



Beyond Belief.

Author/s

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Some of you would be old enough to remember the Blackstump Christian music and arts festival that used to light up the Sydney Christian scene. The time when it was most influential was right in my formative teenage years. Thousands would gather at a big Scout park on the edge of Sydney over the October long weekend, camp out, trudge through mud or dust (depending on the weather which was always either really really hot, or really really wet) and listen to (mostly) great music. They were brilliant times.

Two memories from Blackstump are etched in my mind. The first is the time I stayed up all night drinking hot chocolate and talking to a gorgeous girl, both of us wishing the sun would never come up. It's the kind of stuff Ed Sheeran could write a song about. But that's for another time.

The second memory was one year when the theme for the Festival was 'Beyond Belief'. I remember singing the Festival song together. The song was centred around a prayer to God – 'Oh Lord, lead me on.... beyond belief'.

The song has stuck with me. It's a powerful prayer. And it has come alive for me in a fresh way as Seed has developed over the last few years.

Seed started out of a desire to transform the way that followers of Jesus engage society and culture.

One of our core beliefs is that the purpose of our engagement with society is not to be right. And it's certainly not to show others how wrong they are. Belief is foundational to our engagement with society, but it is not the goal or the end point of that engagement, or of our discipleship.

We want to suggest that our purpose as followers of Jesus has more to do with becoming:

To become who God has made us to be
To help the people and places we serve
experience and become what God created
them to be
And in that process of becoming we
experience life in its fullness, as God
intended.

Part of the essence of Seed is to move people Beyond Belief, to experience and then embody the reality that the way of Jesus touches and transforms every part of life.

As we come through Advent (the season where we enter into the 'waiting' that the people of Israel experienced as they longed for their Messiah to come), I want to invite you to pause and reflect on the phenomenal grace that has been poured out on you by way of the Messiah coming into the world. I want to invite you to 'dwell' in that grace. I want to invite you to re-affirm your belief that this child we remember is indeed both Emmanuel and Messiah.



Seed Article

And I want to invite you to remember again that it doesn't stop there. To commit yourself again to moving beyond mere belief and to let that belief invade every part of your life, and to invade every part of the context where God has placed you.

It's an invitation not simply to believe, but to become.

In recent times Psalm 34 has been at the forefront of my mind. It's a reminder that the way of God is the way of blessing – it's life as it was intended to be lived. In verse 8 we have the well-known invitation by the Psalmist to 'taste and see that the Lord is good'. That's my prayer for our community and for those that we engage with. And that as you experience that goodness from God you would be led to a place where God's praise is 'ever on your lips' (v.1).