

NUDGE FOR JESUS THIS CHRISTMAS

LUKE BEARDMORE, with shaved head and built as solid as a refrigerator, is aptly known as 'Nudge' by his mates. Luke says he is a 'Bra Boy', a close-knit group of young men in Maroubra. And this may already have readers of Sydney's tabloid newspaper, *The Daily Telegraph*, jumping to some false conclusions.

Luke says people have the wrong idea about the Bra Boys. They are just a group of friends who have a few things in common. Most grew up in the large public housing commission flats in Maroubra. They are fearless and athletic. And what binds them is a love of high adrenaline activities like surfing and Rugby League.

"We are just working class fellas who like surfing together," says Luke.

And Luke is a gun at both. He surfs open A grade in the local board riding competition and played 1st grade Rugby League for the Coogee club.

Like many other young blokes his age, Luke has had his problems with alcohol. But what really made him think more about God lately is that he has been 'pretty down'. One of his best mates has been diagnosed with brain cancer.

"I was really destroying myself," says Luke.

Luke has known fellow surfer Dannie Boyd, who is now a leader with Maroubra's Surfers' Church, since Luke was a kid. So one day last year when they ran into each other in the surf, they got talking about what



Luke was feeling. It's been a gradual process, but at the beginning of the year Luke came to a Surfers' Church meeting. Now he can't get enough God-talk.

"I wish we had a meeting every day," says Luke. "It gets you amped for life."

Luke explains that since he 'came to the Lord', God has been working in him, helping him to put his 'faith into action'.

This Christmas, Nudge will be actively celebrating Jesus' birthday for the first time as one of his followers.

"I've always believed in God but it wasn't showing in my actions," he says. "Reading the Word makes me want to be a doer."

FIND A CHURCH → www.sydneyanglicans.net

THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS



Christ, his teaching, healings, death and rising to life. And all of these—including the healings and resurrection—remain the subject of serious examination by scholars today.

Because Christianity's claims are uniquely tangible, having to do with historical events not simply timeless spiritual truths, they are probed and evaluated in a manner without parallel in the study of the world religions. Archaeologists dig up Galilee and Jerusalem to see if Jesus' stomping ground has been accurately described by the Gospels (the New Testament accounts of his life).

Historians pore over the non-Christian evidence to see if Jesus' teaching, healings, death and resurrection rate a mention outside the Bible. And they analyse the New Testament writings themselves to assess their worth as independent historical sources.

On all these counts Christianity fares much better than most of us realize. The Christian Faith gladly places its neck on the chopping block of public scrutiny and invites anyone who wishes to take a swing.

© 2006, *Bluebottle Books*

THE UNIQUE and enduring claim of Christianity in all its forms is that the God of universal conviction—of our common sense—has broken into history for all to see. The 'kingdom of God' has touched the world of humanity in a tangible way.

While churches have disagreed about many things through the centuries, the acknowledged core of Christianity is Jesus

DIGGING DEEPER → www.christianity.net.au

A printed brochure 'Christ: a primer for the curious' is available from Bluebottle books. Call 02 8268 3344.