

2024-04-10 CWW - When God wants our attention, He is impossible to ignore.

The miracles have kept coming since we started our joint journey to Christ.

We have been saved to serve. God never wastes a hurt and He is waiting to take you on a journey of recovery and discovery.

May God continue to bless us all.

Graham and Michelle.

Published April 10, 2024

Hi everyone and welcome back to Church Without Walls, and uh, we'd really like to thank you all for the encouragement and the prayers as we kick off this new initiative. It's something very new for us to do some kind of televised ministry. And as usual, I want to just put it out there as a disclaimer.

I'm not a preacher. I'm not a pastor. I haven't studied theology. I'm not, um, I'm not speaking for any particular denomination. I'm just walking with you on a journey to faith, which I found really fruitful and sharing some of my experiences and our experiences, if you will, on the journey to encourage you.

So, um, we're starting from scratch for most of you because a lot of you are just beginning your journey into faith. Others have been doing it for a while and slipped out of church as a result of the last four years and you want to come back into a fellowship that you believe you can trust and we hope that that's what we can offer you because here at Church Without Walls there is no judgment beyond this point and that's one of the mantras that we, we stick to.

So let's get into what we're going to be doing today. I'm joined today. by the most, uh, special human being in my life. And that's my wife, Michelle. Yeah. Hi honey. And it's great to have you on. And we're about to unpack a bit of a story together. Uh, we're going to share some experiences of, uh, look, we've had hundreds of miracles in our lives.

Every day brings a new miracle and we could make a movie on, on the story. There's been a few, there's been a few and your story in particular. going way back to your childhood is horrendous. And, uh, a lot of people have heard your testimony. It involves childhood sexual abuse within the church and a whole bunch of other things, which we will unpack in future episodes.

But because this is an encouraging, um, uh, presentation, we're talking about miracles. Yeah. And when I met you, I was just coming out of atheism. I just realized that there must be a God. And it was all around the time I was going to kill myself. I'd set a date to kill myself and it was very close. And I met you just days before, just 10 days before.

I think it was that we met. Uh, and we met under the most incredible circumstances, the odds of us meeting the way we did were just, it's a miracle in itself. That's a miracle in itself. Exactly. So having, having met. We got together very quickly because we did fall in love straight away. We both admitted that we, uh, we, we fell in, don't mind the dogs, um, that we fell in love, you know, within minutes of meeting each other.

We were just so, uh, serene in each other's company. It just felt right, didn't it? Yes, it did. And it still does. Yes, it does. Perfect. It's perfect. And, um, but as, as we came together, We moved into an apartment together on the Gold Coast. There were a whole lot of, uh, personal family issues. We both had to deal with on both sides, big issues, and we've had to confront, I think, 60 major life changing events in our, in our life since we got together.

Yes. Massive, massive events, but we kept our head down and we kept walking, but we got to a stage after living together for six months, it was all, it was all going. really, really well. It was like almost too good to be true. Wasn't it? Yeah. I thought the bubble was going to burst. Yeah. And you kept reassuring me saying it's not.

And I kept thinking I was punching above my weight and it wouldn't last. So in a way you thought the bubble would burst too. Yeah, I did. I thought the bubble would burst. And, but because I'd come to the edge of the cliff of suicide and come back, I felt I had nothing to lose. I had everything to gain if I just gave this a chance.

And so that's what I did. But, um, yeah. So we, when we got together, everything was going well. We were discovering each other. We were working out a lot about each other as individuals. We were coming together, as the Bible says, in one flesh, weren't we? And it felt right, didn't it? It didn't feel like either one of us was controlling the other.

No, it wasn't. It never has been. It never will be. It never has been. And we've always, um, We have our individuality, but we have our sense of togetherness as well. So we can complete each other's sentences and we often laugh and most of you will have been through this with your marriages too. Uh, we've often laughed, we've been driving along the road and you'll say, can I talk to you about something?

And I already know what she's going to say and vice versa. And it's been really good. But we, there was one Saturday afternoon, I remember where. We were sitting in the apartment and we're talking all the time. We've never stopped talking in the last 18 plus years since we met. And, um, I had this notion to give you a pad and a pen.

And I said, I want you to go to the other room and write down all the things, all your incompleting goals, all the things you wanted to, to complete in your life. And I'll do the same. And let's come back together without discussing it. And we'll talk about it and compare them and see how close they are.

What are your goals in life? What are your goals in life? What, what is there left for that you want to achieve? And let's see how close we are. And how were they? Identical, except for one thing. Except for one thing. And, uh, Michelle had near the top of her list that she wanted to go back to her church and be baptized, her denomination, and be baptized because that's what her mum and dad would have wanted because you weren't ever baptized up till then, were you?

No. And so my response was, well, you know what, I'm not into religion and I'm not into church, but I love you that much. I want to spend every day with you. And if you want to go to church, I'm quite happy to sit next to you in the church and, uh, and, and I'll be your bodyguard because being. Sexually abused within the church when you were a child meant that the church wasn't really a safe place for you.

No, I'd become distanced from the church itself as its entity by the treatment I'd had in the church. So I left the church and didn't want anything to do with it for 35 years. And then I came along and we realised when we became so happy having come from lives of great darkness, and we both shared each other's darkness within the first year.

conversation that we had. I mean, it was incredible. I told you about my addiction and, and, uh, how miserable I was in my life. You told me about the things that had happened in your life and we just, we just gelled and we started asking each other questions that were healing, weren't they? They were cathartic.

Yeah, it was very cathartic to talk about stuff, um, that had happened to us because we were, in my case in particular, you were the only one I'd never divulged anything to. Yeah. And that was bizarre because, you know, I had a, I had a sex addiction at the time, which I don't have anymore. Thank God for that.

Um, I had that and, and you were a victim of, um, a predatory mouse for a great portion of your life. And you knew my background before you declared anything to me, but God whispered something. God had told me I

could trust you. The very first day I met him, God told me I could trust you. And that's really bizarre because I never trusted any man until that stage, but I trusted Hoodie implicitly.

And that, and you know what? I desperately needed to be trusted. I wanted to feel, I wanted to be in a relationship where I felt trusted. I've done an awful lot in my past to destroy any chance I had of anyone seeing me that way, but, but I still wanted it. And I think. Um, most people want to, most, I don't know of a man who doesn't want to be seen as honourable.

Even though our behaviour doesn't always exemplify that. Yeah, that's right. And there you were, you were trusting me, even though you knew about my past. And I thought, wow, if, if she could only trust me and I could work and live into that, my life could turn around. And maybe I could live a life out of the darkness, in the light.

And be a better person because being with you every day wants me to, makes me want to be a better man every day. And, and it's, it, it works beautifully. Anyhow, we got together and we, we, uh, you moved over within six weeks of our meeting from WA. Yep. And we moved in together into a little rented apartment on the Gold Coast, which was all very nice.

And we spent months and months and months talking and talking and talking and getting to know one another. And then we did that page. Sorry And we did that page. That's right. And we got to know each other more. We did that page and we were identical, except for the one thing about God. Yep. And so we, you said, let's find a church so you can fulfil this need.

And we found the church I wanted to go to after looking at several. And we found the church and we went there. And what happened to you? Well, First of all, I was nervous because I wasn't a churchgoer at all. I think I'd been to a church a couple of times for weddings and a couple of times with, um, with, uh, you know, Sunday school or something.

And he went as my bodyguard. So he was, he was on the alert to protect me from in the church. So he was on the alert to do that. So he went as my bodyguard. The whole, yeah, the whole, can you believe that you would go to church to be someone's bodyguard? I mean, I'm blown away with that because church was never a safe place for you after what happened as a child.

No, not as a child or afterwards. After you declared what happened. I was, I was, um, absolutely condemned. And ostracized, yeah. Yeah, ostracized. So anyhow, we went to the church and we were taken aback by the warmth of the people. People welcoming us. Yeah. And they're still our best friends. They're our best friends to this day and we've been through an amazing journey all of us together.

And I remember, uh, I remember seeing it was multicultural. People were joyous and happy to be there and I felt reasonably well accepted and comfortable. Uh, any, any, um, any apprehension I had was of my own doing. It wasn't because of the way the people were treating us. They were great. No. But then I sat next to you and I'm sitting there with my arms folded looking around like making sure you're okay like some kind of bodyguard.

And after a bit of awkward singing because I didn't know the hymns and I didn't know what the, what the rituals were and uh, we sat down and pastor Jeff, um, got up and delivered his sermon for the day. And this was a Saturday. Mm-Hmm. because we're Sabbath keeping Christians and churches was held for our denomination on Saturday.

And um, and he delivered this sermon and I, he got my attention straight away because you did, I thought he was talking about me. In fact, I even nudged you. You did. You asked me, have you been talking to him? And I said, no, I've never, never heard of, never spoken to him and never dunno him, dunno him. Yeah.

And, uh, he was talking about my life. Mm-Hmm. . He, you didn't. It really hit me. I mean, it was like a truck went through me. I'll never forget it. And, uh, I remember looking up and down the pews thinking, you know, are you

guys, are you guys enjoying what I'm enjoying? I mean, look at this guy is amazing. And they were, some of them were nodding off and some of them were looking at their watches and I thought, what's going on?

You know, anyhow, when it was over, uh, he met us at the door as we were all walking out and he shook my hand and he said, it's great to see new people in the church. We hope to see you back again. And I said, not likely because I'm a shift worker. And one thing led to another. And he said, uh, what do you do for a living?

I said, I work at the airport at Brisbane. He said, who for? And I said, Qantas. And he said, what do you do for them? I said, I'm a pilot. And he said, I used to be an engineer at the jet base in Sydney for Qantas. And I was their shop steward for the union. And we struck up this friendship. What are you doing now?

Why aren't you fixing airplanes instead of fixing souls? And he said, his wife dragged him along to some, uh, seminar, uh, with John Carter, a very, uh, a very famous evangelist. And he said he was smitten from that time on and gave his life to God. He did. Anyhow, um, the following Saturday came, we got up and had breakfast and I said to you, what, what do you want to do today?

I said, we can go to the beach. We can just go to the beach. Have a picnic. And I said, don't you want to go back to your church? Uh, and she said, I didn't think he'd want to go. I said, nah, you said you wanted to go back to church and eventually be baptized so we can go back. So we went and the same thing happened and the same preacher got up and said the, a sermon that hit me, went through me like the Southern Aurora.

Um, it was, um, it was incredible. Anyhow, we kept going back and six weeks later, what did we do? Well, six weeks later, uh, the, one of the elders gave a magnificent sermon and he did an altar call at the end, asking people if they wanted to be baptized. Not straight away. This was a commitment to be baptized after Bible studies, right?

And I looked at you and I said, come on, there's a couple of people going down, down you go. You wanted this, down you go. And you were reluctant. I was reluctant. I knew the implications of that. I didn't have a clue, did I? So anyhow, I grabbed you by the hand and, and dragged you down. Dragged me down there.

Because I thought she was just doing the right thing for me, because she didn't want to involve me in anything. And when we're standing down there, I'm looking away from the guy at the front doing all the talking. I, I'm letting him know that I just brought her down. I'm not involved in this. And he kept talking and he kept praying and there was music going in the background and he looked at me straight in the eye and he said, one more for Jesus, just one more for Jesus.

And I just looked at him and went, put my hand up. And, uh, that started a journey. Weekly Bible studies with the pastor. Yeah, he came around. And was lovely. Lovely people. But then something happened, Michelle, because. You were starting to get really sick. You were getting incredible headaches. Yeah, I wasn't one to have headaches but I started getting headaches.

They got worse and worse and worse and worse in their frequency and intensity. To the point where after several months, or a couple of months, I couldn't go in the car without being nauseous or vomiting. I couldn't go 24th floor so that was quite difficult. I couldn't do anything. So they gradually got worse and worse and worse.

Um, yeah, I was, I was, um, I was starting to get really concerned. We, we did lots of, went to lots of therapists, and then one minute I had osteopath, chiropractic, um, acupuncture, acupuncture, um, all sorts of things. I, they tried different therapists or headaches, which you gotta relax. You, you gotta do this, you know, that.

And I remember, I remember not taking no for an answer from any, um, any specialist receptionist or anything. I'd call up, you know, the top neurologist on the Gold Coast, I thought at the time, uh, who turned out to be anything other than, and, um, I remember calling, calling the receptionist and she said, well, you can't get an appointment with him for another four months.

And I begged her. And we got an appointment two days later. No, that was after, that was after a series of, I'd been to the hospital by then, one of the hospitals in emergency. Yeah. After many therapists and, um, this was about six months later. Misdiagnosis every step of the way. Misdiagnosis and in the end, um, people were telling me I had anxiety and I was a neurotic housewife and, and here's some aspegium, go home and have that.

And, um, and. That's a blood thinner? That's a blood thinner, without any tests or anything being done, to, to dispel anything in my head or anything. And you being a registered nurse, you knew this was more than just a headache? Yeah, and I'd asked, I said, told one of them that I'd been seeing red rings around the moon, and it was sort of dis, not heard or dismissed, and I was given a in the end, I was still so sick, I was, um, beginning to, Um, not function properly.

And I'd be, spend a lot of time curled up in bed or on the floor or whatever. Curled up. And at the time he took me to a major hospital on the Gold Coast in A& E. And they said, Oh, you've got anxiety. And here's some Aspegin. I went home. And you got anxious, more anxious and concerned. And rang around and got on to the top neurologist.

And we had an appointment a couple of days after I went to the emergency. And he said, Oh, you're just a neurotic housewife actually. You're very anxious and you're stressed and you need some. He didn't much like his bedside manner. He wasn't very good. And you said, Oh, I'm insisting that we have some tests done.

Yeah. And he relented eventually in that, in that consult. And he said, Okay, I'll, I'll order some. Um, So he ordered me a lumbar puncture for the Friday. The appointment was Tuesday night. On the Friday he asked for a lumbar puncture on the Saturday and ultrasound on the Monday and MRI. And then come and see him next Tuesday.

So we thought, OK, we'll go ahead, we'll plan for that. Now it's important to note the order of the sequence that those procedures were ordered in. The first one was the lumbar puncture, the second one was the ultrasound, and the third one was the MRI. Was the MRI scan. So remember that it's really important.

So, um, so we try, I tried to get through the week. This being a Tuesday, Wednesday, I was really so sick. The painkillers I had, we all been having for the last few months. We were just not doing anything and I weren't touching anything. So making you a zombie. They were. And the pain was still there. So on the Thursday I was, curled up on the floor, you couldn't find me, you found me on the floor and you, you got really concerned and I was beside myself, I was really non composed and You rang the neurologist and said, um, she's in a really bad way.

Where do you want me to take her? And he said, suggested the hospital that I had booked for to have a lumbar puncture on the Friday. That's right. This was Thursday night. And I remember we were only in a small apartment. I knew you were in the apartment at that time and I couldn't find you. No, I was looking around and then I found you were curled up.

near the kitchen cupboards under the, near the sink, around the corner in the fetal position and you were shaking and it was horrendous and, and, uh, I rang him, I got onto him straight away and he relented and said, look, get her to that hospital. And I took her to the A& E at the hospital, we got there about eight o'clock that night.

And the only doctor on duty was a Russian doctor on exchange, Dr. Bob. It was amazing and I had concerns. I thought, I want to see a top class specialist, not some guy on exchange. And I so regret that. Anyway, he, uh, the nurses put her into a cubicle. Yep. And, uh, they were taking obs, observations and asking questions and filling in forms.

And Dr. Bob came in and, uh, he did a preliminary on you. And I told him that she was down for a lumbar puncture tomorrow morning. And he said, uh, alright, I'll ring the, uh, I'll ring the neurologist and find out if I can do that tonight. So he rang the neurologist and the neurologist said, yes, go ahead and do it now.

And he came back and they wheeled in a trolley and they were prepping you to do a lumbar puncture. Which is, uh, They stick a needle in your spine at the base, right? Mm hmm. And the whole idea is to measure the pressure, isn't it? Oh, I take tests to see what's in the, in your cerebrospinal fluid. Right, in your spinal fluid.

And the pressure helps, but. Yeah. Yeah, it's all done. So they're all set to do it. And as he was getting ready, he said, he looked at me and he said, I'm not really happy about this. I want to see what's inside the head. I don't normally do this unless I know what's inside my head. He said, I wanted to go and have an x ray or a scan.

Sent me off a CT scan. He said, let's hold this procedure and we'll get the scan and we'll see if there's anything in the head we should know about. Well, half an hour later, he called me over to the light board on the back of the, the back of the nurse's station where the, uh, the scan pictures were. And, uh, what he showed me, uh, what he showed me was incredible.

Um, that's the picture I saw. Yeah. Anybody who knows anything about scans and radiography, you will know that the darker grey matter in the middle there is the brain. And those light patches around the outside was pressurized blood that had leaked from between the skull and the brain. Thank God it wasn't in the brain.

But they were subdural hematomas. Two massive subdural hematomas. And 20 percent of her head was filled with pressurized blood that was compressing her brain into her spine. Now, um, there it is from another angle. Now any nurse or doctor would look at that and go, Oh my goodness, this is, this is horrendous.

Then they panicked and then they panicked in there. Now he said to me, after he showed me those pictures, I said, my goodness, he explained them. He said, I'm so glad I did what I did because if I put the needle into your wife's spine, she would have died on the table because the pressure on her brain would have been relieved from the base.

And your brain would have been compressed into the top of your spine. That's basically what he said, she would have died. Involved into the spine. Involved into the spine. Now that's miracle number one. That's the first part of the miracle. He said, this is not good. And he raced you straight into the wards.

Um, I raced home and got a few things and I came back and I stayed with you. Yeah, they were hoping that I could be operated on straight away. Yeah, that's right. And that's a series then, a series uncoiled from there, of um, problems, cause they wanted to operate. The neurosurgeon was called in. Yes, and a lovely lady.

And of course all the bloods were taken, you get me ready for theatre, etc, etc, and all the questions, have you eaten da da da, when did you eat da da da, and all was done so they could operate immediately. However. Bye bye. However, um, the bloods came back, they were too thin to operate because if they, uh, No coagulation.

No coagulation because of the medication that was wrongly prescribed to her. If she, if they had opened her up, she would have bled out. So they couldn't stop the bleeding and they weren't prepared to take that risk. So, um, you were in the ward. You were still very, very sick. They were doing 30 minute observations on you.

Yes. Um, and she said, Neurosurgeon and Neurologist were arguing. They wanted to, They had a fight, yeah. Amber had a fight. I remember the Neurologist coming in that, the following morning, after you'd checked into the hospital that night. And he just didn't even acknowledge us. He walked in, grabbed the chart at the end of the bed, looked at it and smacked himself on the forehead and said, Oh my God, Oh my God.

Oh, and he dropped a couple of F words. Mm hmm. And he walked out to the nurse's station and I followed him out there and behind the nurse's station in the office, he was having an argument with the neurologist, with the neurosurgeon. You've got to operate now. You've got to operate now. It's really important.

She said, I can't because you prescribed the wrong medication to her and her blood's too thin. No, no, you've got to operate. And then she said something like, if you wanted to be a neurosurgeon, you should have done the extra eight years of study to do it. I'm the neurosurgeon. I'm telling you we can't go in.

And then I heard all that and I'm thinking, Oh my goodness. Uh, this, this a certain amount of urgency to this. And we went back in, I went back into the room and we spent day after day. Now the hospital agreed. I said, I'm not leaving a site. They let me sleep on a mattress on the floor and we stayed together.

We ate together and, uh, doing obs every 30 minutes, every 30 minutes. We had virtually no sleep. They're expecting me to die. Because that could um, push my brain in at any time. If the pressure got too much, it could convolute into my, and things. So they're expecting that. Now the pastor of the church, who, uh, who I heard the two sermons with, he was amazing.

He came every day to the hospital. Yeah, I was in there for two, 11 days, two weeks. And the bloods, they were doing my every day to see if the coagulation levels were changing. And they weren't. And they weren't. So I had no coagulation. So every day they were, are we going to operate? Are we not? Are we not?

Yeah. So we're not because they were getting more concerned every day. And they, they started, um, became very concerned because they thought I was the walking dead. That's right. And everyone in the hospital really focused on us because we were in love and we, we told them when she gets better, we're getting married.

And anyhow, the pastor was coming in every day and he was praying with her and he was comforting me. He'd spend hours at a time sitting with me and, um, we've become really good lifelong friends since then. It was really incredible. And he, um, and then he said to me, uh, one day, why don't we have her anointed?

And I said, I don't know what that means. What is that? He said, most of this time I was non compass. You were almost comatose. And so, uh, he was saying things, well he said anointing, you know, we, we pray over her and he said, I anoint her head with oil and, and, um, that often works. And I couldn't see how that would work, but anyhow, I said, look, ask her if she wants to do it for sure.

And he put it to Michelle and you said, yes, you said you were happy to do it. Yeah. And, um, then, um, we'd arrange the time to have that done. Yeah, that was going to be done on a Saturday afternoon, Sunday, Sunday. And prior to that, the neurosurgeon called me out and she said, every day we're taking blood tests and we cannot with any medication, get her bloods to thicken.

And we're really concerned because we can't operate unless we get the bloods to coagulate. And at this stage it's going to be another week at least. She said it'll be at least another week before we can operate. And she actually said to me, you need to steal yourself for the worst. She may not make it.

And if she does, she could end up being a vegetable. And I was gutted. I mean, this was a conversation outside of Michelle's hearing, outside the room. And, uh, I remember feeling absolutely devastated. Like the love of my life. We've only just gotten together and I'm about to lose her. And, um, And we went, I went back into the room and you said to me, what was that all about?

And you could see I was upset. And I said, no, no, just routine. And she said, no, you know, we promised we'd never have any secrets. And what was that about? And, um, I told her what the conversation was about and we had a bit of a cry and you said that you wanted me to sit down and write letters to your kids while you were still alive.

Uh, and say some things that you needed to say to your kids and, uh, it was horrible. Yeah. And you were getting sicker and sicker and sicker and the medications they had you on, you had all kinds of other physical, uh, The pain wasn't, the pain wasn't covered in any way by what I was on. No. And you were on the strongest painkillers.

Yep. And, uh, and her eyes were rolling back in her head. Anyhow, um. After I was given that, that message, the next day, the, uh, church pastor and the elders, our friends, Kim and Marita and Leon Powery, uh, came into, uh, the hospital and they anointed her and, um, the night prior to that, something really significant happened.

I, I needed to go back to the apartment and wash some of your clothes. Yeah. Your undies and all that sort of stuff. And, um, I remember I wanted to get there and get it done quickly and come back. And as I walked into the apartment, I opened the door and everything that in that apartment was of you. The smells, the sights, it was all you.

And I just fell to the floor, prostate face down on the floor, and I prayed and I prayed and I prayed. And I remember praying this prayer to God. God, if you save her life. I promise I'll spend the rest of my life in your service. And as I said it, I realized I was putting a condition on God and that didn't sit well with me.

And I realized that, thank God, I realized it in time and I said, no, no, God, let me take that back. I am going to serve you for the rest of my life. But if you could keep her alive. To walk that journey with me, I will be eternally grateful. That was the prayer. And I raced back to the hospital, sorted things out in the room.

I lay on the bed with you and I held you. And, uh, and then the next day was the anointing. And they all came in to do the anointing. And each person in the room prayed over you and I was the last one to pray. And then the pastor anointed your head with oil and then there was a knock on the door. And I got up and answered the door and the service was still going on.

And a lovely young guy was standing at the door and he said, I'm the phlebotomist. I've come to take your wife's or Michelle's bloods because we weren't married at that stage. And I said to him, look, there's a little thing going on in here at the moment. Can you hang on just a minute? And he said, sure.

And I shut the door and they finished the prayers. And then I went and opened the door and let him in and he walked in and everyone knew him. Yeah. All the people from the church knew him and they said, Wozza, what are you doing here? His name was Warwick. Uh, Wozza, what are you doing here? And he said, Oh, I work part time in the hospital.

I'm a phlebotomist. And I said, well, really, we didn't know that. And I said, do you know this guy? And they said, yeah, he's a youth pastor from our church at Narang on the Gold Coast. I said, you gotta be kidding. He said, no, I know these guys. If I'd known this is what we're doing, I could have come in and participated in it.

Anyhow, they all kissed her on the forehead and I said, look, honey, while you're getting your bloods taken, I'll go down. I was out to it. You were almost in a coma. I'll go down, say goodbye to these guys and I'll be back in 10 minutes. And we walked out and she was lying on her back with her eyes fluttering and she could hardly speak.

Her speech was slurred and it was awful. Anyhow, the phlebotomist came in. Now, remember that morning, I was told that she may not make it. That the bloods, it would be at least another week. Then we had the anointing, and then WASA came in and took your blood. And the next morning was incredible. Because the very next morning after the anointing, after the bloods were taken, He had to come back and take some more.

He had to come back and take some more and we wondered why. I just thought he had to take some more. The neurosurgeon burst into the room at 6.30 in the morning, looked at your charts and said, Michelle, you've got the whole hospital talking because your bloods, which weren't meant to be normal for at least another week, have come back normal.

You must have, you must have, you must have friends in high places. And I said, what are you talking about? She said, the bloods we took yesterday afternoon have come back normal. A week ahead of schedule. Yep. But before we get to that bit, when I came back from saying goodbye to everybody in the car park after the anointing, I walked in and she was sitting in bed brushing her hair with a big smile on her face.

Sitting up in bed like she was fine. Yeah, I had no pain. And I looked at her and I said, you've, you've, what's going, what is this? She said, for the first time in 10 months, I have no pain. It was gone. Straight within 10 minutes of being anointed. And within 10 minutes of being anointed, the bloods that were meant to be too thin came back with the right consistency.

Now the reason they took more bloods that afternoon was poor old Warwick got into trouble. They thought he got the wrong blood samples because it wasn't possible. To have coagulation levels like that. So quickly. Mm hmm. And you were actually called, we found out later on, the miracle woman. Yeah. In the hospital.

So. The surgeon came in the following morning, your bloods have come back normal, we're going in. Yep. And she went into hospital, went into theatre and they allowed me to walk with her right in until the anaesthesia stage. Yep, pastor was there. Yep, and I went in, walked beside her in the trolley to the theatre and I kissed her and, and said I'll see you on the other side.

Yep. And she went into surgery and two hours later we're sitting out the front of the ICU waiting for you to come out. And the, uh, the neurosurgeon all dressed up in a beautiful dress. She was going out for lunch, just finished her surgery. Came out and said, Oh, Mr. Hood. Yeah, that all was routine. It went fine.

Uh, she should be fine. She's got four holes in her head, but, um, we'll keep an eye on her. But we think we got it all. We drained her head and everything's fine. May have to go back in but. May have to, so we'll leave the holes. Yeah. We won't plug the holes up, we'll just leave them in. They're still there to this day.

Yeah, I'm a bowling ball. And so, uh, then you spent how long in ICU? About a week was it? Yeah, several days. And, uh, normally you're only allowed in ICU for about 45 minutes. And then I was on the ward for two weeks before we got out. Before you got out, so it was a long stay. But in ICU, what? Yeah. Yeah, several days, nearly a week.

And they only, um, they only let you go in there for 45 minutes at a time, but the nurses let me sleep in there, didn't they? Yeah, they did. They were great, they were fantastic. But just coming back to when I went into theatre, when I was being anaesthetised, that's when I surrendered totally to God. Totally.

What was that experience like? Um, I, I had nothing. I was humanly, there was humanly nothing I could do. Yeah. And saying goodbye to you was really hard because I didn't know if I'd wake up. But I had to hand that over to God. And I handed that over to God, but I was handing him my life. It's in your hands now, God.

What happens from here on in, it's yours. It's yours. But that feeling was, um, amazing peace came over me. And I was totally, um. totally had nothing. Surrendered. Totally surrendered, had nothing. Peace came over me, but I knew I was in his hands. Yeah. And I started to get a real glimpse of that too. And it was, it was a profound moment for me.

I said to the pastor, if, um, my divorce had only just come through while she was in hospital. And I said to the pastor, as soon as she gets out, we're getting married. We had a wedding planned down for several months ahead. We had that planned. Well in advance, yeah. Yeah, that was four months away. But we wanted to get married straight away because you said something to me when we had the conversation after the doctor said you may not make it.

Yeah. You said, if I end up being a vegetable, I want you to farm me out somewhere and get on and live the rest of your life. Yeah. Without me. Yeah. And I said, you've got to be joking. If I've got to, I'll, I'll quit my job. Mm hmm. And I'll be with you for the rest of your life, and I'll look after you for the rest of your life.

Regardless. Regardless of whether you know me or recognise me or not, I'll never leave your side. And I meant it. You did. And, um. It means a lot. You meant it. Yeah. And, and, uh. But ever since. Then we said, yeah, we want to get, as soon as we get out of hospital, we're getting married. She, yeah, you said to me, uh, you said to me, why would you do that?

We're not even married. And I said, we'll fix that as soon as we get out of here, we're getting married. And then you put it to Jeff. Yeah, I put it to Jeff. Look, I want to get married as soon as we get out of here. And he said, um, well, okay, we can do that. And he said, I'll baptize you and marry you on the same day.

And I said, well, she's getting out this Thursday. Can we do it next Saturday? On the Saturday? And he said, have you got your divorce certificate? And I said, no, not yet. He said, well, I can't marry her unless you've got your divorce certificate. And that's a whole other story. That's another miracle. That's another miracle.

We'll leave it there. But I'll tell you, we, um, I did get the divorce certificate the day before we got married, I went up to Brisbane to get it and it was a miracle I got it. And we went back to that beautiful church, uh, Reedy Creek. And they'd put on an impromptu day for us. Yep, they baptised us with several other people.

And I was still quite sick, like exhausted, so I'd get up in the morning after my op and I'd be up for about three hours, then I'd have to spend the rest of the day in bed. For months and months and months I was totally fatigued, but they put on a day for us especially. And we were baptised and married.

Yep. On the same day. Now that, when you came out of hospital, the neurosurgeon was incredible. Instead of shaving all her head, all her hair off. She shaved little squares around each hole. So I had little holes like that, of shaved hair with the burr hole in the middle. And she did that in four places and she plaited my hair all the way around.

Because she knew you were getting married and she didn't want to take your hair. Okay. But of course, all the blood that came out was all through your hair and your hair was like a helmet. It was, it was dreadful and after two weeks of being a helmet, when I finally got home, because it hadn't been Hadn't been washed.

Yeah, hadn't been treated because I had bandage on it around my head for two weeks. Yeah, and I said, look honey, just shave it off and we'll get a wig or something. And she said, no, no, and she spent hours with knitting needles, wasn't it? Knitting needles. Yeah. Yeah, straightening it all out and you looked amazing on the day when we got married.

It was just three days after coming out of hospital. But the church was amazing. The church people were amazing. They put on this impromptu lunch. Reception. Reception, the big cake and drinks and It was just beautiful. It was just beautiful. It was just beautiful. And you know what, um, We turned up at the church and nobody knew except only a couple of people, only six people knew.

That we were going to get married. That we were going to get married that day. It was a surprise. So most of the church didn't know and we turned up at the church and everyone said, Oh, you're dressed for a wedding. You look like you're dressed for a wedding and they didn't know. But we were baptized together and married on that day and our lives have exploded with relevance ever since.

God has led us every step of the way. We haven't looked back and, um, He keeps opening doors for us. Yeah. And we step through them. We do. And that's what, that's what this whole journey has been about. And it's been really, um, amplified in the last four years as a result of the pandemic, because we went on to set up a beautiful 12 step recovery program called Recovery Road, which has been functioning now.

Uh, uh, for 17 or 18 years, 17 years, 14 years, 14 years, and, um, sorry, we did celebrate before that. Yeah, we did. 17 years. So I cut all that out and you've written, uh, you've written the books for recovery road and, uh, that's been going nonstop ever since. We've got beautiful volunteers. helping people.

Recovery Roads is a 12 step Christ centered recovery program and a lot of people have found healing in that and we're ramping that up with Church Without Walls. We're going to expand that in the coming months. That'll be really hitting the road. We're getting edition number two of the books printed up as we speak.

So our life has exploded with relevance and I'll just put a slide up. Um, that was back. At the time, um, when it was all going south, when we just met and we truly believe that we were safe to serve. Mm-Hmm, , there's no doubt about it. And, and when we agreed that that's the way we wanted to spend our lives, um, evil came in and did that to her.

Mm-Hmm. and that, so I had two, two acute spontaneous subdural hematomas. Two. Not one. Not one but two. Size of a man's hands under my skull, under my skull holding my, pushing my brain. And ultimately it was diagnosed as the probable cause was adrenal burnout. Yeah. Adrenal burnout and you gave up coffee as a result and you did a lot of water therapy as in floating in a pool and Yeah, stress, de stress.

De stressing. De stressing. You gave up work. Although I've got to say you've worked harder voluntarily since. But that's been cathartic work if you know what I mean. Yeah, so you were constantly helping the adult victims of childhood sexual abuse and you were loved by a great many people. By a great many people.

And, um. God has a purpose. God never wastes a hurt, does he? No, never, never ever wastes a hurt. No matter what happens to you. As we go back to the slideshow, um. That's your life verse. Yep. And that photo is taken of our, our wallaby that you saved. Mm hmm. Who comes and goes on the farm. He wanders off and he, he was saved as a baby.

With another rescue, a beautiful maramba, Kobe. Who, uh, sits on the hill and they're looking at the headlights coming down the highway together like two old friends. Mm-Hmm . And we love that photo 'cause that's where we live in Northern New South Wales. Well west of Byron Bay, about two hours west of Byron Bay and your life.

First Michelle is Jeremiah 29 11, which says, you know what the plans I have for you, plans to give you hope, peace in the future. And it's true, and it really is true. It really is true. He turns everything around. So to all those people who are on this journey to faith. What do you reckon? It can be turned around.

Life can be turned around no matter what's happened to you. Your life can really mean something and we've come from horrible places in the past. God's amazing. God's amazing. God never wastes a hurt and you will never know how many people are standing behind you waiting to see how you overcome the issues in your life.

Jesus Christ is there ready to forgive you. In fact, if you listen carefully, you can hear forgiveness calling out your name. And that's, uh, what's so amazing about grace. And that's one miracle we wanted to share with you to encourage you to stay on this journey. I have never looked back. I tried everything for most of my adult life.

I was agnostic. I was atheist. I looked at new age. I even looked at Buddhism. None of it. did anything until I realized that Jesus Christ for me was the only show in town. And when I realized that a man I had never met 2000 years ago died the worst death on a cross to give us a second chance, why wouldn't you love someone like that?

So what is this journey about for us? What's this journey about for you? Well, it's about restarting your life. It's about committing to something that will save you for eternity. It's about having a relationship, not a ritualized religion, but a relationship with the creator of the universe, who's dying, was dying to have a relationship with you.

And he's ready, willing, and able. He stands at the door and knocks. And you wouldn't be watching this if you hadn't opened the door. So it's our purpose to help you invite him in. Become one in relationship with him to sort through all the minefields that await you on this journey, because sometimes it's one step forward and two steps back, but together we'll get through this and together our lives can mean something.

What do you reckon? You never waste the hurt. You can turn anything around. Anything that's thrown at you, you can overcome. And despite all the darkness of your past and mine, Here we are now feeling better than we've ever felt in our lives. Happiest and joyful. Happy and joyful. It is well with our soul.

And our lives have been completely turned around. Yeah. That's what he wants to do for you. So God bless you. Thank you all for watching. We'll bring you more interviews like this and more testimonies like this. In the meantime, let's close with a prayer. Lord, Father in heaven, is it possible that we are all saved to serve?

I think so, Lord God. And I thank you, Father, for making it so abundantly clear that it doesn't matter what we've done in the past, that we are forgiven. All we have to do is surrender to your will. All we have to do is accept your grace and your mercy in our lives. So as we take this next step, we do it right in behind you, never in front, but we're tucking in right behind you and listening to that beautiful, still, sweet, small voice.

that guides us step by incredible step. And for that, Lord, we thank you. And we ask you to be with all of those beautiful people who are watching this, who are wondering if this is really for them. Help them to make the decisions they need to make. Help them to start their own journey. If this starts a journey for them down the street to their corner church, fantastic.

If this encourages them to form a small home group where they can sit around and discuss the meaning of life through your lens. We pray that that will happen. We pray that this word will spread and we thank you for being in control of everything that's going on in our lives. And knowing that gives us great peace and serenity.

We say all these things and ask these things in the precious name of Jesus. Amen. God bless you. What you did yesterday got you to today. One step at a time. One step at a time. I love you. I love you more. Thanks for watching us and we'll be back next time on Church Without Walls. Bye for now. Bye.