

Aussie Update

Hamish could be characterized as a typical Aussie bloke. He is 20, studying at Monash Uni and looks forward to the weekends when he can hang out and party with his friends. He had been to a Catholic school for a bit of high school and felt like he fully understood what Christianity was about and wasn't interested, but enjoyed talking about faith so we spent some time chatting. At the end of our time, he asked 2 clarifying questions to make sure he understood what we had been talking about related to God's love. "So, what you're telling me is God loves me right where I'm at? So, I don't have to clean up my life for God to love me? I've never heard that before." He didn't start a relationship with God, but he understood something new.

During our time in Australia we approached hundreds of students and got in many conversations with over 250 turning into conversations related to what it means to have a relationship with God.

We saw 3 students pray to start that relationship and many who were like Hamish, having learned something new or how I phrase it, taking a step towards Christ.

It was great to partner with a campus that we've worked with for 9 years. To see the thriving *Student Life* club as it continues to grow and pursue students who are just drifting through life.



The team at a 'footy' game.

Students we spoke to just want a good job, a house, tickets for the local Australian Football club and have money to go on holiday. The level of apathy is something that is hard to describe on paper. Australia *seems* similar to the U.S. in culture... they speak the same language, we share the colors of our flags, we both enjoy McDonalds. Yet, the differences are sharp. They just don't care about eternity; they only live for the now.

From our surveys, we confirmed that only about 1-2% of current university students have walked into a church or know someone who has put their faith in Christ. So, it's not just that they don't know God personally. The great majority don't even know someone who would say they know God personally.



Giant Jenga always drew people's attention

The team in Australia was overwhelmed in a good way that we left them so much to do! *Thank you so much for your prayers while we were away.*

OTHER STUFF

--Three fourths of our team had never been on a trip like this before or had ever learned to share their faith. They are now going back to their campuses in the U.S. with vision and focus to reach out and love their friends, to really be a part of what God is doing. Some are considering how they can go back to Australia or other parts of the world to use their gifts, talents and desires to make an impact for Christ. They've used evangelism tools, learned initiative evangelism and relational evangelism. They've learned the importance of prayer, times of solitude, and God's heart for the nations. They've "cleared the air" in a team atmosphere, learned to press on when tired, communicate when hurt and fallen in love with God in new ways. We are so excited to see what God continues to do through these men and women.

--Lastly, our family did really well. From the flight, to the food, to all the in country travel. Times on campus or with the team helped give our kids an idea of God's love for people that don't know him.

*In His grip,
Kyle, Wendy, Malia, Carter & Avery*