

Micah Challenge Giant Toilet Tour Kicks Off In Tamworth



THE launch of the 'Toilet Tour' in Tamworth last Saturday proved a giant success with over 100 people joining the queue of 2.5 billion people across the world that do not have access to basic sanitation.

The toilet was hosted at the Tamworth LifeFest as part of a national Toilet Tour travelling up the east coast, across the great bite of South Australia, into Adelaide and then across to Western Australia, finishing its journey in Melbourne on World Toilet Day on 19 November.

As festival goers practiced their aim by throwing toilet paper into the Giant Toilet, Tamworth's Regional Council Deputy Mayor, Russell Webb, joined in to learn more about the global sanitation crisis.

'It was a fantastic day – the giant toilet is such an engaging way to attract people's attention and be able to tell them more about what the Australian government can do. There was never a dull moment,' said Event Coordinator, Simon Massey.

In 2000 world leaders agreed to a set of goals to reduce global poverty by 2015, called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Despite actions to increase the focus on water, health and sanitation in recent years, the Australian Government spends around 1% of the aid program on sanitation, one of the most off-track MDG targets.

The Government plans to reach 5 million people with sanitation facilities in the next four years which represents just 0.2% of the 2.5 billion people who currently live without decent sanitation.

'The long term goal is universal access to hygienic working toilets for all people. Our government can help us take significant steps to making that goal a reality,' said John Beckett, National Coordinator for Micah Challenge. 'We're calling on it to invest at least \$500 million each year in water, sanitation and hygiene – with at least half this amount directed to sanitation and hygiene programs.'

The World Health Organisation estimates that by addressing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) we could prevent 28% of all child deaths.

Community events in over 35 Australian electorates which feature the Giant Toilet plan to draw Australia's attention to the global sanitation crisis in an effort to encourage the Government to see this basic necessity as an aid priority. Supporters are being asked to join the queue, sign petitions for their local MP and snap a photo of themselves with the Giant Toilet.

(Picture above: Tamworth's Deputy Mayor)
-Angela Owen, Micah Challenge Australia

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TO THE POINT ...

The Power Of One

How often do we complain about 'them'? Even in the Church, we seem to find plenty to complain about. Being an evangelical Christian in the minority of a denomination where the leadership is firmly in the grip of a liberal group is one situation which breeds frustration, discontent and despair of ever seeing better things. Our own knowledge of the blessings of belief promotes the desire to see better things for the people of God, whose leaders too often appear to be 'the blind leading the blind'. What to do?

The Power Of Prayer. As in all things, we should be much in prayer for the state of things, including our own spiritual standing. Prayer changes things as it moves the heart which moves the hand which moves the world - and the Church.

The Power Of Persuasion. While we might have to speak against others in the courts and councils of the church, there's nothing to stop us from approaching them later to explain why we said what we did. This often leads to fruitful discussion and exchange of ideas, sometimes to the improvement and growth in faith of others.

The Power Of Personal Assessment. Sometimes the criticisms others make of us are either all too true or rather misguided. Are evangelicals 'obscurantist', lacking 'reasoned' faith, 'hard and unloving', 'lacking a social conscience', 'unconcerned for the poor and needy'. Of course we should pursue excellence in every part of Christian faith and life. Are we constantly growing in faith and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? Have our critics heard of, much less read and studied the likes of F.F. Bruce, Leon Morris, E.J. Young, J.G. Machen, John Murray, etc, etc, etc? If we appear to be judgmental, harsh, unloving or uncaring then we ourselves need an outpouring of grace to remedy this situation. And surely there's nothing wrong with pointing to the work of Micah Challenge, TEAR Fund, The Salvation Army, Samaritan's Purse, Compassion, World Vision and so many others to whom I apologise for not mentioning because of the exigencies of space. Yes we want social justice, an end to poverty, help for AIDS sufferers - all such things - but more than this, so much more, we want to see them in Heaven in the end through a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Power Of Personal Friendship. Have you heard that a liberal minister (for example) is in hospital? Bereaved? Suffering from a terminal illness? Go and see them. Don't take flowers. Don't pat them on the shoulder and say, 'Never mind, old chap, you can always find someone worse off than yourself'. Don't say, 'you'll be all right.' Take your Bible and a tract or Bible portion or an article which you've personally found helpful. Do engage in small talk for a while. Do talk about the problem, but not in an inquisitorial kind of way. And find an opportunity to ask: 'By the way, what's your favorite Psalm?' Read it with them, discuss it purposefully. (If they come up with one that doesn't seem too helpful, I'd read it, talk about it, then say, 'That's interesting. Mine's Psalm 46.' Then go on to discuss that with them.) After that, say what you like in rounding off, and leave them with some printed material to read later. If you've been careful and prayerful you may well have won a friend - and be well on the way to seeing them come to real, saving faith.

The Power Of One. I had the privilege of attending the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland last week.

(Editorial continued on p. 5...)

Aceh, Indonesia: New Governor Advances Islamisation

ACEHNESE went to the polls on 9 April to elect a new governor. The incumbent, Irwandi Yusuf, running as an independent, had been favoured to win. However, in the end the people chose to put their loyalty behind the Aceh Party's candidate Zaini Abdullah (72). Founded in 2008, the Aceh Party (Partai Aceh, PA) has dominated the parliament since 2009. PA is the political party of the now defunct separatist guerrilla Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM).

Both Irwandi and Zaini have their origins in GAM. But in 2006, after GAM put Irwandi forward as its candidate for governor, GAM strongman Malik Mahmud overruled and put his own man forward, splitting the movement and forcing Irwandi to run (and win) as an independent. The political rivalry continues. All through 2011, the PA tried but failed to have Irwandi banned from the contest. Furthermore, the increasingly autocratic and militant PA has been blamed for the deadly political violence that has struck Irwandi's team and supporters. Moreover, the PA played the populist 'religion card', vowing to advance a more 'pure' form of Quranic Sharia (Islamic law).

On 17 April governor-elect Zaini Abdullah pledged to 'strengthen peace across Aceh' and 'eradicate corruption'. Claiming that 'moderate Islam' is what is 'in line with the Koran and Prophet Muhammad's hadiths' (i.e. is fundamentalist!), he pledged to raise awareness of right and wrong by means of Islamic education, so that Islam in Aceh 'can return to where it was during the Sultan Iskandar Muda era'. (Iskandar Muda was a cruel 17th Century Islamic autocrat who shed much blood in making Aceh strong, expansive and Islamic.)

Aceh is around 98 percent Muslim and one percent Christian (mostly Protestant). At the southern-most tip of Aceh, Singkil district has the highest proportion of Christians of any district or city in Aceh, with Christians making up about one-sixth of the 120,000 population. Despite this, the administration has ruled that Singkil is only permitted to have one church and four 'undung-undungs' (small prayer rooms without exterior crosses).

On 30 April hundreds of Islamic hard-liners from the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) and the Aceh Singkil Muslim Forum held a rally in Singkil demanding the undung-undungs be closed. The administration subsequently shut down 17 Christian places of worship in four sub-districts of Singkil on the grounds that they were built without permits.

A spokesman for the group 'Pro-Democracy People', Agusta Mukhtar, denounced the administration for acquiescing to hard-liners and failing to promote religious tolerance. 'The religious peace here has been shattered,' he said, 'by this anarchistic action that seeks religious domination for an inflexible faith. This is a dark time in the history of religious freedom and tolerance in Aceh.' Everything indicates life is about to get even more difficult for Aceh's minority Christian community. (see Jakarta Globe)

PLEASE PRAY SPECIFICALLY THAT GOD WILL

- Fill Acehnese Christians with full assurance of his presence. May they find their security, wisdom and strength in him in these darkening days.
- Embolden Aceh's many secular, moderate and folk Muslims, awakening them to the fact that Quranic Islam brings cruel repression and culture change (Arabisation), not the utopia the Islamists promise.
- Work all things for good, so that repression will be replaced with beauty and liberty; may Aceh know revival, for '... where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' (2 Corinthians 3:17 ESV).

*-Elizabeth Kendall,
ASSIST News Service*

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- Tay Plain - TRIBAL

*"We were so blessed by this seminar in 2011. It was
an answer to our prayers as we got so much practical
information out of the day and were able to meet many
inspiring people. Thank you! Blessings" - Susan Jo*

We would like to thank all our sponsors



'The Power Of One' Editorial Continued...

Well enough known around the world for its re-served approach to Christianity and its revisionist approach to the Scriptures, this year's Assembly was in for a surprise. Its new Moderator, Albert Bogle, Minister of Bo'ness, made no bones about his evangelical faith. Lead singer in a Christian rock band in younger days, he set the Assembly singing - singing songs of FAITH. He exuded the joy of the Lord. He preached the Gospel at the Assembly Communion Service in St Giles Cathedral. He delivered meaningful devotions from Scripture at various times during the Assembly. He prayed over the business of each day and at other appropriate times. He maintained good humour throughout the Assembly. But he drew no lines of exclusion. He created no 'us versus them' situations or mentality. The line he drew around everybody was a line which in-

cluded all. And from where I was sitting I could see that yes, he was drawing people nearer to Albert Bogle (he's one of those warm reformed, not chosen frozen types) but praise the Lord, He was drawing people to Jesus. There's a new tone in that whole denomination today thanks to a work of God in and through one man.

Do you remember the story of a young man who heard an evangelist say that the world had yet to see what wonders God would do with one man who was completely devoted to Him. Dwight L. Moody said, 'By the grace of God, I will be that man,' and how powerfully God used him!

Is there a situation in your church which needs someone to get in and, under God, to fix it? Will you be the one He will call on to do it?

- Bob Thomas

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Lausanne Movement Convenes Global Gathering of Seminary Presidents To Focus On The State Of Theological Education

Sixty-five seminary presidents and leaders of global theological education, representing 31 countries, will gather at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary near Boston this week to consider the challenges of theological education for the Church in the 21st Century.

Leaders will be focused on theological education as a global community, and theological education as mission. Additionally leaders will explore the barriers to theological education around the world.

S. Douglas Birdsall, Executive Chairman of The Lausanne Movement, says leaders will also address the changing role of American seminaries in Global Theological Education. He emphasizes that he believes, "that seminaries are the most important institution in the Church, bar none. They are the repositories of our past and the shapers of our future. As a Movement that serves the Church as a thought leader with respect to world evangelization, it is imperative that Lausanne provide the context in which the leaders of our top schools can interact with one another to provide guidance for the Church on the great issues of our day. It is equally important that leaders of seminaries and theological institutions make a concerted effort to develop a new generation of leaders who are equipped to defend and advance the gospel in every sphere of society.'

Dr. Timothy Tennent, Chairman of the Lausanne Theology Working Group and President of Asbury Theological Seminary, believes Lausanne is uniquely poised to help theological leaders reflect on how they can best prepare and equip leaders for effective service to Christ and the Church.

Dr. Samuel Logan, International President of World Reformed Fellowship, is chairing the Consultation. Logan says the Consultation builds on partnerships started during The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization: Cape Town 2010, specifically in the area of evangelical theological education.

Dr. Dennis Hollinger, President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, counts it a privilege to host the Consultation. 'A great hope for this global Consultation is the same hope that we have for our seminary students- that we will learn from each other, that the global Church will be enriched, and that we will together carry out God's Kingdom work and mission with vitality, wisdom and faithfulness.'

The Lausanne Consultation for Global Theological Education begins 29 May and concludes 1 June. Dr. Tennent's welcome address, which will frame the Consultation and provide a historical background for the gathering, is tentatively scheduled to be posted online by 31 May.

- Naomi Frizzell, Lausanne Movement



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Report From The World Reformed Fellowship Meeting In Sydney

FROM April 24 – 26, 2012, the Board of Directors of the World Reformed Fellowship held its annual meeting and, on this occasion, we were especially blessed to be the guests of the Presbyterian Church of Australia whose leaders made it possible for us to stay and to meet at the beautiful Collaroy Centre just north of Sydney.

In fact, the evening we spent with those leaders was one of the highlights of our entire time in Australia. After a wonderful dinner, we learned from Dr. Robert Benn about the amazing history of the Presbyterian Inland Mission (formerly the Australian Inland Mission). And because the dinner was held on the evening of Anzac Day, it was especially meaningful to the "foreigners" among us (i.e., most of the members of the WRF Board).

This was one of our most important and most successful meetings ever. We are still a very young organization and we are just beginning to understand the specific tasks in which we should be involved on behalf of the global evangelical and Reformed community.

The Board identified eleven specific projects on which the WRF would focus its attention during the coming year. Some of the projects are as follows:

1) We have made major commitments to follow-up on the Islam Consultation which we organized this past November. Among those commitments are initial negotiations with WRF member theological seminaries in the USA, Indonesia, Brazil, Germany, and South Africa to work toward the creation of Muslim Ministry Resource Centers designed to provide support and training for Reformed and evangelical Christians who are working with Muslims.

2) We are committed to mobilizing the global evangelical and Reformed church in support of the work that WRF Board member Dr. Diane Langberg is doing in the area of gender violence against women, specifically sex trafficking and sexual abuse.

3) We are joining with the Lausanne Movement and the International Council on Evangelical Theological Education to sponsor and host a major conference on theological education to be held in Massachusetts during the last week of May of 2012. The theme of the conference is "The Changing Role



of American Seminaries in Global Theological Education".

4) We will continue our work with the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University toward the goal of making all of the digitized work of that Center available free of charge to evangelical seminaries around the world.

5) We will continue to work toward the establishment of an evangelical theological seminary in the new country that is South Sudan. Two of our Board members, who met each other through the WRF, have been working on this project for several years and the WRF will now provide organizational support for that work.

6) We will again sponsor "Women in the Word: A Workshop," a program designed specifically to train women to teach the Bible Christocentrically to other women.

7) We will begin work on a community development project led by new Board member Koos Richards of South Africa. The goal will be to try to create a working model of what a church-based community development plan might look like.

Finally in terms of this report but first in terms of priority, the Board spent time in worship and prayer. We thank the Lord for the privilege He has given us to serve our membership – 60 denominations, 74 congregations, 125 organizations, and 576 individuals, as well as those whom such members themselves serve. We seek the Lord's guidance as we undertake the work listed above. And we covet the continued support of our members in that work.

*-Dr Samuel Logan,
International Director, World Reformed Fellowship*

Bible Society Distributes 'Struggle And Triumph' Sports DVD

THE Bible Society are the sole Australian distributors of another great DVD called STRUGGLE AND TRIUMPH.

This DVD also produced by the Athletes In Action International Media team is part of a global initiative designed to assist the local church in outreach to the local community around the time of major sports events, such as the 2012 Olympics & Paralympics when the eyes and ears of world are on the athletes. It seeks to seize this moment for God!

Every four years, athletes from 200 countries gather to compete in the world's greatest sporting event. While some achieve the sport's ultimate prize, the Olympic gold medal, others have to be satisfied with the experience of taking part. They may recall the words of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympic movement, 'The important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have won, but to have fought well'.

Relive the struggles and triumphs of some of the world's best athletes who represent the highest in

personal achievement. It is the result of hard work and passion. But in addition to their passion for sport, they share another passion, from which they draw strength for the competition.

This DVD which can be viewed within half an hour will be for sale at the great price of \$5 per copy so will be well suited to be shown as part of a large screen event and then personal copies could be included in a take home pack by those present. This ofcourse could be included in the entry fee to the event.

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It could be used by schools, church camps, sports camps, breakfast, dinners, sample bags, small groups etc inside a church hall, on an oval, or in a movie theatre.

Please visit the website www.struggleandtriumph.com to see the trailer and find out more.

*- Rosemaree Knight,
Major Sports Ministry Facilitator: Australia*

Churches Urged To Register For National Marriage Webcast - 26 June 2012

AUSTRALIAN Christian Lobby Managing Director Jim Wallace is urging churches across the nation to join a live webcast of Christian experts as they answer questions about the importance and future of marriage.

'Defining Marriage, Does it Matter Anymore?', will be held on Tuesday June 26 and is a significant opportunity for the church to come together and discuss whether the definition of marriage continues to have any relevance in modern Australia.

The panel will be compered by Karl Faase from Gynea Baptist Church and include panel members: former deputy prime minister John Anderson, family law specialist Professor Patrick Parkinson, columnist for The Australian Christopher Pearson, sexologist Patricia Weerakoon, pastor and author Dr Allan Meyer and his wife Helen Meyer who is an

educator and counsellor.

'The definition of marriage is being challenged in our Federal Parliament and there is so much confusion about the value of marriage to our society,' he said.

'This will be an important opportunity to talk about marriage and help answer the church community's questions through the combined experience and expertise of this panel,' he said.

The webcast will be available to churches only but people will be able to submit a question to the panel to answer.

For more information please go to <http://marriagewebcast.acl.org.au>

*-Katherine Spackman,
Australian Christian Lobby*

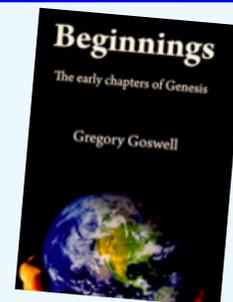
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Make or Break: The Challenges Of A New Missionary Church



A few years ago, I read a book called "Let the Nations Be Glad" whose author and pastor, John Piper, with a heart on fire for missions dedicates this work not only to missionaries, but to lay people who want a greater motivation to be true Christians.

His work is addressed to all those who wish to reflect carefully on the relationship between church and mission, as well as reflect on the missionary responsibility of every Christian.

Passionate about the mission work, six years ago, we, as a family, left our country, Brazil, and arrived in this place called Down Under with the desire to see from the most diverse ethnic groups, people abandoning their gods to follow the true God. It was here, in Sydney that was born the Brazilian Christian Church. We are a young multicultural church, with Reformed principles, whose motivation is to encourage people to discover the joy of a Christian life.

Our vision is to be a biblical, contemporary, missionary and friendly church present at the community: A church that causes impact in our neighbourhood and also a church that reproduces churches. Our target is to reach people (immigrants and natives) that are far from GOD, making them mature and equipped followers of Christ.

For us, who are a part of the Brazilian Christian Church, the Church must be the place where people can find new friends and develop a strong and healthy personal relationship. Place where people can enjoy the pleasure of worshipping God through a contemporary praise.

It is the place to hear biblical messages of encouragement each week and also hear clearly and objectively God's purpose for life. At the BCC, you can experience the love, grace and the real presence of God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

In 2010, we participated in a missionary trip to East Timor along with other pastors of the PCA, aiming to strengthen the fraternal ties that bind the two churches. As can be seen, the BCC is a church with great growth potential due to new families comprised of Australians and Brazilians.

By the grace of God, the BCC has become known in the great Sydney, or through the OPEN DOOR (Bible studies in homes) or through our column Way of Hope in the community newspaper that is published every two months. In our web site, our devotional has been receiving over 1000 visits per month. But as an immigrant church, a high turnover of members is a peculiar characteristic of BCC and our financial capacity started to run out. Given this reality, I appeal to the missionary responsibility of every Christian and by extension to the local churches, asking all of you to get involved with the Lord of glory in His cause.

First, remembering that without prayer, without intercessors our ministry will face difficulties progressing. We need to establish a network of people who will pray for us. Please pray for families that can be members of our Congregation, for a strong discipleship, for a stable church and for churches and individuals to support our ministry.

-Rev. Dr. Wilson Fernandes Junior, Brazilian Christian Church

Judith Bond Talks About Her Mission Trip In Northern Thailand

THIS shares only some of the fun, happy and memorable time of my seven week short term self funded mission trip...

On my arrival at the Agape Children's Home, Chiang Mai, Thailand, it was another warm welcome from the Agape children AND the weather 37 – 40C for 6 weeks.

So many highlights this year. Like Visiting two of the Agape children in hospital, (Agape has a nanny with sick children 24/7); a visit to a village home, (a reminder of my days living in East Java); visiting 4 homes of Project Lek (a HIV child is with their family, supported by Agape) a visit to Tiger Kingdom, swimming 6 times in 7 weeks, watching children with no confidence in the water the first week to swimming across the pool after 6 sessions. I heard many a time "Mae Judith, look me!"

The morning sessions, all spoken in English, were given by Robyn and Lurline, both from Wollongong and myself. Robyn gave craft, played 'Robyn says' and made a village mural scene, which the children loved creating. Lurline taught the recorder, which the children mastered very well. I taught English and songs and encouraged reading in English.

After lunch and an afternoon nap for the children, some had Thai language lessons by a Thai teacher, some revised times tables, and others practiced Thai writing and spelling. Then it was more group time to play.

I especially enjoyed small group times with the children in the afternoons and on Saturday mornings till lunch time. This year's favourite activities were a wooden train set with engines and carriages; a floor road map with cars; playing UNO and making rubber band skipping ropes. The girls loved making cards, felt sewing and embroidery. Others enjoyed books, jigsaw puzzles and construction sets.

We all visited the handicraft village. The children were enthralled watching wood caring, umbrella and saa paper making. The children were fascinated and observed with much interest.

Sincere thanks to those who contributed finance as I purchased 39 pairs of thongs AND a conveyer toaster. The children loved eating thick toast, with



strawberry jam, peanut butter or sweet milk (condensed milk) or a mixture of these spreads. Toast is a big treat. And a 2nd brand new commuter Toyota van was purchased, thanks to people in Australia. Any more contributions? Another \$10,000 AUD will finish the payment of this much needed 2nd van to take students to school, hospital visits, shopping and outings.

The Director Mae Avis has waited 16 years for an Agape swimming pool. Just this week, down payment for a pool to be built on their grounds has been made for a pool 25 x 12 ½ mtr, plus fencing.

I was playing Memory with one child, who was highly amused "Mae Judith zero, me 10!" Imagine her delight at winning and beating me! Another boy, "me win, you no!" Comments heard, "you teach lifestyle", "you have taught them many things". On leaving and hugging the children, one calls out "See you tomorrow!" And imagine 101 nappies were on the line daily! 90 children from 3 days old to age 20 call this place home.

Yes, the Agape home is a very special place.

-Judith Bond

**WHO CAN YOU
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Syria Conflict Spills Over Into Lebanon

THE conflict in Syria is political, sectarian and increasingly jihadist; local, regional and increasingly international. The US - Saudi - Gulf Arab axis is determined to deal Iran a heavy blow and counter its ascendancy by removing Syria from the strategic 'Shi'ite Crescent' through which Iran is connected to Hezbollah on Israel's northern border. Further to this, al-Qaeda elements are infiltrating Syria, keen to establish bases for jihadists' operations that will replace those bases lost in Iraq. Despite Lebanon's official policy of disassociation, geography made it almost inevitable that the conflict would eventually spill over the border.

On 7 May Syria's envoy to the United Nations, Bashar Jaafari, sent a letter to the UN Security Council listing a dozen incidents since mid-March of the smuggling or attempted smuggling of weapons from Lebanon to Syria. The letter also accused al-Qaeda, Syria's Muslim Brotherhood and Lebanon's Sunni Future Movement of supporting opposition and terrorist fighters. A 21 May report from Stratfor Global Intelligence essentially supports these claims, noting that a struggle is under way in northern Lebanon, a Sunni stronghold. The US - Saudi - Gulf Arab axis is funnelling money and weaponry through Lebanon to the Syrian rebellion -- primarily through Tripoli via Akkar to Homs -- while Syrian forces, together with their allies in the Lebanese military and security agencies, are determined to disrupt those supply-lines.

On 12 May plain-clothed officers from the General Security Directorate arrested a popular Sunni Islamist and anti-Assad activist, Shadi Mawlawi (27), in Lebanon's northern port city of Tripoli. He was charged with supporting regional al-Qaeda forces. Riots ensued, attracting an influx of Salafis [Sunni hardliners]. According to Lebanon's Daily Star, 'Salafists hurried to open the Bab Tabbaneh-Jabal Mohsen [Sunni vs Alawite] front.' Armed groups from the two neighbourhoods exchanged rocket-propelled grenade, mortar and sniper fire until a tenuous truce was brokered. Stratfor reports that five Salafist groups have now moved into Tripoli and are calling for Sunnis in the Lebanese army to defect. Then on 20 May Sunni cleric Ahmed Abdul-Wahid and his companion Sheikh Mohammad Hussein al-Mereb were killed at an army checkpoint in Akkar district while en route to a rally organised by the Sunni Future Movement. Lebanese soldiers fired on them, reportedly for

failin g to stop. Local Sunni clerics have denounced the 'assassination' and called for the creation of a 'Free Lebanese Army'. Gun battles erupted at the funeral on Monday 21 May, spreading even into Beirut. Subsequently, reports that 11 Lebanese Shi'ites on pilgrimage in Aleppo, Syria, had been kidnapped by the Free Syrian Army (FSA) triggered Shi'ite rioting in southern Beirut.

According to Lebanese Druze leader, Walid Jumblatt, the minorities are essentially being ground between two stones: Sunni and Shi'ite. His solution: ally with the winner, which he believes will be the Sunnis in Syria and Shi'ites in Lebanon. The Middle East's Christians, like other minorities, have long sought security through alliances with hegemonic powers. In the end though these powers either prove to be insufficient or fail to be true allies. Not only are they limited and mortal, they are generally self-interested pragmatists -- often liars. They will protect Christians as long as it is convenient -- often exploiting them in the process -- but will betray and sacrifice them as soon as it is not.

In reality the Christians of the Middle East have only one protector. His name is Yahweh Sabaoth: the Lord of hosts (literally, the Commander of heaven's angelic armies). In truth, a better ally could not be found! But for Christians to receive his grace, they must seek it in faith. In the face of massive violence and destabilisation, such faith is more radical than natural. So we must pray.

PLEASE PRAY THAT GOD WILL:

*Draw Christians in Syria and Lebanon to him, so they will look to him, finding comfort and refuge as well as strength for endurance as the security situation deteriorates. ' . . . in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by.' (Psalm 57:1b ESV.)

*For the sake of his Church, guide Christian religious and civic leaders in Syria and Lebanon with wisdom, discernment, moral conviction and courage, that they might not be influenced by misplaced fear and will do what is right regardless of circumstances.

*Redeem these dark days by exposing and bringing down all that is false so that Christ alone will be exalted; that 'the earth might be filled with the knowledge and glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea' (Habakkuk 2:14 ESV).

-Elizabeth Kendall, ASSIST News Service

Brazil Sees Faith Explosion

EVANGELIST Sammy Tippit met with church leaders and thousands of others in Brazil this month.

It became a harvesting moment for Christians in Imperatriz, Brazil. Tippit not only conducted evangelistic meetings in Imperatriz, but also in Maceio, the capital of the state of Alagoas.

Hundreds responded to the Gospel, making life-changing decisions for Christ. Church leaders asked Tippit to return next year. Sammy Tippit Ministries helped the churches hire buses to bring many to the meetings. A prayer furnace was stoked by believers meeting in churches during the public gatherings.

Strategically, counselors were on the buses to help disciple new believers and get them connected as they traveled back to the church pick-up and drop-off point. Even though church leaders were anticipating a lot of response, it was much larger than they had imagined.

The stage was set a year ago when a dozen church leaders gathered with Sammy Tippit in Goinia, Brazil. They worked together to ready a new generation of evangelists who would take the vision, strategy, and message of the Gospel to their people.

Tippit also taught the Brazilian evangelists principles and strategies of evangelism. Each of the

Brazilians committed themselves to implementing the strategy during the following year.

On this trip, Tippit met with some of these same men and discovered they followed through with what they had learned during the "multiplying evangelists" meetings.

For example, Fabricio Freitas is a Missions and Evangelism Pastor for the large Memorial Baptist Church in Brasilia. He caught the vision that Tippit presented last year and recruited 94 churches to participate in the plan to reach the capital for Christ.

Since then, Freitas has implemented a program where more than 1,000 people commit themselves to pray for five people each for the next three months. They will be trained to share their testimonies and share the Gospel with those people during June. Each of the 94 churches will then host an evangelistic meeting during the end of July. They are praying for thousands of people to come to Christ.

Tippit said, 'I'm so excited about what God is doing with these evangelists. God has been faithful to bring the vision to pass.'

-Mission Network News

Justice Clouded Under Pakistan's Blasphemy Laws - An Opportunity For The Gospel To Spread?

A United Nations representative says Christians are not the only people who are under pressure under Pakistan's blasphemy law. Judges and politicians face reprisals, too. Patrick Klein with Vision Beyond Borders says this report is nothing new. 'We've heard that there has been pressure put on judges to use the blasphemy laws to hurt the Christians. [It] seems like it's increasing. I think if people are open to the Gospel, we need to do what we can to get the Gospel in to them, especially right now.'

Pakistani Christians say the laws are often misused

to settle personal scores or family feuds, but the timing, Klein notes, is perfect. Doors are open for the Gospel, and partners are begging for Bibles. 'What we're hoping to do is to get permission to print 100,000 Bibles. We think it'll cost us about \$3.50 to have them shipped into Pakistan. We'll try to work on raising funds and hopefully get these Bibles in there before the end of the year.' Be praying for believers to be strong, especially the pastors and evangelists- those that are kind of on the front lines that are sharing the Gospel, that they will be strong in their faith."

-Mission Network News Online

Dynamic Programs Train New Generation Of Christian Leaders

THIS summer, 40 young adults are heading around the world for internships with HCJB Global. They'll work in England, Ghana, Ecuador, sub-Saharan Africa, and the United States. President of HCJB Global Wayne Pederson says this is strategic. 'In order to reach this next generation with the message of Jesus, we need to recruit some millennials, young people, to reach their peers with the Gospel. We've been very intentional about recruiting sum-

mer interns to come alongside and work with us in the areas of media, health care and leadership development.'"The highlight? Outreach at the Olympic Games in London. Another pinnacle placement is at the HCJB Global Technology Center in Elkhart, Indiana. Pederson says, 'This is a laboratory for college and university students to come in and use their skills in video, graphics, and audio to produce content that will be used in the new social media,' like Facebook and Twitter.

- Mission Network News Online

Question Evolution Tour Impacts Australia



ORGANISED by Brisbane-based Creation Ministries International (CMI), over 3,500 people came out to hear two of the world's most in-demand speakers and champions of biblical Christianity return from the USA to 'bust' some of the myths of our 'evolutionized' age.

During a series of joint public meetings, Dr Jonathan Sarfati and Gary Bates (formerly with CMI here and now working with CMI in Atlanta) presented solid scientific and biblical answers to the many questions Christians and others have about the Bible and science. They clearly showed that the supposed 'scientific evidence for evolution' is not what it seems.

Commencing in Brisbane on 27 April and finishing in Perth on 6 May, ten meetings were held in all: one each in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, then two each in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. The first meeting in Brisbane set the scene for the whole tour, where the auditorium was packed out, requiring the use of an overflow room. Young and old attended the meetings, including the convinced and the sceptical.

During their presentations, and afterwards during question time, Jonathan and Gary clearly demonstrated the importance of biblical beliefs about origins, and how this impacts our overall worldview, our behaviour, and future destiny.

Response to the tour has been overwhelmingly positive with the following comments being representative of many received thus far: "It was awesome", "I was blessed", "Absolutely inspiring!", and "Great evening. Thank you. Amazing stuff."

The presentations, the resources purchased at the meetings, and linking folk to the free material on creation.com have sown many seeds to greatly strengthen people's confidence in the Bible, their trust in the Lord, and their ability to witness to family and friends.

UPCOMING EVENTS...

Fuelled Training Day June 16 2012

This event will be held at at Scots' Church in Melbourne. Fuelled Training is a forum of high-quality ministry training pitched at church members to motivate them to consider serving Christ in the local church and equipping them to do so.

Seminars that will be offered for the day include:

- * One-To-One Discipleship - Rev. Nello Barbieri
- * Breaking The Silence - Rev. Brian Harvey
- * Youth Ministry - Rev. Brian Harvey
- * Serving As A Church Treasurer
- * The What and How To of "See For Yourself"

For more details please contact Fuelled Training Coordinator Rev. Hui Lim on fuelled@cenc.org.au or 0402 887 650

African Enterprises Founder To Speak In Vic

You are invited to listen to and engage with Michael Cassidy, founder of African Enterprises, who will speak at an ILG Leadership Forum on 4 July 2012, from 7.45am to 11am at Pitcher Partners, Level 19, 15 William Street, Melbourne.

Michael has been involved in evangelism, teaching and leadership ministries since 1962, the year he launched African Enterprises with a mission to Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Michael will discuss the following topics: One man's journey as a leader in Africa for 50 years, and leadership in the workplace in complex times.

Please register by return email, or phone Christine at 03 98167114, or email Christine@marketplace-connections.com.

Read: "The Mathematical Impossibility Of The Theory Of Evolution" by David Holden at www.defenceofthefait.org

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BOOKS WORTH READING ...

Out of the Shadows

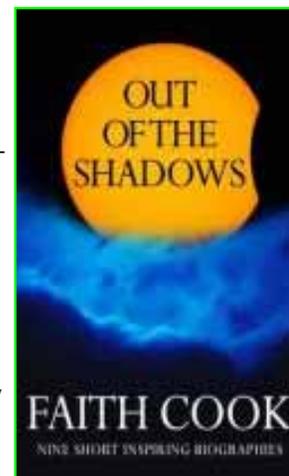
Faith Cook (Darlington, Evangelical Press, 2011)

NINE people from different times and places are brought to our attention in another of Faith Cook's biographical collections. These are biographies of real people who have struggled in the Christian life. One has to deal with success in business that causes him to forget his first love of Christ, while another finds his reputation devalued by deceit. There is illness and persecution for others. We know of Charles Dickens, but do we know the story of his favourite sister? We may have read John Bunyan's work, but in this book we learn more of the life of a faithful friend of his.

Patricia St John is the last person featured in the book. This chapter is the one Cook describes as a personal tribute to her. Cook adds to the knowledge people may already have from reading St John's own story of her life and Faith Cook's own autobi-

ography. Having long appreciated St John's writings, I found this chapter of particular interest.

The history of the Christian church is the story of God's dealings with his people as individuals and collectively. The church has stretched throughout the world and across the centuries. Well can we say with the hymnist, 'Your hand, O God, has guided your flock from age to age'. What he has done in the past he has promised to keep doing. Cook helps us keep that perspective by the way she writes of these saints of God.



-Mignon Goswell

The Wisdom of the Cross: Exploring 1 Corinthians

Edited by Brian Rosner (Nottingham: IVP, 2012)

THE chapters of the present volume were originally papers given at the 2010 School of Theology at Moore College, and the editor has recently co-authored (with Roy Ciampa) a large commentary on the same Pauline letter. The combined efforts of nine contributors show clearly that Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians has a coherent structure and theology. This apostolic letter is no piecemeal response to a church with multiple problems. For example, the theme of love (especially prominent in 1 Corinthians 13) is not only relevant to the issue of gifts, but is the underlying virtue needed to solve every problem touched on throughout the letter, for all the problems in Corinth arise from a lack of love.

Brian Rosner shows that the teaching of Deuteronomy lies behind much of what Paul says, for example, his warnings against idolatry and sexual immorality. This understanding is part of a recent scholarly trend of finding a pervasive influence by the Old Testament on the writers of the New Testament. Karl Barth was one who attempted a coherent reading of 1 Corinthians, seeing the whole letter as leading up to the famous discussion of resurrection in chapter 15. Richard Condie evaluates Barth's approach. Barth anticipated the recent renewal of the theological interpretation of Scripture, namely reading the Bible with a focus on what it reveals of the character and purposes of God.

Bill Salier examines Paul's teaching about holiness in 1 Corinthians, arguing that it is a sustained theme throughout the letter, with Paul's use of temple imagery being part of this theme. Philip Kern shows that the secular values and lifestyle that had invaded the church in Corinth have been crucified by Christ's cross, which means that Christians must think and live differently than worldly people. Roy Ciampa provides the social and cultural background for a more accurate understanding of Paul's teaching about sexual ethics in 1 Corinthians 5-7. David Peterson helps us to see that Paul's teaching about gifts and ministries is not confined to chapters 12-14. This is helpful, for it means that the

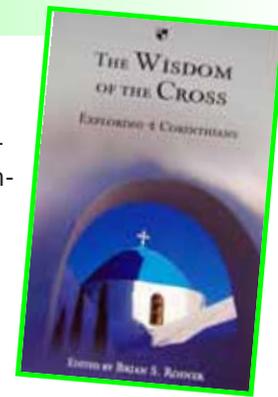
apostolic letter is more unified than often thought. Underlying Paul's response to different problems in the Corinthian church are consistent spiritual principles (like loving others and a concern for God's glory) that apply to a wide range of specific pastoral issues.

Primarily using 1 Corinthians 15, Bruce Winter shows the nexus between Paul's teaching about the bodily resurrection of Christians and present Christian living and evangelistic priorities (in contrast to self-centred affluence). Winter has an enviable knowledge of ancient Roman and Greek writers and he uses his expertise in this area to great effect. Michael Jensen also wrestles with the relation of eschatology (the Christian's future hope) and ethics in Paul. He clears Paul of the charge that he empties the present time of ethical significance and vitality. What Paul actually does is that he enables us to reassess the contemporary scene and to live differently within it.

Matthew Malcolm makes good use of the classic exposition of John Chrysostom to teach us about living to the glory of God in 1 Corinthians. Chrysostom traces the problems in the church back to human pride, obsession with wealth, and human autonomy from God. The great fourth-century preacher urges us to die to self, imitating the cross of Christ.

In the closing essay on how to preach 1 Corinthians, Brian Rosner encourages would-be preachers to remember the letter's essence, namely that it applies the counter-cultural and counter-intuitive wisdom of the cross to various church problems. Here, then, is the ideal book for a minister to read who is thinking of preaching on 1 Corinthians, or perhaps a layperson could buy it and give it to their minister in the hope that it may be the next sermon series in church!

-Greg Goswell



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