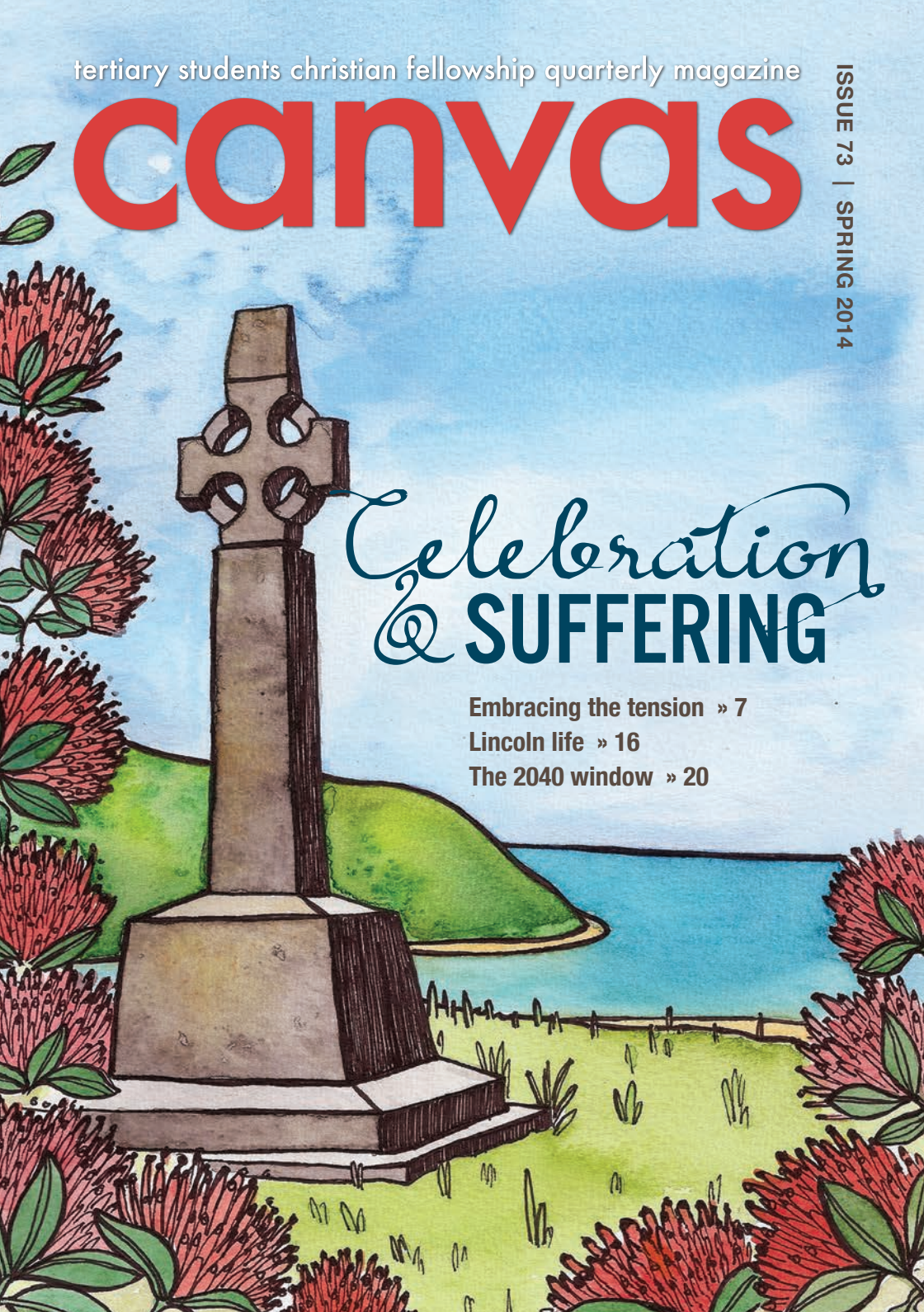


tertiary students christian fellowship quarterly magazine

ISSUE 73 | SPRING 2014

canvas



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canvas

CANVAS aims to inform and encourage all who are interested in reaching students for Christ, and in thinking Christianly about their life and work. It is published four times a year by TSCF.



Canvas Issue 73
Spring 2014

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Mara Gilmore

TSCF is a founding member of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. It serves to help students reach students for Christ nationwide by enabling them to reach maturity in Christ, so that they understand and proclaim the truth about Christ and serve God by showing his love in the student world.

Send your thoughts, comments, questions and letters to us at canvas@tscf.org.nz

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If you would prefer to receive a PDF version of Canvas, or an email reminder when it is available on the website please email canvas@tscf.org.nz

canvaseditorial

"No one in heaven will say, 'Well, this is rather disappointing. Is this all I get for what I went through?' The sight of Jesus' face alone will compensate more than a million times for every pain and heartbreak we go through now." (Mark Altrogge)

Celebration and suffering

Few experiences unite us like experiencing joy or trials together. Of course we prefer the happier end of the spectrum, so – in contrast to this whole season devoted to Christmas – opportunities to suffer are bypassed when possible and ploughed through hastily if no other options present.

But we pause here at the most joyful time of year to consider suffering. It isn't the antithesis to joy – it's often the foundation and fuel for it. We recognise God's mercy to us through painful circumstances, and reflect it to others who face suffering. And by first acknowledging the brokenness in our nation, our communities, and our lives, we seek forgiveness and restoration.

So this is how we begin our celebration of Christ's birth, the Christ who came to suffer for us, who will soon end suffering forever.

– *Maryanne Wardlaw, Communications Manager*

canvasnotables

Married

Peter Bevan and Melody Forrest, former leaders of Veritas and EU respectively, married in July.

Born

Aquila Hoani Reid was born 6 October, a third son for Palmerston North Team Leader Ian Reid and his wife, Erin.



Jonathan and Margaret Short, both former LUCF, welcomed a son, **Azariah John Russell**, on 30 October.

Awarded

Canvas received recognition from the Australasian Religious Press Association in September. The organisation awarded TSCF the bronze for "Best Design (Magazine)" for the 2013 issues.

New staff

The Auckland team has been blessed by the addition of **May Lee**, first as an intern and now as a part-time staff worker. "Watching May love and serve international students this past year has been wonderfully encouraging," said Jane Pelz, who works with May. "She is herself amongst people from anywhere."

May came from Korea in 2006, and first worked



with Taumarunui Baptist's youth and children's ministry. More recently she completed a Bachelor's of Contemporary Ministry at Alphacrucis College in Auckland.

May has a vision to be a bridge connecting the many cultures represented on Auckland's campuses, and to disciple international students as they discover and grow in God's word. She is in the early days of raising vision funding, working part-time in a café until she has enough support to spend the majority of the week in student ministry.

canvaswanted

Are you committed to seeing the gospel worked out in every area of life? Are you excited by the challenges and opportunities that young adults face during their university years? Do you relish seeing communities strengthened, pennies dropping, hearts growing, and fleeting opportunities grasped? At TSCF, we are and we do.

CATALYST TEAM LEADER

Catalyst is TSCF's graduate ministry. It encourages those who are entering the workforce to continue connecting God's word with their calling. Initiatives include local groups, such as weekly lunchtime studies in Auckland City, and one-off events hosting speakers or organising conferences. TSCF is looking for someone to find and lead

graduates around the country.

STAFF WORKERS

If you have a vision to invest in the next generation of leaders in any region of Aotearoa New Zealand, we would love to hear from you. There is a particular need for staff to walk alongside students in Auckland, Wellington and Lincoln, and graduates around the country through Catalyst's ministries.

TEAM LEADER

TSCF is accepting applications for the leadership of the Wellington team.

We are looking for someone who can develop both staff workers and student leaders, helping them build community, study the word and share the gospel.

Please email info@tscf.org.nz for an application form and job description, or telephone (04) 384 7274.



Massey Albany

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). This verse has taught us the value of commitment on Massey's Albany campus. Though we have often lacked in numbers, God has used faithful members to strengthen our presence. This has developed through communal lunches and inviting renowned speakers to our meetings to attract a wider audience to hear how God is working.

We continued meeting through exams to encourage one another during this stressful time, and are organising a group to go to Launch in February.

– Blake Gardiner

Lincoln CF

We had the annual CF camp early in semester two, with Ian Reid from Palmerston North giving a series of talks. It was an eventful camp with paintball, a swim in the frozen lake and even a massive bush fire that two helicopters were called in to put out. (We didn't start it.)

We also had a combined Christian clubs ball at Canterbury Uni. It was a hit with the country theme and an amazing band.

The usual weekly meetings with a new speaker each week continued on campus. We also had the Women of Grace Bible study going, working our way through the book *Captivating*, and the Sons of Thunder group also had their Bible study. (I would tell you what they were studying, but the guys thought it was best to keep it a secret.)

We finished off the semester at the Song of the Bellbird in the Port Hills. Adrienne, a long-time CF member, shared about her time here while we cooked sausages over the fire.

– Katrina Jackson

Dunedin VCF

During the mid-semester break in August, Dunedin groups held a combined retreat for OCF, VCF, Nursing CF and Occupational Therapy CF. We met at Tirohanga Camp for four days of digging deeper into God's word. We studied part of Revelation with the theme "The Things that Last," which was both challenging and eye-opening.

We thank God for the success of Red Frogs, where we serve pancakes to students at a residential college throughout the year. We have been well received and they have invited us back again next year.

– Wei-Yan Fan

Veritas

Veritas, a group of law students at the University of Auckland, has been engaging in Bible studies and discussions, particularly around issues of governance and the Christian response to authority. It's been a great opportunity explore how our faith relates to the way we interact with society.

We also held a successful "Dinner with a doc and a lawyer" event with Auckland CMF. Jonathan and Jo Moses blessed us with their hospitality as we gathered for a meal at their home. It was a great opportunity to meet other students and gain advice from those in professional fields.

– Jerome de Vries



CMF's "Dinner with a Doc" series joined up with Veritas for a doctor/lawyer combo.



Auckland EU

One of our recent events was on time management and calling, challenging us on issues of truly resting, gratitude for the time we are given, and using our time in a God-honouring way.

In November, we're doing a trip to Rangitoto with dinner afterwards to celebrate the end of exams and fundraise for IFES.

– Tim Gray

(More on EU's activities with World Student Day in October is on page 19.)

Wellington CF

In our weekly meetings we've been going through a series called "Gospel and Life" – looking at how we as students can live out the gospel in our cities, universities, communities and as individuals. We've looked at how the Gospel affects all aspects of life.

Before term ended, we had a desserts night to say goodbye for the summer and pray for and bless those who are graduating.

– Shani Meyer

Hamilton CF

We had a ski trip in September, Wednesday badminton nights, and an end-of-semester Thanksgiving event, with dessert bake-off. Bible studies have covered the five of Jesus' "I am" statements in John.

Students also participated in Streetworks Volun-

teering Day and Live Below the Line.

– Charissa Tan

Palmerston North OCF

God continues to bring people through the doors of The Centre every Friday evening. We're thankful for this weekly meeting place, for Ian Reid (our awesome staff worker/OCF dad), helpers, graduates, churches, friends, fundraising opportunities, and food.

We kicked off semester two with Christmas in July, instead of the International Food Night that we used to run. CIJ gave us the opportunity to tell others about Jesus through the very familiar Christmas story.

The following weeks were centred on Bible studies. We have three small groups: Christianity Explored for seekers, Christianity Basics (such as prayer, the Holy Spirit, and baptism), and Philippians+Colossians (a discipleship group).

In August, we held a Muslim-Christian dialogue to discuss the basics of both beliefs. We also held a one-day series of talks on love, purity and trust, and had our AGM.

– Yvonne Sng



Robert Hunt and Palmerston North OCF students



Students at conferences (from left): IVF 1951, OCF 1964, TSCF 1984, and Victoria Wellington CU 1993.

Growing the vision

The year I arrived in NZ coincided with the 70th anniversary of TSCF. The movement was not in great financial shape so we decided to have an appeal that celebrated the past and looked to the future. This initiative became known as “the 700.” We asked people to give a \$1,000 thank offering for the future and held a series of 11 “Parties to Remember” around NZ and in London, KL and Singapore.

The 700 has raised \$125,844 to date. We now call this “The Vision Fund” and we use it for strategic projects and leadership development. Over the years it has helped fund things like sending students to IFES training events, supplying KGK students in Japan after the 2011 earthquake, the God Zone Rugby World Cup Gospel, the William Lane Craig apologetics tour and some capital projects like the new server.

Most importantly, the 700 has helped TSCF stay afloat during the toughest financial periods of the last 8 years. On two or three occasions, without the buffer provided by the Vision Fund, a lack of cash flow would have precipitated a serious financial crisis.

Our balance sheet has steadily improved, and we

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continue to depend on God for financial provision and to grow our support base. The Vision Fund has a balance of \$71,865, and it is still possible to designate a donation to it. We are profoundly grateful to the 700 and for the opportunities the Vision Fund has created.

If you would like more information, to make a gift to the Vision Fund, or discuss leaving a legacy to TSCF, please get in touch: nigel@tscf.org.nz.

Nigel Pollock
TSCF National Director



Celebration & suffering

“We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” – we know it, but we don’t always feel the reality of Romans 8:28. Good is often veiled by pain; present struggles distract us from future hope.

The following three reflections consider the tension between God’s goodness and this world’s brokenness. They ask what this tension means to us as individuals who suffer, as members of a nation and communities scarred by suffering, and as believers in a Saviour who suffered.

“You do not find one godly man who came out of an affliction worse than when he went into it.”

Jeremiah Burroughs



Hard mercies



What do you expect when you find yourself going through a tough time? Many of us have come to expect suffering, realising that it's not only a part of living in a fallen world but part of the Christian experience. But I reckon we also expect that suffering will come for short periods of time: something difficult happens, God helps us through it, we learn something and then the tough time will pass. Everything will be okay until the next difficult time comes along.

But what about tough times that don't pass? When things continue to be hard week after week, month after month, year after year? What do you expect then?

I have a chronic illness. When an illness lasts longer than a few months or a year, you start to find out where your hope lies. I'm tempted to place my hope in the next doctor's visit: maybe that last test will show a quick fix and things will be alright. Finally my life won't be on hold.

I haven't sorted it all out, but here are some things

I've been thinking through. An expectation that suffering should be short-term can come when we think that its purpose is to learn something. Yes, undoubtedly we do, but it's more complex. This is not simply about my growth. It reflects aspects of sin's impact on the world, of God's patience before judging it and bringing the new creation to fulfilment. Peter talks about trials refining us but also points to God's ultimate glory: "In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:6-7). My learning is only one aspect, not the full picture.

Long-term illness also seems contrary to God's goodness. Yet everything I know about God from my experience, from his track record as recorded in the Bible, from the character of Jesus, is that he is good. Romans 8:28 is oft-quoted: "And we know

“God uses chronic pain and weakness, along with other afflictions, as his chisel for sculpting our lives. Felt weakness deepens dependency on Christ for strength each day. The weaker we feel, the harder we lean. And the harder we lean, the stronger we grow spiritually, even while our bodies waste away.” (Joni Eareckson Tada, *Pain and Providence*)

that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” But a lot of the time, what I reckon is good for me is different from what God knows is good for me. Think about the relationship between a good, loving father and his child: the child often wants things that aren’t good (more chocolate, less sleep, fewer vegetables) so the father won’t let the child have those things. Later in life the child sees the bigger picture and knows the father was right. So as I work through these things, I choose to trust my Father who knows me better than I do and who understands the big picture.

I’m also tempted to think that I can only properly serve God if I’m well. It’s easy to see how far God’s originally perfect design is from my current situation: I can count the number of extra hours I used to be able to work, how much less sleep I needed, how much more healthy people can do with their lives. Yet God doesn’t call us to meet the same standard of productivity; he calls us to be faithful with the gifts, time, and energy he has given us. In the parable of the talents, the master entrusts different amounts to each servant and his expectations are in keeping with how much they received. Jesus teaches us that although we have different gifts, opportunities and levels of health, God expects us to be faithful in making the most of what he has entrusted to us. My responsibility is to be faithful with the time and energy I do have, rather than wishing I had more.

Finally, I can become fixated on this earth rather than having an eternal perspective. We seek fulfilment in work or friendships or family or career; with a long-term illness I can feel unfulfilled because I

can’t do all I’d like to. Having an eternal perspective means that what I do on earth matters, but eternity matters more. So seeking fulfilment in serving God matters; whether or not I meet society’s expectations doesn’t. This hard life is a short time in the face of eternity. It will pale in comparison to the glory and perfection of the new creation, where there will be no tears or sickness or sin.

When I look at that reality, it transforms how I think about life now, knowing that the hard work of serving God first is not in vain. My faith has been influenced by Jesus’ teaching about losing our life now to save it later – living a life of sacrifice and putting God first for the sake of what’s to come, rather than selfishly seeking a nice life now and disregarding eternity. His words encourage me: “For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” (Mark 8:35-36).

Yes, I will continue to pray for God to heal me. Yes, I will continue to visit the doctors and take the medication they recommend. Yes, it would be nice if I got better, and maybe I will. But my hope doesn’t rest in being healed (whether miraculously or through modern medicine); it rests on God’s sovereignty and love. I know that when Jesus returns, everything that is messed up about this world – including illness – will be set right.

Robyn Drake
Auckland Staff Worker



Suffering & grace: our story



ohutukawas whistle in the wind. Kauri tower over the moa. A chorus of bird song deafens. A world away, outside the gates of Jerusalem, a cross stands on a rocky knoll. They crucify Jesus. God suffers in history.

It is always a joy hearing Maori New Zealanders unpack their whakapapa, or Pakeha New Zealanders describe themselves as fifth-generation Kiwis. This is how we affirm the role of history in our heritage and identity.

How do we understand God's role in New Zealand history and in our personal history? Acts 17 provides some signposts: "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands" (Acts 17:24).

At the centre of history is the God of the Bible, of heaven and earth. He speaks in the

beginning and history is created. He developed it through the centuries and continues to unfurl it in front of us today.

“And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live” (Acts 17:25-26).

I have a godly friend who is going through the furnace of suffering, facing intolerable pain. Compounding this has been a series of life-threatening emergencies. While we chatted recently, she smiled and said, “I’m here.” Compressed into those two words, echoing the sentiments of Acts 17:25, was her understanding of God’s powerful and immense grace in her simply being alive.

But how does this understanding of God’s grace to us, in and through New Zealand’s history, square with the pain of our personal and national stories?

Acts 17:26 encourages us to see our place in history as an act of God’s grace. But how does this understanding of God’s grace to us, in and through New Zealand’s history, square with the pain of our personal and national stories? What does it say to the breaches of the Treaty, to violence, pain and hardship? How do we reconcile the sovereignty of God in our history with the suffering smeared so thickly across it?

Understanding God’s role

Imagine two blades of the same pair of scissors. One blade is God’s total control over the events of history, and the second blade is humanity’s freely chosen actions – including migration, colonisation, and their consequences. The Bible teaches that God uses the scissors (history) in such a way that his control is exercised in and through human beings – human beings who are responsible for their actions and the results. In his book *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, Timothy Keller writes:

God’s plan works through our choices, not around or despite them. Our choices have consequences, and we are never forced by God to do anything—we always do what we most want to do. God works out his will perfectly through our willing actions.

In Genesis 50:20, Joseph explains how God used his brothers’ evil action of selling him into slavery: “You intended me harm, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” In Acts 2:23, Peter tells us Jesus was crucified “according to the definite plan” of God, and yet the hands that put him to death were guilty of injustice. In other words, Jesus’ death happened by God’s will. Yet no one who betrayed and put Jesus to death was forced to do it. Don Carson writes:

It must be the case that God stands behind good and evil in somewhat different ways; that is, he stands behind good and evil asymmetrically. While moral evil cannot be done outside the bounds of God’s purposes, “the evil is not

morally chargeable to him” since the perpetrators are responsible. Yet since all good impulses in the human heart come ultimately from God (James 1:17) — when good things happen, they are directly attributable to him.

My children are of Ngai Tahu and Te Arawa descent. The Ngai Tahu tribe has suffered for generations through massive land losses and over a century of broken Treaty promises, with ensuing deprivation and loss of mana. The Crown’s recognition of this legacy of suffering and Treaty breaches led to the Ngai Tahu Treaty Settlement.

My children have benefited and will benefit from the settlement in a number of direct ways, as will their children. These are and will be such a blessing. We see God’s grace and provision in them. It is our conviction that “what was intended for harm, God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done.”

Understanding God’s purpose

“God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us” (Acts 17:27).

The whole purpose of New Zealand’s history is that we would seek him. God created New Zealand and everything in it. God created us Maori, Pakeha, Polynesian, Indian and Chinese. God brought our ancestors to these islands and God has done all of this so that we would seek him. The purpose of our history as a people is that we would seek the God who has revealed himself through his Son, Jesus. Jesus suffers at the centre of history so that the Father’s justice may be satisfied, justly punishing sin so we could be forgiven.



The purpose of our history as a people is that we would seek the God who has revealed himself through his Son, Jesus. Jesus suffers at the centre of history so that the Father’s justice may be satisfied, justly punishing sin so we could be forgiven.

Understanding our history

We see God enter human history to hang on a cross. We see God working through the pain of human history to bring the gospel of his suffering Son to these islands. We see God working through the migration of ancient Pacific peoples, the expansion of the Maori population and the upheaval of colonisation to bring us to where we are today.

We can see his grace alive in Aotearoa New Zealand. We can see his grace in our personal and national histories.

We can see his grace in the gift of his Son, Jesus – the one who suffered for us at the centre of history and the one who will ultimately end history. Without Jesus, our history is a groundless struggle full of pain and suffering. But with Jesus as the focal point, we can begin to see God’s purpose and truly understand our history as an act of God’s grace poured out for us.

Mark Grace
Catalyst Team Leader





Advent, suffering & salvation

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.” (Romans 8:18-21)

Four years ago this December, I was in India. As thoughts of Christmas brewed, thoughts of God becoming man, I witnessed one of the most miserable scenes of my life. On the surface it seemed the antithesis of Christmas cheer, a dark cloud blocking the warmth and light of the Infinite’s incarnation. After all, what does suffering have to do with Christmas? Christmas carols ring with “joy to the world,” “merry gentlemen” and angels rejoicing. We save sorrow for Good Friday; Christmas is for celebrating.

But in my mind, the event mingled with Advent. And it continues to each year, defining Christmas’s shadows and adding depth to my perspective of Christ’s birth.

I had been staying in Kolkata near Mother Teresa House, so I took the opportunity to visit the non-descript building on a busy street. In the hive of activity in its courtyard, a small team prepares the stream of visitors to volunteer in the Missionaries of Charity’s operations. I chose the women’s home.

It's less popular than the children's home or the home for the dying; only two of us left that morning for its quiet grounds.

From the current state of the women, it's impossible to guess anything about the homes they came from besides the fact that they aren't welcome there now. In this refuge, the plain, functional spaces and the blank days punctuated by meal times and sleep offer a drab mercy.

I had worked with people who were marginalised, but my heart was not prepared to meet these women. Those with mental disabilities live on the ground floor. Their wing of the building borders a courtyard, and they are kept inside that wing by a makeshift wooden barrier that bolts from the outside.

Most remained seated in the open corridor as we entered, gazing blankly ahead. But one of the few who noticed us immediately rushed towards me. Her face was scarred, possibly burned with acid or fire, probably intentionally. The right side had been so badly damaged that only the thinnest layer of skin covered her skull – no lips, no flesh over her cheek, no eyelashes or eyebrows or hair. She clung to me with thin arms, her raw face pressed into my shoulder and noises I couldn't begin to

interpret coming from her throat.

A wave of emotions hit me, but repulsion trumped them all. I didn't want to know that such suffering existed, let alone embrace it. I stepped back and held her arms, restraining both her enthusiasm and my fear. Over the next couple hours, as the other volunteer and I combed nits from shaved heads and massaged lotion into weak limbs – scarred and shrivelled, even amputated stumps – I tried to make sense of their physical state and their mental isolation.

As I left that evening and the countdown to Christmas entered its final week, the reality of what Jesus signed up for gained a new dimension – his refusal to consider equality with God “something to be grasped,” his fellowship in our sufferings. He entered space and time in a body that would bear scars and with a mind that would be overcome with sorrow. My brief experience of those women's tragic existence framed Christ's incarnation. The smells. The futility. The blank faces – one-way mirrors that concealed ruined childhoods, violence, abandonment.

Jesus didn't visit, as I had, offering some diversion for a few hours before retreating to safety. I longed to escape the destitution; he moved in. He “bore

S

aeed Abedini is one of today's suffering heroes. He is an American citizen who has been imprisoned and abused in his native Iran for the past two years because he was helping his people materially in the name of Christ. In a letter to his daughter on her 8th birthday, he wrote:

“I know that you question why you have prayed so many times for my return and yet I am not home yet. Now there is a big ‘why’ in your mind. You are asking why Jesus isn't answering your prayers and the prayers of all of the people around the world praying for my release. ...

He suffered what the amputee and burn victim and discarded spouse suffered, and he did it so that they – so that we – could be restored.

our wounds, and carried our sorrows.” He suffered what the amputee and burn victim and discarded spouse suffered, and he did it so that they – so that we – could be restored. Our word “love” doesn’t begin to fathom that.

And what of our coming restoration? If there was no way for Christ to bypass suffering, we won’t find a shortcut. But here is a hope to cling to: God brought infinite good out of Christ’s brutal death, and he will turn our little troubles into great blessings.

Christmas is the story of the omnipotent I Am becoming a suffering saviour. He endured death and decay in order to abolish it. And in the meantime, our own suffering grows perseverance, character and hope (Romans 5:3-5). Christmas is the only reason we can have joy in every situation, at each stage of life, no matter the pain each holds.

When Paul says we become like Jesus by sharing in his suffering, he reminds us that we are

changing from our ragged selves into a bright reflection of something more beautiful than we can imagine (Philippians 3:8-11). Of course, we want that transformation, but suffering isn’t how we’d choose to effect it. I definitely wouldn’t – I’d prefer to get there by reading great books, going on memorable adventures with inspiring people, and finding constant success. But every time we face pain, disappointment and futility, they remind us of this hard and comforting reality: We aren’t yet who we’re meant to be. We aren’t yet where we’re meant to be. Suffering proves it.

So we can relish the tension. This planet is in the “pains of childbirth,” and when the new earth is born every tear from the beginning of time will shine like a diamond in its light. We celebrate Jesus’ literal birth, one that led to suffering and death, because we have the hope of his resurrection and the promise of a spiritual rebirth.

What child is this? He is our suffering Saviour.

Maryanne Wardlaw
Communications Manager



“The answer to the ‘why’ is ‘who.’ The confusion of “Why has all of this happened?” and “Why your prayers are not answered yet” is resolved with understanding who is in control ... Lord Jesus Christ, our God!

“... Jesus allows me to be kept here for his glory. He is doing something inside each of us and also outside in the world. People die and suffer for their Christian faith all over the world and some may wonder why? But you should know the answer of ‘why’ is ‘who.’ It is for Jesus. He is worth the price. And he has a plan to be glorified through our lives.”



Lincoln life

Christian Fellowship's
Women of Grace group
at Banks Peninsula.

This year, for the first time, the Lincoln University Christian Fellowship made the front page of *The Press*, and also received a mention in *Central Canterbury News*. The reason? They served the campus by giving out free sausages and non-alcoholic drinks at the annual end-of-lectures Garden Party, which ordinarily has a reputation as a drunken festival. For several years, the CF has opted not to avoid the drunkenness but to serve fellow students by picking up rubbish on hands and knees after the day-long event. This year they wanted to serve up both food and the gospel, answering the “why are you doing this?” questions by pointing to Jesus.

The new leaders for the undergraduate CF at are already doing a fantastic job of planning for the mission opportunities that February’s orientation week will bring. They are focused on living for Jesus and speaking for Jesus together. In recent weeks they’ve continued to have opportunity to proclaim Jesus through word and deed.

Undergrads may well be heading into summer placements, but for postgrads, the work of research continues unabated. Ani Kartikasari, part-time TSCF staff worker, is doing a great job

encouraging postgraduate mission. She has found plenty of opportunities with individuals, both Christians and non-Christians, to have conversations that often centre around stress-related matters. That opens up windows of opportunity for inviting God to be part of the situation. Ani can testify from her own PhD experiences in Lincoln that Jesus, as the all-knowing God, knows more about the research than anyone else. So we have confidence in praying to him for wisdom, understanding and clarity. Seeing answered prayer boosts confidence in the living God who is intimately interested in people. Several students have become part of “investigating Jesus” studies as a result of this.

Student mission is not easy. But the undergrads and postgrads of the two TSCF groups in Lincoln are leading the way in giving all sorts of things a go, and being all things to all people so that some may be won to Jesus. Well done!

Tim Hodge
South Island Team Leader



Building up

South Island Team Leader Tim Hodge interviewed some students who have been involved with the ministry at Lincoln University as they graduate. Jia Ying Chai (who goes by “Chai”) is originally from Singapore. She has completed a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture.

In what way has Jesus made you more like him while you’ve been at university?

I have been taught repeatedly to trust that God is entirely sovereign and trustworthy. Throughout my whole four years, God has reminded me that nothing else – not friendships, not studies, not careers, not “street cred,” not independence, not finances – can be as firm a rock, as strong an anchor as he can be. All other ground is sinking sand, as was aptly illustrated by the February 2011 earthquakes that welcomed me on my second day in NZ!

What are you grateful to God for in terms of being part of TSCF in Lincoln?

To witness how the Bible and God transcend age, race, ethnicity, background, culture, and language as we study the Bible together and testify to what Christ has done for each of us.

What’s the next step for you, and how do you think you’ll worship Jesus in that?

I’ve received a summer scholarship at Lincoln University and an internship with a landscape company in Christchurch (potentially). Worshiping Jesus in that has already started, firstly with gratitude for such wonderful opportunities. I am also determined to not let this “working world” take over my life. As I keep reminding myself, I don’t want to be a landscape architect who is also a Christian; I want to be a Christian who (hopefully) is working as a landscape architect.



Jia Ying Chai

What advice would you give students starting uni in 2015?

Think carefully about what you define as success. Invest your energy and time into something that you believe matters in the future. Hopefully that’s not a mere paper chase to get good grades or recognition – not that either are bad in themselves, but if that’s all you have, I don’t think you will enjoy life. You will see it as a constant struggle.

What would you like to say to those who pray for and finance Tim and the TSCF staff team?

Thank you for working in partnership together with Tim and TSCF. TSCF has opened my eyes to know Christ better, and Tim has been an invaluable mentor. You have indirectly been supporting and helping me, and many other students like me. So, thank you indeed!

LIFE OF A GRADUATE:

Lost in limbo

I run, and I run. The giant monster is chasing after me no matter where I go. There does not seem to be an exit from this eternally dark, deserted place that holds a strange déjà vu for me. There is no anchor, no end. No hope.

The life of a graduate is not as glamorous as I imagined: proudly holding my certificate, entering a professional corporation, starting the journey as a successful career woman. The reality is, competition is fierce in New Zealand. Landing a job is hard; it is even harder for internationals. After six months in the City of Sails, I have applied for countless jobs and attended numerous interviews. My initial glow of confidence soon turned into gloomy desperation.

Doubts and fear set in. I am frustrated by going in circles every month with no job offer. What happened to my dreams? What am I doing with skills honed at university? Did I make a wrong decision?

When God called Jonah to Nineveh, Jonah ran away from the Lord. He did not just run away from the Lord's command, he ran away from the presence of God. I resonate with Jonah. I feel like I betrayed God and angered him by not doing what he called me to do this year.

Yet the truth is the opposite of what I feel. God's grace is bigger than my mistakes. I always have a choice and he is always able to catch me when I fall. His sovereignty is sufficient to cover my flawed plans. When I make decisions, there is a deeper issue than merely obeying God's commands – it is about my relationship with God himself. How do I perceive him? Do I know his loving nature and his unwavering care for me?



Joyce at Winchester Windmill in the UK.

The real challenge is not to land the perfect job, but to continue to follow him through desolation and struggles.

The real challenge is not to land the perfect job, but to continue to follow him through desolation and struggles. When I say I love him, how am I living it out practically? How am I showing my trust in his provision when real tests come, when threatened with a lack of provision?

I run, and I run. Then I realise that to exit this limbo I must follow the light. His presence is the anchor. His Spirit empowers me from within to keep running. He is the Good News.

Joyce Yip is a graduate of the University of Otago who is sharing the transition to working life with Canvas.

Global prayer



To mark IFES World Student Day on 17 October, the Evangelical Union at the University of Auckland focused on prayer the entire week.

It concluded with many of our members participating in the TSCF Prayer Challenge organised by staff worker Robyn Drake.

We focused on a meeting for prayer at noon each day. Monday started with prayer for each other, and on Tuesday we prayed for EU and other groups at Auckland Uni. On Wednesday we got information to pray for groups on other campuses around the Auckland region. On Thursday we prayed for the whole TSCF movement and groups around the country. We ended the week on Friday, World Student Day, where we prayed for IFES and groups in other countries, making good use of the prayer profiles available online.

We also had a discussion about prayer, exploring why we pray, how we should pray, and what the Bible has to say. We shared some of our own experiences of prayer at the Thursday evening meeting – how God has answered prayer in our lives, and in what ways prayer has impacted us.

During the TSCF Prayer Challenge on Friday we received texts every hour, each containing a country and some prayer points for the IFES movements there. Robyn sent out more than 1700 texts, and together those of us who participated around the country prayed for students in 154 countries and dozens of IFES groups.

The first thing I noticed as a result of the daily

meetings was the sense of unity that was created. There's something special about praying together as a group – especially for a reasonable period of time, not just 5 minutes tacked on to the end of a Bible study! An hour every day seems like a big commitment, but

it wasn't that difficult. God worked through the regular and frequent meetings.

As we moved from praying for each other to praying for the city, country, and world, the sense of community only increased. It was fantastic to get more information about groups similar to us, to know that they are struggling with the same issues we are.

“What difference can 20 people make on a campus of 40,000?” we ask. Spending that time in prayer made me realise how much bigger our mission is.

In our small- and medium-sized groups, it's easy to feel isolated and insignificant – “What difference can 20 people make on a campus of 40,000?” we ask. Spending that time in prayer made me realise how much bigger our mission is. We aren't just part of the worldwide IFES, but part of bringing about God's Kingdom, which is broader than any single organisation.

This time also drew me closer to God. As the end of semester nears, finding time each day to spend with God becomes more and more difficult. Setting this time aside was both an inspiration and a challenge to my own daily habits. Hearing about others' experiences with prayer, and how God has spoken and changed them through answered prayers, was also a huge encouragement.

– *Tim Gray, EU president*



Framing the 2040 window:

Maori mission is key in a new New Zealand

The 2040 window – the 26 years between now and 2040 – is framed on this side by the bicentennial year of the Gospel's arrival in New Zealand and the centennial commemorations of Gallipoli in WW I, and in 2040 by the bicentennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

In those 26 years, a new New Zealand will come of age. Today 60% of Kiwis aged between 10 and 17 are of Pakeha descent, but it's projected that in 2030 the figure will be 30%. A generation will come of age in an increasingly bicultural and multicultural New Zealand.

In this 2040 window, mission to Maori as well as Maori mission to New Zealand will be significant. There is a fresh stirring amongst Maori of the Wairua Tapu – the Holy Spirit. The Bible Society, which normally sells between 100 and 200 Maori Bibles a year, has sold more than 1000 each year for the past four years.

Just as the biblical story can be read in terms of creation, fall and redemption, so can the Treaty of Waitangi. I believe that Treaty relationships are moving out of a season of breaches and brokenness, of protest and pain, and into a season of

renewing, redeeming, restoring and reawakening.

I came away from this year's Waitangi Day celebrations sensing that a new window of gospel opportunity was opening. A new generation of Maori with resources and education are making a social, entrepreneurial and economic impact in New Zealand. Church leaders across New Zealand tell me they are having small numbers of non-Christian Maori turn up at church because of God-given dreams and visions. In media, academia and publishing there is a small but growing recognition of the foundational role of the gospel in early New Zealand. A new generation of believers is discovering the gospel's history in Aotearoa and opening up to Treaty responsibilities and gospel opportunities. And the Treaty settlement process is moving forward. When this process is complete, the impact on the hearts of Maori and Pakeha will be significant.

The 2040 window offers a window of gospel opportunity for Kiwi mission agencies like TSCF. These groups have a central role in seeing this new New Zealand come to faith in Jesus Christ.

What does this role look like? Steve Maina, from Kenya, is the National Director of the New Zealand

Church Missionary Society. As an African Christian, he has been able to say things to Pakeha and Maori that neither group could say to each other. He has been able to delight in the gospel and the missionaries who brought it. In our globalized world, mission is from everywhere to everywhere. Agencies like TSCF are in contact with outstanding Christian men and women like Steve from post-colonial contexts. They would be warmly received in Maori tertiary communities and make a considerable social, economic and spiritual impact. As a mission agency, we have the unique ability to identify, receive and place these people in Maori communities and institutions in partnership with local churches.

There are other ways missions communities can participate in the 2040 window:

1. Resource a new generation of Maori evangelists. In secular New Zealand, a growing preference is given to Maori spirituality. Peek under the hood of our education system and you'll meet an increasing number of Maori leaders who pray at ceremonies, speak at opening events and carry out any number of spiritual duties.

As New Zealand continues to secularise, they will have the cultural capital to announce the good news of Jesus Christ in the public sphere in ways Pakeha can't. If you want to see multicultural New Zealand impacted with the gospel, we need to be identifying and resourcing Maori evangelists. Part of this process may be exposing young Maori leaders and evangelists to theological study or to missional churches that are grappling with mission in the context of social, economic and spiritual malaise.

2. What might happen for the growth of the gospel in Aotearoa if the missions community worked with campus ministries to bring majority world missionaries to disciple students at each Te Wananga o Aotearoa campus?

3. New Zealand has an amazing network of older missionaries who are multilingual and have a wealth of cross-cultural experience. As these faithful men and women return home, can they be encouraged to consider a term of service in Maori communities or institutions across New Zealand?

If you want to see multicultural New Zealand impacted with the gospel, we need to be identifying and resourcing Maori evangelists.

4. We are a people committed to the transforming power of God's gospel.

This word had a revolutionary impact amongst Maori after it was introduced 200 years ago, and God is again sovereignly working through his Word. The Bible Society has launched a 13-year-long project to produce a contemporary Maori translation of the whole Bible. Does the wider missions community have translation resources to contribute?

Mission agencies like TSCF have a pivotal role to play in the 2040 window. It is critical that we continue to send New Zealanders to the nations, but can we also take up the challenge of facilitating mission to New Zealand?

Mark Grace is Catalyst Team Leader for TSCF. He also works with NZCMS and World Vision, and is an elder at Feilding Bible Chapel. He is a member of Te Arawa and Ngai Tahu. Contact him at markg@tsmf.org.nz.

Mark Grace
Catalyst Team Leader





The Problem of Pain, & A Grief Observed

C.S. Lewis wrote *The Problem of Pain* in 1940, as World War II engulfed Europe. It is useful for its logical and theological answers to the challenges that pain presents to the existence of an all-good, all-powerful God.

Anything that book lacks in a per-

sonal perspective on suffering, *A Grief Observed* makes up for. Twenty-one years later, following the death of his wife, Lewis penned this book from the depths his sorrow. It is a bleak, gut-wrenching, and transparent record of his journey through doubt and despair. Like many Psalms, it resonates with those who are in the valley, beyond the reach of easy answers to the experience of suffering.



Vaneetha Rendall

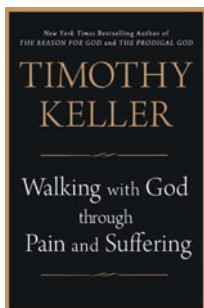
Vaneetha regularly and honestly addresses the topic of suffering in her blog posts, <http://danceintherain.com>.

From *Is my suffering meaningless?* –

“God weighs every minute detail of my suffering. Not a hair falls from my head apart from his will. That assurance sustained me as I weathered the onset of post-polio syndrome and my

husband’s abandonment. While I was brokenhearted at both, I knew that God would ultimately use them for my good and his glory.

“I will never know all that God is doing in my trials, but I have seen that he has refined my character, drawn me closer to him, and enabled me to minister to others through my afflictions. And it is my earnest prayer that through my suffering, the works of God are being displayed in my life.”



Walking with God through Pain and Suffering

by Timothy Keller

Keller marshals a broad array of historical, philosophical, religious and theological resources to make the case that the Christian view of God and suffering is coherent, consistent and humane.

He addresses the problem of evil as a theologian, exploring God’s sovereignty and human free will in the midst of suffering, and as a pastor, addressing the meaning and

significance of our own suffering.

Keller weaves his and his wife’s own story of pain into the fabric of the book. Personal stories draw the sections together, stories that are both harrowing and hopeful as their authors draw on the resources of God in Christ. This book has enriched my understanding of the Christian view of suffering, enabling me to better articulate it and stand with others in the midst of their suffering.

– Mark Grace

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The shadows exist in the painting, the dark
corners of grief and trial and wickedness
all exist so that he might step inside them, so
we could see how low He can stoop.

N.D. Wilson, Notes from the Tilt-A-Whirl

