

Life **equipping** News

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A sunset is a reminder that there is hope for tomorrow.

Imparting HOPE

Igniting PASSION

Inspiring LIFE

WELCOME....

The LIFE newsletter is produced quarterly. We hope it inspires you to pursue a life that is free and driven by purpose.

Our desire is that the articles will inspire, encourage and equip you on life's journey.

We all have one life to live and the choices we make today will impact all our tomorrows.

Today choose to live and love your
LIFE!

Contentment is not
the fulfillment of what
you want,
but the realisation of how
much
you already have
~ Anonymous

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Sunsets

I simply love sunsets. Now I am sure that sunrises are as beautiful but I don't get up so early in the morning to catch a sunrise often enough.

For me sunsets are special simply because it reminds me of forgiveness. The various shades of reds, oranges and yellows that are created when the sun is setting is like watching God gathering our hurts, pains and sins and putting them all in the fire never to be remembered again. It promises me that if I am able to let go of the hurts that have caused me pain during the day, perhaps I can enjoy the sunrise the next day and make the most of it. I also need to work through and seek forgiveness from anyone I may have hurt. Now for me to truly enjoy the sunrise the next day I need to appreciate the sunset.

So, what is with us human beings that we feel the need to keep reminding ourselves or others of the wrongs done towards us, yet we don't want to be reminded of the wrongs that we do unto others.

Maybe the reason we don't need or want to be reminded of what we do to others is because that would mean that we have been purposeful in what we have said or done. Could it also mean that we have not given thought or consideration towards others needs

or feelings. Why are we good at or more prone to remembering the negatives in life more than the positives in life?

Once the sun has set it is too late to look back on all that the could have been. However, as the night passes and a new day is dawning we must look forward to all that a new day brings us.

At the end of the day we are responsible for how we view the day and the night and what we have done within the hours that mark a day. No one should end a day with 'I should have' or 'I wished I', for these thoughts usually keep us focused on regrets. Instead focus on what you have done and make changes for your future. Regardless of what we hold on to or let go of, the sun is going to set and it will rise.

The time it takes for the sun to rise and set is dependent on latitude, seasons and how quickly the conditions within the atmosphere changes. We don't have control over sunsets, however, we do have control over our choices and what we choose to make of each day. No matter what we believe or what we hold on to, God lets the sun rise and set on everyone promising new adventures and new possibilities and new hope.

Candy Daniels

How one event can impact my life

Event + Memory + Perspective

=

Belief



Thinking



Feelings



Physical/Emotional Behaviour

Your identity is defined by what you believe. It further impacts who you are and how you choose to live. Is what you believe about yourself holding you back or equipping you for your future?

Often we don't realise that there is a difference between what we believe and what we actually know or think. At times we may know the truth about something, yet we choose not to believe it or shape our thinking according to the truth.

The truth has the power to set us free if we let it. Yes, the truth can be painful and at times seem impossible to be anything but freeing. We have to accept and believe the truth in order to experience the freedom it brings.

The truth about you and me is that God loves us unconditionally, each of us has a purpose for our lives, and God desires for us to be free from all that is holding us back from living a life of purpose and passion.

Your life and story is important to us. Your story can impact another person's life for it has the ability to influence, encourage, uplift, inspire and even change someone's life! What we go through often impacts only us, how we deal/react to the event impacts us and others.

If you would like to send in your story, please do so titled "my story" to info@lifeinternational.com.au

All personal details will be kept confidential.

CHIPS

Christians Helping In Primary Schools

Hi! I'm Captain Eric and I'm part of the wild team at Christians Helping In Primary Schools, also known as CHIPS. I'm not very different from the children I serve - I have learning problems, a short attention span, I come from a unique, fractured family and lots of people have tried to 'fix' me or help me fit in. Yet God loves me. I wouldn't say I'm fixed- but I am found! (I got it all together and forgot where I put it!)

CHIPS is known as a 'lost lamb ministry' from the story Jesus told in Matthew 18. We look for children who struggle, love them in practical, fun ways and lift them through networks of support. The volunteers here are extraordinary. Many professional people donate their time to mentor a child, run breakfast or lunchtime clubs, scrap booking for restoring memories, boys groups and girl groups. There are also in-school seminars and staff support services. So in any week here, volunteers are sailing, horse riding, mountain bike riding, conducting craft clubs and much more!

We run Life Gets Better Camps for children (and their carers) who have experienced trauma, grief or loss in their lives. The camps are run near Mother's day and Father's day each year and are a weekend camp. We also run an intervention program (called Day Away) for children who have been recognised by the school welfare team as 'at risk'. CHIPS also currently has ten Chaplains working in eleven primary schools, but we provide services to any local primary school that requests them.

With so many doing so much it's easy to get lost in the list. When Jesus helped restore Peter after his denial, he did something so simple and so profound. He reminded him of a miracle, he made him breakfast and they had a little walk and talk. These little ones are so lost in grief, loneliness and despair; we look for them, make something for them and show them they are a miracle, not a problem to be fixed.

If you would like more information or to be part of the miracle please visit www.chips.org.au or contact enquiries@chips.org.au

Eric Wieckmann

LIFE talks - stories

I get so angry and defensive when I think about my parenting especially sleeping and breastfeeding. Prior to Liam being born, I fully intended that he sleep at the other end of the house in his cot, and didn't even know what a baby sling was.

I was very anxious being pregnant with Liam given my experience in pre-term lung development and clinical risk. My obstetrician was great and assisted me to relax a bit.

But things did not go as planned... Liam needed to be born by elective (as there was no choice!) c-section "tomorrow". My "birth plan" was to avoid epidural and the IV and catheter that went with it, because I didn't want to be 'sick'. I ended up with major surgery.

Before I go on, I need to acknowledge that many women have it a lot worse, but I can't ignore the lasting impact my experience had on me.

They stuck a needle in my back! Gave me drugs that made me nauseous, tugged and pulled and presented me with a flaccid, purple, baby with huge testicles. I didn't even know if I was allowed to touch him. They then resuscitated him. I was lying down in the recovery room and I realised that in the towel that Brian was holding was my baby. I couldn't even see him.

I was eventually allowed to hold him and was wheeled back into my room. He

Didn't do much, didn't feed and I can't remember his eyes. I needed to share this time with Brian's brother, wife and toddler. Then a nurse decided that he was in distress and took him away from me. Brian came back from seeing his brother off and I needed to tell him that I let our son be taken away from me.

I couldn't go into see him because I had had an epidural. Brian went in and took video of him being forced fed formula and throwing it up. I had midwives pinch my nipples in an attempt to get a few ml of colostrums out. I was told I could see him the next day when I had my catheter out.

Brian went home and came back late at night. I told him that they had a choice, to bring him to me or I would crawl down the hall: catheter and IV in 'situ'. They opted to bring him to me.

I didn't sleep from 4am, and kept on asking when I could get my catheter out. When they finally took it out Brian wheeled me around to him. I could only stay for a few minutes because I felt sick. My time in hospital was a blur.

When I was able to walk to special care, I told them to call me for every feed. I always tried to feed him or just have skin to skin prior to a bottle feed. One time they told me that I should change his nappy. I had never changed his nappy before! It was just all too much for me, I didn't have the capacity to change my own son's nappy.

Eventually he was back in the room, and I never slept, I was feeding, expressing and repeat. I needed to do this while receiving visitors including extended family and random people from Brian's work. I was invisible.

The midwives told me I needed to feed him every 3 hours (not every 4), and to put him near the window. The Paediatrician said "why is he near the window, he will get hot" and that 4 hourly was adequate. One midwife told me that I was making him tired by trying to breastfeed him. Brian dropped breast milk on the floor. Before we left hospital Liam was fitted for a brace for his hips.

When we got home from the hospital we all slept. I was woken by mum because of the pre-planned visit from my terminally ill nanna, and crazy uncle and family. The last thing I wanted. Liam didn't eat or sleep that night and Brian was at the baby shop buying a breast pump at 9am the next morning. Feeding continued to be difficult, I got really bad mastitis. Liam got streptococcus and continued weekly treatments for his hips.

Over the next 3+ months Liam cried. Nothing worked. The most effective thing was to have him literally on me night and day. They say a mum knows best, but I didn't have a clue.

Sleep consultant at our house- didn't sleep. Day sleep school- didn't sleep. Week sleep school- fail. I got yelled at for sleeping with him on me, told off for

sucking his dummy after it dropped on the floor. Scaled high on the depression scale, but the psychologist was not helpful. I felt so much pressure to make it work because if I needed to go back to work he would have been at the age for controlled crying, and I wasn't going to do that.

Liam got a lump in his neck, so I thought he had cancer, turned out to be fine. I counted down the days until he was 3 months and magically would be happy- didn't happen.

A mum in my mum's group said that having her son was the best thing ever and she could not imagine life without him. I remember thinking that I could not elicit a feeling close to this one for Liam.

I have been through so much with Liam, I would really like acknowledgement and validation that despite all the challenges I did well.

I am confident that the sleep training techniques would work with Rose and Liam (now) but I don't have the will to try. I don't want to strive for other people's picture of ideal, but enjoy them while I can. Even if it does mean less adult time at night and LOTS of cuddles. Before I know it they will be teenagers and won't want to know me. I actually enjoy Liam (and Rose) now and can understand where that mum was coming from. Surely having a mum that loves them is the most important thing.

~ One content mum

WORDS

There is a saying '*Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.*' I wonder if this is true when the name calling comes from a parent, relative, respected teacher or other influential person in your life.

Many of us are not aware of the words we use and how they can influence the way a person thinks and feels about them -self. This is particularly true for children. Parents, relatives or favourite teachers can say things in anger, frustration or jest, that can be destructive to a person's self-belief, and the punch these words can pack can be dynamic in setting a person on a self-destructive life course.

This may sound a bit dramatic and surely words can't be that bad? I'm not so sure. Telling someone they are stupid, irresponsible, a pain in the neck etc. may be just words said, we don't *really* mean them, yet more and more we see people repeating these words about themselves as they grow older. How we speak about ourselves can influence the sorts of people we surround ourselves with and the jobs we may or may not apply for.

If you have grown up thinking you are stupid and irresponsible then you may feel your opinion is invalid before you even voice it. Keeping inside the things you feel and believe for fear of being told you are stupid can be bad for your self-worth as well as your health. Not standing up for yourself because you don't

living the life of a victim, perhaps believing you are powerless over your life.

Many of our youth are trying to end their lives and we as a community are at a loss as to how this could be happening. I heard a story the other day of a young man who jumped from an overpass bridge onto a motorway intending to be hit by a truck; thankfully he was unsuccessful in his attempt. I question now how is he going to be viewed in his family, social-group, and community? Is he stupid, a nuisance, an embarrassment to his parents and school? Was it because he felt this way about himself already that led him to take such drastic measures? Did he feel his life was so invaluable that people would be better off if he wasn't here?

I would love to have the answers to these questions or that wonderful 'magic pill' to let our youth know that we as a community value them as the ones who enrich our lives as we age, with their insights, ideas and enthusiasm for seeing a better world.....not to mention showing me how to use my iPhone!

What pressures are we putting on our youth that seem to have them feeling displaced or that life is not worth living? There is a poem called '*Children learn what they live*' and it suggests that a child grows up according to the messages they receive from those around them.

'Words have the power to build up or to tear down.' What words are you speaking over the youth in your life?

Jodie Chambers

“Children Learn What They Live”

Dorothy Louise Law

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn...

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight...

If a child lives with fear, he learns to be apprehensive...

If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself...

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy...

If a child lives with jealousy, he learns to feel guilt...

But...

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient...

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident...

If a child lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative...

If a child lives with acceptance, he learns to love...

If a child lives with honesty, he learns what truth is...

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice...

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith in himself and those about him...

If a child lives with friendliness, he learns the world is a nice place in which to live.

With what is your child living?

In Celebration of life



Frances Jane Crosby, usually known as Fanny Crosby was born on 24th March 1820. She was an American

Methodist rescue mission worker, poet, lyricist, and composer.

Fanny Crosby was blinded, while only six weeks old, by an unlicensed doctor. He permanently scarred her corneas by applying hot poultices to her mildly infected eyes. Her father died before she was an year old. Her mother Mercy Crosby, widowed at 21, hired herself out as a maid while grandmother Eunice took care of little Fanny.

Her grandmother was a powerful influence in her life. She helped Fanny appreciate what she had rather than what she didn't have. As a result, Fanny never fell into self-pity. "Don't waste any sympathy on me", she said. "I'm the happiest person alive."

At age 44, Fanny wrote her first song. Over the next 51 years, she wrote over 8,500 songs, often producing six or seven songs per day!

Fanny Crosby had a photographic memory, memorizing five chapters of the Bible every week. She knew by heart the first five books of the Old Testament, the

four Gospels, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and many of the Psalms.

Some of her most well-known songs were "Pass Me Not Oh Gentle Saviour", "To God Be The Glory, Great Things He Hath Done", "Draw Me Nearer, Precious Lord", "Blessed Assurance", and "Praise Him! Praise Him! "I Am Thine O Lord"

One of her best known songs "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour" was written specifically for a prisoner who cried out at her meeting: "O Lord, Do not pass me by!"

Fanny was married for 44 years to Alexander Van Alistine (who was also blind) Alexander was a top organist and Fanny an accomplished harpist, they must have been quite a duo. Sadly their only child, Frances, died as a baby. It was this tragedy that inspired the writing of one of Fanny's most famous songs: "Safe in the Arms of Jesus".

Once a preacher sympathetically remarked, "I think it is a great pity that the Master did not give you sight when He showered so many other gifts upon you." She replied quickly, "Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition, it would have been that I should be born blind?" "Why?" asked the surprised minister. "Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Saviour!"

Amritha Perera

LIFE force - Assurance

The full confidence that things will be alright, that nothing is going to go wrong because the trust placed upon the person or thing is able to sustain, this is assurance.

I often get asked by people ‘how do you do what you do?’ or ‘what keeps you going?’ when they come to realise that I live with pain. What people see or what I think people see is my ability to live and do what I am passionate about.

This pain is physical, it restricts my physical movement not my mind or my spirit. I can say with confidence that it is well with my soul because I am at peace even when I am in pain. If you are wondering why or how can that be, well to me it is simple really.

Like Fran Crosby’s song ‘Blessed Assurance’ I know and believe without a shadow of doubt that Jesus is mine, and therefore because He loves me with an everlasting love, I am safe in His arms and always will be.

In all that I am and do, I do my very best to stay focussed on Him rather than on the things or circumstances that can so easily distract me from living my purpose and passions.

It is Jesus Christ who equips me daily with all that I need to live. I am whole in Him and because of Him.

There is a saying by an unknown author that says ‘If you pray about it don’t worry about it. If you are going to worry about it don’t pray about it’. This person knew what they were talking about. For once we commit something to God who is more capable, if we have assurance in Him we will be able to leave it with Him and do what we have to do.

Each day is often a struggle to get out of bed because of the physical pain. I remind my self that I am not walking alone. I focus on the One I love and what I am passionate about rather than the pain. This physical condition has been a good teacher and made me a better person.

I know I am blessed, I know God loves me, I know I can do all things through Jesus Christ who is my strength. I know that my physical condition is a result of life on earth; it does not define me. I am a child of God and I am free.

My life force or that which gives me the power and ability to live is my assurance in Jesus Christ!

Candy Daniels



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by Candy Daniels**

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