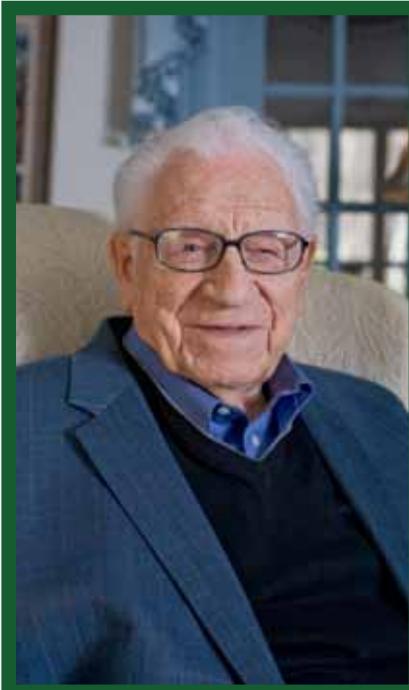


Bev Shea Receives His Reward

George Beverly Shea, the man who sang 'I'd Rather Have Jesus Than Silver or Gold' into the hearts of 20th Century Christians went to be with Jesus on April 16, 2013



George Beverly Shea, 104, of Montreat, North Carolina, often called 'America's beloved Gospel singer', passed away Tuesday, April 16, after a brief illness. Best known as the soloist of Billy Graham Crusades, George Beverly Shea was born February 1, 1909, in Winchester, Ontario, Canada, the son of the Reverend A. J. Shea and Maude Whitney Shea.

Shea attended Annesley College (Ottawa, Ontario) from 1926 to 1928, then Houghton College (Houghton, N.Y.) from 1928 to 1929. From 1929 until 1938, Shea worked in radio broadcasting as an avocation while employed as a clerk in the headquarters of Mutual of New York insurance company. From 1938 to 1944, Shea was an announcer and staff soloist at WMBI radio in Chicago. While in this position, he met a young pastor named Billy Graham in 1943. Graham had taken over a radio program called 'Songs in the Night' at Chicago's WCFL, and, having recalled hearing Shea's radio singing, enlisted him to help with the broadcast. That was the beginning of a long association between Graham and Shea. In 1947 Shea went to Graham's hometown, Charlotte, N.C., to sing in one of the first of Graham's citywide Crusades. Shea devotedly preceded the evangelist in song in Crusades over the span of nearly sixty years. In his autobiography, 'Just As I Am,' Graham writes, 'I have sometimes said that I would feel lost getting up to preach if Bev were not there to prepare the way through an appropriate song.'

(Continued p. 7)

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Problem Solved

HOW do you preach on a 'God-less' chapter of Scripture? To my shame I confess that I often don't, I just skip on to the next chapter. But Ian Hamilton, minister of Cambridge (UK) Presbyterian Church, showed how to do it on Sunday 28 April in a sermon on 1Samuel 27.1 - 28.2. In brief, you wrestle with it before the Lord until He enables you to preach it! He reminded us that 2 Timothy 3.16 declares that ALL Scripture is God-breathed, and that the great purpose of God in giving us the Scriptures is to show His overarching purpose of bringing everything under the headship of Christ, who is the subject and predicate of all Scripture.

First of all, Ian Hamilton made no bones about the fact that this was an unsavoury incident in the life of David, in which no mention of God is made, and he made no excuses for David's reprehensible behaviour, which clearly showed the influence of Satan. The Lord's people must always be on their guard against Satan's wiles. David had been pursued by Saul for many years by this time, and those who have fought long and hard can become battle-weary and vulnerable to Satan's devices. Our strengths can too easily become ways of entrance into our lives for Satan.

There is nothing to show that David had taken his situation to the Lord or sought the counsel of fellow believers although He had intervened in the previous chapter. Christians have many fellow believers to whom they can turn, and above all can always and in every situation turn to the Lord in prayer.

But although although God's presence is not directly noted, He is of course omnipresent, and the greatest manifestation of His presence is His grace. David here is a sinner in need of gracious forgiveness for sin. He has been plundering his enemies from Zilpah, killing the men and women to remove witnesses of his crime.

Sin has been described as 'God-killing', and 'all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God'. David needed grace, and so do we.

Overall, we see that from greatest to least, we are all feeble and frail children of dust. The best of us, like David, can fail, so that even the best of us desperately need God's grace.

So when we serial preachers are confronted by a 'difficult' chapter along the way, it's worth our while to pause, reflect, study and bathe our task in prayer so that we can take on the difficult passages of Scripture in their context for the blessing of our people - and ourselves as well.

- Bob Thomas

Our thanks to Katherine Goswell, doing a great job as Acting Editor while Bob Thomas is in the UK attending several conferences and enjoying a holiday.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

Egypt: Evil Thrive In Lawless Sinai

IT was in the Sinai desert that the nation of Israel received God's law. Consequently we tend to think of the Sinai as a place of law-giving. Today, however, under Egyptian control, the Sinai (particularly the north-east) is absolutely lawless - a place of law-breaking. Not only has al-Qaeda established a presence, but Bedouin criminal gangs and human traffickers operate with impunity. The Egyptian government knows that the clusters of concrete buildings dotting the Sinai desert are being used as torture chambers by human traffickers. The traffickers relay their victims' agony to family members or diaspora groups via mobile phone to facilitate payment of ransom. Even when ransom is paid it is not uncommon to find that victims are subsequently sold on to other traffickers who repeat the process. Failure to pay will result in death by torture, including through the extraction of saleable organs. New York Times (NYT) estimates that some 7000 refugees have been abused this way in the past four years and that 4000 of them may have died.

The victims, mostly Eritrean (99 percent), Somali and Sudanese refugees, include many Christians who have fled persecution in their homelands. Most of the victims have been kidnapped from the Shagarab refugee camps in eastern Sudan, home to tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees, and then transferred to the Sinai where they are sold to criminals. Eritrean opposition groups are demanding that Sudan improve security at the camps. Chairman of the Ethiopia-based Eritrean Democratic Alliance (EDA), Tewelde Gebresilase, says human trafficking is carried out by a highly organised network that stretches from Eritrea to the refugee camps in Sudan and to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. It is a highly lucrative business, not only for the Bedouin, but for the Eritrean, Sudanese and Egyptian officials who are involved either directly or indirectly through taking bribes. According to intelligence sources, it is a major form of revenue for the corrupt and wicked regime ruling Eritrea.

On 1 April Amnesty International (AI) released a report entitled 'EGYPT/SUDAN: refugees and asylum seekers face brutal treatment, kidnapping for ransom, and human trafficking'. AI is appealing that Egypt and Sudan should 'make urgent and concerted efforts to stop asylum-seekers and refugees being kidnapped from camps in Sudan, forcibly transported to Egypt, and being severely abused in the Sinai desert'. Reporting on a typical case, AI writes, 'On 22 January 2013, two Eritrean women living in the Shagarab camps set out to go to church, but did not arrive at their destination. Camp residents believe they were kidnapped.'

Recently five Eritreans escaped from their captors during a fierce night storm. Whilst two perished en route, three made it to safety. Mhretab (27) is frail and heavily scarred. 'We had barely anything to eat or drink,' he explains. 'And we weren't allowed to sleep. If we did, they burned us. They scorched the skin on our arms or backs with burning plastic, or they burned us directly with lighters. They hung us from our feet and hit us. If we cried, they called our families and we had to beg them over the phone to pay for us.' By selling everything they owned and taking up a collection at church, Mhretab's family raised the ransom. But instead of releasing Mhretab, his kidnapers sold him on to other human traffickers. Lemlem (15) is totally traumatised. Wearing only a sweater, she asks the home owner if there is any underwear she can put on.

This evil thrives because nobody is prepared to act against it. Egyptian President Morsi would say it is not in his interests to pick a fight with criminals who are hurting only non-Arabs and mostly non-Muslims anyway, posing no threat to him personally or politically. As for the Eritrean regime at the source of the problem, it is certainly not in its interests to see its refugees protected or its human trafficking revenues cut off. The whole situation would be totally hopeless were it not for the reality of the Lord of Hosts.

– Elizabeth Kendal, *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin*

Please Pray That The Lord:

- Who demands 'Let my people go,' will shake the Sinai and break the arm (the mechanism of action) of the wicked (Psalm 10:15), that his people might be delivered and law and order restored to the desert.
- Will send his forces to guard the mostly Eritrean refugees – many of whom are Christians – in Sudan's Shagarab camps.
- Will intervene in Eritrea, the source of the problem, to liberate it from its corrupt, repressive and wicked regime.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

North Korean Christians Ask For Prayer

NORTH Korean church leaders are asking Christians worldwide to pray for their country, amid increased war threats and combat preparation by North Korean military officials. Between 200,000 and 400,000 Christians live in the country featured as the Number 1 persecutor of Christians worldwide on the Open Doors World Watch List for the past 11 years. An estimated 60,000 to 80,000 Christians are forced to live in political prison camps because of their beliefs.

According to underground Christians in North Korea, a war-like atmosphere now grips the country – highlighted in this summary by a Christian leader of the message the people recently received from 'high command':

'We are to meet the decisive battle with a gun in one hand and a hammer in the other,' he explains. 'The military army, navy, air force troops, strategic rocket troops, the red guards and the red youth guards are already in combat mode. Urgent meetings are being held everywhere, regardless if it is day or night. At those meetings, officials make decisions on what needs to happen in case war breaks out and everyone, including women, needs to be combat ready.'

According to Open Doors sources, many cars on the roads are covered with camouflage nets, while soldiers carry guns and wear hats camouflaged with dried branches. But despite the call to be 'combat ready', Christians and other citizens of North Korea greatly fear war and its consequences.

'Many people are in a hurry to purchase emergency food supplies and daily goods just in case,' says an Open Doors source. 'The prices of goods, including food, are skyrocketing.'

Prayer for North Korea is now more important than ever before. Underground Christians in the country are grateful for the strength they receive from believers around the world and urge them to continue upholding North Korea in their prayers.

'I would like to thank the many brothers and sisters around the world for their continuous love and support,' reads a letter recently smuggled out of North Korea, written by an underground Christian there. 'We know that our journey will not be an easy one, but we are sure that our faith, desperate hope and passionate desire will someday bear many fruits. Not matter how difficult life is for us, we never blame or complain about our circumstances. God has promised us in the Bible that if we seek His Kingdom first, all other things will be given to us. Please pray for us.'

For almost 60 years Open Doors has worked in the world's most oppressive and restrictive countries, strengthening Christians to stand strong in the face of persecution.

– Open Doors Australia

Protestants In Uzbekistan Harrased And Bullied With Impunity

Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov rules according to Communist Soviet methods, so society is heavily regulated. Revolutionary and jihadist Islam are real threats to his regime. Religious laws primarily targeting these Islamic groups are also used to persecute Protestant Christians whom the regime considers are threatening social cohesion. Small house churches are routinely raided by hostile security police. Protestants charged with breaching the religion law by possessing Christian literature, witnessing or worshipping without registration face exorbitant fines often 50 and 100 times the minimum monthly wage. These fines leave them destitute. This persecution has nothing to do with state security and everything to do with making Protestant Christianity undesirable to its members and to the masses. Despite this, Uzbekistan's Protestant and independent churches are growing.

– Elizabeth Kendal, *Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin*

Please Pray That:

- The Holy Spirit will forge unity and solidarity amongst believers so that in assisting one another their love will be a witness to others.
- Christ will build his Church, raising up leaders filled with the Spirit
- God, who rules heaven and earth, will raise up political and civic leaders in Uzbekistan who will establish justice and liberty.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CHRISTIANITY IS JEWISH

UK Visitor To Speak in Melbourne & Sydney

Mike Moore, the General Secretary of the UK-based international mission to the Jews, Christian Witness to Israel, is the featured speaker at the Annual Edersheim Lecture to be given at Melbourne School of Theology, Wednesday 1 May at 7pm and Morling Theological College in Sydney on Saturday 4 May at 2pm. The subject of the lecture is 'Pentecost and the Plan of God'.

Mike will be speaking at other meetings in churches in Perth, Tasmania, Melbourne and Sydney. Details from stevenholmes45@hotmail.com. While in the country he will be sharing his conviction that the key to the success of world mission is the success of Jewish mission and introducing CWI's work in Australia. Under the inspiration of a number of prominent evangelicals including Robert Murray McCheyne, Christian Witness to Israel came into being in 1842 for the purpose of reaching Jewish refugees in London. Since then it has become an international mission with branches in the UK, Israel, France, Bulgaria, Hungary, America, New Zealand and Australia. Ten years ago Mike was appointed General Secretary and has travelled extensively. This will be his third visit to Australia and he is looking forward to the challenge of once again stirring Christians to recognise the spiritual need of the Jewish people.



Elizabeth Kendal To Speak In Melbourne

Elizabeth will host a symposium entitled, 'Confronting Persecution in the 21st C'. **Date and venue:** Wednesday 15 May from 7pm at Glen Waverley Anglican Church (supper provided). All are welcome.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

River of Life Celebrates the 'Church Together' in Melbourne

SIMPLY the mention of the name 'Yonggi Cho' draws a strong reaction among evangelical Christians: from charismatics who believe he is one of the greatest and most influential Christians alive today, to conservatives on the reformed end of evangelicalism who label him and point out the theological flaws in his doctrine.

But loathe him or love him, the River of Life conference bringing him to Melbourne in early May, is bringing together churches of all stripes in an almost unprecedented (since the Billy Graham Crusades) show of Christian Unity.

In a remarkable show of unity among churches in Melbourne, Christians from over a dozen denominations and hundreds of charismatic and conservative evangelical churches across Melbourne are gathering on 9-10 May at the River of Life conference, to pray for their city, to celebrate how Christ loves the city every day, and to hear from Dr David Yonggi Cho and Dr Young Hoon Lee, Founder and Senior Pastor of Yoido Church (pronounced 'Yoh-ee-doh') in Korea, the largest local church in the world, with over a million members, according to the Guinness Book of World Records.

Many of Australia's mega churches trace their growth back to the 'Church Growth Movement' which he started, and the explosion of the Australian Christian Churches (formerly Assemblies of God) to his visit in 1977.

'Whether they realise it or not the majority of Christians in Australia have been impacted by his ministry and have much to be grateful for,' according to Dale Stephenson, Senior Pastor of Crossway, Australia's largest Baptist Church.

'If you're part of a growing church, chances are it's influenced by the 'cell church' or 'home group' model, a concept developed and refined in the modern era, by Dr Cho at Yoido Church - which was fundamental to the growth of his church,' he said

'Unlike other Christian conferences, 'River of Life' has been endorsed by over 100 Christian leaders and is being promoted by an oversight team of fifteen including Anglicans and Pentecostals, Baptists, Presbyterians, Salvation Army, Korean ministries and Christian organisations,' he said.

It also features Australian speakers from a range of backgrounds, each demonstrating how Christ is loving Melbourne, from worship leaders Darlene Zschech and Roma Waterman; to social and homelessness care from Salvation Army Officer Brendan Nottle and Father Joe Caddy of Catholic Care; from Cam Butler of Sports Chaplaincy Australia to Pentecostal leader David McCracken.

More details about 'River of Life' can be found at www.riveroflifeconference.org

– Dean Troth



The banner features a background image of the Melbourne skyline. On the left, a blue bar contains the word 'MELBOURNE'. The main text reads 'River of Life CONFERENCE 9-10 MAY 2013' with a blue cross icon above 'of Life'. Below this is a blue wavy line graphic. At the bottom left, the text says 'WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER BRINGING LIFE TO THE CITY AS WE FOLLOW JESUS' and 'www.riveroflifeconference.org'. On the right, there are two portrait photos: a woman (Darlene Zschech) and a man (Dr David Yonggi Cho). Below the photos, it says 'Special Guests Dr David Yonggi Cho & Dr Younghoon Lee Worship with Darlene Zschech, Roma Waterman & Melbourne Gospel Choir'.

WITH CHRIST

Remembering George Beverly Shea



(Continued from p. 1)

Also a prolific recording artist and composer, Shea recorded more than 70 albums of sacred music. At age 23 he wrote the music to one of his best-known solos, "I'd Rather Have Jesus," to words by Mrs. Rhea H. Miller. The poem had been left on the family piano by Shea's mother, and after reading the words he sat at the piano and composed the tune. Shea was also well known for singing 'How Great Thou Art'.

The NSW Council of Churches has written that Shea not only had an influence in America but in Australia. The President of the NSW Council of Churches Reverence Dr Ross Clifford writes, 'We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of George Beverly Shea, and yet we rejoice in the knowledge that he is with the Lord whom he served faithfully for so long.'

'Over many decades George witnessed in song to the power of the death and resurrection of Christ in his own life, and wanted others to know Christ and share the experience. His life is a testimony to the goodness of God and what God can do through a life fully devoted to his service,' Dr Clifford said.

Thousands of Australians will remember George accompanying Billy Graham at evangelistic crusades in Sydney and in other Australian cities, and hearing him on radio and vinyl records, and will have fond memories of his beautiful voice and his humble, gracious spirit.'

Family & Friends Gather to Celebrate the Life of Bev Shea



A public memorial service took place in Montreat, North Carolina on April 21. 'This man's life can be summed up in a few simple phrases,' said Dr. David Bruce, who offered the Scripture reading and meditation during the service. 'The twinkle in his eye, the praise on his lips, the song in his heart, the length of his days, and the joy of his Lord.'

WITH CHRIST

Beginning as the soloist for Billy Graham Crusades in 1947 in Charlotte, Shea sang with Billy Graham for nearly 60 years, until Graham's final Crusade in 2005 in New York City. Shea remained active with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, singing at Franklin Graham Festivals in Charleston, South Carolina in 2008.

The event was attended by nearly 1,000 friends and family, including Billy Graham, Franklin Graham and other associates of the ministry.

Shea was born on Feb. 1, 1909, in Winchester, Ontario, Canada, where his father was a Wesleyan Methodist minister. Between Crusades, radio, and television dates in many countries, he sang at hundreds of concerts and recorded more than 70 albums of sacred music.'

Shea was the recipient of ten Grammy nominations, a Grammy Award in 1965, and was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Grammy organization in 2011. He was also a member of the Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame and Religious Broadcasting Hall of Fame.

Shea will be laid to rest on the grounds of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte during a private ceremony on Monday, April 22. The Billy Graham Library and grounds will be open for visitors on Tuesday, April 23.

– ASSIST News Service



LEAD PASTOR REQUIRED

The Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC) is a young interdenominational and intergenerational Christian Church based in the Eastern suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia.

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GETTING TO KNOW...

Geoff Gawler: CEO Belgrave Heights Convention

Mrs DP talks to Geoff about his passion for the annual conference....

BORN on a poultry farm in Montmorency, in 1949, Geoff has only lived in three houses, all in the Greensborough area. He graduated from Melbourne University with a degree in Commerce. Until recently, he held accountant type positions and was a financial advisor. The family's roots were in Methodism and Geoff made a public commitment to His Lord, aged 10, at the Billy Graham Melbourne Crusade. He remembers making day trips to the convention as a child and once staying as a family. His father was involved in the Methodist Camp, 'Aldersgate'; then with the Diamond Valley Camp.



Since the age of twenty, Geoff has attended every Belgrave Heights Convention, where he met his wife, Sue. They were married in 1974, and continued attending BHC with their three daughters. At the age of 27, Geoff was asked to join the Belgrave Heights Council and for the last 30 years he has been assistant Treasurer, then Treasurer. In September 2010, he became the Chief Executive Officer. What had been a part-time ministry for many years is now his employment. Geoff said, 'It's wonderful to have a job that I am really committed to and passionate about. It is a great honour to hold this position.'

When he is not working at Belgrave Heights Geoff loves flying a plane. His wife and four friends are travelling to the outback with him later in the year. One day a week Geoff helps out at the Australian Centre for Mission Aviation, at Coldstream Airport, where he assists with financial and other matters. He also enjoys walking, and visiting his family in USA. For the third time, Geoff and Sue will attend the Keswick Convention this year, where he has previously met with the Chairman and General Manager. This year he will meet with leaders of Young Adults to enquire about the way their needs are met at the English conventions.

In 2000, the BHC Council started working on a master plan to upgrade and extend the auditorium. The construction started in 2003, followed over the next few years with the addition of the foyer. Then four new camp kitchens were erected; roads were upgraded as were the gas and electricity supplies. In 2011, the Recreation Hall was commenced and meeting rooms added to the Small Hall. OAC make full use of this great facility with the primary aged children during convention time.

There are over 1,000 trees on the property. Twenty-five have had to be removed in 2012. But the plan for 2013 is to do extensive landscaping and tree-planting.

The original planning permit of 2002, for accommodation and dining facilities has been amended. Initially, in stage 1, it will accommodate 80 people with a kitchen and dining room to seat 200. The final plan is for 220 beds, with living quarters for families. Car-parking spaces will be provided for 600 cars, including one space on each caravan site. There are 150 powered sites and 50 unpowered sites...all were full at Easter.

All this progress will enable the BHC ministry to extend to school camps, as well as more conventions, church conferences and family ministry.

When asked how these planned improvements could affect believers, Geoff replied, 'Over the years, BHC has been my spiritual foundation for good teaching and good application for living. That is my vision for others. Christians must understand, and apply the Bible, if we are to minister to an increasingly secular society. The great blessing of the convention is that 12 years ago when we began developing, we had very little money. Today, we still haven't got much money. But we have spent more than \$ 2.3 million in upgrading the property. God has provided the money as we've been obedient to His vision. And God will provide for the next stage, which is the accommodation project, estimated at a cost of \$2 million.' We rejoice with the Belgrave Heights Convention, as shortly after Easter, a cheque was received for \$90,000. This has greatly encouraged the Council members. They recognize God's seal of approval on this ministry of nearly one hundred years. As God's people we are 'All one in Christ Jesus.'

– Barbara Prout (Mrs DP)

Radio Reaches the Far North of Russia

Norilsk in northern Siberia is the latest FEBC-Russia station to begin broadcasting. Known as the most northern major industrial city in the world, and also as one of the most polluted due to the production of nickel, there is a small but active church in the city. Several evangelical congregations are working together to make sure they fully utilise this radio station. Although equipment and additional transmitters are still needed, 107FM is already on air, covering the territory of Norilsk and the neighbouring city of Talnakh.

'People in our city need Jesus,' says Rev Mikhail Dolgih, the local leader in Norilsk. 'We are so glad to be able to broadcast FEBC signal here. I know that people will be blessed and many will come to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour.'

– *March-April Skywaves*



Mobile Missions

You might have noticed that mobile phones are everywhere – and appear to be surgically attached to people's hands and ears! Mobile phones are great communication tools. Increasingly they double as hand held computers which search the internet, download, store and play music and provide all manner of news and information.

Today there are over five billion mobile phones in the world. South America boasts more subscriptions than people as many have two subscriptions due to coverage issues. Over 70% of South American homes now have at least one mobile. This figure is 40% for PNG and over 50% for the Solomon Islands and India. Several African countries have a mobile phone penetration rate in excess of 70%. This is providing Christian missions with a massive opportunity to get their message across. For example, Global Recordings Network has audio record-

ings in over 6,000 languages. With so many people now owning a device which is capable of playing those recordings, their challenge is to get them onto their phones and listening.

ChristianityWorks is also moving in that direction. Previously known as Back to the Bible, their founder Theodore Epp was a true visionary: as early as 1939 he wandered into a radio station in Nebraska, USA, figuring that this new technology – radio – could be used to proclaim the gospel. Now ChristianityWorks is launching an all out assault on the 'mobile' world. Berni Dimet's blog, A Different Perspective, currently heard on over 1,100 radio stations around the world, is already optimised for mobile devices (adifferentperspective.org), and very soon their website, www.christianityworks.com, will be relaunched, fully optimised to take God's Word into the mobile world.

– *Inside Tracks GRN, ChristianityWorks Autumn Newsletter*

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HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE ... *With Barbara Furman*

Displaced Peoples Church

One of the legacies of the unexploded military ordnance in the forests of Laos and Thailand is the displacement of people. One of these groups is known as the Plang. They have no citizenship and no access to land of their own. They move and live where they can get work. Businesses like them because they work hard and expect little.

One such community of Plang has made a home in Nakhon Pathom province in Central Thailand. Whole families are employed in the orchid farms. The average family income is A\$500 per month, a subsistence income. Together they have planted a church and are reaching out to other groups of Plang.

Since 2008 the church has grown to a community of 264 adults and children. They have saved hard and on their behalf the Church of Christ in Thailand has purchased land with the current project being the construction of a church building. At the same time a second church has been planted that now has 80 people as part of it. What a lot can be achieved with little!

– *In Partnership, November 2012*

A New Initiative

East Asia team leaders working with Pioneers Aust have started a launch team so that many of the unreached people groups in the region would hear about Jesus. The goal is that new workers, building on what they already know, would be given a solid foundation in spiritual formation, character development, language and culture acquisition and relevant issues in mission while living in their host culture among the people group they are serving. A 1990 study showed that 47% of missionaries go home, never to return, within five years of commencing their work. Of these, 'preventable causes' (such as relational breakdown in teams, marriages and families, language and cultural acquisition difficulties and moral lapses) were at 71%. The work is hard and sometimes the cost is just too high. The hope of this initiative is to see new workers thrive, not just survive; flourishing in long-term work; equipped by God's grace to overcome inevitable trials; so that Muslim, Buddhist and animist peoples in the area will come to know Jesus.

– *Pioneers Express, April 2013*

The Rich and the Poor

In the North West of Australia Bush Church Aid-supported Philip Knight ministers with his family in the booming mining town of Port Hedland. He has found one of the main challenges is that many people focus on accumulating wealth and possessions and then believe they are self-sufficient and don't need God.

However, despite the abundant wealth in the town, Port Hedland seems to have a two-speed economy of its own and Philip is aware of the great financial divide. 'There may be boom for some, but it definitely goes bust for others,' he said. Philip runs the Hedland Emergency Relief Organisation which rep-

resents the local churches and provides food vouchers for those in need.

Philip says the key to reaching both the rich and poor is to 'prayerfully, biblically and regularly challenge people about life and about their standing before God, knowing that He is the only one who can spiritually open up their eyes to the reality of their sinfulness and of their need of Him'. While the challenges may be great, Philip has witnessed God at work in these booming times. 'It's not mission-impossible,' he says, 'because God is the one changing hearts. I have seen God do a miracle in transforming people from being slaves to money to being servants of God.'

– *BCA Society of Australia*

Understanding the Bible

David Acevedo is an evangelical chaplain who works with men in Prison 1072 in the city of Bayamon, Puerto Rico. Many of these men are drops outs with serious literacy problems and learning disabilities. As David explains, he himself had a lot of problems trying to explain the Bible to the prisoners. The reason he couldn't explain it was that he had problems understanding many of the elaborate words used. He felt that he could not do his job properly.

David was invited by Bible League International to a Project Phillip training program where he received a La Palabra de Dios para Todos Easy-to-Read Bible and since then his work has become much easier and far more effective. He says, 'Now I can share the Word of God in a simpler way and the men understand it much better because I myself understand it more.'

– www.bibleleaguecom.au

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Mrs DP talks to Maxine Cook

CHATTING with such a delightful lady was a refreshing way to start a busy Easter Sunday. Her faith is transparent, as is friendliness and genuine kindness. Her sense of humour sprinkled her comments with fun and laughter. It is easy to see how this small, yet dynamic lady would have been a great and godly influence in the lives of countless students at Sydney Missionary and Bible College where her husband was principal for 26 years. During the first 18 years they lived in the centre of the campus. Then for 8 years their home was on the fringe of the property.

It takes a special type of woman to embrace such an open family life. Yet they raised their children in the midst of the hectic routine of a student campus. I am sure Mrs Cook's home was an oasis of peace and a refuge sought by many a student with problems. When we allow God to choose our life's partner, He always leads the right woman to complement and work alongside the man He has selected for a particular task.

Maxine lived in Brisbane and grew up in a nominal Church of England family until the age of nine. They moved to Sydney where she attended school until 14, then did a secretarial course. Maxine had always believed in God, but when her sister was converted she noticed the change in her sister's life. She was actually reading the Bible and praying and enjoying it. When she was 16, she began to feel convicted at meetings but never responded to the altar call. One night she knelt down at her bedside and surrendered her life to the Lord. She arose a changed person; the Bible was real to her, as was the Lord Jesus as King of her life.

At 17, she started four years nurses' training at Prince Henry Hospital; followed by midwifery training in Tasmania. On returning to Sydney she entered SMBC, where she met her future husband who was one year ahead of her. Like most Bible Colleges of that era, fraternizing was against the rules. But they were seated at the same table two weeks in a row. Then they were on the college mission team together. 'But Barbara,' she said with a twinkle in her eye, 'We broke the rules!'

David had graduated, and Maxine was in her second year, when they married in 1971. He continued studying by correspondence, then went to Moore Theological College, after Maxine graduated and returned to nursing. They had four children in five years...then the fifth child came along eight years later. Three daughters are married to men in the ministry, and each family has four children.

Maxine has always been connected with Sunday School teaching and Bible studies, as well as mothering and duties of a wife. At SMBC she was always involved in Wives' Fellowship, Bible studies, and prayer meetings. She has always been enthusiastically involved in Christian work.

This involvement continues today. As David travels the world in his preaching ministry, Maxine often accompanies him. They always keep in touch with past students on the mission field, and when possible they visit them. David often speaks at mission conferences and Maxine shares with the women and encourages them. She said, 'I'm not a tourist by choice! But I go where God sends me.' She describes her husband as the 'ideas' man, a real goer, who drags her along until they reach their destination and she realizes once more how terrific is the Lord's planning. Maxine feels she is more of a realist than David, but even there we see God's wisdom in giving him a wife with her feet planted firmly on the ground.

Maxine spends a lot of time preparing for ministries. She loves reading. Her bedside table is always cluttered with books. She loves the writing of C.J. Mahaney, and his wife Carolyn; Jerry Bridges, John Piper and missionary biographies. In her spare time Maxine loves to share with her extended family, especially the grandchildren.

To conclude our chat, I asked Maxine what word of encouragement she might give us as women, and especially women in ministry. 'You're wonderful!' was her reply. 'You are women, not men. You are different. We all need to learn obedience (men & women). Jesus learned obedience...even to death.'

– Barbara Prout (Mrs DP)



EVENTS FOR THE DIARY

Missions Interlink Explores 'God's Disturbing Mission' at National Conference July 16 – 18

LATER this year, Missions Interlink's National Conference will explore the challenging idea of the growing complexity of global mission through its theme: 'God's Disturbing Mission'.

The Conference, which will take place in Melbourne on July 16 – 18, is open to all who are interested or involved in global mission, and will seek to engage participants in the changing face of global mission, reflecting on the developing complexity and diversity in the practice of global mission.

Missions Interlink says that, 'The thought that God himself might be behind disturbances in the mission agenda proves to be an invitation to seek God, read His Word, strengthen relationships across diversity, and bow in worship.'

The Conference's keynote speaker is Rob Hay, principal of Redcliffe College (UK), an internationally renowned global centre for missions training.

Speaking at the Wycliffe Global Alliance European conference earlier this week, Rob stated that, 'What is clear is that a neat and tidy mission cannot and does not fit in a messy world. So if we accept that messiness: that uncertainty, that interlinked interdependency, we must as we move forward, seek to contextualise the way we think, act and organise.'

He urged the missions community to, 'deal with complexity, not by denying it and hiding from it - fearful of what it throws up, but by engaging with it and in it.'

Other speakers and topics during the conference are Murray Baird – Assistant Commissioner, ACNC speaking on NFP Reforms; Johan Linder – CEO OMF Australia on Mission on our doorstep; Sam Sterland – NCLS Research presenting findings from NCLS 2011 operations survey on Australian churches and mission, and many more.

More information about the ConNEXTions Conference can be found on the Missions Interlink website: www.missionsinterlink.org.au, and bookings can be made through TryBooking (www.trybooking.com/CEUW).

– Larissa Ocampo, Missions Interlink



Rob Hay



John Linder, CEO OMF



Murray Baird

National Day of Thanksgiving Approaches

The National Day of Thanksgiving (Saturday 25th May, 2013) isn't just about saying "thank you". It's one of the most successful tools for mission and evangelism the Church has ever had. Many stories have emerged of communities being significantly impacted by their local Churches, working together with Councils and businesses to bless people in need.

Go to www.thanksgiving.org.au to find out more.

– Annette Spurr

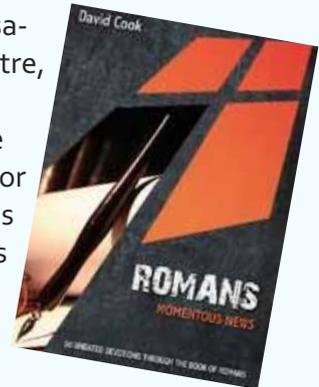


**Read 'The Objective Evidence For The Christian Faith' by David Holden.
Free at www.defenceofthefaith.org**

Read Romans 1. 8-15

Paul planted significant churches within the Roman Empire – at Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus – but he did not plant the church at the centre, Rome.

He had not met the church at Rome. Yet we see his real interest in the progress of these 'brothers'. Paul gives thanks for them (v 8). He prays for them as if they were his responsibility (vv 9-10). He is a man of generous spirit. He is not given to parochial interests. If God is at work, Paul prays for and supports the work. What a model he is in ministry in contrast to other examples of professional jealousy and territorial insecurity. Paul's attitude provides a necessary corrective.



How often are our sharp criticisms of other ministries simply a thin veneer for envy?

Whether God does His work through Paul or not, Paul rejoices that God's work is being done. He gives thanks. He prays in particular that God might make a level road (v 10) so that he might come to them.

Paul wants the work to continue growing and he wants to impart some spiritual emphasis (v 11) – probably the gospel – so they will be strengthened.

Paul, however, is not coming as a superior. Verse 12 makes it clear that he expects there will be mutual blessing in the visit – note the emphasis 'you and I', 'mutual' and 'each other' (v 12).

There is no aura of detached self-sufficiency about Paul. Some were alleging that he had not visited them because he was not interested. He corrects that in verse 13. His desire is for a harvest in Rome among the Gentiles because he is the apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). It is apparent that, as well as being a great theologian, Paul was a passionate missionary and evangelist.

REFLECTION

Reflect on Paul's generosity of spirit and his enthusiastic support of gospel work.

Are you challenged by his attitude and his activities towards a people he had never met?

John Wesley said that parochialism has always been the enemy of the gospel.

In what ways does parochialism creep into your thinking?

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BOOKS WORTH READING

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO C.T. STUDD'S MISSION? Evan Davies, WEC Publications, 2012. ISBN 978-0-900828-90-4. www.wecinternational.org.uk

EVAN Davies, former head of WEC Missionary Training College, St Leonard's, Tasmania, and more recently WEC's International Director before his retirement, asks, and answers this very good question.

WEC and the denominational churches have often had a rather uneasy relationship in the past, probably due to the idiosyncratic nature of C.T. Studd, WEC's founder, on the one hand and a lack of Gospel focus, imperative and urgency in at least some denominations and their mission agencies on the other. In fact as WEC has developed and matured over the years in responding to changing circumstances, it has virtually become a denomination itself with its own churches in many parts of the world, its own structure of governance, its own property holdings, its own way of dealing with problems and innovations, its own jargon, often characterised by catchy acronyms.

There was much to admire about C.T. Studd. Few men have ever been so single-minded about the task of world-wide evangelisation, nor have they so willingly given up all to take up their cross and follow Christ - wherever He might lead them - and in Studd's case he gave up much. A gentleman, a scholar and a fine cricketer, he set all this behind him to follow Christ in going first to China then the Belgian Congo that was.

Evan Davies paints a 'warts and all' picture of Studd, noting also his impatience with the slackness and slowness of so many fellow Christians, the heavy demands he made of his followers and the sharpness of his tongue and pen. It sparked in this reviewer, though, a deeper admiration for this man, eccentric though he may have been. After all, the Lord for His own good reasons uses His Gideons, Bunyans, Whitefields, Wesleys and Booths to great effect in advancing His Kingdom, and Studd stands in that line.

One thing which appalled many calmer Christians in Studd's day was the acronym 'DCD' - standing for 'Don't Care a Damn' - and expressing a willingness to do whatever it takes (worthily) to win the lost for Christ, even to be ready to sacrifice life itself in that cause. Rather less of Gilbertian shock/horror and rather more of a willingness to go and do likewise would do far more for the Kingdom of God than stumbling over Studd's use of the Captain of the Pinafore's 'big, big "D".'

Prayerful waiting on the Lord, patient waiting for unanimity before proceeding on a new venture, preparedness to take on new challenges, perseverance in the face of difficulties and persistent Gospel focus in all aspects of the mission's work have characterised WEC from its first day until now.

So, whatever did happen to C.T. Studd's mission? It has blossomed and flourished. It has cut loose from the domination of an individual, be it the founder, his wife, his daughter or his son in law. It has encouraged gifted leadership and indigenous leadership. It has responded to new challenges while remaining faithful to Biblical principles. It has continued to boldly go through closed doors to the utmost ends of the Earth. It takes better care of its workers than it did at first.

This book tells the magnificent story of a magnificent group of men and women with the magnificent obsession of putting wind beneath the wings of the Bible's closing prayer: 'Amen. Come Lord Jesus!' And it really is worth reading.

- Bob Thomas

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Peppermint Grove	(08) 9384 9186
Southern River	(08) 9332 1829
West Leederville	(08) 9310 5935

'... We... know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.' (Galatians 2.16)

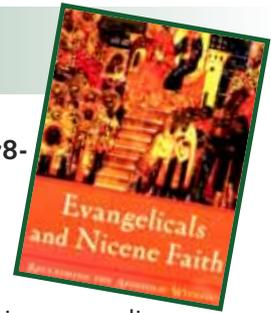
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BOOKS WORTH READING

EVANGELICALS AND NICENE FAITH: RECLAIMING THE APOSTOLIC WITNESS, Edited by Timothy George, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011, ISBN 978-0-8010-3926-3

THE chapters of this book started as papers delivered at a conference at Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama in September 2009, and they are dedicated to the memory of Jaroslav Pelikan (1923-2006).



The essays focus on the significance of Nicene orthodoxy for pastoral work, worship, evangelism and other expressions of evangelical faith. Evangelicals have sometimes been suspicious of theology and this volume will assist Bible-loving believers to love and appreciate the deep theological roots of the evangelical understanding of the Faith, which is the legitimate heir of the orthodox Christianity of the Nicene Creed (AD 325/381). It should lead us to reassess the 'No creed but the Bible' slogan that is sometimes mouthed in evangelical circles, for the essays in this splendid book show that creeds can embody and preserve the gospel and biblical truth. A creedless Christianity too easily devolves into theological liberalism.

Thomas Oden explains that true ecumenism unites believers with 'the faith once delivered to the saints', as opposed to the type of ecumenism that in the Twentieth Century led to the wholesale jettisoning of that faith. Mark Gignilliat shows that early church theology was in essence the exegesis of Scripture (primarily the Old Testament), and that we are not distorting the Old Testament when we read it with Christian eyes. We do not need to change or edit the Old Testament to do this.

Frank Thielman argues that no Platonist would have described God as one who enters the world, and suffers and dies, as the Nicene Creed does, rather that understanding comes straight from a faithful reading of the Bible. The charge is simply not true that the creeds were the outcome of an unfortunate trend to mix Christianity with Greek philosophy. Gerald Bray urges that the church take up and use again the Athanasian Creed, which he explains and defends against its critics. Carl Beckwith discusses the Reformers' evangelical understanding of church tradition, seeing 'Protestant' theology as standing in continuity with the early creeds.

Steven Harmon encourages Baptists to embrace a lower-case-c 'catholic' tradition and in doing so tackles the vexed issue of the magisterium (teaching office). Carl Braaten tries to explain how the imperfect church we all know can be one, holy, catholic and apostolic (the four so-called 'marks of the church'). With a touch of humour, he notes that we are called on to believe this about the church because we cannot see it! Matthew Pinson shows that being a Baptist is not incompatible with a strong confessionalism (namely subscription to a doctrinal document). Likewise, Curtis Freeman argues that Baptists need a creed (the Nicene) to highlight the trinitarian and christological centre of their faith.

Elizabeth Newman provides some clues as to how a Nicene faith might be lived out, and David Nelson shows how it should shape worship among Evangelicals, for 'reading the Bible is simply too dangerous to do without the liturgical community' (page 149). It may, as well, provide an antidote to the current obsession with music, that has crowded out prayer, the reading of Scripture, confession of sin and much beside, that have been the traditional staples of Christian worship. The 'music wars' of the church have been fuelled by our current disconnection with the great tradition of doctrinal orthodoxy.

Kathleen Nielson unpacks one line in the creed: 'who for us and our salvation came down from heaven'. Bishop John Rucyahana of Rwanda says that the church must come back to credal teaching to regain its influence in society. Mark DeVine tackles the emergent church movement's phobia of creeds and doctrine, explaining that doctrine is not a modern construct but that the Bible itself has many creed-like statements and that humility demands that something like the Nicene Creed not be curtly dismissed. The point is well made, however, that the Apostles Creed or Nicene Creed are insufficient by themselves, for they provide little teaching on the atonement or the way of salvation, which are just as central to the Christian faith as are Trinity and Christology. The chapter by DeVine is perhaps the most important and the most helpful in the book.

The book closes with Timothy George's tribute to Jaroslav Pelikan, whose love of the orthodox theology of the creeds marked all his scholarship. Here, then, is a book that helps Bible-loving Evangelicals to rediscover the God-honouring and Christ-exalting doctrine of the great creeds.

– Greg Goswell