

Hi everyone

Greetings in the name of Christ.

Little Philip, born with Down's syndrome, attended a third-grade Sunday School class with several eight-year-old boys and girls. Typical of that age, the children did not readily accept Philip with his differences. But because of a creative teacher, they began to care about Philip and accept him as part of the group, though not fully. The Sunday after Easter the teacher brought Leggs pantyhose containers, the kind that look like large eggs.

Each receiving one, the children were told to go outside on that lovely spring day, find some symbol for new life, and put it in the egg-like container. Back in the classroom, they would share their new-life symbols, opening the containers one by one in surprise fashion. After running about the church property in wild confusion, the students returned to the classroom and placed the containers on the table. Surrounded by the children, the teacher began to open them one by one.

After each one, whether flower, butterfly, or leaf, the class would ooh and ahh. Then one was opened, revealing nothing inside. The children exclaimed, "That's stupid. That's not fair. Somebody didn't do their assignment." Philip spoke up, "That's mine." "Philip, you don't ever do things right!" the student retorted. "There's nothing there!" I did so do it," Philip insisted. "I did do it. It's empty. the tomb was empty!" Silence followed. From then on Philip became a full member of the class.

He died not long afterward from an infection most normal children would have shrugged off. At the funeral this class of eight-year-olds marched up to the altar not with flowers, but with their Sunday school teacher, each to lay on it an empty pantyhose egg.

The empty tomb is more than just a fact of history or an intellectual understanding of what happened to Jesus. It signified that the One who was thought to be dead is alive. It signifies that his resurrection changed our perspective of life and death.

It means that all that wants to destroy our life has been defeated and our mortal life is only a shadow of what Life with Jesus is all about.

I struggle at times to fully comprehend what this really means. I live in a country where owning the name Christian does not put my life at risk or forces me to live underground or deprives me of all the basic necessities of life.

I read about my brothers and sisters in other countries whose lives are always in peril. Here is a selection from the Australian Prayer Network:

In spite of the changes in Egypt, tensions between Christians and Muslims continue to rise. In the most recent clashes Muslims destroyed a church south of Cairo, burning it to the ground and desecrating the contents. Christians in turn took to the streets again to protest this attack, burning tires in the highway and throwing rocks at cars. Responding to an imam's call to, "kill all the Christians," a mob of nearly four thousand Muslims confronted the Christians and a four-hour battle followed. Thirteen people were killed and at least 140 injured.

Christians in Japan are appealing for prayer as their stricken land struggles to cope with the three-fold disaster of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis. There are more than 300 churches in the affected area; many have suffered the loss of pastors and church members, while other believers are still unaccounted for, and church buildings have been destroyed. Pray that Christians will stand strong in their faith and be distinctively Christ-like in the way they help and care for the suffering, that they will be salt and light in this situation. Only one per cent of Japanese people consider themselves Christians. Pray that this unprecedented disaster will prompt others to turn to Jesus.

The detaining of 30,000 Bibles in the Malay language at Malaysia's Kuching Port has "greatly disillusioned" the nation's Christian community. The books, imported by the local branch of Gideons International for distribution in schools, churches and longhouses, have been detained at the Kuching Port since January. This is not the first time authorities have detained Malay-language Bibles. 5,100 copies of the Bible in Malay, were detained in March 2009. Bishop Ng Moon Hing, chairman of Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM), decried the action. "We are disillusioned, fed-up and angered by the repeated detention of Bibles written in our national language," Hing said. "It would appear authorities are waging a systematic program

against Christians to deny them access to the Bible in Malay."

For the above people, the resurrection of Christ is a matter of life and death. It empowers them to take on unjust governments. It provides the hope where this is no hope. It gives them succour that this life will not be the only life they will lead.

The death and resurrection of Christ fuels their existence in such a way that they are willing to die for the Christ cause.

You probably do not remember the name Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin. During his day he was as powerful a man as there was on earth. A Russian Communist leader he took part in the Bolshevik Revolution 1917, was editor of the Soviet newspaper Pravda (which by the way means truth), and was a full member of the Politburo. His works on economics and political science are still read today. There is a story told about a journey he took from Moscow to Kiev in 1930 to address a huge assembly on the subject of atheism. Addressing the crowd he aimed his heavy artillery at Christianity hurling insult, argument, and proof against it.

An hour later he was finished. He looked out at what seemed to be the smouldering ashes of men's faith. "Are there any questions?" Bukharin demanded. Deafening silence filled the auditorium but then one man approached the platform and mounted the lectern standing near the communist leader. He surveyed the crowd first to the left then to the right. Finally he shouted the ancient greeting known well in the Russian Orthodox Church: "CHRIST IS RISEN!" En masse the crowd arose as one man and the response came crashing like the sound of thunder: "HE IS RISEN INDEED!"

We have been busy praying for people. We continue to do 15-18 ministry sessions per month. We also support our clients as they ring up in between with their challenges. One young man rang me while he was walking to work. We had one prayer session with this young man where we discovered that in his 19 years, he had experienced more than many twice his age. He had just become a Christian and now it was time to do the healing work of all the abuse he had received.

He shared with me that he has had these stabbing pains. His visit to the doctor revealed an infection in the groin. The type of medication needed had a side effect: sterility. We talked for a while and then I prayed over the phone as he walked to work. The Holy Spirit came upon him and he felt a warmth over him. The pain went as we targeted the infection with our praying. We

are hopeful that Jesus has done a work of healing for him. We will soon see when he sees the doctor.

The resurrection healing power of Christ is as real today as it was in the disciple's day.

We are still exploring God's direction for India. We have had a new invitation for 5 days of ministry and an invitation by the first pastor to extend our time and work with his network of churches. We are conscious of doing what God wants. It is not just the financial cost but it is the cost to Walking Free and what God wants to do here. Liz and I are the primary prayer ministry team that do the majority of prayer ministry.

The Lord is bringing together people interested in healing. We have about 7 people and we will gather them together when we get back.

Please continue to uphold us in prayer. We hear the cries of the people of India who need God's healing power. But we must do what God wants.

Our family is well for which we are very grateful to God. David and Maddy will be in Chicago soon to start his new job. Our daughter Naomi is on holidays with us. Our other daughter, Jess, is organizing 6 weeks of holidays to travel overseas in July. Our parents are well considering their age.

Liz and I wish you a happy Easter. May you encounter the risen Lord in a powerful way this Easter.

Prayer Points

- Thank God for Easter and the gift of eternal life.
- Thank God for His Son who endured a most heinous death so that we might have life.
- Pray that you may discover the significance of the empty tomb for you this Easter.
- Thank God for the new clients that are referred to Walking Free. Pray that we do not lose

momentum while we are away in May/June in USA.

- Pray for Jamie and Robyn who will look after the ministry organisation while we are away.
- Pray for the ministry of Pastor Devadas as he ministers to Hindu people in villages in Andhra Pradesh, India. Pray for converts and healings. Pray for finances to be released for our visit in November.
- Pray for guidance about this second invitation to minister in India.
- Pray for new people to become prayer team members. Pray for a team to be established at Coolangatta.
- Pray for God's leading re a Healing Room at Coolangatta. Pray for the shape that it needs to take.
- Pray for Coolangatta church to continue to be open to the healing work of Jesus.
- Pray for wisdom and inspiration to develop material for training etc to put on website.
- Pray for our prayer teams: Hal and Debbie, Robyn, Jenny, Liz and myself. Pray for our support people Desley, Jenny, Craig, Rod and Jamie.
- Pray for our management team: John, Liz, Jamie, Robyn, Hal and Debbie, Jen and Craig. Pray that we receive God's leading for our ministry.
- Pray for the Toowoomba site of Walking Free. Thank God for Jenny, Robyn whom God uses to bring healing to people. Thank God for their faithfulness to use the gifts that God has given them.
- Thank God for the financial provision of this ministry. We are grateful to the many that are obedient and give to our ministry weekly, monthly and one off. We have been blessed with gifts of merchandise and money, computers and printing. We have been blessed with many talented and gifted people who give of their time, talent and treasure each week to help this ministry have a Kingdom impact.