



Hawke's Bay Update

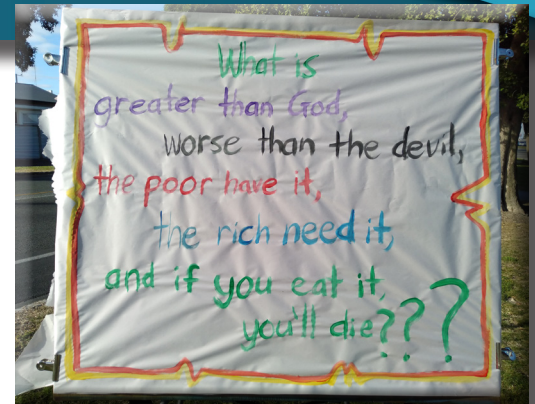
June 2024

We have been out most weeks to engage with teenagers after school. Some of these young people enjoy stopping to chat while others openly ignore us or make smart comments as they walk past. One day we prayed specifically that they would stop to talk for more than a minute. Maria hadn't had much time that day to prepare a topical message on the sketchboard so she simply painted up a riddle we use sometimes (pictured). Before she finished writing it up, some youth stopped to talk to Kevin. Over the next half hour, about 20 young people stopped in ones, twos or threes to have a go at the riddle. We were able to talk further with about half of them, pointing them to the reality of God and answering whatever questions they had.

Not all our time is spent in Hawke's Bay. One weekend Maria went to Rotorua with a teenage friend and teamed up with local youngsters and Glen Kriel at one of his favourite 'fishing' spots. Doing a quiz for chocolate bars is popular with all ages at the playground and the team did well at engaging with the public. Maria's teenage friend also did a fantastic job of using the Good Person Test with a group of young people, having only been introduced to it that hour. Praise God for this new generation keen to share their faith!

We spent a week at El Rancho connecting with teenagers and children to point them to Christ. Dozens of teenagers came to the camp for the weekend for training and preparation to lead over the week. Maria ran an impromptu workshop on what the gospel is and how to explain it to others. It was clear that some of these young people had remembered a gospel presentation from a previous camp speaker so this was a good opportunity to build on it.

Soon 150 or so children arrived and it was a full-on and fun week of kids' camp. We spoke at the chapel times along the Shipwrecked theme. A highlight was telling the story of



John Harper, a gifted preacher who was on the Titanic as it sank 112 years ago to the week of camp. We shared how Christ can be our safe place in the storms of life and encouraged the young people to trust in Him. There was good interaction and most of the kids in one unsettled cabin requested Bibles to take home with them.



Back in the Bay, we have been out on the street regularly. One week we had a run of good apologetics conversations with people genuinely interested in knowing what to believe.

First, Maria talked with some young men, one of whom was particularly interested in knowing if Christianity was true. Initially he asked questions in comparison to the Quran, how we can trust the Bible has not been changed over time. Later he posed as an atheist, questioning how we could even know if there is a God at all. For perhaps half an hour, Maria enjoyed reasoning with him and discussing his questions. Eventually he had to go for lunch with his friends, but not before noting down two things Maria recommended he searched up to help him in his journey.

A couple of days later on our regularly Friday morning outreach, two of us offered tracts to two young men who were walking by. They stopped and asked us more about ourselves. One guy opened the bag he was carrying to show a book he had just bought from the local Christian bookshop, "Why Christianity is Probably True." He thought it was significant (and so did we!) that he had now run into some more Christians and went on to ask us for evidence of Christianity as well.

Another day Kevin met a young French man with an upbringing in religious schools, but who now believed in evolution and the need for humans to better themselves. Even so, he was very interested in listening for about twenty minutes as Kevin explained the Gospel to him while drawing a picture; he even asked to take the picture home with him.

Praise God for:

- young people keen to reach out with the Gospel
- various people to serve alongside in ministry
- some really encouraging conversations recently
- His work in people's lives and our privilege to be a part of it

Pray for:

- those who have heard the Gospel in recent days, weeks and months
- people we team up with and/or are training in evangelism
- the various outreaches we have on weekly and coming up.

Coming up:

Dare to Be a Daniel – 5 Sunday afternoons from 12 May & Dare to Be A Daniel camp – approx 8-12 July

Riverbend Bible Church holiday program – 15-19 July