

a TESTIMONY OF
GOD'S
GOODNESS



**A Tribute to a Mighty Man of God
and Good Friend -**

MURRAY SELWYN



You will forever be an inspiration to me, for I have been greatly impacted and blessed by your life.

**In Loving Memory of
Murray Meirana Nui Glen
MUZZAH
SELWYN
7th December 1983 – 27th July 2020
Rest in Peace**

Murray had a number of church pastors and I had the privilege of being his pastor for the last three years of his life, when I came to Ranui in August 2017. It was an honour to do ministry together and to study the Bible in a way that I have not done so with many others. Murray had a hunger for the word of God and a desire to be closer to the Lord. He was a friend of God. The name of Jesus was glorified in and through his life.

A lot of us had plans of doing future ministry with Murray and we were praying earnestly that he would be healed. After he passed a group of us gathered around him and prayed that God would raise him from the dead. God in His wisdom chose to keep Murray in Heaven, whereas we wanted him to come back.

The Bible says that when a Christian dies they are 'away from the body and at home with the Lord' (2 Corinthians 5:8). Jesus said to the dying man beside him, "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Through his faith in Jesus we know that Murray is in the paradise of God. No wonder the Bible says, 'Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful servants' (Psalm 116:15).

When I first came to Ranui I met Murray at men's group, along with two of his stepsons. They are gifted in worship and singing to the Lord. The high call of God was upon Murray's life. Around that time I could tell that something was still holding him back from walking in God's best. Nevertheless, I invited him to share his testimony at our Sunday evening service, 22nd October 2017. His testimony was awesome, except for one point.

I immediately made arrangements to go to his house and have a Bible study on the key topic that God wanted to deal with in his life. I'll say this in light of the fact that ultimately I ended up having a hundred Bible studies with Murray (that might be a slight exaggeration but not by much), for after the first Bible study he kind of avoided me for the next few months and no longer came to men's group very often.

The topic I had shared with him was on the importance of marriage. His partner, Leanne, immediately wanted to get married, but for whatever reason Murray was still holding back. I did see him a few times over the next year and he knew that God was still on his case, but until he sorted out this issue he was being hindered in his calling. The day finally arrived when he came to me and said, "I'm ready to get married and I want you to take my wedding." That was a joyful day for me.

Leanne has explained to me why Murray had left it so long for them to get married, so I'll make note of that here. They wanted to get married in 2016, but so much was going on with the custody battle for his daughter. Murray was scared he would lose his daughter, Keana, if he married Leanne because Keana's Mum could never accept it, even though they had been apart for eleven years. He was waiting until he had full custody of Keana before he married Leanne.

Now looking at my diary I see that it wasn't until the 7th of March 2019 that Murray came to me with the request that he was ready to get married. Sixteen and a half months after the first Bible study! Over that time we only had a cordial friendship. Now that he was willing to get married to Leanne with the blessing of God our friendship would grow from there.

I had my second Bible study with Murray and Leanne on the 11th of March, as we went through 'Building Marriages with God's Love'. The wedding was planned for the 23rd. It was an awesome day. The ceremony was at Parkinson Lookout (Waitakere Rangers Reginal Park). When it came time for Murray to take his vows I put my hand on his shoulder because his tears were flowing so much. It is interesting that at some weddings men are more emotional than women.



In April I was putting our Easter gospel tracts into letterboxes when Murray drove past, so we had a chat and he took a couple of bundles of tracts to distribute in his area (Royal Heights). That same month I had to shift houses from Massey to Ranui and Murray was one who helped me shift.

On May 1st Murray came to my church office with his daughter's partner (Graeme), for he had led him to the Lord and now they were ready to get married. I did the same Bible studies with Graeme and Shaetana that I had done with Murray and Leanne. I heard Shaetana say that she always followed closely behind her Dad.

On June 2nd I did a church membership welcome for Murray and Leanne in the Sunday morning service. (I don't write very much in my diary but I found that written there.) After that I emailed the elders recommending Murray to become our Ministry Team Leader for Outreach. The mighty call of God was upon his life and having got the marriage issue sorted he was again free to pursue that. Murray took the Bible study a couple of times at men's group and he was a good Bible teacher.

On the 29th of June Graeme and Shaetana were water baptised by Murray in the water, while I had led the service. I had the blessing of taking their wedding, which was at the Fukuoka Gardens on the 13th of July. The reception was at Fortuna Buffet Restaurant beside Sky Tower.



From the middle of October 2019, I began to do a weekly Bible study with Murray on the New Covenant. The study was simple and yet thorough. We had some great discussions and we looked at whatever other topic he wanted to bring up. After a family tragedy towards the end of November we then did a study on Heaven. Throughout the year I had been writing a book called 'Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing,' so we did an overview of that also.

Murray took a Bible study group at his house with the men and Leanne with the women, but I think that only went for a short time due to other problems going on. There was a purple book which he was teaching from on the kingdom of God.

On the 18th of December I had a dream that woke me up at 4:40am (I checked my phone to see what time it was). In the dream I was at a work site where men were doing some kind of construction work. I didn't know specifically what work they had to do, but it reminded me of the days when I had worked in a ship building yard. There were quite a few workers.

I walked into the middle of these big, strong men to share the gospel with them. They were unbelievers who didn't seem to want to listen. There was a person who was getting annoyed

with me and wanted me to go away. When there is a person speaking against the message people are put off from accepting it. Between this group of men who were standing around, out slipped one person who supported me and encouraged the men to listen. I saw his face and it was Murray. I could also tell it was Murray because he came with a very humble demeanour. I then woke up from the dream.

Towards the end of the day there was a knock on the door at our place and who should it be? It was Murray and Leanne. They had come to give us boxes of chocolate. I said to Murray, "It's interesting that you came today because just this morning you were in my dream. I think God wants us to do more ministry together."



I was doing a series of video clips for the church on the theme of "I love Jesus." It was windy that day and some noise of the wind was in the recording, so I said to Murray we should re-record his testimony another time, but that never happened so now this recording is more valuable:

"Hi, my name is Muzz and this is my message on why I love Jesus. There are many reasons why and there are countless things I could say why I love Jesus, but I guess one of the main points now is my Mum.

Before becoming a Christian, I guess me and my Mum's relationship together was pretty hard because of the addictions that I had in my life and it caused me to abuse Mum in such

ways that I wish I never, but ever since I became a Christian in 2006 I tried to make up for many mistakes and ask Mum for forgiveness for all those things I had done wrong, but sometimes she wouldn't take my word for it because they were just words at the time. But when I made the decision to make Jesus my Lord and Saviour because He changed my life and my heart, I guess Mum had taken my actions more serious.

Just recently Mum passed away, about eight weeks ago. I could be standing here today without Christ and still asking Mum to forgive me, but because Christ had changed my life and Mum had witnessed it I no longer have to worry about those things that I had done towards Mum, but thank God and rejoice that today she is in Heaven and before she left she said she was proud of me."





After the Christmas and new year holidays were over, I was back at the church office and I met up with Murray to have a discussion about his outreach ministry. We talked about some ideas for doing street evangelism and raising up a team to do that. We decided to start by doing a prayer walk in the nearby area, take some tracts and see who we might bump into.

At the end of January, 9 pm Friday evening, I meet Murray outside the church and we went for a prayer walk up and down Ranui, which didn't take long because there's not much to the main street there. We talked with one lady to encourage her to follow the Lord.

We then went over to Henderson, which had more people. I had a bag of tracts, mainly Rob Brown's testimony, 'From Hate to Love,' and my own one called 'Amazing! Miracles are real'. We prayed with people, including a man who had his stuff in a shopping trolley. We shared the gospel with a Muslim man from Somalia and by the end of the night most of the tracts had been given out.

Murray also took me to all kinds of interesting places; under bridges and around the back of buildings where homeless people used to stay. He also told me lots of stories of various

bad things that had happened here or there. His heart was to share the gospel with those who had a hard life. Murray wanted to do this kind of outreach using a barbeque. I encouraged him to raise up a team, but at first he wanted to do some more street witnessing with just the two of us a few more times. We were talking of doing an outreach on Queen Street, but another situation or problem seemed to get in the way and it was delayed.

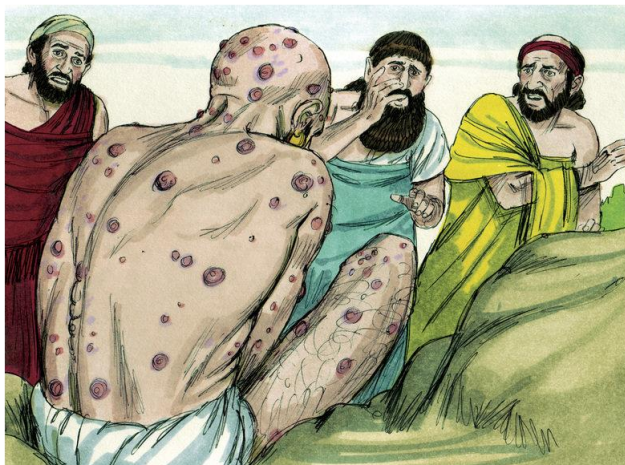
Murray came to our Western Park Village Bible study group with his guitar, which was what we needed. He continued to come along to those weekly meetings and he had other plans of what he wanted to do to outreach there. At first he didn't want to lead the Bible study, but after a few weeks he said that he would. Unfortunately, before the next Wednesday when he was scheduled to share the message, the health problem of his aunty became more serious. She was dying of breast cancer, so Murray was going to her beside every day to sing worship songs and remind her how much Jesus loved her.



Tuesday 21st of April was the first morning I did an online Bible study with Murray from the book of Job. At that point I never knew this would become a major daily series during the time of covid-19 lockdown. At first it was just a one-off message. The next morning I shared from the story of Moses and the next day something from the life of King Solomon.

Due to Murray's situation with cancer I considered it to be beneficial for both Murray and myself to study the entire book of Job together thoroughly, verse by verse. While I included

other messages, particularly on the power of God, the book of Job was our central theme for the next two or so months.



My aim, not in the short term but in the future, is to write a book on, 'The Healing of Job.' I will dedicate that book to Murray (and Leanne). We looked at how Job needed to be healed body, soul and spirit. At times our study seemed to be a long battle to reach the end of the book (to get to chapter 42). But we made it. I was claiming chapter 42 and other aspects of the book for Murray. Leanne would always do our closing prayer.

One morning I preached on the baptism with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. That evening Murray went over some Scriptures again with Leanne and she immediately started to speak in tongues. That is another blessing Leanne received from Murray.

There were so many blessings that came through those months of daily Bible studies. There were lots of battles as well. There were times when Murray was unable to handle having a study that day because of the pain or times when he was too sleepy. I know that towards the end Leanne would stamp on the floor to wake him up, but that was at his request. The last two or three weeks before he passed away he was too weak to continue with the studies, so we stopped and I only

met with him online to say prayers and have a catch up on how he was feeling.

One time when I went around to their house I said to Murray, "I'm getting bored now that I can't have a daily Bible study with you." Showing his good sense of honour, he told me not to worry because the next time I see him he'll be fat. It will be true. Not that people are overweight in Heaven. They are perfect. Knowing how thin Murray became, I'm happy that he is now without pain and he is fat. He is perfect.

Many people were praying for Murray to be healed and I believe no prayer is in vain, even if we didn't receive the answer the way we wanted it. Something great is yet to still come out of those prayers. I shared a good number of healing messages with Murray and used to say to him, "You're my guinea pig". By that I was meaning that I'm practising these messages on him to get them better before preaching them to crowds of people. The time will come when there is another healing revival in New Zealand and those with cancer will be healed. In that day I will proclaim some of the messages I shared with Murray.

About a week before Murray died I had another special time of prayer at home. Over the months I had been praying for Murray I had not felt a definitive release until that night. I felt that God had heard our prayer. The hope is that when you feel that release the person will be healed, but in Murray's case God took Him. God's will be done and God be praised!

The day Murray died I had taken my car to the garage and I left my phone on the shelf. By the time I read the message that Murray had wanted to talk to me, and I contacted Leanne, he was already unconscious. I rushed to the garage but the car still wasn't ready. The mechanic was doing whatever he needed to do, so while I was standing there I shared with him about the reality of Christ through the life of Murray. In the morning when I had dropped the car off I knew that God wanted me to try and say something about the Lord with that man, but there was no opportunity then. In the afternoon talking with the mechanic about Murray's life made it easy to share the gospel.

When he finished the job and I was about to go to the counter to pay the bill, I received a text that implied that Murray

had taken his last breath. Driving up from there to Murray's house was a strange feeling. My prayer was that God would raise him from the dead. I was glad to find that Dean (Leanne's brother) and his wife, a South African couple, and Tupu had that same prayer.

Murray's body was still warm when I arrived, but after some minutes his hands began to become cold. I sat there rededicating my heart to the Lord. I wanted to be closer to God. I wanted to know Him and make Him known. The reality of death explains to us the true meaning of life, if we can get a glimpse of eternity. When the time seemed suitable for us to pray, we called upon the name of the Lord for Murray's spirit to return to his body. I anointed his head with oil. We wanted a resurrection, but it was not to be. That will wait until Christ's second coming, but what happened to Murray the moment he died? I can only speculate through Scripture.

The angles came when the beggar Lazarus died and carried him to paradise (Luke 16:22). "Angels" plural, meaning that there were many angels. When Elijah was taken to Heaven there was a whirlwind and horses and a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11). When Stephen was martyred Heaven was opened and he saw the glory of God with Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father. Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:55-59). I believe Jesus answered that prayer and took Stephen straight to Heaven.

Did angels come? Did Jesus Himself stand there? Did the heavenly creatures swoop down in blazing fire? What happened? Murray knows, for those things are invisible to human eyes unless God allows us to see it. One day we can ask him, but for that to happen we need our own experience with death. No one is prepared to live until they are prepared to die. *'For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord'* (Romans 6:23).

I used to think that a moment a person dies they immediately go to Heaven or Hell without any delay (and that is what mostly happens). But now I think that sometimes God does allow a person to see their own funeral. The situation with Jesus was somewhat different, but I still see it as a scriptural example. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, but many things happened in between the moment He died and the

moment He rose again. Over the next forty days many things continued to happen before Jesus officially ascended to Heaven.



Murray left behind a testimony of God's love imparted into people's lives. The stories people shared at both the Thursday evening service and the Friday morning/afternoon funeral were amazing, especially from the immediate family. My heart was deeply touched, for I also received the blessing of God's love

from Murray. We can all impart and receive God's love for one another, but somehow it becomes more real when a person goes through a lot of suffering and yet stands firm in God, leaving behind an amazing legacy of faith.



Maybe when you see a person suffering it helps you to appreciate them more, for of all the people I got to know during the three years I had in Massey and Ranui I consider Murray to have been my best friend. He told me what he thought I should know. He was honest and trustworthy as a friend. Sad to say the time was too short.

Christine Bartle shared an encouraging word for Leanne from the Scripture she received back when her father died of cancer. It was about the great cloud of witnesses that surround us, cheering us on to follow Jesus. Murray is now in that great company of faithful believers.

'Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the

pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart' (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Murray was able to throw off the sin that had been hindering him, so he stands forever as a witness and testimony for Christ. He ran the race with perseverance, especially through the time of his battle with cancer. He endured the cross, he overcome opposition, and his life can encourage us not to grow weary or lose heart as we serve the Lord. The key is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

It is easy for me to come to the conclusion that Murray was a mighty man of God. In Hebrews chapter 11 there are two types of people who are included in the heroes of faith. There are those who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies (Hebrews 11:33-34). There are also those who received back their dead, raised to life again (Hebrews 11:35).

Yet on the other hand there were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised (Hebrews 11:35-39).

Murray is commended for his faith. He trusted God for his healing and for even a better resurrection. He stood on God's promises. God has a different standard of success and failure than the world does. God works through the weakness, pain and suffering of this world to find those who belong to Him. He found Murray. Has He found you?

JESUS LOVES YOU AND IS CALLING YOU TO BE SAVED

If you have never given your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, or you are backslidden and need to come back to your faith, please take this opportunity to dedicate your life to the Lord right now. Please say the following prayer:

“Lord Jesus, forgive me of all sin. I turn away from anything that is stopping me from following You. I repent and believe the gospel. I receive You as my Lord and Saviour, and will follow You for the rest of my life. I confess with my mouth that “Jesus is Lord” and I believe in my heart that You are alive. Fill me with the power of the Holy Spirit. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil. Thank You for Your love. Amen.”

If there is a call of God upon your life to preach the gospel, I encourage you to pursue that calling. Save souls by leading people to Jesus. Let there be a fire in your heart to share the love of God. I believe that God will use Murray’s testimony to raise up many people to preach the word of God. It has already been happening in Murray’s family.

In our battle against the devil the Bible says, *‘They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death’* (Revelation 12:11).

GOD BLESS YOU AS YOU LIVE FOR JESUS!

Please tell me of your decision to follow Jesus by contacting:

Pastor/Evangelist Matthew Needham

findsalvation@hotmail.com
www.evangelistmatthew.com





