

SWIMMING IN THE DARK

By Ian Menzies



At Dimalurru (Tunnel Creek) in the Kimberley, WA, water has carved a large tunnel through the limestone of the Napier Range.

When we visited with a small group, recent rains had flooded the cavern and what was usually at worst a straightforward paddle had become a rather challenging, cold swim through water that was well above head high.

In complete darkness while wearing our compulsory shoes.

Armed with small torches that proved almost water-proof and provided very little light, about half our group chose to venture on, safe with the option of bailing out should our courage fail.

Clambering over rocks and around the first bend, total darkness enveloped us as we stumbled onto a small “beach” with an endless black expanse of water disappearing into a dark void lapping its edge.

“No way am I doing this,” I thought.

Then a tiny light appeared on the far side, about 100m away, and the guide from another group shouted at us to swim to his light.

That tiny glow in the dark was encouragement enough to have a go,

and one by one we set forth and, guided by that light, all arrived safely on the other side.

That tiny beacon and his few encouraging words provided the small nudge that provided the confidence required to undertake what later proved to be a memorable experience.

How often does a similar nudge arise when hearing a Biblical passage or snatch of a prayer and give us the confidence to go on?

Or conversely, how often can we provide an encouraging word, a guiding glimpse of light to another swimming in the dark on their life’s journey?

That little torch light across the black expanse wasn’t the light at the end of the tunnel.

But it was a significant signpost pointing the way through the darkness.

Swimming alone in the dark without that friendly little pinprick of light to guide me forward, I’d never have seen it.