

THE INSIDE RUNNING

Why does it seem easy to connect with God when we are outdoors? Some settings just seem to create that instant connection.

This month we look at the link between outdoor recreation and finding God in creation.

One principle I have found to be true is that it's difficult to really recharge and re-energise until about day four of a holiday. I'm amazed that some people go for years without taking a break that long. I hope that as you look to the summer break, it will be refreshing and memorable, especially if you still have children at home.

The team at Promise Keepers is enjoying a break from the pressure of the Event season. Themed around breaking free from things that hinder our spiritual journey, we based the description of that journey on David Murrow's book *The Map*. This really helped many men understand where they are in their walk with God. Interviewing David via Skype from Alaska for each Event really brought the journey up the mountain to life.

May you walk closer to God than ever before and see Him more clearly as you look at His creation.

Be blessed



John Subritzky

God's Creation

November 2012

by John Subritzky

Andrew staggered half-dressed out of his snow cave into the pre-dawn gloom. Afterwards he turned around and realised his mistake. Because he hadn't marked the entrance to the snow cave with his ice axe, he couldn't find his way back in! After the initial panic, he looked out across the top of the clouds surrounding Ruapehu and as the sun rose, he had the revelation, "My Father made that! There's someone out there bigger than me – He made that sunrise!" Andrew had a spiritual encounter right there – and lived to tell about it!

Like Andrew, many of us men feel closely connected to God when we are outdoors. Immersing ourselves in creation brings us closer to the Creator. There is a reason that sunsets are the most photographed subject. The unending beauty, variety and majesty that engulf the sky move us.

When we pause and absorb this beauty in the stillness of a dawn or twilight, our spirit can more easily commune with God. The natural rhythm of day and night, tides and seasons, measures our progression through life with incremental change each day.

Andrew has been an outdoor instructor for many years, specialising earlier on in climbing and kayaking, and more recently in diving. He says that when he takes groups into the bush, he points out the

incredible complexity and variety that exists, even within the same type of bush. When you stop and take time to study it, the complexity is amazing.

What do you see in the natural environment?

Since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. Romans 1:20

Dean Ohlman says, "I've often used this verse and its context in apologetic discussions with folks who were not followers of Christ, but a few years ago I began to concentrate on what Paul's statement means within a believer's life. I considered primarily what Paul said, that all people, believer and unbeliever ➤





Andrew Ferguson diving in the Solomon Islands

➤ alike, ought to be able to 'see' in the natural creation. The NIV states that we can see God's *invisible* qualities—His eternal power and His divine nature—in the creation itself. In studying the word 'divine,' I concluded that something divine is superhuman, God-like, supremely good, magnificent, and compels human beings to worship. Then I asked myself, just exactly what is it about the natural world that would demonstrate our Creator's eternal power and His right to be worshipped?"

Dean's list includes...

- Mysterious light and matter
- Seemingly endless time
- Seemingly endless space
- Wonderful life and fearsome but essential death
- Regular cycles
- Awesome power
- Incredibly informed design
- Overwhelming beauty

Recreational activities that take us outside into God's creation can really revitalise us. Some recreation pursuits like hunting or fishing also hold enormous appeal for many men as we compete against creatures in a hunt.

There is something about pausing when you are in a beautiful place and talking with God through prayer that causes

revelation and prophetic words to come easily. That happens for me, even walking in regenerating bush on the fringe of my suburb.

Kim White says, "We must find how God speaks to us and gives us His heavenly downloads. I lie on my bed with worship music and five minutes later I fall asleep, but as soon as I put on my walking gear and start the Runkeeper GPS app on my iPhone, God just downloads visions and ideas. Same happens when I'm out in my kayak paddling - God speaks. I'm not sure if it's just my quiet place or if, as we men get involved in action/outdoor/manly stuff, it's just easier for God to talk to us."

Andrew had a divine encounter while caving with a group. They paused and the leader said to turn off their lights and to try and maintain silence for 60 seconds. With no light inside the cave it was profoundly black, pitch black. It affected Andrew's senses and even though he knew that the person next to him was only 2 metres away, he felt so isolated and so alone. But then he felt the overwhelming presence of God as the verse came to mind, "Be still and know that I am God".

Dean Ohlman observes, "The capacity of God's awesome creation to reveal knowledge of Himself and His goodness is so obvious that children are almost [always] the first to notice. Peter Illyn of Restoring Eden discovered [this] a few years ago when he was out in the wilderness with his young son. As they were walking, the joy of the experience prompted the boy to say, 'You know, Dad, it's easy to believe in God when you're outdoors, isn't it?'"

Pastors register for...



Geoff Wiklund has a heart to see pastors who are struggling healed and to bring a spark of encouragement to their ministry. This Promise Keepers *Refreshed & Released* Pastors' Conference will give tools to encourage and equip pastors. It will be a time to grow together and come to a great place in God.

This time has been significant. Giving out, dealing with people/issues is draining. Having time to sit under good, easy to listen to, solid teaching strengthened by personal experiences has been very encouraging. The style, openness and honesty of how things were presented was excellent. Thanks for sharing the years of knowledge. Andrew

The PK Refreshed & Released Conference has been a very beneficial and impacting event for me personally. God has used it to re-vision and encourage my ministry in a powerful way. I recommend it to any minister as a catalyst tool to revitalise, refresh and refocus on the things that will enhance your personal, family and ministry life in God. Dave

Wellington 7-8 November
Auckland 14-15 November
Christchurch 21-22 November

Limited to 40 places. \$40 per person.

Register today!

For more information or to register go to www.promisekeepers.org.nz

"... So that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19

**PROMISE
#1**

A Promise Keeper is committed to honouring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Next Issue:
FAMILY**