

# Beginning a faith journey

By Bill Pugh

As a boy I went on holidays with my family to a small seaside place. I loved exploring. Just off the beach was an old broken down jetty. We loved to climb on it and walk along, spotting fish and crabs beneath. One day it was very windy and the waves were rising. We should have stayed safely on the beach. But no, we wanted to enjoy the crashing waves close up. Suddenly a huge one hit the pylon, engulfed me and took me with it. And, as if guided by an unseen hand, deposited me further down the old structure, dripping wet, scared but safe. I have never forgotten that.

I have never forgotten my early experience of the power of the sea. Do miracles happen? Some years ago I had the privilege of reading the biography of a local doctor. He was in the British Navy during WWII. Not once, but twice, his vessel was torpedoed and each time he was rescued from the sea. After the war he studied medicine and came to Australia and set up a practice. He was recognised as a

doctor with special skill in seeing women safely through childbirth.

In the Bible there is a story about Jesus and his friends in a boat at sea. Jesus is asleep. A huge storm threatens them and he sleeps on. Terrified, they wake him. "Don't you care that we are perishing?" they say. And he calmed their fears, rebuked the wind and waves, and said, "Peace be still." And there was calm.

*Do miracles happen?*

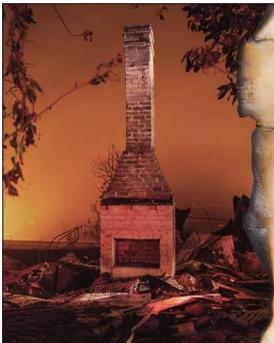
As a teacher, in every experience at sport, or camping, I was cautious about the safety and wellbeing of students in my care, while allowing a certain measure of risk taking and challenges to be part of their learning experience.

*Do miracles happen?*

Each day we face the adventures of living. Caution, care, safety first, are learning processes. And such experiences, lived, reflected upon, and understood are keys to the growth and development of human character.

*Do miracles happen?* Surely the gift of life is one.

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