

what to bring

- underwear ✓
- valises ✓
- fingerless gloves ✓
- bible ✓
- hair warmers & bullets ✓
- hair spray ✓
- towel & cozy ✓
- deodorant ✓
- jumper ✓

★organise lift buddy★

11th - 15th APRIL

PHAT



J-WALK

INSIDE:

- J-WALKING PT2
- JESUS' RESURRECTION
- GOING SUB-CONTINENTAL PT1
- PHAT PHEVER SETS IN
- CONFESSIONS OF AN EASTER EGG SCROOGE

APRIL 2007





J-walk is the monthly magazine of CCECYOUTH.

CCECYOUTH is run by Central Coast Evangelical Church.

CCECYOUTH is for year 7-12 high school students

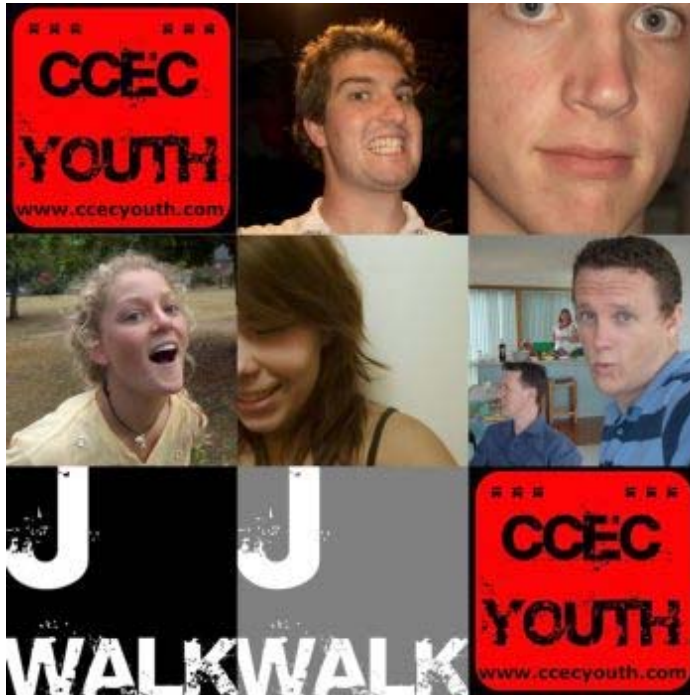
**We meet on Friday nights from 7-930pm @ erina high school
Entry = \$5 (includes din)**

GLADLY rejoice in Him.

We also have G-TEAMS - the aim of these is to GROW TOGETHER.

G-TEAMS are smaller groups where we dig even deeper into the Bible

Join us on Friday, or in a G-TEAM.



We exist to GLORIFY God in everything as we: GATHER to hear his word; GROW in godliness; GIVE in service of others; share the GOSPEL of Jesus' death & Resurrection; and

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J-WALK ISSUE #002

It's almost EASTER!! You know what that means? Yes, it's a good time with family, it's a good time with chocolate, and it's fantastic to meet with our larger family at church and again be reminded of Jesus and his death and resurrection... but another thing great about Easter is that it occurs just before PHAT!!!

If you've been living under a rock: PHAT is our year 7-12 camp. It is the CAMP OF ALL CAMPS!!! Registration closes this weekend... and April 11-15 is going to be super-fun as we head down the windy road to Galston.

Our first issue of J-Walk was a great success... great content and great feedback from all of our readers. As well as the 150 copies that were given out at CCECYOUTH, there were over 100 copies downloaded from the inter-

TEAM J-WALK

- Alex Hartley
- Dave Miers
- Jackson Stace
- Josh Bones
- Nicole Maloney

Guests this issue:

- Adrian Haynes
- Andy Bootes
- Dan Godden
- Lachlan Grice
- Rowena Miers

net. We'd love to hear your feedback on any of the articles. Send feedback to ccecyouth@gmail.com or leave your comments at www.ccecyouth.com

If you missed the 1st edition, our hope for J-walk is that it would be a great tool to help you grow. A tool that will be fun to read—but also help you to:

- 1) Make sense of the world
- 2) Make sense of the Bible
- 3) See how the Bible helps you to understand how to live in the world.

This issue is jam-packed with some great fun writing... we hope that you enjoy these articles and grow as a Christian from them. Most of all we hope and pray that these articles would point you to Jesus... the one who died, was buried, was raised, and appeared. Be joyful in Jesus this Easter... HE IS RISEN!

dnm

J-WALK ISSUE #002

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EDITORIAL
By
Dave Miers

**J-WALK
IS
WALKING
LIKE
JESUS**

PART TWO

By
Dave Miers

JESUS. The most mocked man in all of history. If you mock someone who is homosexual you will have stoned throne at you from every direction. Last year a cartoonist in Denmark mocked Mohammad with a drawing in a local newspaper—the result: the death of a number of people in retaliation attacks.

Yet Jesus is mocked every day. Society doesn't care less. Each week there would be a "funny" cartoon mocking a Christian or mocking Jesus in a paper somewhere around Australia.

Below is some graffiti from the 3rd Century. The Greek



words read: 'Alexamenos worships god'. You can see Alexamenos on the left, worshipping his 'god', who is a man with a donkey's head, hanging on a cross. The donkey-guy is Jesus, and someone is giving Alexamenos a hard time for worshipping someone who was crucified.

Not many people take the death of Jesus seriously.

In 2006 on Madonna's *Confessions* tour she finished the show hanging on the cross in a mocking way toward Jesus.

Not many people take the death of Jesus seriously.

It's almost Easter.

When I speak to students in local high schools—they're not quite sure if Easter is Jesus birthday or what? All they care about is getting some chocolate and holidays.

In one sense Easter isn't any different from any other weekend throughout the year for Christians. Every weekend as we meet at youth group and church we are reminded of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. BUT Easter is a great time to spend even more time reflecting on it and a great opportunity to talk to others about why they should take Jesus' death and resurrection seriously.

Last month we looked at Mark chapter 8. Can you remember? We said that the big question in the first 8 chapters of Mark was "Who is the man?" People marveled at Jesus and what he was doing.

In chapter 8 the answer to the question was made clear. Jesus is the CHRIST. Not a last name—but a title that tells us something of who Jesus is. Who is he? He's the King that God promised who would come and fix the world.

From this point forward Mark answers 2 questions: 1 What

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does it mean for Jesus to be the CHRIST? And 2 What will it mean to follow Jesus?

In Mark 8:31 Jesus immediately answered the first question... what would it mean for him to be the King?? It would mean that he would die and rise again.

Jesus took his death very seriously. In the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14) we see that Jesus is willingly to take upon himself that which we deserve. We sin. We reject God's rule in our life. Yet Jesus is willing to die and take our punishment upon himself.

Substitution.

This idea has been called substitution. Like a substitute teacher steps in and takes over your class for the day... JESUS steps in and takes our punishment so that we won't have to.

How seriously should we take Jesus death?

We shouldn't mock him like

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our 3rd Century Graffiti Artist, or Madonna, or the person that sits next to you in Maths!

3 ways we should respond?

- 1) Trust him. Trust that when he died he died in your place.
- 2) Love him. Delight in Jesus the one who has saved you from judgment.
- 3) Be like him.

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? 37Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 38If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

We don't become Christians

by WHAT we do. It's all about what Jesus HAS done.

But one of the ways to respond to the death of Jesus, is to be like him.

Deny yourself.

Take up your cross.

This is what Jesus did. This is what ALL Christians are called to do.

If you want to follow Jesus. That's what Jesus did. Follow him.

It's not going to be easy—we'll be tempted to be ashamed of the cross. We'll be tempted to laugh with our friends when *The Simpsons* makes another joke about Jesus.

What will it look like to deny yourself at school? At home? On the internet? With your boyfriend? On the sporting field? In your workplace?

J-WALK magazine is all about encouraging you to look at the way that Jesus walked... to trust him... to love him... and to live like him.

Take His death seriously: Deny yourself. Take up your cross. Follow him. Do the j-walk

We'd love to hear your comments ... ccecyouth.com

**MOVIE
&
MUSIC
REVIEW**

By
Alex Hartley

MOVIE REVIEW:

Film: Happy Feet
Rating: G
Release Date: 26th April 07
DVD

Happy feet, is just an animated musical really, which may not seem like a draw card for that many. Personally I love all the animated movies; you can not go past Aladdin and the Little Mermaid, but surely skipping over a bunch of penguins running around singing and dancing would be acceptable. I mean really, Penguins? But you will be missing out. It may seem a little childish, but when you're zooming toward Earth in the opening scenes with well known pop songs ringing in your ears it is hard not to get caught up in the excited anticipation. While at times it is a bit weighed down with the extensive and at times sketchy narrative it is definitely fun to watch. Happy Feet follows the story of Mumble the only penguin it seems who can not sing, apparently ever. He eventually leaves his home because he doesn't fit in and begins the search of what is causing the drop in fish. With covers from the Beach Boys, Stevie Wonder and the Beatles it is a very amusing film. There is not a lot we can apply from the film to our lives as Christians except to watch the ways in which we treat each other. Jesus commands in Matthew 22:39 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself' and while it may seem like a simple task it is something we need to work on daily in our lives.

3 j-walkies

MUSIC REVIEW:

Band: Brand New
Album: The Devil and God are Raging Inside of Me

Driving back from Copa in a friend's car was the first time I heard The Devil and God are Raging inside of me, Brand News' latest album and Jesus Christ was the first song we put on. One of the biggest shifts from previous album *Deja Entendu* is the softer sound which the band has produced, which has been a steady and welcome change. There's no forcing the beats and lyrics trying to get that rhyme exactly right as it was on the last album. The songs are carried by Jesse Lacey's bitter and reflective lyrics and complemented with clever riffs and a great drum backbone. The first song 'sowing season' has traces of the soft and loud method we can recognise from earlier songs but which definitely works as a great way to introduce the new sound. Jesus Christ is by far the best song of the CD. It seems to tell a story of the struggles sin, and while there is no real structure, lyrically to the song, it is unquestionably something we as Christians can relate to. It speaks of thinking you're not good enough, 'And I know you think that I'm someone you can trust, But I'm scared I'll get scared. And I swear I'll try to nail you back up,' which is something we all struggle with even though we have assurance we can have a relationship through Jesus' death. It furthermore raises questions about the cross 'Well Jesus Christ I'm alone

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again. So what did you do those three days you were dead? 'Cause this problem's gonna last more than the weekend,' which are crucial to us as we think of Easter coming up. It is without a doubt an album to challenge you and one to listen to again and again.

4 j-walkies

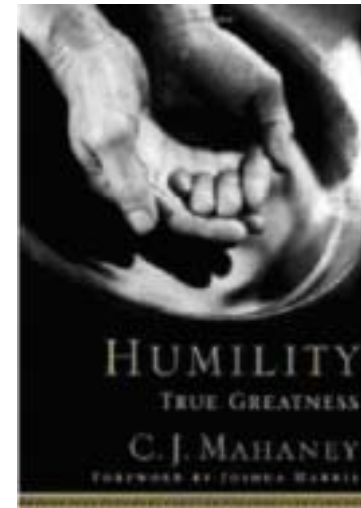
BOOK REVIEW

Humility: True Greatness
Author: CJ Mahaney

"God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). There is a huge difference between wanting to be humble, and wanting to be *thought of* as humble. Creating the appearance of humility is easy enough, but to actually be humble is a much harder task. CJ Mahaney's book is a great tool in thinking through how to cultivate a humble heart. In the start of the book, Mahaney takes a biblical look at pride and humility and God's reaction to each. He then devotes more than half the book to practical steps through which we can strive for humility. These practical tips are very helpful in creating a heart more concerned with God's glory than yourself and more intent on serving others rather than yourself. Firmly rooted in biblical text and theology, this book is well worth reading and much needed for our current generation.

4.5 j-walkies

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**BOOK
REVIEW**

By
Lachlan Grice

GOING GLOBAL INDIA

By
Dan Godden



Going Sub-Continental

I had never been to a *real* overseas country. I've been to New Zealand but that doesn't really count. What I mean is that I have never been somewhere where you can't just take your own money and pass it off as local currency. In January of this year though, I went to India with my Father-in-law. He likes to think of himself as a middle-aged Indiana Jones, trekking the nations in search of new experiences and cultures. He wanted to show me a part of the world that I had never been to before so off we went to India. There are lots of benefits to travelling to another part of the world. One of them is the insight and perspective that it gives you into your own culture. Another is the way that it helps you to put a face to that place on the World around us and Getaway. A third benefit is the way that it gives you a greater sense of what it means to be human. It gives you a glimpse of global humanity in a way that you may not have had otherwise. India is a place filled with People, who live in overwhelming Poverty, who are obsessed with Religion.

So when I was asked to write

a J-walk article about India, I thought I would look particularly at these three areas: People in India, Poverty in India; and Religion in India.

People

Before I went to India I thought that it would be all jungles, sweat and talking bears, like in the Jungle Book. Turns out I was wrong. The first thing that I was struck by when I landed in Delhi was PEOPLE. People were everywhere. There were taxi drivers climbing over each other to give us a ride to Delhi; All the way along the highway from the airport to the city in the middle of the night, people were walking; Even in Delhi the streets would be filled with people standing around right through the night. Presumably they can't lie down to sleep because if everyone in India did that at once they would cover the country plus half of Pakistan. It is a place of people.

And the romantic notions of jungles, tigers and young man-cubs?

A myth.

Most of the scenery where I went resembled western

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NSW. It was like going on a trip to Dubbo with a billion Indians. Although let me say, if I were going to go on a trip to Dubbo with a billion members of a people group, you can be sure that I would choose Indians! India is a nation that has eight different races of people living in it. These people all speak different languages and follow a variety of religions. Yet, they all seem to get along like a house on fire. Everyone is generally polite and hospitable. Even the guys who try and rip you off do it in such a way that makes them seem lovable and kind. Everyone is keen to stop for a chat. I had a three hour conversation with a guy on a train about politics, family and Jesus. I met a bunch of guys from the Kashmir who were running a dodgy travel business and then sending all their earnings to terrorist cells back home. I met a taxi driver who goes home to see his wife one weekend a month. I went to a church that had about 40 people in it and they had no supper but people stayed around and chatted for an hour or so. Everyone loves to talk.

Everyone has a story as well. Most of them end with... 'So, can I have some money?' We ran into a boy who tried desperately to convince us that he was doing a school project where he needed to get some money from Australians. An-



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other guy told us he would take us to an 'incense competition'. We ended up at his sister's place buying aromatherapy oils.

I miss the people of India. When I landed in Australia there was a woman who bumped into another woman in the airport with her bag. The lady who was bumped turned and snarled 'Hey. Watch it.' I was not proud of my country then. Indians respect one another in a way that Westerners do not. They value community while we love to isolate ourselves. They live in each others lives while we try to get out of each other's way. In India 'church' truly means family. As I turned up at this small fellowship in Bangalore, I was welcomed as a brother. It shames me to think of how we would welcome an Indian into our church.

All of this is a generalisation and Indians hate the same way that we hate. There is a social system in India called the caste system that has bred hate and contentment for thousands of years and is only just now starting to be healed. I'll pick up much more of this next issue where I'll tackle poverty and religion in India...

Check this article online and leave your comments...

CONFES- SIONS OF AN EASTER EGG SCROOGE

By
Jackson Stace

I don't like Easter Eggs. I was the child at home who didn't actually eat my Easter day loot but rather stored each egg like a trophy up on a shelf in my room, tempting every member of my household to eat until so many months had gone by that when opened, the chocolate had turned a stark white. This all isn't really that surprising because I don't really like chocolate. But I particularly don't like Easter eggs, and I'll tell you why.

Every year at the local supermarket there is always the same display at the end of the centre aisle which displays large amounts of what I like to call "The Super Egg". The super egg is roughly 40cm high and 20cm in width. It is generally wrapped in a single colour foil to emphasise the impact of this size and then housed in an A4 cardboard frame, typically with a creepy smiling bunny printed on the side. Further down the aisle from these Super Eggs are their varied cousins: The smaller fist sized egg, the tiny solid version (packs of 25 to compensate its size), the Bunny shaped one which is hard to eat with all its curves and isn't even an egg (really, are kids meant to believe the Easter bunny is so egocentric that it would drop off mini edible replica's of itself??) and the humpty dumpty eggs filled with smarties (because the Easter message mix of Jesus and a bunny rabbit wasn't confusing enough someone decided to throw a random nursery rhyme in for good measure)

The problem with all these eggs is that they are hollow with a thin outer casing. There is nothing inside except unsatisfying air and so the egg turns from being a promise of much yummy goodness to a deceitful lie. A deceitful lie which tastes like cardboard (everyone pretends like it doesn't but c'mon, it does) If melted down, a normal sized egg would probably only have the same amount of chocolate as a single square of chocolate and yet somehow they cost at least double the price.

Another problem with Easter eggs is that they seem to represent so many different things that in effect, they mean nothing at all. I googled the history of Easter eggs and got so many different answers it wasn't funny. Easter eggs apparently represent anything from the rebirth of the earth for ancient pagans, to a happy pregnancy for ancient Romans. Or if you're referring to eggs that have coloured spots on them, some Roman Catholic legends suggests that the Virgin Mary cried tears on some normal eggs when with some soldiers and made lots of colourful spots on them (a feat which would have complimented Gandalf's fireworks display nicely at Bilbo Bag-gins' Birthday).

You might quite enjoy eating expensive cardboard flavoured chocolate. Good for you. As for me—I'm looking forward to another great opportunity to reflect upon our Lord and Saviour's death and resurrection. Praise be to Jesus.





MY PHAT JOURNAL

11th April - Wednesday night

Sitting. At. Home.

It's a Wednesday night and I'm sitting on a Bob the Builder bean bag chair. I'm constantly shifting tying not to slide from my seat which was definitely not made for the lanky frame of a teenager. I'm waiting for 830pm when Heroes will come on, the one bright glimmer of hope that this day hasn't been a complete waste. Right now I'm flooded with reality quiz shows, the con-test for one. What a play on words that is, whoever thought that gem up should receive a congratulatory round of applause. Really well done.

12th April - Thursday midday

Supposed to work in an hour, yet they just rang to say don't bother. Who wants to buy Christmas lights in April. My one shift for the week and it's not happening. I could ring someone to hang out, no ones home. I could watch Doctor Phil, it's not on. The note left on the table this morning suggested I lovingly clean my room. Score.

13th April - Friday morning

There is no one left on the coast. Seriously, the one weekend I am free and everyone decides to go away. PHAT. I could be at camp, but no I had to work - could have got it off. I had to watch Heroes - could have Taped it. I wanted to have some ME time - well I have to say I'm not that interesting, wanted to have some time alone with my thoughts but it turns out I don't have as many thoughts as I well, thought.

14th April - Saturday afternoon

Got out to Erina last night before I realised youth wouldn't be on.

14th April - Saturday night

I am going out to the movies with my mum. The only consolation is that no one is left to witness my embarrassment. One positive in three days I suppose.

15th April - Sunday night

Crowds of friends arrived home this afternoon, showing up at church I suspected there would of course be some post PHAT discussion, a bit of

'it was great you should have come'
'you missed out, check out my super cool **** (insert 07 phat theme) shirt'

'you will so have to come next year'
to which I would invariably reply

'oh really? Bummer'
'yeah great shirt'

'oh maybe I'll probably have to work,' all of course with limited enthusiasm of course.

But when I got there it wasn't the superficial talk I'd envisioned. Over the five days they had forged new relationships, taken risks (with calculated safety) and grown in their relationship with Jesus, I hadn't done any of that. I'd watched Heroes, which had turned out to be a repeat. My one shift had been cut for the week, and I'd bonded with my mum. That's not to say I didn't enjoy the bonding it's just not quite what I'd been looking for that weekend. I felt left out, not my friends didn't like me anymore but because I'd missed out on a really great camp and an opportunity to make new friends. I'd blown it, and I'd learnt.

It is here I insert my clichéd epiphany.

PHAT sounded great, and I'm sorry I missed out because I was too lazy and thought I'd have a fine time at home. WRONG... Next year I am going.

**BY
ALEX HARTLEY**

PHAT IS OUR YEAR 7-12 CAMP APRIL 11-15

Miss out and this could be you... Get your rego forms in NOW!!

MY FAV
BIBLE
VERSE
AND
WHY...

By
Rowena Miers

A favorite verse of mine is Philippians 3:14 which says **"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus".**

I like this verse because it reminds me to keep my eyes fixed on heaven as the goal for which I am straining towards in my life. This verse supposes that the Christian life is not always going to be easy. In fact as outlined in this verse the Christian life is something that will involve "strain" and possibly hurts in this world. The goal of heaven though far exceeds these past hurts and the effort of perseverance in the Christian life. The goal of heaven is a prize that marks the end of our earthly toils. This prize as the verse outlines is only possible through the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. God in his goodness has given us this hope in Jesus where Jesus took the punishment that we deserved for our rebellion against God. Because of Jesus this world is not all that God has in stall for us but we have a hope for eternity with God. For Paul the writer of this verse this was a great source of encouragement and anticipation as it is likewise for me.

FULL NAME: Andrew Bruce Bootes **AGE:** 20

Holden or Commodore: LOL... A Holden is a Commodore... dumb question Dave!
Coke or Pepsi: Coke
Scrunch or Fold: Folder all the way...
League or union: Union... league has no tactics and need no brains
Poo flavoured ice-cream or ice-cream flavoured poo: Depends on the mood. Go the 1st for a desert (cold factor)... and the 2nd for a main (warm).
Soccer or cricket: Can't watch cricket... fall asleep, so soccer
Rap or techno: Don't listen to either...
Comedy or Horror: Comedy for sure. No way would i choose to scare myself!
Mac or PC: Whatever
Chocolate or Carrots: Chocolate
Drums or guitar: Guitar or either if i was able.
Mars Bar or Snickers: Snickers... I love the nuts!
Surfboard or body board: Surfboard - body boards are speed humps.

When did you become a Christian? Around year 9
What are some tough times you've been through? Struggle with sin in my life, I'm always doing things i don't want to do and struggling to do the things i want to do...

What has helped you to persevere through tough times? My salvation doesn't depend upon my ability to be good... at all. Reading God's word. Knowing who God is and that He is always the same. He is God and I'm not. He keeps every promise He makes. He is in control.

What's your favourite Bible verse? Not sure if a favourite... but I've been preaching this one to myself a lot lately... "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes..." Rom 1:16. Need to remind myself that my mates need to hear the Gospel.

What do you remember from growing up in CCECYOUTH? I remember a whistle in yr 9- that freaked me out! Good bible study times.

What do you love about being a CCECYOUTH leader? Getting to know all the fellas... been there in their growth as a Christian is really encouraging.

If you could hammer one message into the heads of year 10 boys what would it be? Grace alone...

What are you looking forward to about phat 07? night session talks.. they have been gold!! 1 thess.. just hanging out.

5
MINUTES
WITH
ANDY
BOOTES

By
Dave Miers



How to get more PHATness out of your PHAT.

The weather is getting colder, leaders are having secret meetings and whispering behind backs, the last minute rush to get permission slips in has begun and I've been looking for my Volleys. All these things are a sign of one thing:

PHAT is upon us.

And once again this year is shaping up to be even better than past PHATs. Is it possible, could the youth team at CCEC pull it off again and top



last year's PHAT? Of course we can, what sought of a question is that!!

What has been so great about PHAT in the past?

Is it the games? Is it mucking around with friends? Is it just not being at home or at school? Well yes it is all these things... but there is so much more to PHAT than that.

One of **the most** exciting things about PHAT is seeing people growing to be more godly and having a better

understanding of what it means to be a Christian. This is in fact the main Goal of PHAT.

PHAT is a time for us to **GLO-RIFY** God as we **GATHER** at camp to study and hear His Word so we may **GROW** in our godliness and **GIVE** us opportunity's to serve others and share the **GOSPEL** of Jesus **GLADLY** rejoicing in him.

The leaders are working hard to prepare for camp to make sure it is a encouraging fun time. But there is lots you as youth can do to prepare to make sure you and your friends get the most out of PHAT.

1) Prep

> A pre PHAT fitness training program with a focus on upper body strength and endurance would definitely be a good idea.

> And not to give anything away but there has never been a PHAT were some form of camouflage would not have been an advantage.

> We will be studying the book of 1 Thessalonians this year and to make sure you

J-WALK ISSUE #002

get the most out of it, it would be a good idea for you to read over the book before camp.

2) Ponder

> When thinking about camp and how much fun you are going to have, think also of others. How can you serve those around you at camp? Jesus, our Lord made himself a servant and as Christians we are to be imitators of him and look not only to our own interests, but also the interests of others. (Phil 2:1-11) Come to camp with a servant heart.

3) Pray

> Be praying for camp and all those involved.

> Thank God for how he has worked through PHAT in the past to bring people into a relationship with him and to mature us to be more Godly followers of him and pray that through his word and Spirit he will do it again.

> Here is a prayer you might want to pray right now:

Thank you Lord for the opportunity we have to go away together as a youth group and be encouraged by your word and each other.

We ask you to look after us and grow us to be more like your son Jesus.

We pray that you will give us servant hearts and we will honour you in all we do at PHAT. Amen.

See ya there!

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MAKING
PHAT
PHATTER

By
Adrian Haynes



**ON PHAT WE WILL BE
LOOKING AT PAUL'S
FIRST LETTER THE THESSALONIANS.**

In the lead up to PHAT it would be a great thing to take 10 minutes a day to read and pray over the passages that we will be studying.

DAY ONE

Read 1 Thess 1

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY TWO

Read 1 Thess 2:1-16

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY THREE

Read 1 Thess 2:17-3:13

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY FOUR

Read 1 Thess 4:1-12

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY FIVE

Read 1 Thess 4:13-5:28

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

**HOW GOOD WAS PHAT!!
FOR THE REST OF THE
HOLIDAYS YOU MIGHT
LIKE TO REFLECT ON 2
THESSALONIANS**

Jot down any questions you may have and ask them at church or when you get back to youth group.

DAY ONE

Read all of 1 Thessalonians

How were you challenged and encouraged on PHAT07 from 1 Thess?

What questions do you still have?

How can you pray?

DAY TWO

Read 2 Thess 1

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY THREE

Read 2 Thess 2

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY FOUR

Read 2 Thess 3

What do you learn about God?

What do you learn about Jesus?

What questions do you have?

How can you pray?

DAY FIVE

Reflect on all of 2 Thess.

Spend some time praying from the passage and praying for the term ahead at CCECYOUTH.



**PRE-PHAT
HOLIDAY
BIBLE
READING**

1 Thessalonians

**POST-
PHAT
HOLIDAY
BIBLE
READING**

2 Thessalonians

CCECYOUTH.COM is the place for the latest Bible Talks, Podcasts,

Pictures, Daily reading notes, videos, j-walk, articles + other stuff



JESUS IS ALIVE

By
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Warning this article isn't for the faint hearted...

It is reasonable to accept that Jesus is God

An interesting quirk has arisen in modern spirituality. People will freely and happily talk about God, but as soon as you mention Jesus, the conversation will often stop. This is due to the massive divide over the question 'Who is Jesus?' Some say that he was simply a good moral teacher, some that he is their homeboy. Some say he was a prophet just like any other. Have you ever wondered if it is actually reasonable to accept that Jesus is in fact God?

It would certainly be unreasonable to accept that Jesus is God if he did not believe this of himself. The earliest gospel, the synoptic gospel of Mark widely accepted as written between 60 and 80 AD, records an account of Jesus claiming divinity when on trial before the Sanhedrin

But he kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, coming with the clouds of heaven." Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. (Mk 14:61-64)

In this account, Jesus claims to fulfil the role of the hea-

enly Son of Man prophesied about in the Old Testament book of Daniel (Dan 7:13-14). While this phrase *son of man* is used elsewhere to simply signify humanity, in the context of Mark 14, it is a clear claim of Jesus to divinity. Although the Son of Man in Daniel 7 is a divine figure, his deity is dependent on God. Therefore, even though Jesus is claiming to be divine, there is a clear distinction between himself and God the Father. Paul Barnett explains this distinction, describing Jesus as "God in the sense that, as his *Son*, he perfectly represents the *Father* to us." This is not to say that Jesus was any less God than God the Father. Indeed, as Paul says in Colossians 1:15, Jesus is "the image of the invisible God."

However, Jesus goes beyond this claim in Mark 14, identifying himself by names and phrases that describe God (YHWH) in the Old Testament. For example, John's gospel records Jesus identifying himself as "the good shepherd" (Jn. 10:11-16). First century Jews would have immediately remembered the Old Testament passages referring to God (YHWH) as the shepherd of Israel (Ps 23:1; Is. 40:9-11; Ezk. 34:11-31). Yet Jesus claims this title for himself, implying his unique identity as God.

Another example is Jesus' claim to forgive sins (Mk. 2:5-12). Jewish law restricts this ability to God alone (Is 43:25). After all, no one can forgive sin except the one against whom all have

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sinned. The scribes present knew exactly what Jesus was claiming here, giving rise to their agitated response in verse 6: "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" At this point, no conclusion must be made about whether or not Jesus is in fact God. But it has been shown so far is that it is reasonable to conclude that Jesus claimed to be God.

In light of Jesus' assertions, many critics suggest that Jesus did not truly believe he was God but was simply lying. Such a view has massive implications for our view of Jesus. It makes Jesus hypocritical for teaching others to be honest. It makes Jesus malevolent for telling others to trust in him for their salvation when he knew he could do nothing. One must ask though, what possible motivation Jesus could have had for claiming deity if he did not believe he was divine. As Josh McDowell has rightly noted "If Jesus wanted to get people to follow him and believe in him as God, why... didn't he go to Greece, where they believed in various gods and various manifestations of them?" But for me, it is one final implication that is most striking. Were Jesus lying, he is a fool, since his claims to be God fuelled the Jewish motivation for his crucifixion (see Mk. 14 cited above). Does anyone really die for something they know to be false? Would you die for something you knew for sure was not true? This view of Jesus doesn't match his life and teachings and it is thus unlikely that Jesus was sim-

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ply lying.

There does exist another critique which asserts that Jesus, although believing himself to be God, was deluded. In diagnosing delusion, psychologists look at a person's emotions. The available records of Jesus' life show no evidence of inappropriate emotions. For example, he cries at the death of his friend Lazarus (Jn. 11:17-36), a natural response for an emotionally healthy individual. Jesus' emotional health, as well as his ability to construct a logical argument and his valid perception of reality, leads one prominent psychologist to conclude that Jesus was in fact mentally much healthier than anyone else he knows, including himself. Another psychologist goes so far as to say that Jesus holds the "blueprint for successful human life with optimism, mental health, and contentment". Accordingly, it is highly improbable that Jesus was delusional.

However, all this conjecture about honesty and mental stability fades into the background if it is true that Jesus was raised from the dead, a fact that we are about to celebrate at Easter. A resurrected man is neither a liar nor a lunatic. Deceased eminent lawyer Sir Norman Anderson well understood the implications of the resurrection, arguing, "if Jesus arose, his claims to be Lord, God and Saviour must be taken seriously. If he lies in the grave, he is only one amongst many gurus". As Saint Paul puts it: "If Christ

has not been raised, our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain" (1 Cor. 15:14).

The first step in establishing the likelihood of the resurrection is to show that Jesus was dead beyond resuscitation. This has recently been questioned as a result of the speculative *Da Vinci Code*. The Qu'ran, written in the seventh century, also denies Jesus' crucifixion suggesting that he ascended to heaven alive (Surah 4:156-159). Yet the crucifixion of Jesus during the reign of Pontius Pilate is one of the most certain things we know about Jesus. Second century Roman secular historian Tacitus attests to Jesus' death in his *Annals* (15:44). First century Jewish historian Josephus also mentions the event in his *Antiquities* (18.3.3). Although early Christians have certainly tampered with this passage from Josephus, the reference to Jesus' death is widely accepted as part of the original. Furthermore, biblical references to Jesus' death appear as soon as 30 years after the event (1 Cor. 15:3-4). With all these attestations, it is highly unlikely that Jesus was not crucified. Some people, though, suggest that Jesus may have survived the crucifixion and later been resuscitated. This view is

commonly called the swoon theory. However recorded indications of both pericardial and pleural effusions leave no doubt that Jesus was dead

Having established that Jesus was indeed dead, I now turn to the evidence for him being alive after this time. One cannot deny the demoralization of Jesus' disciples after his arrest and execution. Equally undeniable is the defiance of authority by these same disciples within a short space of time, and their proclamation of Jesus as God. Many of Jesus' disciples were killed for their proclamation of Jesus as the risen Lord. What had given them this confidence and boldness if not that Jesus had actually been raised? What had caused them to go from hiding for fear of being associated with the one who had been crucified to walking the streets shouting about their association with Jesus? There is also the issue of the empty tomb which needs some explanation. By the late 50s, a Christology had already formed claiming Christ's resurrection.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was

buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. (1 Cor. 15:3-8)

In this excerpt from Saint Paul's letter to the church in Corinth, he cites many people who are reported to have seen Jesus alive, including himself. Written around 30 years after Jesus' death, Paul acknowledges that a lot of those claiming to have seen the risen Jesus are still alive. Those receiving his letter could have easily verified the truth of his claims. The reference to the five hundred brothers is a clear appeal to accessible evidence. In light of this evidence, it is certainly reasonable to believe that Jesus was seen alive after his death; and despite the obvious human tendency to disregard such an event on the basis of personal experience, the resurrection is the most probable explanation.

On top of all the logic, all the probability, and all the intellectual inquiry, there also exists a deep well of experiential evidence that cannot be expressed in words. Indeed, the Christian faith is like a trampoline. When you come across a trampoline, do you first

examine each spring, testing its renewing force? Do you carefully scrutinize the canvas, looking for imperfections in its structure? For most people, it is not a thorough inspection of a trampoline that assures them it works. Rather, it is the experience of getting on the trampoline and jumping. Such is my appeal to you. This paper has shown it is not unreasonable to believe that Jesus was raised from the dead and, as a result, that his claims to divinity are reliable. It is therefore reasonable to believe that Jesus is, in fact, God. So now, jump on!

**BY
LACHLAN GRICE**
Lachlan is a smart guy who is also a fantastic year 8 boys leaders.

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