

CHRISTIAN SURFERS – Reaching Out Around The World



CHRISTIAN mission and evangelism takes a multitude of forms, as it should, given Christ's command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel – and that doesn't just include all the nations of the world, but all the people groups, all the age groups, all the language groups, all the interest groups, all the ... yes, *all*.

To the praise of God's glorious grace, there is a ministry to surfies, and that ministry is extending its reach to more and more countries, including Switzerland (!) where the leader of Christian Surfers there, Eric Zbären, sent in a donation for a CS project with the comment: 'Even though we are small and struggling ourselves with limited leaders and no waves, God has done amazing things to enable us to support others.' Another leader, 'Moose', has planned three international surf trips that will also involve giving assistance to other surf communities.

(Continued on Page 3)

CTA Easter Program Looks At Issue Of Forgiveness

CHRISTIAN Television Australia's Easter Special, *Forgiven People* will screen on the Seven Network at 3pm on Good Friday (except Melbourne, due to the Good Friday Appeal for the Royal Children's Hospital. The show will be available from 4pm on www.CTA.tv) *Forgiven People* tells the story of three colourful Aussies who speak candidly about their dark past and their spiritual journeys towards a more positive lifestyle.

Susan is an ex-bikie chick who led a rebellious life as an adolescent. She recounts her experience of growing up in a dysfunctional family and explains how the supportive nature of Christian groups such as 'God's Squad' motorcycle club helped her survive to become a wife and mother of three children.

Johno is a former rock drummer who escaped a life of violence in Melbourne's northern suburbs to pursue his passion for music in a number of successful pub bands. Once an illegal drug abuser, he eventually joined a Christian hard rock band and discovered faith in a forgiving God.

Monique is a creative musician/composer, author and public speaker. A survivor of child sexual abuse, she has struggled to come to terms with her negative past. Her story, while containing elements of sadness and loss of innocence, is one of overwhelming hope. A strong Christian faith and keen analytical mind have enabled her to deal positively with situations that would have crushed a weaker individual.

Forgiven People will screen on the Seven Network at 3pm on Good Friday, 29 March. (Check local guides) It will also air on the Australian Christian Channel. www.christiantelevision.org.au

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When Leaders Don't Lead, Christians Still Persevere

'ALL of Israel's problems centred on a problem of leadership.' That's what an Old Testament lecturer taught us at Moore College.

Australia is going through a crisis of leadership – we have a Prime Minister who has committed us to a six month election campaign, so she is electioneering rather than governing. Leadership in sport seems non-existent – the NRL, AFL, Australian swimming, even the Australian cricket team. Then we have the alternative PM, Tony Abbott being asked on *60 Minutes* if he could guarantee that he would not invoke his Catholic faith in policy making. 'Yes I can', he said 'Faith is important to me. It's important to millions of Australians. It helps to shape who I am. It helps to shape my values. But it must never, never dictate my politics.'

How disappointing! Mr Abbott's shaping faith faces a no-go zone when it comes to policy. So on what basis will our potential leader make his decisions? Will it be consensus, following the popular thinking of the electorate or will it be more self-serving, what seems good for him or his party? Aren't we entitled to know the moral basis of his decision-making?

We seem happy enough for others to base their policy making on a failed political philosophy, but when it comes to the Christian faith, we expect that those who espouse it also reassure us that their faith will have little influence over them. So we are left with politicians who profess faith and then seem to do all they can to show that such faith means very little to them in the day to day issues.

I am a third generation Australian from mainly Scottish heritage. I love Australia and Australians – 'this wide brown land for me' – but I feel increasingly isolated in my own land, where perverse values are promoted, freedom of speech is curbed in favour of political correctness and where justice and righteousness are flexible concepts, based on fickle public opinion.

I no longer watch *Q & A* on the ABC – not because there is no debate of ideas. I no longer watch because of the presence of the ubiquitous comedian whose role is to trivialize big issues for cheap laughs. Is that what we are reduced to? Ideas and reason out the door, and cynical mockery dominating? We have become a pathetic society.

The apostle Paul was distressed by the vacuous state of his audience in Athens (Acts 17.16) however this did not deter him from his persistent pursuit of a persuasive ministry (Acts 18.4;19.8).

Such is our calling, brothers and sisters. Let us persevere in being salty and not covering over the light of truth (Matthew 5.13-16).

– Rev David Cook

David Cook, Principal Emeritus of Sydney Missionary and Bible College, is chief speaker at the forthcoming Belgrave Heights Easter Convention.

OBEYING THE GREAT COMMISSION

CHRISTIAN SURFERS – Reaching Out Around The World (From Page 1)

Foundations Training

Foundations Training is now in its fifth year and fully available as eight online modules. It covers *CS Fundamentals*, *Developing A Leadership Team*, *Surf Culture*, *Gospel Process* and more. Head to training.christiansurfers.net, create an account and start your training! 'I am convinced that as we intentionally grow our leaders, we grow our missions,' says Johnny Hillman, CSUK.

Chaplaincy Training Quiksilver Pro Gold Coast

In February 28 key chaplains received training from CS partner Sports Chaplaincy Australia. Abe Andrews, the ASP Men's WCT chaplain has been qualified to train other chaplains and hopes to do so on tour. Keep up with the chaplaincy movement online at surfchaplaincy.org



'We aim to help kick off the year with some encouraging training and meetings with our key chaplains,' says Steve Bligh, International Chaplaincy Co-ordinator.

'A highlight is introducing the chaplains to the rookies, as well as the ASP awards ceremony we are invited to attend.'

From 'Club' to 'Hub' In Australia

It has been a one-year process to transition the traditional 'club' model of a local Christian Surfers group to a 'hub' of mission-minded people exploring various ways of reaching their surfing friends. The traditional group of grommets is run by some; an older guys group called *The Shaping Bay* has been launched by others; some run an annual surf-school summer outreach and there are inroads to the three local Boardriders clubs by hub members. A monthly hub meeting keeps each of the spokes co-ordinated and connected. Aaron Hughes, CS North Wollongong Mission Leader, comments: 'We usually struggle to get more than four or five leaders to our monthly meetings, but creating a hub has grown this to 12.'

The Perfect Wave Coming Soon

Filmed on location in South Africa, Bali and Java, *The Perfect Wave* brings to life the incredible true story of Ian McCormack, a surfer who came to faith in a very dramatic fashion. The film promises to be a great tool for CS groups around the world. 'As a surfer, Ian McCormack's amazing story will connect well with Christian Surfers' target group and we hope the film will be a blessing to you,' says Bruce MacDonald, the film's director. You can view the trailer and find out more now at www.theperfectwave.co.za

Pura Vida Fest Chile

Now in its fifth year, this event has grown to a whole new level from a small local surf contest with a young Nathan Anderson at the helm. Major media coverage, skate ramps, gospel bands and massive prizes are only part of the impact. There is a great partnership with CS Chile and the YWAM base there to run an event that is professional and fun. Organizer and CS Chile leader Nathan Anderson says, 'It has become known as one of the most reputable events in the country and God always blesses us with great waves.'



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OBEYING THE GREAT COMMISSION

CHRISTIAN SURFERS – Reaching Out Around The World (From Page 3)

United Kingdom Inroads

CSUK was there to serve in the *Ice Cube Classic* surf event in chilly 8°C water. Last week they ran a skate event in an 800-year-old abbey! CSUK has grown in so much favour with all levels of surfing that they can't keep up with all the requests to serve. Read more on CSUK's latest events at www.christiansurfers.co.uk

La Red El Salvador Church Plant

'Now that you have become Christians, you need to give up your surfing.' This comment was made by a local evangelical pastor in the El Tunco area where CS El Salvador has made great impact. Salvador Castellanos has wrestled for some years about what to do with the new converts and the obvious disconnect in the poor undeveloped local churches. He has finally made a decision for CS to help launch a new church named La Red that is connecting the beach with the Christian community. They opened in a new meeting area with roof and few walls that was custom built by CS. Some 50 local residents and CS helpers came along to launch the church with music, teaching, worship and theatre. 'I never expected to be the pastor, but right now we are doing our best to care for these people as there is no other church capable,' says Salvador.



North African Opportunity

A key North African ministry is in need of encouragement and visitation after persevering largely alone for the past four years. They face many challenges with strong resistance from their Muslim community and at the same time great inroads taking place. Both CS in UK and South Africa have been considering a team to go surf, pray and encourage later this year.

South Africa National Conference

Son Skate and Aleph Surf also meet under CS South Africa's national conference banner. There is a 'hub' connecting all of the surf-related ministries in J-Bay that will help Kingdom growth. The CS Second Session thrift store now provides most of the operational costs of the office, which is overflowing with six new interns and three new staff, while the Harley family wisely moved out to their own place at The Point! Pray for God to move at conference and read more at www.christiansurfers.co.za

'Our National Conference will be held 21-23 March in Jeffreys Bay with the theme *Growing Deeper*. We are looking to grow more hubs of ministry as many of our club models are fading,' says Roy Harley, Africa Regional Co-ordinator

Costa Rica National Camp

Over 130 CS people camped out for Costa Rica's third national camp in February. Damian Boza, the new national director, is a working professional from San Jose who, along with others, has brought about a more organised and disciplined movement. Whole families are encouraged to participate and they are now supporting three CS-based disciple making communities that have become recognised local churches. Damian and the team are looking forward to hosting their international conference in 2014.

CSUS Prep School

There is a strong element of training throughout the movement in USA with East and West Coast coaches delivering their annual leadership training on both sides of the country. The National Multiplication Center now houses interns, as well as the odd stray surfer with no place to go! Dean Plumlee, CSUS National Director, reports: 'We had 35 people chapter leaders and members come and receive training at our National Multiplication Center. It was awesome to gather together to be encouraged, to pray, and to learn how we can better connect our lost surfing friends to Jesus.' Support the centre and keep in touch with CSUS at

www.christiansurfers.com

CS Online Activity

Three CS nations have brand new websites: CS Portugal, www.christiansurfersportugal.com; CS Canada, christiansurferscanada.wordpress.com and CS Norway, christiansurfersnorway.blogspot.com

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

The Bitter Fruits Of Pakistan's Radicalised Society

ON 7 March Sawan (26), a Christian, and his Muslim friend and neighbour, Shahid, argued as they sat drinking after work, in Joseph Colony, Lahore. The next day Shahid claimed Sawan had blasphemed during their spat. The rumour spread like wildfire. Sawan fled for his life. The police took Sawan's father into custody and registered a blasphemy complaint against Sawan hoping that would appease the agitated crowd. However, sensing otherwise, the police advised the Christians to flee their homes. The next day some 7000 local Muslims descended on the Christian colony, pillaging and burning. At least 160 homes, 18 shops and two churches were looted and burnt while the police watched on. Intolerance, violence and insecurity: the bitter fruits of a radicalised society. Please pray for Pakistan and its Christian minority.

– Elizabeth Kendal

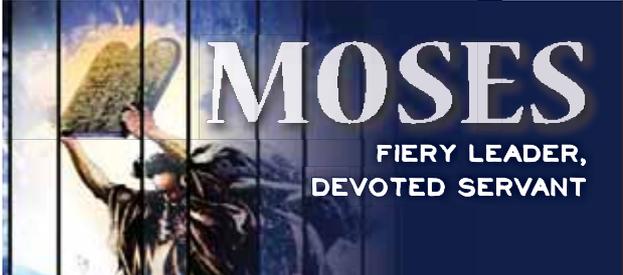
Libya – Egyptian Christian Dies In Custody

EZZAT Hakim Atalla Abdel-Malak, one of five Egyptian Christians arrested in Benghazi last month on charges of proselytising, has died in custody. According to the authorities, Ezzat died of natural causes on Sunday 10 March. Middle East Concern reports that while Ezzat did receive some clearly insufficient treatment for severe chest pains, the extensive bruising all over his body indicates that he had been physically abused. Please pray for Ezzat's widow and two teenage children, and for the remaining prisoners – especially the four Egyptians whose situation is particularly precarious. May God intervene on their behalf.

– Elizabeth Kendal

Unrest Stirs In Bangladesh; Translation Work Continues

BANGLADESH is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. And with over 91% of its people adhering to Islam, your prayers are vitally important. A Wycliffe Bible Translators team is translating the New Testament into a local language. They hope to have it ready for print by next spring. Ask God to guard the team's time, health, and technical equipment. Pray He will prepare the hearts of Bangladeshis to receive His Word. <http://www.MNNonline.org/article/18295>

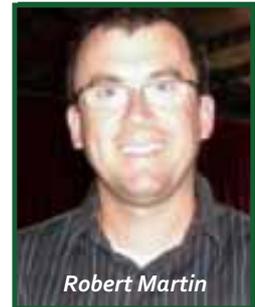
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MEANWHILE, UP AT THE HEIGHTS

Helpful Seminars At Belgrave Heights Summer Convention

The New Atheism

A POWERFUL DVD of Dr John Lennox speaking on atheism at the Keswick Convention, England in 2008 was shown during a seminar at the Belgrave Heights Summer Convention. Dr Lennox is a leading challenger of modern atheism and his book *God's Undertaker* answers more fully many of the questions raised during the DVD. The session was introduced by Robert Martin, Melbourne Director of City Bible Forum (Robert.Martin@citybibleforum.org) who replied to questions at the conclusion of the presentation. Together with BHC he hopes to bring John Lennox to Melbourne in 2014. John Lennox said there was no such thing as 'tolerant atheism' today. Led by Richard Dawkins, the movement is aggressive and militant. Their main tenets are: a passion for science, horror of religion and belief in God is a delusion. They state that people have no need of God to be able to live moral lives. But traditionally, the ethics of our society are based on Christian values. In their view, faith is blind and irrational. But the Bible has meticulously detailed accounts of Jesus' life, death and resurrection recorded by eye-witnesses.



Richard Dawkins speaks of the evils of religion and the good of new atheism. Yet he maintains there is no good or evil in the world – no design, no Creator! In the world of new atheism, justice is an illusion, just as moral sense is an illusion. However, our God will return to judge the world, uphold the fundamental moral standards and see that justice is ultimately achieved. Humans are moral beings. As Christians we must always be ready to answer the critics with meekness, respect and godly fear (1 Peter 3.15).

To view the DVD go to: www.essentialchristian.com

Being Christian In The Workplace

PETER Kentley has been a pilot with Ansett, Air Mauritius and Singapore airlines. He pioneered Christian fellowships with airline personnel and has been CEO of Marketplace Connections.

Peter says there are ten main dominions in the world: business, creative arts, education, government, health, justice, media and entertainment, religion, sport and recreation, and welfare. The church, through Christians, needs to bring the Life of Christ and godly order to all these areas. Christians need to be prayerful and Spirit-led. They need to take the gifts of the Spirit to work; have sound minds; be committed to excellence; act with integrity; have a spirit of generosity; be positive; be highly professional and give back the first fruits of their labours.

We need to identify our area of influence and use our daily lives to work and witness as His people. Jesus' own life purpose was 'to seek and save that which was lost'. And we must ensure that our household and business values are aligned with God's purpose. We can witness in this era of political correctness through our integrity. We need to win over a person professionally before we reach him theologically, following the example of Christ.

But What Can We Do?

Peter suggests:

- Start a prayer meeting after work or during lunch break.
- Be creative, asking open-ended questions that show our interest in the other person ... 'Mohammed, what do you believe?' Courtesy demands that the person asks the same of you.
- Giving a brief testimony of the Lord's goodness to you is a great start.
- Be genuinely interested in others. Do not be manipulative or push your own agenda. Yet stand up for your own convictions when challenged.
- Mentor others with actions such as friendship, hospitality, service. Then the opportunity will arise for apologetics, testimony, confrontation.

Peter summarised with a simple ABCD of pointers to follow:

Ask open-ended questions. **B**e living letters. **C**are for others with God's love.

Disciple/mentor in the workplace.

He said that, by prayer, by the power of the spoken word, by obedience and influence we will make a difference in those around us.

– Mrs DP (Barbara Prout)



CHURCH AND NATION

Greens' Push For Polyamory A Consequence Of Redefining Marriage

THE Australian Christian Lobby is concerned by a renewed push by Greens Party activists to legalise polyamorous marriages. 'There is no doubt that a growing number of members of the Greens Party take its "marriage for all" policy to mean exactly that,' said ACL's Managing Director Jim Wallace.

'The recent establishment of the Polyamory Action Lobby – headed up by Greens activists Brigitte Garozzo, Timothy Scriven and Kieran Adair – should send a loud warning to parliamentarians, particularly in NSW and SA, of the consequences of redefining marriage,' Mr Wallace said.

During last year's same-sex marriage debate, ACL warned that same-sex marriage would inevitably lead to a push for polygamous or polyamorous "marriage equality" in Australia.

'Once you cross the threshold of redefining marriage away from its natural meaning, you cannot in all honesty hope to stop further redefinition,' said Mr Wallace. 'You either keep marriage as nature defines it, or lose it.'

Greens politicians and Labor supporters of same-sex marriage continue downplaying calls from even Greens officials such as ACT Greens convenor Simon Copeland and the poly community for 'marriage equality' to be extended beyond two people. However, in May 2012 former High Court Justice Michael Kirby told a Senate inquiry that if same-sex marriage is passed, there could be further redefinitions in the future. 'The question that is before the parliament at the moment is the questions of equality for homosexual people,' Justice Kirby said. 'There may be in some future time, some other question. The lesson in courts and in the parliament, I suggest, is that you take matters step by step.'

Mr Wallace says: 'The Greens' tactic is always to try and legislate their radical social policies incrementally by fatigue, but it is obvious that the party's high profile championing of the redefinition of marriage is not limited to same-sex marriage. We urge Australian legislators to take serious consideration of the consequences of redefining marriage and to question the logic and integrity of calls for so-called "marriage equality".' <http://www.acl.org.au/>

NSW Churches Call For Alcohol Harm Minimization

THE NSW Council of Churches has renewed its call for the O'Farrell Government to extend recent Newcastle trials of measures to curb alcohol related violence. New national data showed that 70,000 Australians were involved in alcohol-related disputes each year, and the estimated annual cost to emergency services was around \$15 billion.

'Alcohol is a popular drug that is easily accessed and easily misused, the President of the NSW Council of Churches, the Rev Dr Ross Clifford, said. 'Alcohol consumption is a significant contributor to street violence, family violence, health problems and poverty in our communities. The O'Farrell Government is to be commended for small positive steps in the past, but we want to see significant regulatory reform this year. Trials in Newcastle have demonstrated that measures such as earlier pub closing times, lock-outs, and re-

restrictions on the sale of high-alcohol content drinks late at night can significantly reduce alcohol-related violence. It's time for the NSW Government to extend these trials to other parts of the state.



GEELONG BIBLE CONFERENCE

5 - 7, July 2013

Topic: **Is the Church Past Her Use-By Date?**

Keynote Speaker: **Dr. Derek Thomas**
(First Presbyterian Church, Colombia, South Carolina and Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta)

Venue: **Reformed Theological College, Geelong**

Register Online:
geelongbibleconference.org.au

The Geelong Bible Conference is organised by the Geelong Reformed Presbyterian Church.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

SUDAN: Islamic Belligerence And Soaring Persecution

ISLAMISTS – a powerful force in Sudan – hold President Gen Omar el-Bashir responsible for the loss of southern Sudan. Of course he is responsible, for he systematically marginalised, cheated, persecuted and fought the predominantly Christian non-Arabs of southern Sudan while trying to impose Islam on them until all they wanted was separation. Eventually on 9 July 2011 South Sudan became an independent nation. Khartoum's hardline Islamists believe secession should never have been an option, not merely because southern Sudan is resource-rich, but because Islamists do not believe Allah's land should ever be forfeit – especially not at the behest of the US! In the latter part of 2012, Arab Spring-inspired protests erupted in Khartoum only to be hijacked by Islamists who attacked Western embassies. Rumours abounded that a coup was imminent. Whilst some of the discontent in Khartoum is due to economic hardship and repression, the Islamist discontent pertains to the growing belief that el-Bashir has failed the State by not being Islamic enough! A key opposition figure, Hassan al-Turabi, has asserted that el-Bashir's regime should not even be regarded as Islamic! Factions inside the regime are leveraging this discontent to increase their power, leaving el-Bashir under pressure to prove his Islamist credentials. This is the context for the campaign of systematic persecution that began in late 2012.

On 14 February doctors in Khartoum cross-amputated a man's right hand and left foot under orders from the government as a punishment for robbery. Canada responded by condemning the deteriorating human rights situation in Sudan, noting also the targeting of civil society organisations, particularly those which are owned and run by Christians. Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird called on Khartoum 'to respect the rights of Sudan's people, to cease its intimidation of civil society and political opponents, and to end indiscriminate bombardments of civilians'.

Ulf Laessing reports (Reuters 27 Feb) Sudanese Christians are growing anxious that the day is coming when they will not be able to practise their faith at all. Laessing visited one of several demolished churches: the Africa Inland Church which stood in a slum suburb of Khartoum. He reports on the mid-February raid by security agents on the library of the Sudanese Presbyterian Evangelical Church, founded by missionaries in central Khartoum more than 100 years ago. 'They took hundreds of books,' a church source told him, 'and the entire archive, not just religious literature.' Laessing notes that numerous church-affiliated institutions have been closed and foreign Christians deported. (In addition, on Monday 4 March, the regime closed the Aslan English Teaching Centre, accusing it of engaging in 'suspicious activities'.) According to Laessing, 'Despair and anxiety is palpable in many of Khartoum's churches, most of which date back to the British colonial era which ended in 1955.' He attended Sunday worship in a small room beside the demolished church. He listened as Pastor Said tried to encourage what remains of his flock – 11 adults and four children. 'The government destroyed our church,' he said, 'but we don't have to be afraid. God will always protect us. Hallelujah!'

On 28 January 2013 the 54 member states of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC) showed how little they care about Sudanese citizens. First they elected Sudan as one of four Vice-Presidents, then they nominated the racist, genocidal, rogue state to chair UN-ECOSOC's proceedings on humanitarian affairs. The US and Canada lobbied strongly against the nomination on the grounds that Khartoum is currently blockading humanitarian aid from its own people, creating famine and a humanitarian crisis in Blue Nile and South Kordofan where conflict has left 700,000 people displaced and from where more than 200,000 have fled. France and Australia did not oppose Sudan's nomination! Thankfully, however, they did not object to further consultations and eventually Sudan agreed to cede the humanitarian segment to Pakistan. It is good and right that Pastor Said is exhorting his flock to trust in Almighty God – He is faithful while 'all other ground is sinking sand'. <http://rlprayerbulletin.blogspot.com>

– Elizabeth Kendal

Please Pray That The Lord Will:

- protect His people as a shepherd guides and protects his flock, while providing all their needs (Psalm 23);
- encourage believers, fanning their faith into flame, drawing them near into prayer and dispelling their fears and enabling 'rest' (Isaiah 42.3 ESV);
- intervene in Sudan to establish righteousness and 'bring forth justice' for the sake of the Church and all the peoples of Sudan who are in need of the Gospel. (Ephesians 3.20)

PASSING THE BATON

LAUSANNE MOVEMENT APPOINTS MICHAEL OH NEW CEO

– Leadership Passes To Next Generation

THE Lausanne Movement has appointed Dr Michael Oh, a 41-year-old Korean-American serving in Japan, as its new Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer, effective 1 March.

'Michael is a cross-cultural bridge-builder, from East to West and across generations; he knows the overall Movement well and understands the complexity of this leadership calling,' said Ram Gidoomal, Chair of The Lausanne Movement Board of Directors, regarding the unanimous selection confirmed by the Board. 'He will be able to build on the firm foundation that Doug Birdsall and the global leadership of Lausanne have established, to the glory of God.'

Dr Oh is president and founder of Christ Bible Seminary in Nagoya, Japan, a vibrant and growing seminary in Japan, which is making an impact among young Christians seeking a renewed vision for the next generation of Christianity in Japan. He has been involved in Lausanne since 2004, serving as keynote speaker and part of the planning team for Lausanne's Younger Leaders Gathering in 2006, and as a member of the Lausanne Board since 2007. He will be formally installed at The Lausanne Global Leadership Forum in South Asia in June.

Oh succeeds outgoing CEO Rev Doug Birdsall, who becomes the President of American Bible Society on 1 March. 'Michael is an exceptionally gifted younger leader who will serve the Movement with vision and passion in the years to come,' Birdsall said. 'As a reflective practitioner, he embodies the essence of the spirit of Lausanne – humility, friendship, study, prayer, partnership and hope.' Birdsall further indicated that he believes Oh understands the value of Lausanne's rich history, and as a younger leader has demonstrated the ability to inspire and enlist a new generation of men and women around the globe who share Lausanne's commitment to 'the whole Church taking the whole Gospel to the whole World.'

'Lausanne is in good hands, and the future is filled with promise,' Birdsall added. After passing the baton of leadership to Oh, Birdsall will continue to serve in leadership with Lausanne as an Honorary Chair.

'I am humbled by this appointment as I follow in the footsteps of the legacy that God started in the Movement through godly leaders like Billy Graham, Leighton Ford, Gottfried Osei-Mensah, Paul Cedar, and my predecessor, and friend, Doug Birdsall,' Oh said. 'My own development as a leader, along with countless other younger leaders within Lausanne, has been significantly impacted by the mentorship of Doug, the Lausanne Board, and other Lausanne leaders. Lausanne is getting younger, stronger, and more representative of the rich diversity and depth of the global church. Mobilising and connecting younger global leaders for world evangelisation will be my joy and priority as I take the leadership of Lausanne.'

www.lausanne.org



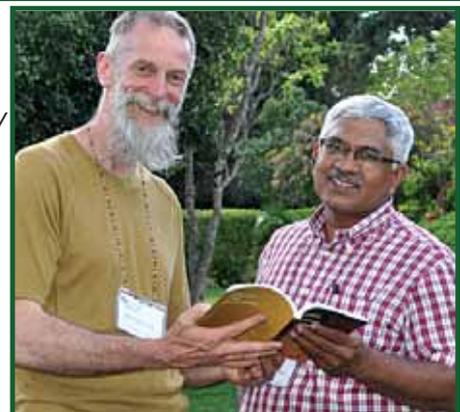
Michael Oh

SPCKA Helps Out With Indian Bible Commentaries

A LOAN of \$6,000 from SPCKA (Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia) has made possible the publication of the first two titles in *The India Commentary On The New Testament, First Corinthians and Timothy And Titus*.

This is the first commentary series written to serve the Indian subcontinent. The ICNT aims to be exegetically sound and contextually relevant by giving a well-informed exposition of the original meaning of the Bible text and applying it to today's India. The authors of the series address challenges common to India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka such as caste, the treatment of widows and corruption as well as the philosophical questions posed by the Hindu world view.

There is a need in India for Bible commentaries that are affordable and accessible. Although many Western commentaries are invaluable, they are written for a Western audience and are expensive. The ICNT is scholarly yet written in everyday language and is inexpensive. While intended primarily for theological students and teachers, the commentaries are also suitable for pastors and lay people with an interest in theology. www.spcka.org.au



Primalogue Managing Director George Korah presents SPCKA National Director Michael Collie with a copy of *First Corinthians*, from the *India Commentary On The New Testament*.

PERSECUTION WATCH

Couple Kicked Out Of Lao Village For Accepting Christ; Pastors Detained

LAO village officials frequently harass Christians. In one such event, a couple have been thrown out of their village in Laos because of their conversion to Christianity, while three pastors have been detained, accused of spreading the faith.

Sakien and his wife Dong were issued with an eviction order on 23 January by the chief of Chumpoy village, Sanamsai district, Attapeu province. They are currently being provided with temporary shelter in an unfinished church building which has no walls, in Intee village. Sakien is in poor health and requires medical treatment. The couple had converted to Christianity when they attended Intee village church earlier in January. They had been inspired to go by the testimony of their son and daughter-in-law, Sanien and Pitsamai. The young couple had gone to the church in December 2012 seeking prayer for physical healing for Pitsamai, who had complications relating to childbirth. She was healed, and the couple accepted Christ, prompting Sakien and Dong to seek prayer also. There have been numerous similar cases of believers, especially recent converts, being threatened with eviction – threats that are sometimes carried out.

Church leaders are also vulnerable. Three from Savannakhet province were detained by police on 5 February. The pastors, Bounma, Somkaew and Bounmee, had gone to a shop in Phin district market to make copies of a Christian DVD. While they were testing one of the copies, police came by the shop and saw them, along with the shop owner, watching it. Three senior police officers were called to the scene and stormed the shop. They arrested the pastors and also took the shop owner in for questioning. He was later released, but Bounma, Somkaew and Bounmee remain in custody.

They are accused of spreading Christianity, though the pastors said that they had made only three copies of the DVD so that each could watch it in his own home. The Lao authorities are very suspicious of the rapid spread of the Christian faith among ethnic minorities. They consider Christianity an American import that is a threat to national identity and unity. barnabasfund.org

A Cry For Help From A Brother Minister In Pakistan

ONCE again Christians in Pakistan paid the price of faith. More than 100 houses of Christians have been burnt by an enraged mob of thousands including hundreds of militants related to banned Islamic group Sipah-e-Sahaba. This violent mob attacked the houses in Joseph Colony, Badami Bagh, Lahore, the provincial capital of Punjab. This violent act happened after fake allegations of blasphemy against a Christian man but the police were forced to register a case to placate the mob.

The incident started on Friday when a young Muslim man accused the Christian man of committing blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammad. According to the reports Shahid Imran, complainant in the case and Sawan Masih, accused of blasphemy, were friends but got annoyed with each other on some matters. After accusing Mr Sawan Masih of blasphemy against Prophet Mohammad he incited a large crowd from a nearby mosque and went to Sawan's house to kill him. Sawan had fled from his house but the crowd threatened the Christian people in the area to hand over Mr Sawan to decide his fate. Fearing for their safety, hundreds of Christian families fled the area on Friday 8 March. These innocent and frightened people were forced to flee for their lives, leaving behind their houses and possessions unprotected. The mob returned on Saturday 9 March and began to ransack Christian homes and setting them on fire. When people came back to their houses they found that they had lost every thing. Everything was burnt and they have nothing to wear, eat and drink. The victims are shelter less and in miserable condition. People were mourning over their burnt houses and loss of their belongings. The situation is still in danger and people who came back to see their burnt houses are under threat. This sad incident is also a question mark on competency of law enforcement agencies who remained failed to control the mob. This is also a question mark on the role of Muslim religious leaders and scholars who instigate people to attack on Minorities. This is also a failure of Christian political leaders and our representative in legislative assemblies who could not raise their voice effectively.

I call for support and solidarity of international organizations for the amendment in the blasphemy law in Pakistan. I also request all of you to share this news with friends around the world and pray for Christians and other religious minorities in Pakistan who are constantly under threat of forced conversion, kidnapping, blasphemy law, less opportunities and discrimination. I also request you to join hands with us to provide them food, clothing, medicine and in the rehabilitation of the victims. Please pray for the affected people.

The name of the man who wrote this letter is with-held for his own protection, but he is a friend and fellow minister of mine, and his account of this event is corroborated by other sources. Our brethren in Pakistan who suffer under 'The Religion Of Peace' need our prayer and care. – Ed.

Big Families, Big Blessings

IF you knocked on the door of Sveta and Sasha's house in Vladivostok, Russia, early in the morning you would find them cooking breakfast for 27 people. Their family! Yes, 27 including 22 children of which 19 have been adopted. Parents are busy but calm preparing children for school and a few for their university studies.

The same hustle and bustle happens in Lena and Sergei's family that has 12 children living with them at the moment. What is remarkable is that there is substantial peace and order in both households. Not only has Lena got children to look after, but she also milks her cow every day, takes good care of all the other farm animals and has an extensive garden producing enormous crops of vegetables to feed the family. Selling the excess at the markets provides extra income for the family. On Sundays they have a church service in their house and during the week home group meetings.

Sveta and Sasha's family has been living in the house built for them for two years now. There is still work to complete it, but they have been able to occupy two of the four storeys. Lena and Sergei have an old house but some renovations have been done. Donations are welcome and needed to complete these houses. Contact Kids Outreach Int, 02 6259 0760 or email admin@kidsoutreach.org



Lena and Sergei' – and the family.

Statement From Hillsong Church Re: Zion

'WE are honoured that our album, *Zion*, has reached No.1 on the ARIA Albums Chart, and would like to thank all those who have supported Hillsong UNITED. It is humbling and exciting to know that this album is inspiring people not just in Australia but across the globe to live with purpose and to put their trust in God. Music is an expression of our worship and UNITED consists of a great team of people passionate about revealing God through music. In a world where negativity is so dominant, we hope Zion can be a sound of joy and hope.'

An Opportunity To Help Mukti

GLENDa de Jager, National Director of Mukti Australia, has just returned from India, where she has seen several projects brought to completion through the generous support of Australian Christians. Glenda says, 'What a privilege it is to see lives changed, hope for the future and new opportunities available to girls and young women in India. The teenage girls at Mukti are looking forward to the opening of the new Junior College for the start of the 2013 Indian school year. Short term volunteers and visitors have supported and encouraged our Indian staff with various programs, leading to the empowerment and dignity of our girls and women living at Mukti.'



'The Junior College (years 11-12) is well underway, however, due to a change in building regulations it has become necessary to include parking spaces not previously in the plan. This has increased

the cost and we now need some additional funding to bring this project to completion.

Funds are also needed for fitting out classrooms – students need tables and chairs; teachers need a desk and cabinet. Ceiling fans will enable students to work in a comfortable work environment. The plight of girls in India cries out for our attention. Please partner with us this Easter as together we make a difference in the lives of so many girls in India? www.mukti.org.au
Crisis For Christian Digital Radio Station
MELBOURNE's 89.9 LightFM's digital radio sister service, LightDigital, is at risk of scaling back its transmission if the federal government fails to reverse a funding shortfall for community broadcasters in the upcoming May budget. Community digital radio services were launched nationally in 2011 and there are currently 37 metro-wide digital radio services in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. Light Digital was launched just over 12 months ago airing only Christian content. Since then they have attracted 158,000 regular listeners. However, federal government funding cuts in the last budget have resulted in a \$1.4 million shortfall which, unless reversed, will see this and many other digital stations axed.

Community Broadcasting Association of Australia President Adrian Basso said the Government's funding shortfall for community digital services would be disastrous for media diversity, specialist programming and local and Australian content. www.lightdigital.com.au (Continued on Page 12)

HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE (2) ... With Barbara Furman

(Continued from Page Eleven)

Hope For Europe

'TODAY Europe is suffering the effects of being a post-Christian society,' reports Every Home for Christ's Regional Director Pierre Clement. 'Our cathedrals are tourist attractions, Islam is growing, Christians are facing challenges.' However Pierre has noticed a recent shift in the spiritual atmosphere of the region: 'The tide is turning. There is a new generation with little exposure to the Bible or the church. This generation hasn't heard the Gospel. People are becoming more spiritual; they are seeking something more.' As a result there is a growing enthusiasm among Christians for evangelism and a growing curiosity among non-believers about Christ. Over the last year EHC has seen the evidence of this as 6,272 people so far have responded to the Gospel through their ministry. Using the home-to-home evangelism strategy, as well as new strategies especially relevant to the Europe region, EHC teams reached over 1.7 million families in 2012, planting the seeds of 'something more' that can only be found in Christ. everyhomeforchrist.org.au

Rapid Response Teams On The Job

'THERE is an urgency in reaching out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no more important message for us to deliver and the opportunities are all around us if we open our eyes and make ourselves available.' So writes Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's Australian Director Jorge Rodrigues. Their Rapid Response Team chaplains have been in Bundaberg, Qld, working alongside Samaritan's Purse Disaster Relief, reaching out in the name of Jesus Christ to hurting people as they return to homes ravaged by the floods. A couple of weeks earlier a chaplain was deployed to Dunalley, Tasmania, to comfort and support those whose lives were drastically impacted by the bushfires. However these disasters did not prevent BGEA from pushing ahead with their campaign to help churches in NSW disciple 10,000 youth this year with their *Dare To Be A Daniel* resources. www.billygraham.org.au

Dress Ups

DRESS A Girl Around the World is an organisation which, with the vision for every girl in the world to own at least one dress, motivates women to sew dresses and then distributes them to needy girls. The organisation partnered with OM Ships' *Logos Hope* by making 10,000 dresses for the ship's visit to Cambodia. A team from Dress A Girl flew from the USA to the ship to distribute the dresses, working alongside crew members. When the team was dressing girls in a very poor village, they noticed the girls' mothers watching them, so decided to dress the mothers too. 'It was very special to dress the girls but when we dressed the women it was even more incredible,' said Holly Crowe from USA. 'We prayed for each woman that God would bless her and she would know Him.' www.omships.org

CMS Victoria News

ONE of the passions and talents Wei-Han Kuan brings to the position of CMS Victoria State Director is for seeing people grow into greater service for Jesus. Out of this passion, Wei-Han has initiated an internship program. Two interns have been appointed: Rachel Sobey and Iain Payne. Rachel will be four days a week and Iain two days. They will work under Wei-Han. After 17 years service, Myrla Lozares announced her retirement from CMS Victoria at the end of January. Myrla was PA to the State Director and was an institution in the office. Her incredible organisational skills and caring heart made her such an important part of CMS Victoria. The news that a CMS member had died in a serious motor vehicle accident in Nepal was a shock to all the CMS family. Neda, a 23-year-old woman, was participating in a Queensland/ Northern NSW Go Explore trip when the tragic accident happened on Sunday 13 January. Four other participants were injured, two of whom were admitted to hospital. All have now returned to Australia, reports *CMS Victoria March Branch Matters*



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EVENTS FOR THE DIARY

MAF Open Day About To Take-Off

NEARLY a thousand people are expected to attend MAF's Mission Aviation Discovery Day at Camden Airport (Sydney) on Saturday 23 March. You are invited to visit the Discovery Day to learn first hand about MAF's vital and strategic mission, meet some of their pilots, support missionaries and have a great day. MAF Discovery Days have grown to become MAF's most popular and well attended event. At Discovery Day 2013 visitors will see an interactive medivac simulation set up to allow them to experience the feeling of rescuing a croc attack victim in Arnhem Land. The less adventurous can grab a seat and watch it all unfold! Dr Judy Fitzmaurice, former missionary doctor with Pioneers in PNG (now chair of Pioneers Australia) will speak on the difference MAF makes in delivering health care to remote communities. Also MAF pilot Jonathan Lowe, currently serving in East Timor, will be on a live chat in which you can ask any questions you'd like. Jonathan did 110 medevacs last year alone!

MAF's aircraft will be there on display for people to have an up-close look. The usual discovery joy rides will be available for just \$60, with trial instructional flights available for \$100. You will be able to grip the controls, climb, descend and turn.

www.maf.org.au/discoveryday

Open Doors Open Day

OPEN Doors is holding an Open Day on Saturday 16 March from 10 am to 3 pm, lunch provided, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Cnr Riversdale Rd and Waterloo St, Camberwell. RSVP to Jess at odaevents@od.org or on 02 9451 2999.

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HERE TO HELP

Doctor In Baby's HIV Cure Is Rooted In Faith And Compassion

FAITH and godly compassion are guiding principles in the life of Hannah Gay, the University of Mississippi Medical Center pediatrician at the forefront of the reported cure of HIV in a 2-year-old girl born with the disease in rural Mississippi.

Gay and her husband Paul served as Southern Baptist representatives in the Horn of Africa 25 years ago as HIV was taking root there, but Gay's interest in the disease is driven more by a desire to achieve the best for children, rather than a desire to find a cure, her husband told Baptist Press.

'[Faith] influences every area of her practice. Hannah ministers through everything she touches. Her ministry is supported and guided by prayer,' Paul Gay said. 'The affection, the love that she has for the families and the children, the commitment she has, all [stem] from her faith. She has a dedication that flows from her relationship with God and I think that has attracted a team to work with her who share her commitment.'

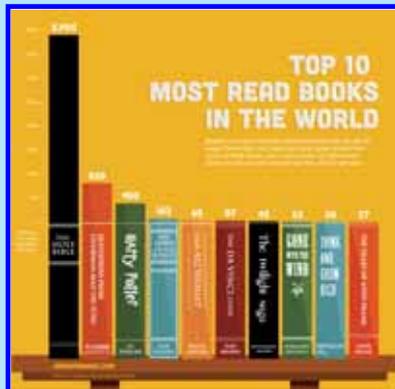
– Baptist Press via Worldwide Photos



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BOOKS WORTH READING

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY: THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, Derek W.H. Thomas, Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2011, ISBN 9780852347423

THE 15 chapters that make up this book began as sermons at the midweek prayer and Bible-study hour of First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Mississippi, where Dr Thomas is Minister of Teaching. The meditations are based on the *Songs Of Ascents* (Psalms 120-134).

His aim is to provide a 15-day course of exercises in Reformed spirituality, namely a spirituality that is God-centred, biblically-based and realistic about indwelling sin that will not be completely eradicated from the believer in this life. It reflects an understanding of spiritual experience that makes Christians useful in the present even as it prepares them for the world to come. It asserts our dependence upon God, but does not rule out the need for effort on our part.

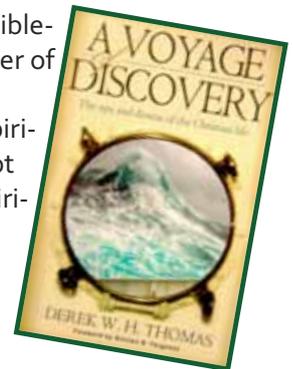
In other words, unlike so many other books on spirituality, it does not promise more than it can actually provide. In all these matters, Dr Thomas is a reliable and wise guide.

The exposition of Psalm 120 provides an analysis of spiritual depression, giving wise words of comfort based, of course, on the counsel of God's Word. Psalm 121 reassures us of God's keeping power, with the words 'keep/keeper' used six times in the Psalm. One of the great encouragements of believers is to know that we have a sovereign Heavenly Father. The writer's Reformed convictions are on show at this point.

Derek Thomas uses Psalm 123.2 ('till he has mercy upon us') to teach that God has a timetable for His providential dealings with His people who cry out to Him for help. Working through this choice part of the Psalter, Thomas provides apt illustrations, excerpts from Christian poetry and hymnody, and pertinent quotations, all of which are designed to help those wearied by life's troubles and those keen to mature and deepen in their spiritual experience.

Each chapter closes with questions to answer. Dr Thomas suggests that a journal be used to write down the answers. He goes further and urges the keeping of such a journal after the 15 days are completed, as a helpful aid to spiritual growth. Like going on a crash diet, what counts is not what we do for two weeks, but the formation of good habits that continue with us! This book will help its users to develop a healthy ongoing pattern of Bible reading and meditation.

– Greg Goswell



THE FIRST THOUSAND YEARS: A GLOBAL HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY, New Haven: Yale, 2012.

HISTORICAL surveys are typically marred by predictable blemishes. Some so generalize that the personalities and specific contours of historical life get smoothed over. Others are too particular, veering dangerously toward the genre of 'list.'

Robert Wilken's new book is remarkably free of these stains. Only at one or two points does he slip into listing, and he never overgeneralizes. By the end of the book we have not only read about Origen and Constantine, Nicea and Ambrose and Augustine, the spread of Islam and Justinian, Pope Nicholas and Boris the Khan of the Bulgars and Charlemagne. We have met them, taken tours of their buildings, frequently heard them in their own voices.

Wilken makes a number of distinctive contributions, most related to his conviction that Christianity is not merely a doctrinal system or faith but a city that transforms the cities in which it's planted. 'Christianity is a culture-forming religion,' and we can trace how the 'growth of Christian communities led to the re-making of the cultures of the ancient world.'

The First Thousand Years is a genuinely global history whose scope extends beyond Byzantium and Western Europe. Wilken includes substantial chapters on Coptic and Nubian Christianity, Ethiopia, the 'Nestorian' Church of the East, Armenia, Georgia, India, and China. Wilken makes his history uncannily contemporary by emphasizing the church's continuous interaction with Islam in the second half of the first thousand years.

The First Thousand Years is a substantial historical study, but Wilken assumes little prior knowledge. He includes the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and other documents familiar to most Christians. This makes this nearly blemishless book an ideal gift for a non-Christian, especially one whose view of the church is infected by the notion that 'religion poisons everything.'

– Peter J. Leithart. (Full review at thegospelcoalition.org)

WITH CHRIST ... BETTER BY FAR

GRANVILLE HOWARD WILSON, architect, author, lecturer, 26-4-1922 – 27-2-2013.

RELOCATING from a depressed post-war Britain to the beckoning opportunities of Australia, Granville Wilson made Australia his home and served his adopted country with flair, faithfulness and Christian grace.

Granville was an integral part of the firm Stephenson & Turner, but not content to remain just an employed architect Granville aspired to explore his talents with more freedom. In the late 1960s he was invited to join the faculty of RMIT to lecture in architecture and especially its history. He loved talking architecture, and could converse intelligently on its history from early Roman, through the great romance of cathedrals of medieval Europe, to the modern day. His flair and skill came to the fore when he co-authored the book *Building A City – 100 Years Of Melbourne Architecture*, OUP, 1981. Other writing followed into print including historical monographs of RMIT Faculty of Architecture, Reservoir Presbyterian Church, Diamond Valley Baptist Church (*Light Up The Valley*), to name just some.

Community service and goodwill to others marked his life and attitudes all his days. This commitment never diminished and as Jean and Granville spent their later years as a vital team at Templestowe Orchards Retirement Village, Granville taught water colour painting at both U3A and in the village.

Though a talented artist, author, lecturer and architect, he was pre-eminently a Christian man. He wanted more than anything else to glorify God. He served with distinction and faithfulness in each church where he and Jean were members: Baptist churches at Norlane, Box Hill, East Kew, Diamond Valley, Phillip Island (where he designed the new church) and, lastly, Eltham Presbyterian Church. Wherever he served he became known and loved for his gentleness and kindness. His wider Christian influence was similarly felt as he served in voluntary capacities organisations such as Belgrave Heights Convention and Scripture Union.

Granville and Jean were married for 66 years, having met at Cambridge University, where each of their London colleges had been relocated during wartime evacuations. It was the days where an emerging Christian presence was felt within the Christian Unions of several English universities and it was meetings of organisations such as CICCUC that brought Granville and Jean together.

He died, 'full of years', at sunrise on 27 February, aged 90. His legacy will be lived out and enjoyed through his wife Jean, and their children: Tony, John, Tim, Jan and Linda; their eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Granville Wilson was a gentle, sensitive and humble man whose 90 years were graciously and thoughtfully spent. — *John P Wilson, Clerk of Assembly, Presbyterian Church of Victoria.*

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