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# Understanding Cultural Trends & Spiritual Climates

# Inspire

*"Men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do."*  
1Chronicles 12:32.

This scripture indicates that there was this group of people that had the ability to understand the times and seasons, the ability to understand the social and spiritual climates that they lived in. They also had the ability to understand what God's people should do in response.

What an incredible gift, but the truth is, we all possess this gift to some degree. These two qualities are based in two areas of life:

- ♦ our love for people; and
- ♦ our love for God, or our theological and sociological understanding of what God is doing and where mankind is at.

You can see in John the Baptist's time, that he had a good grasp of the spiritual and natural climate of his day. He knew his position and place in the plan, and scheme of things. That he was simply a voice and the world was a wilderness. He spoke into the social climate of the day, into the Pharisee's and even the Roman soldiers of what they should do in response to what God was doing in that nation. He spoke into Jesus' life concerning his destiny and calling. He didn't get caught up in ego or insecurity when Jesus' ministry was rising beyond His. He simply read the times and seasons and knew how to respond. His ministry and time was one of preparation of the coming visitation of God.

Jesus interpreted the time and seasons of John and his ministry and challenged them on their response. *"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. Whoever has ears, let them hear. To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the market places and calling out to others: We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance, we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn. For John came neither eating nor drinking and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by her deeds."* (Matthew 11:12-19) He was saying that this generation were

likened to children in a market place calling out to one another and John's ministry was likened to a dirge (funeral song), calling them to repentance. And His ministry was likened to a piper calling them to mix it among the sinners. But, these people simply acted like children in the market place, calling out judgments towards John's ministry and calling it demonic and about Jesus' ministry being worldly.

Jesus' also spoke prophetically over cities. In Matthew 11:20-24, He spoke over the spiritual climate of the church in His day, Matthew 23 and what God was doing and calling the church to do in response.

*"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing."* (Matthew 23:37).

HE IS CALLING US TO UNDERSTAND THE TIMES WE LIVE IN AND WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SAYING TO THE CHURCH

*"Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

(Revelation 2:7) The beginnings of the book of revelation is all about what God is saying to the 7 churches in Turkey. But it is also a call to you and I to hear what God is saying into our church, our lives, work-places, neighborhoods, cities, our nation and world.

This is what it means to be a prophetic people, not just running around prophesying words of encouragement and comfort or chasing prophets for prophetic words over our lives. But a church, a community of people that know the seasons and times they live in, sensing and seeing what God is saying to us and then begin living and speaking out of that word from God. Prophetically painting a picture in the hearts and minds of our communities of what God is saying and what God is doing.

Yes it says we won't know times and dates (Acts 1:7) meaning to actually given times and dates like the ridiculous cult in the U.S.A. that had the day the world was going to end. Certainly not what I am talking about! I'm simply talking about a group of people that have sense of social trends, also what is the churches spiritual climate? And to know what God is saying to the church to do in this time.

## SO WHAT DO WE FEEL IS THE SOCIAL CLIMATE? WHERE IS THE CHURCH AT SPIRITUAL AND WHAT IS GOD CALLING IT TO?

I'd like to think I have got all the answers to these questions, but I don't. However, I am sure together we do have a sense. What I've done now and then is when I get a group of key leaders together I ask them these questions—I encourage you to do that in your connections. I also read titles of prominent books coming out in both Koorong and in the market place.

- ♦ Listen to key communicators within the body of Christ and community
- ♦ I observe global, national and local events happening

Let me take a chance and share a few observations.

**CONSUMERISM**, the world is prospering in many areas especially in the western world, yes some are doing it tough or tougher, but come on we are fairly well off in this country. I sense the church needs to be careful not to allow ourselves to become consumers both individually and corporately. Let us remember the Lord, in our wealth and to consider His purposes and plans. It's not all about our superannuation, redundancy and retirement!

Yes, prosper, invest well and wisely, increase in the land. The bible says we will become rich in every way, which includes money and possessions. You will be enriched in every way **SO THAT** you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. (2Corinthians 9:11). We must remember the (**SO THAT!**).

**ENTERTAIN ME, TEACH ME, CARE FOR ME** the world seems to have this never ending thirst for entertainment and technology, which is life and we must learn to work with it and in it. I love the whole development of church media and t.v., excellence in the arts, and the creativity of the local church. I think Hillsong and C3 have been real forerunners in this area, bringing the body of Christ to a real excellence. One of the only problems is instead of using it to reach lost people, we end up using it to put the best show in town on so Christians have options of where to go to church if they are bored.

Many Christians are attending church on what is going to benefit them—instead of going to where they are going to be a benefit and a blessing.

This has got to turn if we are going to see a kingdom growth. You might say to me you are just upset they don't come to your church. Well I have never been a big one for chasing Christians from other churches and if people join a church on the bases of what's in it for them, I'm not sure I would want them anyway. We need to be challenged about this from both sides—one as a minister on why we do what we do and the other as a congregation member, why we move around as we do.

I will never forget this challenging verse I read a number of years ago which speaks of this very thing. *"A horrible and shocking thing has happened in the land; the prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?"* (Jeremiah 5:30-31)

### MOVING INTO THE MISSIONAL POSITION

I know it has been my topic for some time, but I personally believe it has been because I believe it is something that God is moving in. Encouraging His church to missionalize or incarnate itself into its community and I must say as I travel you can see it, churches really

working to build themselves into their communities in so many areas. What areas is He inspiring you or your church to emerge into?

Remember look for needs, and ask: "how can we fill them?" I get so saddened when I see a church building remaining dormant during the week. I met a minister one time the had just spent over \$200,000.00 on air conditioning for his auditorium that was used once a week on a Sunday, oh and music practice on a Wednesday night. Explain that—I can't. Our building should be the community centres for the area. Our rooms should be used multiple times during the week. I know one of our rooms is a mothers room on Sunday, a Doctor's Clinic on Tuesday, a Gamblers Anonymous room on Wednesday, and a Counselling room on Thursday.

Last week we served about 50 of Newcastle's highly marginalized for lunch, then in the evening hosted about 60 local business people at a cocktail party serving food, wine and beer, also providing a local muso to entertain. I was at some church in the suburbs the other day sharing on missional church with the leadership and when we started to discuss the possibilities of being missional on their property, (it was an old school set on a 2 acre property, that backed on to a huge bush reserve), straight away I saw

personal trainers working out of their property and building maybe even some of their congregation have the skills to run or facilitate it. We need to think outside of our little boxes

One thing is for certain, Jesus is wanting to incarnate Himself (flesh himself out), move into your neighborhood (John 1:14) fly the scarlet cord from your space, ministry and life (Joshua 2:18)

So what's the social climate of your spheres of influence? And what's God speaking to you about? What opportunities lay before you and your church or ministry?

Go for it

Cheers  
Kev



**Kevin Wilcock**

Team Leader @ Life & Ozreach

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Follow Kev on Facebook and Twitter

## NEWCASTLE—Rick Prosser

They call Novocastrians (people from Newcastle) a parochial bunch and probably rightly so! The great thing about this is that ingrained within this is a deep passion and love for the place and her people, with God in the mix...anything is possible!

For many years now we have always stretching ourselves beyond our primary ministry responsibility to one that embraces others in the Kingdom of God. This has reflected in crusades, outreach initiatives, pastor's gatherings, conferences and so on and our experience is that in this city focused stretch our lives have been enriched and ministry grows!

Twelve years on the Lord spoke to us about serving the church in the city for the cities sake in a greater capacity and by faith. You may have heard, 'if it's his Will he will pay the bill' - we can tell you after eight months of no

fixed income and four kids its easier said than lived, but it's true, God is faithful!

### Our Message is clear:

We sense an burden to carry a message that calls the church to pray, work and believe for a divine visitation. With a combination of The Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9), The Great Commission (Matt 28:16), The Great Commandment (Matt 22:37) and the last recorded prayer of Jesus, *"...that they might be one"* (John 17:20). We continue to believe for and call churches and the believing community to rise to new heights in passion, prayer and purpose with the love of God flowing powerfully and a spirit of unity establishing His Kingdom here in our region as it is in heaven!

### Our Belief:

That the Lord would want to visit our region! We believe for and are committed to working towards **a sovereign visitation of the Lord** that

would permeate the whole of our community.

### A New Day:

Recently we saw just under 600 attend a Regional Prayer Meeting over radio on 'live sites' outdoor in mid winter! The following morning the Annual Lord Mayor's Breakfast numbers doubled from the previous year! There is a great sense that now is the time and we know with concentrated sowing into this region with God, All things are possible!



**Rick Prosser**

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Follow Rick on twitter

### PASTORS & LEADERS ENRICHMENT CONFERENCE

Thursday 1st December

9:15am to 2:00pm

Ausgrid Stadium

294 Turton Road

BROADMEADOW NSW

R.S.V.P. to Jen Purcell on 4922 6800

Or Email: [admin@c3victory.org.au](mailto:admin@c3victory.org.au)

by 25 November 2011



**James T. Meeks** has quickly risen to become one of the most dynamic religious & civic leaders in the United States. He is the founder and senior pastor of Salem Baptist Church of Chicago which is the largest African American church in Illinois with over 20,000 members. Rev. Senator Meeks has served as a state senator since 2002 and is the author of two books.



**Luis Palau** has shared hope with 1 billion people through evangelistic events and media. His radio broadcast ministry is heard by millions on more than 3,000 radio outlets in 48 countries. Luis has authored dozens of books and articles on issues of faith and counselled political leaders and heads of state around the world.



**OzReach**

P.O. Box 2021, Dangar NSW 2309

[www.ozreach.org](http://www.ozreach.org)

We are simply a kingdom of God based ministry that wants to provide fellowship, connection and influence for ministers, leaders of ministries and business owners and managers. Anyone wanting to know more about connecting to Ozreach as a group of churches, contact: **Kevin Wilcock on: 0407 467 798**  
Email: [info@lifechurch.org.au](mailto:info@lifechurch.org.au)

Ozreach relates to:



[www.pioneer.org.uk](http://www.pioneer.org.uk)

## Incarinate Conference

Awesome conference with great inspiring messages from Kev, Rick, Billy & Howard. We were blessed to be a part of it and the guys who came up with us from our church loved it and felt an instant bond. It was two days of relating, connecting and absorbing valuable information. Meeting Nikki and Mel & Denis was a highlight as they are 3 awesome, genuine, transparent people who have allowed a healing God to chip away at them and reshape their lives. Mel is coming down to share at our church later this month and how blessed will we be. Thanks to everyone at City Life & Ozreach for your servant hearts and your big smiles. We love you guys.  
**Pastors Brad & Jannie Exley** and all at Honour 3 Church.  
Email: [bradexl@gmail.com](mailto:bradexl@gmail.com)

Hi Donna- conference was great- Billy's three points at the start came through for me over and over and have stuck:

A focus on the poor  
Partnership  
All about the Presence- Exodus 33.

God's heart and message for this time.

Also- the "dual passport" thing- God is not calling us out to start the next denomination or movement but to stick where we are and network outside the boundaries- the Kingdom of God is way too big to be cloistered.

Bless ya  
**Dale Marthick**  
Living Hope Church, Narrellan  
Email: [marthick@tpg.com.au](mailto:marthick@tpg.com.au)



Hi Kevin

We have just arrived back in the UK. We had a fun time in New Zealand and Hong Kong, on our way home, a bit jet lagged now, though just wanted to say a HUGH thanks for your hospitality and generosity when we were with you. We felt a real God connection and we are excited about developing partnership with you and the others at Ozreach in coming years.

**Billy Kennedy**  
Email: [billyk@newcommunity.org.uk](mailto:billyk@newcommunity.org.uk)  
New Community  
Southampton U.K.



## Incarinate Conference was many things to me...

It was a time of refreshing as Howard Hadley and Billy and Caroline Kennedy moved with the Holy Spirit with words and prayers they had for people.

It was a time of challenge as Rick Prosser preached a massive message on "Unity and Kingdom."

It is always a great time of fellowship and friendship as it's good to be with people of similar heart, mind and flavour.

It was also a confirmation from a word I got about seven years ago—to begin to relate to Pioneers U.K., as Billy and Caroline began to share their heart, their story and their journey. I just knew this was not just a visiting speaker to our conference but someone that is part of a group we in Ozreach are called to relate to, draw from and build with.

Seven years ago while in London I made two calls—one was to Gerald Coates of Pioneers, of which Billy and Caroline Kennedy now oversee and the other phone call was to a church in Southampton, where the prophet Graham Cook attended of which Billy and Caroline now pastor.

Both contacts at the time didn't go anywhere which left me a little confused until about six years later, a lady in our church mentioned her home church in the U.K and the group they were apart of (Pioneers) reminded them of us and she thought we should connect. A month later I was having lunch with Billy Kennedy at Bayswater, London, right next to Hyde

Park and a year later they spoke at our conference.

*"Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay." (Habbakkuk 2:2-3)*

We look forward to our connection together and will try to attend their yearly conference—who's keen?

**Kevin Wilcock**  
Email: [info@lifechurch.org.au](mailto:info@lifechurch.org.au)

### KEVIN'S TRAVEL 2011

#### NOVEMBER

27 Nowra

#### DECEMBER

3 Tuggerah  
11 Shellharbour

#### FEBRUARY

7-15 Philippines

### PHILIPPINES OUTREACH

7th to 15th February 2012.

From 7th to 15th February, Kevin is leading a team of 12 to conduct a 4 day outreach to 2 different communities as well as a Ministers and Leaders seminar on "Moving in the Supernatural" at Bulacan and then heading off to Baroki for a 3 day retreat.

For more details phone Kevin on 0407 467 798

# GlobeReach Some of the works we support overseas

## CAMBODIA - Empower Asia

Dear Tracey & Kevin,

We hope this newsletter finds you and your family well! There is a lot at Joshua and Deborah House this month and it is exciting to see God at work. There has also been much difficulty in Cambodia due to flooding which you may have seen in the news.

Thank you to everyone who gave us feedback on this newsletter and thank you both supporters and friends for your ongoing prayers, encouragement and financial support. This newsletter has a great real-life story of one of our students. Enjoy!

### SOKY'S STORY

*"I am able and happy to help people through God's love"*

Soky was born in Kandal province in 1990. Following the death of his parents, Soky and his younger brother went to live with his grandparents. His childhood was difficult as his grandparents were poor and his grandfather was suffering from alcoholism. There was not enough money for him to attend school regularly.



Soky is now at university studying Marketing and working hard on improving his English. He understands the value of his education and wants to make the most of the opportunity he has been given. Soky is determined to be a leader in his country

because *"If we don't have good honest leadership there will be no growth"*.

In the future Soky wants to continue serving God by playing his guitar in the worship team at Church. He'd also like to volunteer in feeding local children who have little or nothing to eat.

Although he likes to read and study for his Degree and English homework, he also likes to play and have fun with the other students at Joshua House. Despite being shy, Soky tries to be a good leader and role model to the other students.

Empower Asia

Email: [jhdhcampodia@gmail.com](mailto:jhdhcampodia@gmail.com)

## PHILIPPINES - Alvin

Being with 48 teenagers is never boring and always sure to be a fun time. This year's Youth Camp did not disappoint. It was full of great campers that were a joy to be around and we all declared it to be a success!

Camp started on Thursday with campers coming in jeepny's, tricycles and bus from different places, we all made the journey to Adventure Resort, Tigbe Norzagaray. The theme this year was **"CHOSEN"**. We wanted everyone to realize that we are chosen by God and we are very blessed because many are called but few are chosen. We are so blessed to have Jaemin Frazer from Goulburn Australia. We learned about improving our lives, focusing more on Jesus and growing spiritually. Ate Mabel who gave us a very practical teaching, Ptr Joy encouraged all the youth by the word of

God. Anthony Kritis used his music and talent to encourage all the campers; everyone was so blessed by his testimony and music. Ria Rose shared her testimony on how God changed her life from being a lesbian to being a real woman of God. We had a great question and answer time with Jaemin and Anthony and it was great and a very mind opening time.

Games were many as we went throughout camp. God blessed us with perfect weather to enjoy our days. We had a basketball, volleyball, water games, sack race, and some other great group games. "Amazing Race", based on the TV show, was so much fun as some had to blow balloons, eat ampalya, make a tower using cards etc. Some won, some didn't but everyone had fun trying. It was great fun swimming with all the campers. The last Friday night started with a fashion show performed by the campers

wearing their best dress. Campers shone like stars. The 2011 Youth Camp was one of the best camps yet. It seemed as if Jesus was looking out for us and gave everyone great attitudes, wonderful weather, perfect outings and a complete lack of disasters.

**Alvin Bautista**

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## PHILIPPINES MISSION TRIP - Pat Betts (City Life)

After serving at Child's Faith Fellowship in the Philippines on a missions trip with Maisie Gibson in September, faith was something we witnessed everyday.

FAITH is the word, and faith activated: faith lived out everyday in the lives of people. Faith and commitment to the God given vision of changing lives through teaching, feeding, caring and training young children from the poorest of the poor families in Manila. Faith to believe in God being bigger than any of life's circumstances, faith that God will sustain and provide, understanding the sheer size of that faith commitment and faith rewarded: seeing the fruit of that

faithfulness has been both an encouraging and humbling experience:

- ◆ 7 schools beginning with just 14 students
- ◆ 11 trained teachers;
- ◆ An abundance of parents in bible studies;
- ◆ The first ever Women's Conference;
- ◆ A building purchased to develop a school for children with special needs; and
- ◆ A block of land for the establishment of a church for the community of Graceville and surrounds.

Jesus said: *"...Truly I tell you, if you have*

*faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."* Matthew 17:20

Yes Lord!

**Pat Betts**  
**City Life**

