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Ongoing Benefits From More Than Gold's Efforts At London Olympics

FUTURE major sports events, like the World Cup and the Olympics, will benefit from the many lessons churches have learned during the 2012 Games, according to *More Than Gold*, the interdenominational body which provided a strong Christian presence at the London Olympics.

Last week, a delegation of more than 40 church leaders from 12 of the nations where major sports events take place over the next few years gathered in London for a briefing on lessons learned from *More Than Gold's* ministry at the Games. This included a dozen from Brazil who are getting ready for the World Cup in two years time and the Olympics two years later.

UK Director of *More Than Gold*, Jon Burns, said, 'We don't want the valuable lessons learned here over the past three years to go to waste.'

The week-long in-depth briefing included representatives of churches, mission and Christian sports organisations from the 12 nations. They will be visiting churches in action and being briefed on areas ranging from running community festivals, sports outreach, mission teams, social action and prayer to finance, operations and communications.

The Brazilians have already been in the UK for some months receiving hands-on experience in running community festivals. This is thanks to Fusion Youth and Community who have been at the heart of the festival program run by churches during the Games, attended by over half a million.

Carla Mendes, one of the *More Than Gold Brazil* team, said, 'We breathe sport in Brazil. It's in our DNA. So we are already starting to train people how to use sport to engage with their community and are encouraging more than 10,000 churches to work together for 2014.'

While in the UK, Carla has been struck by the way mission volunteers have come from around the world to work among local churches to support festivals, kids holiday clubs, creative arts programs and sports clinics. Carla says, 'We have seen the impact when people



Gathering together to spread the word.

come with skills and ideas from other nations. So we will really be encouraging our churches back home to be ready to receive them.'

A group from Scotland are getting ready for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in two years time. Said Lorimer Gray, Chair of *More Than Gold 2014* in Scotland, 'Being here has given us the assurance that we are on the right track. We are also struck by the spread of denominational involvement and the unity of the *More Than Gold 2012* team.'

The briefing aimed to help other nations take up some of the initiatives by churches new to the 2012 Games.

Saudi Woman Claims Christ In Historic Video

IT'S hard to get information from a place the government says is 100% Muslim, backed up by a death sentence for conversion, but a Muslim woman on YouTube says she's now a Christian. Todd Nettleton with *Voice of the Martyrs* is amazed 'to see a Saudi woman put her face, even though it's veiled, on the internet and say, "I'm not a Muslim any more. I'm a Christian now." She basically is signing her own death warrant.' The video has angered authorities who fear that Saudi young people are turning to Jesus.

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TO THE POINT ...

Christianity – Not A Religion **OF** Works, But A Religion **THAT** Works

'BY grace are you saved through faith,' writes Paul, before hastening on to add that we are 'not (saved) by works, so that no-one can boast', but then affirming that 'we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do' (Ephesians 2.8-10).

We may be greatly taken by God's grace – 'amazing grace', 'marvelous grace', 'matchless grace', 'infinite grace', 'plenteous grace', 'grace to cover all my sin' – but we should never lose sight of the fact that the faith which is bestowed by grace has been so given in order that it will issue in good works.

And how desperately this world today needs Christians whose lives will be marked by good works. A charming and challenging little booklet in the *Pocket Puritans* series has just been issued by the Banner Of Truth Trust: *Christ Is Best* by Richard Sibbes, as the following extract shows:

AN ABUNDANCE OF GOOD COMES IN BY GRACIOUS PERSONS

1. **By Their Counsel And Direction.** 'The lips of the righteous feed many' (Proverbs 10.21).
2. **By Their Reformation Of Abuses,** by planting God's ordinances and good orders, whereby God's wrath is appeased. They stand in the gap and stop evil. They reform and labour to establish that which is pleasing to God.
3. **By Carrying The Blessing Of God With Them.** Wherever they are, God and His blessing go along with them.
4. **By Doing A Great Deal Of Good Through Their Pattern And Example.** They are the lights of the world (Philippians 2.15) that give aim to others in the darkness of this life.
5. **By Binding God In Prayer,** as it were, that He will not inflict His judgments. They do a great deal of good in this way. A praying force is as good as a fighting army.
6. **(By Modelling Grace.)** Gracious men are public treasures and public springs in the wilderness of this world to refresh the souls of people; they are trees of righteousness that stretch out their boughs for others to shelter under and to gather fruit from. Oh beloved, the lives of good men are very useful ... They are God's jewels, they are His treasure and His portion, therefore we ought to lament their death and we ought to desire our own lives, as long as we might be useful to the Church ... When once we are in Christ, we live for others, not for ourselves ... that a good minister is kept alive, out of the present enjoying of Heaven, it is for the sake of the peoples that God has committed to him to instruct ...

If God had not a Church in the world, a company of good people, Heaven and Earth would fall in pieces. It is for good persons only that the world continues. They are the pillars of the tottering world, they are the stakes in the fence, they are the foundation of the building, and if they were once taken out, all would come down.

The booklet, of just 66 small pages, deserves to be read in its entirety – and it might just lead us gently into a fuller appreciation of the Puritans, whose more voluminous writings have enriched the faith of many a Christian and added zest to many a sermon.

Christ Is Best, Pocket Puritans, Richard Sibbes, Banner Of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 2012. Read it and be blessed!

– Bob Thomas

Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin

'Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands to Him for the lives of your children ...' (from Lamentations 2.19 ESV).

Please pray concerning ...

- **KENYA**, where Islamic militants had attacked two churches in Garissa, eastern Kenya (80km from the Somali border), killing 17 worshippers and wounding over 60.

Update: Stratfor Global Intelligence reports that the Somali-based terror group al Shabaab has threatened to carry out attacks in Kenya during Ramadan. On 20 July, the first day of Ramadan, the Nairobi Provincial Police Chief urged the public to remain vigilant. Security has been intensified.

- **SYRIA**, where the region's largest and oldest Christian communities – remnants of indigenous communities that have survived Arab and Ottoman Islamic imperialism – are now struggling to survive amidst civil war, regional sectarian conflict and international Islamic jihad.

Update: Some of Syria's most senior Christian officials were recently assassinated by rebel forces. They included Defence Minister General Dawoud Rajha, killed in the 18 July suicide bombing at security headquarters, possibly perpetrated by a bodyguard. Brig-Gen. Nabil Zougheib also was assassinated along with his wife and son at their home in a Christian neighbourhood of Damascus on 21 July. Jesuit priest Father Dall'Oglio, who has spent time in Qusayr negotiating with rebel leaders for the release of Christian hostages, describes the rebels as Syrian men wearing long beards and Afghan-style traditional dress. He wrote they are not representative of the majority of Sunnis and are totally out of control (*Wall Street Journal*, 22 July). The terror is causing massive displacement. Fides reports that jihadists ambushed and massacred an entire Christian family on 23 July in the Damascus suburb of Bab Touma.

Syria has become a magnet for international terrorist organisations, including al-Qaeda in Iraq, the al-Nusra Front, the Abdullah Azzam Brigades, the al-Baraa Ibn Malik Martyrdom Brigade, the Omar Farouq Brigade and others. German intelligence estimates that in the first six months of 2012 'around 90' terror attacks were committed inside Syria 'by organisations that are close to al-Qaeda or jihadist groups'. Many of these are 'false flag' operations where the jihadists massacre unsympathetic civilians and then present them to the media as victims of government forces. One German MP has slammed

this tactic as 'massacre-marketing'. Whilst the German government acknowledges receiving these reports, it explains that their content remains classified 'by reason of national interest' (ie along with France, the UK and the USA, the German government is supporting the rebels, terrorists, and jihadists).

Tragically, the sectarian nature of the conflict has inflamed Islamic zeal and radicalised many previously tolerant Sunnis. Christian refugees in Lebanon told Sam Dagher (*Wall Street Journal*, 22 July) they fear that Christians will have no place in Syria if Assad leaves power. 'They say the conflict has uncovered the true feelings their former neighbours had kept hidden for years. "We ate from the same plate," said one of the displaced Christians, "and then they stabbed us in the back".'

Further to this, thousands of Iraqis who fled al-Qaeda terror and sectarian war in 2005, for sanctuary in Syria are now fleeing back to Iraq. However, emboldened by advances in Syria, al-Qaeda has launched a new offensive in Iraq named *Breaking Down the Walls*. On 23 Monday July, at least 28 attacks on 19 Iraqi cities left 111 dead and more than 230 wounded.

- **NIGERIA**, where Fulani Muslims, Boko Haram terrorists and rogue elements within the military are cooperating in the escalating terror being inflicted upon Christians in the north.

- **ACEH, INDONESIA: CHURCHES ATTACKED.** On 30 April local officials in Aceh's Singkil regency yielded to Islamist pressure and ordered the closure and demolition of at least 20 mostly Protestant 'undung-undungs' (prayer chapels and places of worship). Seeking redress, most have not complied with the demolition order. Frustrated by this lack of action and emboldened by the government's appeasement policies, Islamists have begun attacking the chapels. On Sunday 17 June some 300 Islamists invaded a store in Kuta Alam sub-district where some 60 Christians had gathered for worship. Whilst the ground floor was thoroughly ransacked, police arrived in time to prevent the attackers from reaching the besieged Christians on the third floor. No arrests were made but the Christians were taken in for questioning. According to the Jakarta Globe, this was yet 'another' attack on a 'storefront church'. Then on 18 July an Islamist mob launched a dawn attack on the Pakpak Dairi Christian Protestant Church house of prayer in Singkil, dowsing the interior with petrol and setting it on fire.

– Elizabeth Kendall, EA RPB

No Olympic High-Street Slump For Bibles

THERE may be an Olympic sales slump in London's West End, but churches tell a different story when it comes to the demand for Olympic-related Bibles, booklets and resources. Far from the 2012 Games reducing sales and interest, it's proving to be a boom to Christian organisations with something to sell that has an Olympic link.

This is especially good news to a consortium of over 20 Christian agencies that, under the umbrella of *More Than Gold*, have produced a wide range of publications to help churches use the Games to reach out to their communities.

One slim-line 'mini-mag', with a background to the Games and stories of athletes that live out their Christian faith, has already sold 200,000 copies. This is double the number the publisher, Verite, had expected would be bought. The mini-mag is being used by churches to give away to those who attend their Games-related events. Says Verite Director Chris Powell, 'Our print run of 100,000 copies was sold out by May and we had to do a hasty reprint. The demand has been far beyond our expectations and shows how well the churches have done in reaching out to those around them.'

When it comes to Bibles with a sporty touch, Bible Society's special editions of *Sports Bibles* have sold over 8,000 copies – again with the demand for a reprint. These are the Bibles being made available in the chaplaincy area of the Olympic Village. Whatever the demand may be for them among athletes,

there is a lot of interest across the UK.

'Our sports Bibles have done really

well,' says Karen Wilson, Production Editor at Bible Society. 'They seem to have hit the right note with people.'

The production of a booklet, *On Your Marks*, based on *St Mark's Gospel* was launched by its publishers Deo Gloria with the hope of selling 20,000 copies specifically for the Games. However, they had to reprint a further 10,000 copies. According to Director Eric Thompson, 'The Diamond Jubilee seems to have warmed people up and started a momentum for churches wanting to reach out through the Olympic Games.'

The consortium of agencies has produced over 50 separate resources with the total sales estimated to be over 500,000 items. These include resources ranging from bunting and banners, to DVDs, books and resources for holiday clubs. The group was coordinated by *More Than Gold*, the agency set up by the main denominations to help churches use the 2012 Games to reach out to their communities and visitors.

David Willson, CEO of *More Than Gold* said, 'This is the largest set of resources ever made available to help churches respond to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are thrilled to have played a part in helping churches have the resources they need.'



First -Ever Games Pastors Program – Special Help For Olympic Travellers

FOR the first time at any Olympics, the thousands of visitors have an extra level of care and support, thanks to an initiative from the churches. Around 300 volunteers are serving as Games Pastors at the major Olympic transport hubs, offering travellers support, compassion and a listening ear.

'Sometimes it is as simple as helping someone make sense of UK money so they have the right change,' said Mike Freeman MBE, Operations Manager of the Games Pastors Team. 'At others it can be offering comfort to someone who is lost and bewildered.' With tens of thousands of extra travellers passing through London there has been no shortage of need for the Games Pastor teams working in their striking powder blue uniforms.

At London Bridge station, Games Pastors met a man struggling to deal with the death of his wife and child following a car crash. He had been driving the car and was blaming himself for their deaths. The volunteers talked to him, took him for a cup of tea and he asked them to pray for him.

Another Games Pastors team helped a Korean student who had caught the wrong train, re-directed a lady who was lost, and gave comfort to a man who had been out of work for a number of years and didn't see any point to his life.

Sometimes the need has proved to be exceptional, as when members of the Madagascar team landed at Luton airport with no-one official to greet them. With their bags still in Paris, arrangements were also made to provide them with clothes and essentials.

'There has been very positive feedback from the public, the station managers and staff,' said Mike Freeman, previously head of senior police officer training at Bramshill.



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BIBLE Society Australia's *Live Light In 25 Words* campaign was launched on 1 August.

Go to <http://25words.biblesociety.org.au> and have a look. The website, built specifically for the campaign, will become your one-stop-shop for everything you and/or your church needs to get the most out of the campaign. Check it out now.

The campaign events have been finalised. Details of all events will be posted on the events section of the website by the middle of next week.

The *Why We Can Trust The New Testament* tour schedule is up as well as information on the *Masterclass* and *Ignite* events.

Bible Society will continue to upload resources onto the website until the middle of September. There are some great resources to come, especially for kids and youth. A promo video on the campaign has also been created to use for social media and churches.

Tips From The Olympics - How To Keep Strong In Your Faith

ONE of the great lessons we learn from Olympic athletes is: never give up. When the marathoner starts the 42km race he/she must endure the conditions and distance to finish the race. Hebrews 12.1-3 explains the same important lesson: never give up. When we want to slow down or stop in our faith, the call is to endure and not grow weary.

The Australian Olympic Team has appointed four 'Athlete Liaison Officers.' These officers are past champion athletes who mentor the team, inspiring and encouraging them to a greater performance. What makes their encouragement special is that these people (eg Steve Waugh, former Australian cricket captain) have been at the top of their sport and achieved great things. Their encouragement has extra weight. Hebrews 11 lists the past champions of the Christian faith. These champions ('cloud of witnesses') are sitting in the stand cheering YOU on in your faith. The message from these champions is to throw off the extra weight and sin that holds you back. A marathoner wears a minimal kit of singlet, shorts and light-weight shoes. Anything extra is a burden. So too, a cross country runner can get bogged down by mud. In faith, many things will be a barrier to your walk with God. As a result, you are to run the race with endurance. Marathoners passing 30km talk about 'hitting the wall,' referring to a physiological and psychological state of becoming fatigued. That's when the runner must focus and keep going. It's the same in our faith. We can get distracted or tired. But how can we keep going?

Focusing on Jesus as the Author and Perfecter of our faith is the tip. By focusing on Jesus we can keep running the course and not slow down. If you wanted to train for a marathon, you would seek an expert who knows about distance running and has completed the race before. So too, Jesus has run the race of faith (perfectly), endured till the end and as a result allows us to share in His victory. In fact, Jesus takes away all our sin and gives us His gold medal victory over sin and death.

As you watch the Olympics in London, a hearty recommendation is to read Hebrews 11,12 to remind yourself of the great need to endure in your faith. For some this might mean enduring hardships and persecution. Others might be rejected or embarrassed because of their faith. For others, faith might not be that important because the comforts of the world make us 'slow down' our faith. Whatever the reason, the call is to never give up, by focusing on Jesus so that we might not grow weary.

– Jeremy Dover, Press Service International Media Team, London Olympics



Nigerian Athlete Runs Two Races At Once

A NIGERIAN athlete competing in the Olympics for the first time has revealed the importance of her Christian faith – both in the good times and bad. Stanford University graduate Idara Otu, running in the women's 4x400 relay, was born in the US and only visited her native Nigeria for the first time earlier this year. There she experienced the high of qualifying for the Olympics, and believes God has been instrumental in bringing her to this stage.

'God is the Author and Finisher of everything I do,' she told 2K Plus International Sports Media outside Olympic Park in London. 'My faith is very important to me. It's been the rock of my training, the rock of my life. Especially this year, God has really shown me what He can do with my talent. He's opened a lot of doors for me that wouldn't have been open without His help.'

Nevertheless, Idara said that having faith does not make you immune from disappointment; rather it can help you cope when things don't go right. 'It's tough at times. Sometimes it's as little as a workout not going well, not running as fast as you want to run, standards not being hit or plans not going well. You deal with that every day. It's really just staying focused and believing in what the goal is.'

'Being a Christian or having faith in something does not mean everything is going to be easy. It just helps to give you the strength to overcome whatever obstacles are in your way.'

The 25-year-old is equally realistic about what to expect in her race, despite Nigeria's creditable track record in the discipline (the team won silver in 1996).

'We have a lot of big shoes to fill, but we're ready to handle those expectations,' she said. 'We just hope everyone comes together and stays healthy. This is my first Olympic Games. Of course we want to be on the medal stand, but we want to compete well and bring pride and glory to Nigeria as a country.'

Whatever happens, her chief goal is to run the race for Jesus as she follows Him. Idara said she is inspired particularly by Psalm 37.4. ('Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.')

'That's really what I live by. Obviously I'm not perfect but I'm striving to be more Christ-like every day. I always think if I'm delighting in Him, He's going to give me what's in my heart.'

– Paul Hobson, former sports journalist, now Editor of *The Baptist Times*



Speed to Glory: The Cullen Jones Story, Natalie Davis Miller, Zonderkidz – A Simple Read With A Strong Message: Honour The Steps God Has Provided To You, Work Hard, And Always Give Back To Others.

BASED on the success Cullen Jones has displayed in swimming, one would find it hard to believe he almost drowned at Dorney Park and Wildwater Kingdom in Allentown, Pa, when he was five years old. But Jones turned the horrific event into a positive. He learned how to swim, and 20+ years later, he became a gold-medal winning swimming champion in the 50-metre freestyle at the Beijing Olympics in 2008. In the 2012 London Olympics, he was part of the 400-metre relay team with the Phelps, Ryan Lochte, and Nathan Adrian team that won silver on 29 July. Jones won the silver medal in the 50-metre freestyle event on 3 August. 'I call on religion in every aspect of my life, whether I'm at the Olympic Games representing the USA or about to get on a plane to an event,' Jones said. In the chapter *Finding Faith*, Miller said Cullen Jones keeps faith at the core of his daily life.

The book is truly inspirational. Whether it is swimming or in life, Jones wants readers to understand that commitment and trusting in God goes a long way.

– Tonya Whitaker, *Inside The Pew*, via ASSIST News Service

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Historic Rwandan Evangelistic Outreach

A MAJOR evangelistic outreach, Rusizi Mission, was held in and around Cyangugu, Rwanda from 5-12 August. A week of 200-300 meetings in schools, prisons, hospitals, local markets, etc, organised by the local church in various zones of the region was highlighted by large meetings on the two Sundays in a park in the city centre. Sammy Wanyonyi was the main evangelist and the event was a continuance of Mission Africa – a series of outreach events which took place in the months leading up to and in fellowship with Cape Town 2010.

Unique to Mission Africa is the partnering of international and indigenous evangelists in proclaiming the Gospel. This was so effective, with around 500,000 people hearing the Gospel and about 58,000 enquirers for salvation that, after hearing reports on this at the Cape Town Congress, over 1,000 people worldwide expressed interest in continuing this wave of partnership evangelism. Thus this phase of Mission Africa was launched along with other regional missions around the globe.

The main week of proclamation evangelism was the outworking of 12 months of preparation, which in-

cluded leadership development, mobilising churches in the region, training classes for believers, prayer, organising many events, and working with civic leaders in planning. There was also a focus on developing nurture groups and a follow-up system to care for enquirers.

Local church leaders, parachurch organisations and a local working committee all combined under the overall organising group, African Evangelistic Enterprise. A number of international organisations also actively participated in the planning. Pastor Lazare Byamungu, chair of the working committee, said, 'This is the first time in the history of the church in Rusizi to see all the church denominations come together with a common purpose to reach people with the Gospel of Jesus. This is really an evangelistic process, not an event.'

Rwanda 2012 was part of the ongoing ministry that began as part of Mission Africa. The initial outreach started in Huye and Musanze in July 2010 and continued in Gisenyi in August 2011. The outreach in Cyangugu was the third and another is planned for next year. The AEE leadership has put together a 10-year program to cover all the major cities of Rwanda.

Upcoming Event:

MORRISON in China, A Picture Exhibition, portraying 200 years of Protestant Evangelism, will be held from 14-16 September 2012, 9.30am-6pm (16 September till 5pm, in St John's Anglican Cathedral, 195 Church St, Parramatta, NSW, opposite Parramatta Town Hall.

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FROM ALL QUARTERS ...

SPARC Australia Announces \$27,500, TV Program Development Prize

THE SPARC Development Prize is a \$27,500 Production Grant to develop an 'Easter Focused' Television Special. The prize is designed to encourage the development of new and/or emerging producers by providing a strategic pathway, professional support and funding.

'Faith-based television content has a long history in Australia and has been instrumental in sharing the message of Jesus and celebrating hope with the nation. Through initiatives like the Development Prize, SPARC is looking to encourage a new generation of Christian Producers, to become culture shapers.' said manager Mark Reddy. 'It's important for Christians to have a significant cultural presence at Easter. Easter is a significant time for Christians and represents the defining message of Jesus' story – forgiveness and redemption,' he said.

SPARC has partnered with Christian Television

Australia to produce the 2012 Development Prize. CTA has been a pioneer in producing faith-based content for Australian television, and has decades of experience and strategic relationships with the major television networks.

'CTA is looking forward to working with the team from SPARC on this innovative project. It's particularly encouraging to help up and coming producers, writers and directors,' said Martin Johnson, CEO of Christian Television Australia.

Selection for the Development Prize begins with a competitive submission process. The successful applicant not only receives a \$27,500 Production Grant, but also benefits from having an experienced mentor, to help develop the program.

Full details and an entry form are available on the SPARC Australia web site at: www.sparc.org.au Entries close at the end of August.

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HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE ... With Barbara Furman

NEW LIFE is pleased to welcome back our multi-gifted Barbara Furman, bringing us the news from *Here, There And Everywhere*. Barbara served the Lord for many years at *New Life* in typesetting, reporting and office management.

LIKE many Christian outreaches at the moment, *Christianityworks*, who have expanded their broadcast network dramatically around the world in recent days, is appealing for funds to make up for a shortfall in support for the year to June. CEO Berni Dymet expressed great reluctance to cut programs which, in places like Africa and India, are reaching hundreds of thousands of people on each station. The programs are so popular that stations are able to charge premium advertising rates before and after they are aired! www.christianityworks.com

JULY 28 was the anniversary of the death in a plane accident of singer, song writer, author and evangelist Keith Green. Keith was making news in the late 70's, sometimes controversial, but there is no doubt he was full-on for the Lord and influenced many young believers of the time. Perhaps the best known worship song he wrote, *O Lord, You're Beautiful* is still sung frequently today, as is *There Is A Redeemer*, written by his wife, Melody.

EVER heard of *Alphacrucis College*? This Christian tertiary college is the official ministry training facility for Australian Christian Churches, comprised mainly of the Assemblies Of God in Australia. Since its formation in 1948 this college has had several changes in name and location. Southern Cross College and Commonwealth Bible College may be

most familiar to readers. Illawarra Bible was later added to the campus, at that time in Katoomba, NSW. Today there are several campuses, the main one in Parramatta, NSW. In its proud history over 3,000 students have been trained and the graduates are engaged in ministry all around the world. In 2009 the name was officially changed to *Alphacrucis College*, derived from the name of the star at the foot of the Southern Cross constellation. Principal Stephen Fogarty says, 'Alphacrucis is the brightest star in the Southern Cross, and it's at the foot of the cross ... We want our students to shine brightly at the foot of the cross.' The college has a vision to build a multi-faculty Christian university to prepare Christians to serve God – not only through the church but in every aspect of society. That plan is already well on the way. So we'll surely be hearing more of *Alphacrucis* in the future.

AUSTRALIAN Christians (formerly the Christian Democratic Party) is gearing up for the 2013 Federal election, determined to continue to fight for representation in the political future of our country. AC Victoria is looking for office space in Melbourne to be used as the campaign headquarters. Vickie Janson is the endorsed Senate candidate for the state. She has already been very busy making the party known and dealing with issues of concern to Christians. The Tasmanian branch has nominated Kevin Swarts as their Senate candidate, and AC Western Australia, which is preparing for both Federal and State elections in 2013, has candidates building their teams and seeking practical support. Check their websites for more details.

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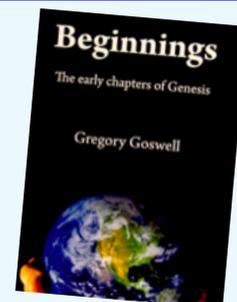
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Gold Medal A Possibility? Namibian Wrestler Says 'Yes! – With God'

WRESTLER Sem Shilimela won a silver medal at the 2010 Youth Olympic Games in Singapore and is a total believer that with God, anything is possible.

A rare talent, the 21-year-old Namibian, who is competing in the men's 55 kg freestyle competition, has set himself a target of winning a medal at the London Olympics. Speaking to *2K Plus International Sports Media*, Shilimela said there would be a lot of pressure on him to do well but that he was used to it.

He turned 21 on 30 July, but what he lacks in experience, he certainly makes up for in confidence and trust in God. 'I pray and ask God to help me and if He hears my prayer and would help me, I can get a medal,' he says.

Before the Olympics he competed at an international wrestling tournament in Spain where he won two bouts against wrestlers from Moldova and Kazakhstan, while losing one bout to a wrestler from Turkey. Shilimela eventually finished fifth in his category and said his performance gave him hope for the Olympics.

Though Shilimela didn't grow up in a Christian home and his mother was against his church attendance, the most important thing for him is being a lover of Jesus. 'Jesus means a lot to me. He does everything for me and I trust in Him,' he concluded.

This talented wrestler has spent the past two years honing his skills at a High Performance Wrestling Centre in Dakar, Senegal.

Shilimela said it was a dream come true when he qualified for the Olympics after winning a silver medal at the Africa and Oceania Olympic Qualifiers in Morocco in June.

– Solomon Izang Ashoms, Editor of *Parable Magazine* in South Africa (www.parable.co.za)



Timeless Teen Turns 80 – Still Hard At Work For The Lord

OVER 200 teenagers (well they were in the 1960s and 1970s) gathered recently to recognize the unique and godly influence Clive Stebbins has had in their lives. Compered by Noel Mitaxa, the evening commenced with people sharing their memories of Clive and Youth For Christ.

Repeatedly, Clive's enthusiastic, optimistic, fun-loving leadership was remembered, especially his overwhelming passion to win teenagers for Christ. He was the Melbourne Director of Youth For Christ for 36 years. Bruce Searle spoke of the strong spiritual foundation laid by Clive, and his great encouragement to young people as he helped mould them into mission teams. At 80, Clive is still spreading the Good News. With Bill Newman, he leaves for Sri Lanka on 2 August to conduct a series of evangelistic meetings arranged by 50 churches in Colombo. He asked us to support him in prayer, as he thanked all those who attended his celebration. Clive says he has enjoyed every minute of the life the Lord has given him. 'God is a wonderful God. If He can use me, He can use anyone!' David O'Brien, pastor of Waverley Baptist Church, concluded the evening in prayer. He said Clive had been a much-loved mem-



ber of the congregation for 25 years. The church, pastor and all his friends joined in praising God for Clive Stebbins' faithfulness, energy, wisdom and integrity.

– Barbara (Mrs DP) Prout

Langham Trust's Upcoming Coming Events

PAUL Windsor, Associate Director, Langham Preaching, will be leading sessions at Ridley Melbourne's Preaching Conference 28-30 August 2012. On Sunday morning 26 August Paul is preaching at Donvale (Vic) Presbyterian Church and on Sunday evening (6pm) Paul is preaching at New Hope Baptist Church, Blackburn North (Vic).

Chris Wright, International Director, Langham Partnership, is speaking at Katoomba (NSW) Men's Convention 22,23 Feb, 1,2 and 8,9 March 2013. On Sunday morning 3 March 2013, Chris is preaching at Castle Hill (Vic) Baptist Church.

Lausanne Movement Appoints Senior Associate For Creation Care

THE Lausanne Movement has appointed a Senior Associate for Creation Care. Rev Edward R. Brown, Executive Director of Care of Creation, an environmental mission organization based in Madison, WI, accepted the position in June at the Lausanne International Leadership meeting.

His appointment reflects Lausanne's deep commitment to the stewardship of God's creation.

Islamic Leaders In Nigeria Urge Boko Haram To End Violence Against Christians

ISLAMIC scholars and leaders in Nigeria have urged militant group Boko Haram to end its violent campaign against Christians and other targets in the country. According to Barnabas Fund, Boko Haram is fighting to establish an Islamic state in Northern Nigeria.

Speaking at a lecture as part of the National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations' Ramadan activities, they called for a ceasefire from the group.

One of the speakers, Sayid Bagher Seyed Jaradi, the Acting Cultural Consul of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said this was 'urgently expected for the sake of humanity, credibility of the Islamic religion and peaceful co-existence among Nigerians.'

He said that the violence being perpetrated by Boko Haram 'not only pitched the non-Muslims against the Muslims, but questioned the sanctity of the religion. They [Boko Haram] should realize that the merciless killings of innocent people, including non-Muslims, across Nigeria, is not known and acceptable by any law or religious tenets across the globe. They should be enlightened or reminded that the basic preaching of Islamic religion is peace, which can never be achieved when we are hostile to

our brothers and sisters, including non-Muslims.'

Barnabas Fund went on to say that speaking out against Boko Haram is a brave move, as other Muslim leaders who have opposed their activities have been targeted by the group.

Boko Haram has this year stepped up its violent campaign to establish an Islamic state in Northern Nigeria, attacking Christians in particular but also others, including the security forces.

The group recently said, 'We will not end our attacks until we have an Islamic state.' They had previously declared 'war' against Christians, saying in March that they were planning co-ordinated attacks 'to eradicate Christians from certain parts of the country.'

A spokesperson for Barnabas Fund said, 'Many Sundays have seen churches in the North and Middle Belt bombed during services, and scores of Christians have been killed. In Boko Haram's latest assault, more than 50 Christians were burned alive when militants bombed a pastor's house where they had sought refuge as the group raided twelve villages in Plateau State.'

– *Dan Wooding, who was born of Baptist missionary parents in Nigeria, Founder of ASSIST Ministries*

Christians Plead For Prayer In A Violent Iraq

BOMBS killed over 100 Iraqis last week. Renewed violence on Sunday killed at least seven more. During this extremely violent year, Christians are more and more at risk. An Open Doors USA contact in Baghdad recently sent an urgent e-mail request for prayer. Pray for protection, provision and perseverance for believers. Pray that they would have opportunity to share Christ's love with frightened Iraqis. Full story:

<http://www.MNNonline.org/article/17505>

Why Christians Are Dying In Nigeria: Understanding Boko Haram

FROM Christmas Day bombings to weekly church attacks, Boko Haram is responsible for hundreds of deaths in Nigeria. But who exactly is this terror sect, and why do they exist? Rae Burnett with Christian Aid Mission says Boko Haram is about one thing: 'Their agenda is Sharia. It is to establish Islamic rule in Nigeria.' Boko Haram was formed over ten years ago with the goals of jihad and power. In recent months, reaching those goals has meant attacking churches. 'If you look at the *Quran*, what

you see is that there are two ways that Muslims are instructed to deal with non-Muslims: that is to convert them, or to kill them.' Boko Haram has chosen the latter. Whatever the combination of reasons for their terror, as attacks heat up against believers in Nigeria, prayer is vital. Pray for these radicals to turn to Christ, and for Christians to know how to respond to attacks.

– MNN

'Religious Cleansing' Near The Pyramids

ONCE again sectarian clashes have broken out near Giza, Egypt. The entire Coptic Christian population in the village of Dahshour have fled in a disturbing trend where Coptic Christians are being forced to leave their homes following any sectarian argument or attack. Bishop Theodosius, Coptic Orthodox Bishop of Giza, has demanded that the Egyptian authorities apply the law firmly on everyone, and for the bullying and robbery of Copts to cease. He also demands that everyone including Copts should have their equal rights, security and safety. He said a Muslim group in the village was going from stores to houses, destroying property and damaging many homes of Christian families.

People Are Committing To Jesus In Stratford

'GOD loves you, He cares about your life – this is the Christian message.' Evangelist Roger Murphy of Through Faith Missions is speaking through a microphone to a growing crowd of people just around the corner from the Olympic Stadium. It's in the churchyard of St John's, Stratford, a place through which many people pass as they make their way either to the Olympic Park, the Westgate Shopping Centre or Stratford's increasingly busy transport hub. It's powerful and heartfelt, and just three days after the Olympics begin, 100 people had already made commitments to Jesus here.

St John's, which has stood at the centre of Stratford since 1834, is playing a key role in a co-ordinated effort by all of Stratford's churches to welcome the world for the 2012 Olympics. It is running a program of activities and entertainment each day from 12 noon in its grounds. Preceding Roger was an entertaining and energetic routine from Sylvain Ramseier, a 17 year old Christian acrobat from Switzerland. The Christian entertainers are drawn from around the world (they also include a Brazilian street dance group and urban dance from France), and have been sourced with the help of *More Than Gold*. There is also table tennis, face painting, puppet shows, classical music concerts in the church and free refreshments.

Peppered throughout are evangelistic messages of the kind Roger gave, and opportunities to make a commitment. Volunteers are on hand to direct people to local churches, wherever they are from. 'Jesus told us to go into the world, now the world is coming to us,' said the Rev David Richards, Vicar of St John's, who has been preparing for the Olympics since London won the bid in 2005. 'We've always had an open door to the local community and to passers-by, now our members are ready to welcome the world and share our faith with anyone and everyone,' he said.

Around 20 Stratford churches are working under the *Ultimate Gold* program to welcome visitors. Through Faith Missions, Open Air Campaigners, Youth With A Mission and Share Jesus International are also involved. Central Baptist Church just up the road are running daily *Cake and Controversy* sessions, where a slice of cake is dished up alongside a tasty discussion. African drumming, dance and storytelling is planned at Ithaca House. Pastor Simon Clinton, minister of Highway Church and convenor of Stratford Churches, said, 'It's thrilling to work together as one church to put on our Ultimate Gold festival.

– Paul Hobson, Editor, *The Baptist Times* (www.baptisttimes.co.uk).

SPCKA Encouraging Christian Writers In South Africa

SPCKA has encouraged Christian writers in South Africa by sponsoring a writers' workshop organised by their partner A Rocha South Africa. It was the first in a series of training workshops for the purpose of publishing fiction, journalism, Bible engagement, children's literature, autobiography, poetry and drama created by South Africans. South Africa has a vibrant and diverse publishing industry. However the national educational context is one of continuing inequality, illiteracy and disadvantage. Opportunities are limited for writing training with a view to publishing, particularly for Christians. A Rocha is responding to this need by providing excellent training and publishing opportunities to encourage writing that communicates the Gospel. The workshop was made possible by an SPCKA grant and held in association with Media Associates International. It encouraged writing aimed at young South African adults or children of all linguistic backgrounds, on the theme *Journeys In Restoration, Reconciliation, Transformation And Hope*.

Good News In Missionary Abduction Case

MISSIONARY Ponnachan George, supported by Gospel For Asia, was violently kidnapped by terrorists on 23 July from a Bible School in Assam, India. The chances of him surviving were small. GFA sent out an emergency prayer alert, and a storm of prayer went up on his behalf. On 29 July, GFA's K.P. Yohannan said, 'Finally, after almost a week, he was released. Of course, blindfolded, his hands tied back, left on the roadside' – but alive and otherwise unharmed. Pastor George was heavily involved in community development and evangelism, so a lot of people rallied to his cause. 'It's a real miracle. The local police, the state government, all authorities, and even the Central Government ... everyone got involved.' The GFA team's commitment to Christ and to love stood firm. 'When [the terrorists] released him, all our workers, all our leaders, continued to stay there – they didn't run away. [They spent the night] and regrouped and declared, "We are here for life. We're not going anywhere".' There is rejoicing, but there's still work to do.

Full story: <http://www.MNNonline.org/article/17507>

Elana Meyer: Greatness Displayed With Humility And Faith

ELANA Meyer, the great distance runner from South Africa, has impacted the sport and the Olympics far beyond the track. Meyer won silver at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics in the women's 10,000 meters. She was forced out of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics through injury, but bounced back to represent her country again at the Sydney Olympics, finishing 8th in the final.



Along with her Olympic appearances and record times she also won the world championships in the half marathon (1994). This victory helped cement her position as one of the great distance runners in South Africa. Her times back this up: personal best for 10,000 metres: 30.52.51, half marathon: 1.06.44, marathon: 2.25.15.

How To Handle The Pressure?

With so much attention on her in South Africa, how did she cope with the pressure of big meets, like the Olympics? She explains, 'Prior to every race I ask the Lord to use me as would seem best to Him. Then having asked that of Him, whether it goes well with me or not, the result will be the best. I can be content with that.' So her Christian faith and running are linked together. God is not just for Sundays but is part of her everyday duties, including her training.

True Greatness

But it was her silver medal at the 1992 Olympics that showed her true greatness. This medal was the highest honour achieved by a South African for that event.

But it was what happened after her race that drew the most attention.

She ran a victory lap with Ethiopian gold medalist Derartu Tulu. This simple act spoke volumes as a symbol of racial harmony for a country that was on a journey of reconciliation. The gesture was beamed around the world as an example of unity.

Meyer's greatest gift, however, is the one she has been given by God: a restored relationship with God through Jesus. Her running was just an expression of this gift of grace. 'Athletics is just a gift, but without the Lord I would not have accomplished anything on my own,' she says.

– Jeremy Dover, a former sport scientist, is now a chaplain and pastor.

He is a regular Press Service International correspondent and lives in Geelong (Vic).

*His previous articles may be viewed at:
<http://www.pressserviceinternational.org/jeremy-dover.html>*



Derartu Tulu and Elana Meyer on their lap of honour and act of reconciliation.

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http://planetsport.tv/content/home/1915/video_unassuming_olympian

- *Madeline Manning-Mims. Us 1968 800m Gold Medallist Talks Sport And Faith*

http://planetsport.tv/content/home/1906/video_madeline_manning_mims

- *Bryan Clay*. Reigning Olympic decathlon champion Bryan Clay talks about a pivotal moment when he was competing in the US trials and how his faith helped.

http://planetsport.tv/content/home/1888/video_bryan_clay_just_get_third

– Adrian Barnard, 2K Plus International Sports Media At The Olympic Games In London

Morling College Launches New Bible Correspondence Course – *The Lens* – Free Bible Training For All!

THE Lens is a FREE online Bible correspondence course for people wanting to deepen their knowledge of the Bible and their relationship with God. *The Lens* is specifically designed for people 15 years and over who don't have time for high level accredited theological study but are keen to access a wide variety of free Bible resources and engage in practical Bible study that is free, flexible, and fun.

The course is completed by working through a booklet, working online, or (for users with higher end computers) as a multimedia course.

The Lens is suitable for individual study and is also a great resource for church small groups. This course is free to download for personal use and use in church or educational settings (as long as no money is charged for it). People can also choose to credit their study towards *The Lens Certificate* for a small fee.

The Lens is for anyone who's ever wanted to study the Bible on a deeper level. Application forms are available online: www.morlingcollege.com/TheLens.pdf All material in *The Lens* is wholly owned and copyrighted by Morling College, and is not available for sale.

Morling College is a Bible and Theological College committed to equipping the whole believer to take the whole Gospel to the whole world. Established in 1916, Morling College has expanded its Bible and Theological courses to include Counselling, Education, Chaplaincy, Distance studies and a Gap-year program. Students can study from Certificate through to Doctoral levels, and can study full-time, part-time and by distance. As a residential college, many students and their families have the opportunity to live on campus. Located in Macquarie Park, Sydney, Morling College is a 5 minute walk from Macquarie University train station. Go to: www.morlingcollege.com for contact information, phone 02 9878 0201 or e-mail: enquiries@morling.edu.au

Ramon A Williams – Worldwide Photos –

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TYNDALE HOUSE AND FELLOWSHIP: THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS

T.A. Noble, Leicester: IVP, 2006

THIS is the official history of the first 60 years of the Tyndale House and Fellowship. It is written by Tom Noble, and there is a Foreword by Bishop John B. Taylor, both of whom have had close associations with the work since the 1940's. There is an Afterword by I. Howard Marshall, in which he expresses how much the House and Fellowship have helped him and been a part of his life.

The aim of Tyndale House and Fellowship has been to nurture scholarship and research among evangelical teachers and pastors. At its heart lies the conviction that the preservation of sound teaching requires the foundation of biblical scholarship. It sought to correct the unhealthy anti-intellectualism that has been a fatal attraction to some evangelical groups and churches. One of the early fruits of this work was the widely used *New Bible Commentary* (in 1953). This was followed by the immensely influential *Tyndale Commentary*.

Tyndale House and Fellowship have their origins in the Biblical Research Committee set up by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Christian Unions in 1938. The committee had A. M. Stibbs, John Wenham, Douglas Johnson and G. T. Manley as founding members. It was W. J. Martin and Australian Broughton Knox (in England for postgraduate studies at the time and later to become Principal of Moore Theological College, Sydney) who in 1939 pressed for the establishment of a residential library devoted to biblical research, to be located in a university city, preferably Cambridge.

In the providence of God, that is how things worked out. What became Tyndale House was purchased in 1944 at 36 Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge. Over the years, the Fellowship has helped to break down the evangelical suspicion of scholarship and it has published high quality research articles in its *Tyndale Bulletin* (started in 1959).

An important ongoing aspect of the ministry is the Tyndale Study Groups that meet in the UK (usually in Cambridge) in July each year. Over the years,

a first-class library for biblical research has been developed, whose depth and quality are probably unique in the world.

The venture went forward on the conviction that adherence to the historic Christian Faith was compatible with free and honest enquiry. There was a commitment to both a high view of Scripture and unfettered research. With respect to papers given at Tyndale Study Groups, certain conclusions were not mandated, but it was expected that all study be on the basis of the agreed starting-point of the conservative evangelical faith that included a belief in the infallibility of Scripture.

F. F. Bruce and D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones took a leading part in early Tyndale Conferences. Donald Wiseman played a key role from the 1950's onwards. Leon Morris was Warden of Tyndale House during 1961-63, before returning to Australia to become Principal of Ridley college, Melbourne. Another significant Australian connection is Dr Bruce Winter, who was the Warden from 1987 to 2004.

The Waverly Hotel Conference of 1961 led to a reaffirmation of the focus on first-class biblical research based on primary sources. The hope was that over time evangelical scholars would receive top university posts. Slow progress was made, but today that dream has become a reality. Those mentioned in this history, who were at one stage librarians, wardens or students using the library of Tyndale House (working on doctorates or writing books) read like a *Who's Who* of contemporary evangelical scholarship.

Tyndale House and Fellowship continues to be a ministry with a global reach, giving academic credibility to evangelical biblical scholarship, enabling a renaissance of evangelical writing and publication, and assisting to equip evangelical theological teachers throughout the world. It is an inspiring story and well worth the read!

– Greg Goswell



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