add to his library. However, J.P. is legally blind and cannot read fine print (he mainly uses Kindle on the computer because he can zoom right in and read) so he had no use for paperback books. He came up with an idea to buy Bibles instead and have them sent over to give to Rey's church. Initially the idea was rejected by the bookshop but after explaining the situation the managers took the idea to the



Board members' and after

considering the proposal they agreed to do it just this once. The problem was that it was getting close to the end of my trip and the postal system can sometimes take a long time for things to arrive but our God has all things under His control! The books arrived about four days before I left and I was able to hand over the Bibles to Rey before leaving! He received with much gratitude and after arriving back in Australia he sent me some photos of the Bibles being handed out to some of the workers that they went to visit (picture bottom right).

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- Hebrews 4:12



PHOTO ALBUM



A view of the Airfield



USAF C-5 Cargo Jet visit



Chaplain Mark Reid and I



Mother's day fun run at the beach



Stan (ex 8/9 guy) and I



U.S. Talent show I performed my song at



At the Heritage Village on a cultural tour



Dubai cultural tour in 'Old Dubai'



Visiting the home church Gina attends



ANZAC day at the memorial



Queen's b'day (she didn't even show up!)



Rey at work on the base



ON THE HOME FRONT



The best part about coming home was being reunited with my beloved, Claudia. Seeing her in the airport as I arrived was almost surreal as I had grown accustomed to seeing her only through a little screen on my laptop. She took some time off of work and we spent some time getting acquainted with one another again. We did a few day trips and she took me to the natural land bridge (pictured below) that she and my mum had gone to when she visited. As I mentioned at the beginning that there have been many changes since returning to home - we had felt the Lord calling us for some time to move churches and as the Lord always does he opens doors that no one can close and closes doors that no one can open and the transition to our new fellowship was as smooth as one could hope for. Whilst we were sad to not see many of our loved brothers and sisters we knew that the Lord had a purpose for it.

During my time over in the Middle East I took some time to come up with some new designs to give a fresh look to Everyman's brew trucks. With the recent purchase of a new brew truck for Richard Gibson I knew this was the perfect time to bring in something new. I saw that our trucks really didn't have anything that identified us as working with the ADF and I wanted to change that, so, I began to come up with some concepts for a new brew truck design and also a new Everyman's logo. After researching and making some rough ideas using Microsoft Paint I sent the ideas off to Chris our graphic designer at HQ and she got to work on the logo. Meanwhile, I found the perfect colour to use for the truck, it is a matte finish paint that is used on the ADF vehicles themselves. Phil went to the makers of the paint and they gave us a discounted price. Finally, Chris finished the new logo and we got the new paint job and logo on the truck and this will be the new standard for all future brew trucks. Personally I love it and it really makes us stand out and hopefully will attract more general support to the organisation. (I have put the new logo on the last page). Special thanks goes to Darren and the guys at Jimboomba Baptist for doing the paint work!



Claudia's Corner

I wanted Claudia to have the opportunity to be able to put her own personal touch to the newsletter updates and so I asked her to begin writing articles from her perspective and in her own words, so here is Claudia's corner:

Dear friends, I am so thankful to be able to write something to you as well, may it be a blessing to all who read it. We are so honoured to be able to serve the Lord, what a great God He is. It amazes me to remember that He would save a sinner like me and still use us to bring His marvellous news to the world. Sometimes I look at Ben singing to the Lord and I marvel at the

goodness of God, He loves us, praise His name. When the Lord gave me the first glimpse that Ben could go overseas I thought "no Ben is mine" (smile), but later on that day I apologized and said "Lord if it is Your will, please prepare my heart" and He did, how great He is. While Ben was away I knew it was not going to be easy, but I knew it was the will of God and I knew He was going to give me the strength to go through it. It was easier than I thought in many ways as we were rejoicing together of what the Lord was doing day by day, but on the other hand some different trials came on our way unexpectedly. Dear friends, I just wanted to remind you that God our Father is watching over us and there is nothing, not one thought, feeling or prayer that passes by Him unnoticed, He cares for us. Thank you so much for all your prayers and support for Ben and I and the Everyman's and the other representatives. May the Lord make us strong in the power of His might to stand firm and to run the race with endurance, for great is our reward in heaven.

"Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise" (Hebrew 10:35-36)



The highlights of the trip were obviously the things that the Lord did in the lives of those who came to know Him, to be a part of that was very special and it is the reason why I do what I do. Other highlights include seeing a side of the ADF that I usually did not see as an Infantryman when I was in the Army - being able to interact with the Air force and Navy was great. Working with the international forces was also great, seeing parts of Dubai and eating some of the local foods was nice too. I cherish the time that I had with the Lord as being away from home trains you to rely even more on His strength as I sense that in future difficult times will come for us as Christians in this world and relying on Him will not be something that is just important but paramount! I have come to see for many reasons that the world is becoming very hostile towards believers in Christ and this trip did have its challenges, I was alarmed at much of the compromise from so-called believers in Christ in areas that you would never have thought would be possible, things like the blurring of lines between Christianity and other religions as well as the homosexual agenda. I would finish with the exhortation to you all to remain firm in your convictions as I feel that persecution could be near to us as is the norm to many other believers around the world. Never the less, Christ told us that we would be face persecution in this life but to remember:

"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. - Matthew 10:28



Much love,

Ben and Claudia



EVERYMAN'S WELFARE SERVICE
Serving the Australian Defence Force