

Operation Christmas Child Reaches Nearly 10 Million Children Worldwide

SAMARITAN'S Purse is pleased to report that almost 10 million gift-filled shoeboxes have been shipped to needy children around the world through Operation Christmas Child. Samaritan's Purse wants to express its gratitude to the hundreds of thousands of people, children and adults alike, who donated shoeboxes. Samaritan's Purse also wants to recognise and affirm the contribution made by many thousands of volunteers, and supporting organisations in many donor countries who made this amazing achievement possible.

'We're so thankful for the amazing generosity of our contributors. We can only imagine the joy a child feels when they receive a shoebox, packed with gifts, from someone they don't know but someone who cared enough for them to know that God loves them and He's not forgotten them at Christmas,' explains Samaritan's Purse UK Executive Director, Simon Barrington. 'Nearly ten million children who received a shoebox through Operation Christmas Child will also have heard the Good News of Jesus Christ when they received their shoeboxes.'

This year, for the first time, gift-filled shoeboxes were sent from donors in the UK to children in Rwanda. In April 2014, Rwanda will mark the 20th anniversary of the genocide that saw almost one million people killed in 100 days. Simon explains: 'This complements the ongoing programs that we have in Rwanda to lift vulnerable children and families out of poverty.'



Samaritan's Purse doctor gives a shoebox to a young survivor of the Philippines typhoon.

'Over the past 23 years, Operation Christmas Child has sent more than 113 million boxes to children in over 130 countries. The demand is huge and is increasing, year to year. I want to encourage more people to get involved with this amazing program, so that we can reach even more children with shoeboxes packed with gifts and share Jesus with them; He is the reason for the season.'

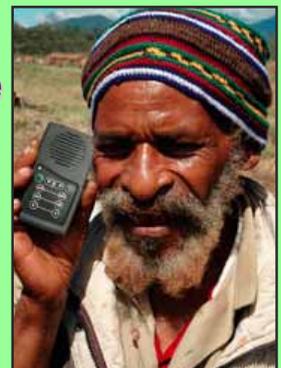
— Peter Wooding, ASSIST News Service



Children in Skenderaj, Kosovo with their gift-filled shoeboxes

GOSPEL CHIP'S VOICE GOES OUT INTO ALL THE WORLD

JANUARY saw the one millionth MegaVoice Audio Bible sent out to the world. It is now 26 years since Australian Tom Treseder designed an audio Bible where the messages are stored on a slither of hard rock (which we know as silicon). These solar-powered audio Scriptures are now being heard in over 160 countries. www.megavoice.com



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Rising From The Ashes

ST Peter's, Kinglake, Vic, is to re-open as a Memorial Anglican Church. It will have been five years of labour and energy but at last, out of the ashes of Black Saturday, a new church has arisen, ready to resume its original roles – of serving the community as a place of worship and standing as a memorial to the fallen who served this nation in time of war. Kinglake has a unique piece of history re-emerging in its midst; a memorial destined to become a significant place of interest to visitors travelling through the Kinglake Ranges.

The opening will be on 16 March at 3pm. Friends of St Peter's include churches from around Australia, the USA, UK and New Zealand, as well as local families and businesses that have supported them during their journey of recovery and reconstruction. All of the re-building funds were raised by St Peter's as no financial support came from the Bushfire Relief Fund or Federal Parliament.

Vicar of St Peter's, Rev Stephen Holmes, says that friends from the Welsh Choir will enliven the music and the Archbishop of Melbourne, Most Rev Dr Philip Freier will preside. The service will also involve the laying of wreaths by invited representatives of the community followed by the playing of the bagpipes and a minute of silence. There will be light refreshments following the service and a solo musical presentation on the new piano.

'It is our expectation that St Peter's will be a place of community and a space for the community,' he says. 'Preliminary plans are in place for the building to be used by local community groups, including the Yea-Kinglake RSL.

'We would like to express our sincere thanks to all in our community who have worked with us to enable us to reach this point. Interested members of the community are most welcome to join us for our opening on Sunday 16 March at 3pm.'

For further details contact Rev Stephen Holmes on (03) 9716-2042, email: www.christchurchwhittlesea.org

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NEW LIFE comes to you as a .PDF file, with many stories and advertisements containing links to other websites and email addresses.

Web and email addresses are printed in bold blue type.

You only have to position your cursor over the link,
eg: editor@nlife.com.au ; www.nlife.com.au

then click and you will be taken directly to that site.

When you are finished there, click on the back button to return to **NEW LIFE**.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

NORTH KOREA: Tenuous Situation Needs Wise Handling

ON 21 March 2013 the United Nations Human Rights Council passed Resolution A/HRC/RES/22/13 which established the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Resolution gave the Commission a 12-month mandate to investigate systematic and widespread human rights abuses in North Korea. North Korean Ambassador So Se Pyong denounced the Resolution as 'an instrument that serves the political purposes of the hostile forces in their attempt to discredit the image of the DPRK', adding, 'those human rights abuses mentioned in the resolution do not exist in our country.' The Commission of Inquiry's report was released on 17 February. It documents 'a wide array of crimes against humanity' and details 'unspeakable atrocities' and concludes: 'The gravity, scale and nature of these violations reveal a State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.' As noted in the report: 'The State considers the spread of Christianity a particularly serious threat, since it challenges ideologically the official personality cult and provides a platform for social and political organisation and interaction outside the realm of the State. Apart from the few organised State-controlled churches, Christians are prohibited from practising their religion and are persecuted. People caught practising Christianity are subject to severe punishments' (Article 31)

The report also remarked on what is without doubt the key dynamic of North Korea today: 'Strengthening market forces and advancements in information technology have allowed greater access to information from outside the country as information and media from the Republic of Korea and China increasingly enter the country. The State's monopoly on information is therefore being challenged by the increasing flow of outside information into the country and the ensuing curiosity of the people for 'truths' other than those provided by State propaganda.

Authorities Seek To Preserve Their Monopoly On Information By Carrying Out Regular Crackdowns And Enforcing Harsh Punishments.' (Article 30)

Groomed to rule, Kim Jong-un assumed power after his father ('Dear Leader', Kim Jong-il) died in December 2011. At his father's funeral, Kim Jong-un accompanied his father's casket along with the 'Gang of Seven' – an inner circle of elites tasked with guiding and mentoring the young ruler. By the end of 2013, four of the seven had been purged and one demoted. Kim Jong-un is consolidating power and establishing a new order that he hopes will have a better chance of holding on to power through the challenging times ahead. According to analysts, '... the upper ranks of North Korean leadership are now sprinkled with people who hold a known interest in [economic] reform.'

Kim, who did his secondary schooling in Switzerland, and his younger clique know that the information seeping in will generate anger and dissent as North Korea's impoverished masses become aware of their plight relative to the outside world. So in a race against time the regime is implementing agricultural and economic reforms designed to raise the living standards of ordinary Koreans. The regime is also easing the way for foreign investment and undertaking major infrastructure projects – highways, theme parks and resorts – designed to make North Korea more attractive to North Koreans as well as to Chinese tourists. It is a delicate balancing act, for Kim knows that while things have to change, change is incredibly risky.

It is commendable that the UN report is shining a spotlight on the horrific situation inside North Korea. However, the situation needs to be handled with great care and wisdom rather than belligerently. For example, if too much pressure is applied or if 'hostile forces' use the report to fan the flames of revolution for their own political, economic and geo-strategic ends, then repression could escalate to unprecedented levels or the state descend into a widespread bloodbath. Neither would benefit the Church in North Korea. Realistically, the report can only be used as leverage to get prisoners released and rights improved if the regime is assured it will not be threatened.

When faced with such an unpalatable truth, it is essential to keep focused on North Korea's long-suffering Church which so desperately needs deliverance and freedom.

– Elizabeth Kendal, international religious liberty analyst and advocate.
This Bulletin is issued as a ministry of the Evangelical Alliance in Australia.

PLEASE PRAY THAT:

- *God will hear the prayers and cries of His people and bring deliverance and freedom to His long-suffering Church in North Korea. ('Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you,' 1 Peter 5.7)*
- *in His mercy give wisdom to fools and patience to hot heads; repentance to persecutors and grace to victims; so that His Church might be spared further calamity and delivered from her adversity, to rise as light to overcome darkness.*

'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the LORD. For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.' (Isaiah 55.8,9)

'HELP COMES FROM THE LORD ...'

A Most Remarkable Answer To Prayer In Ukraine

DURING an emergency session of the Ukraine Parliament, 314 out of 450 lawmakers voted to elect Opposition Leader Oleksandr Turchynov (Alexandr Turchinov) Ukraine's Acting Prime Minister. A Hungarian friend tells me Turchynov is an evangelical Baptist, a leader of Word Of Life Church in Kiev, and preaches regularly.

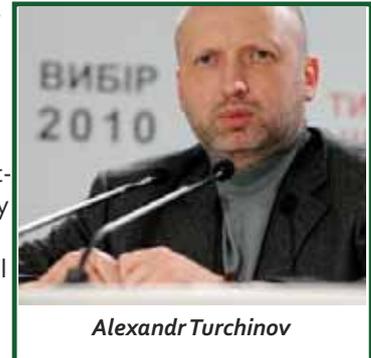
He is a close supporter of the just-released Yulia Tymoshenko, who is herself a professing Orthodox Christian. Before her imprisonment, almost certainly on 'political' grounds, and condemned by the European Court of Human Rights as 'arbitrary and unlawful', she wrote:

'Christianity is a faith imbued with a profound responsibility to God and personal awareness for individual actions, treatment of our neighbours, and fate of one's homeland. It is a faith that frees us from degrading humiliation and demands respect for human rights that were not given to us by the authorities, but from God himself. And before Him we must answer.' – *Contributed by the Rev John Ross, Free Church Of Scotland, Glenurquart*

Joel News International reports: It has been a turbulent week in Ukraine, leading to the impeachment of President Victor Yanukovich. Oleksandr Turchynov, a well-known Baptist pastor and top opposition politician, was named interim President by the Parliament in a bid to fill the political void and to end the three-month-long crisis.

The choice of a Baptist pastor as acting president in Ukraine does not come as a huge surprise to Sergey Rakhuba, head of US-based Russian Ministries, who says: 'He is well-known in political circles as a principled, honest leader. It is great that Turchynov is calling for unification and healing of the nation.'

Ukrainian evangelicals are calling for national prayer, forgiveness and reconciliation.



Christian Hospitality Centre Opens Its Doors At The Sochi Olympics; Salvation Army Helps Out

THE Sochi Winter Olympics have come and gone, with a total of 98 events in 15 winter sport disciplines being held. But there was another side to what was reported on by the secular media at the Olympics, as many Christian groups descended on the Black Sea town, with the message of Good News.

Each day, the International Christian Information Centre, on location in Sochi, presented daily news and other coverage of Christian and secular events at the XXII Winter Olympic Games. The centre was run by several evangelical organizations and a team of volunteers in Sochi for the express purpose of serving the Lord and the visitors to the games. After church leaders Ivan Chehunov, Richard Page and Vladimir Samoilov, the primary organizers of the Christian Hospitality Centre in Sochi, solemnly cut the ribbon at the entrance to the tent on 7 February, the Centre was open for business.

In an open cafe area, guests were offered tea and coffee. A large number of children gathered for entertainment by Christian artists organized by the Centre. The team from the Salvation Army provided hot drinks to those who came to the Fun Zone where groups gathered to watch Olympic events on a large television screen set up by the local church. More than 200 cups of tea and coffee were shared daily along with a local delicacy, not unlike a bagel.

Sunday was a special day for the team as they joined together in worship with the church they were working with in the Fun Zone.

– Dan Wooding, Founder, ASSIST News Service

Come, Join The Celebration!

Glen Park Gospel Church, Lower Road, Eltham North, will be celebrating their 90th Anniversary on Sunday 30 March at 2pm.

Past members will be telling their stories, afternoon tea will be served, allowing an opportunity to renew friendships of years gone by.

Interested visitors and those who have had any association with the church are welcome.

Contact Ann on (03) 9439 8879 or Joan on (03) 9434 7314 and leave a message or e-mail <joanmsmith29@optusnet.com.au>

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF TODAY

Practical Steps To Practical Christianity In Church And Workplace

AT the Sydney launch of *CMA's Essential Standards For Christian Workplaces*, the MC, Tim Matthews, Managing Director of Triumph Communications, commented that key areas which Christian organizations and churches felt they needed to address, if they were to run more efficiently and effectively were: Who's in charge – the issue of governance; how do we fund the vision – the issue of resourcing ministry; and how do we get the job done with the right people – the issue of human resources.

'These findings spawned a series of super useful little books now brought together as: *CMA's Essential Standards For Christian Churches/Workplaces*.

Written by the National Director of Christian Ministry Advancement, Gary Williams, this is the third booklet in CMA's Principles and Standards series. This publication is available in two versions: one for churches, the other for Christian schools and other ministries. The principles and standards in the two publications are identical, the church version just uses some different terminology at times.

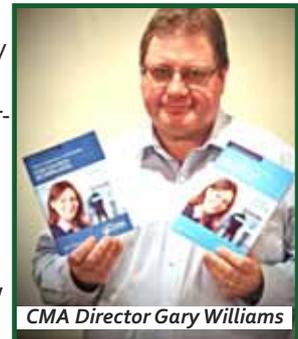
'The booklets address the HR (human resources) issues for Christian organisations, in the familiar dot-point format of our original Governance publication. With 12 Principles and 104 standards, CMA hopes that churches and Christian organisations will find this a helpful tool for stimulating thinking about what makes a great workplace,' said Mr Williams. Mr Williams spoke of Christian organisations being sometimes taken advantage of because of a combination of friendliness and procedural weaknesses. He quoted from church leaders who have never been affirmed in their ministry, or who enter retirement with bleak financial prospects, because of elementary failures in the ministry's HR processes. 'We should be aware of other's activities and praise them for their work,' he said.

JOHN LENNOX TO TOUR AUSTRALIA

Internationally renowned and loved mathematician, intellect, speaker and best-selling author Professor John Lennox will be touring Australia this August. Prof Lennox will speak at five key events:

- Melbourne – Friday 8 August
- Adelaide – Tuesday 12 August
- Perth – Monday 18 August
- Brisbane – Friday 22 August
- Sydney – Monday 25 August

John Lennox is Professor of Mathematics in the University of Oxford and an Adjunct Lecturer at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. Further details to follow.



Many examples and illustrations were given during his presentation, which highlighted the need for practical application of Christian principles in church and business activities. 'Christian organisations should be the best place to be employed, not taken for granted – and encouraged. Make your place the kind of place where people love to work,' he added. 'Make people feel part of it.'

The two versions of the publication *CMA's Essential Standards For Christian Workplaces* and *CMA's Essential Standards for Church Workplaces* are available from the website www.cma.net.au

Pastor/Senior Pastor

Chinese And Australian Baptist Church—Thornleigh, NSW

The Chinese and Australian Baptist Church at Thornleigh is looking for a Pastor with at least three years' pastoral experience, who is fluent in Cantonese and English, and preferably also Mandarin.

The church has five congregations, two Cantonese, two English, and one Mandarin, with about 420 people attending worship each Sunday.

The precise role of the new Pastor will depend on experience. With sufficient experience the new Pastor will be called to fill the role of Senior Pastor with responsibility for all five congregations. At the very least, the role will involve pastoral responsibility for the two Cantonese congregations, and a supporting ministry to the Mandarin congregation.

Responsibilities will include preaching and teaching God's word from the pulpit and in Bible study classes, pastoral care, an advisory role to different church ministries, and administration.

Please apply to the church secretary, Pak San Tam, at
<recruit@cabc-t.org.au>

'CHRIST FOR ALL OF LIFE'

'And Crown Him! Crown Him! ... Lord Of All!'

CHRIST College, Burwood, the newly renamed, rebuilt and refurbished theological centre of the Presbyterian Church in NSW, was officially opened and dedicated on 21 February 2014 by the NSW Moderator, Elder Colin Langford.

A large crowd gathered for guided tours of the new building followed by the service which began outside the building with the Moderator cutting a ribbon, then proceeded to the spacious auditorium for a service of praise and thanksgiving to the King and Head of the Church for His gracious provision of this renewed and expanded facility. The Principal, Dr Ian Smith, explained that the logo was a stylised representation of the Crown of Christ before preaching on the theme *I Will Build My Church:*

Standing Where We've Always Stood

'ONE of the carpenters working on this site had a stroke of brilliance. He suggested using the timber from the floor of the principal's office in the former building to build the stage in the main lecture hall of the new building. It's not just beautiful timber; it's beautiful symbolism: we're standing where we've always stood! In a world which is changing dramatically, the challenges of theological education have never been more pressing. Changing technology does not only change the way we deliver learning, it changes the way the next generation learns. At the Reformation the printing press revolutionised people's access to the Scriptures, changing everything, but the Reformers were keen to say that they continued in the teaching of the Apostles. They stood where the true Church had always stood. As Luther said: 'Here is stand, I can do no other.

'So there have been a few changes around here: we've changed our name, changed our building,

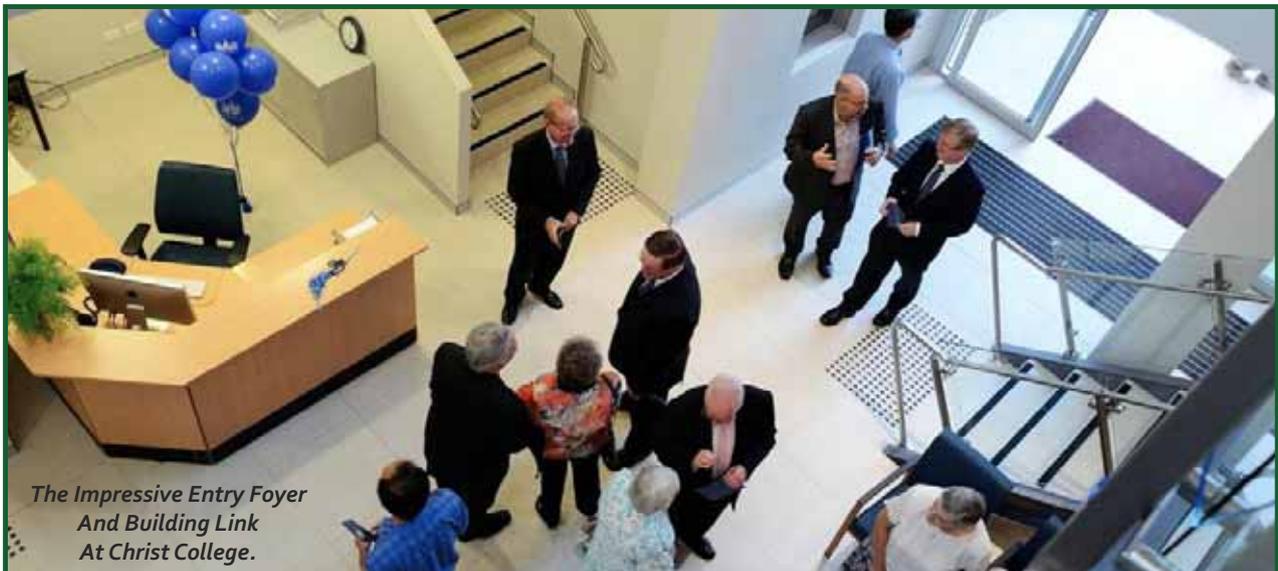


Ian Smith

changed our address, changed our email address, changed our logo, but amidst all these changes, we are standing where we have always stood. We are equipping people through the Scriptures that, under the Lordship of Christ, the church would be built and the world transformed by the power of the Gospel. So as we open Christ College, I want to reflect on the Scriptures, for that is where we stand: where we have always stood.'



Photo credits: Sheryl Sarkoezy



*The Impressive Entry Foyer
And Building Link
At Christ College.*

BUILDING BRIDGES TO SURFIERS

Christian Surfers And Churches Catch The Wave



Fatai singing to the crowd on the Corso, Manly.

THE Australian Open of Surfing returned to Manly Beach for a second time after its inaugural year in 2012 and attracted more than 170,000 people to Manly. The event was sponsored by Hurley and promised top level professional surfing and skateboarding, as well as concert appearances by Birds of Tokyo, the Presets and other well-known musical acts. The event ran from 8-16 February, but on 13,14 February another event, a hugely successful Christian outreach, took place in the heart of Manly.

Approximately six weeks prior, Brad Hall (Christian Surfers Australia), church leaders from all denominations in the Northern Beaches, Jeanine Treharne and Roslyn Hills (Stand Tall Event), and others met with Bryan Jennings, film producer and director of *Walking On Water* films, to discuss the Australian Premiere of Bryan's new film titled *Beyond Sight*, the story of a young Brazilian named Derek Rabelo who was born blind and learned to surf. The film is an inspirational story of Derek pursuing his dream to surf Pipeline in Hawaii as he overcomes obstacles.

During the meetings, professional surfer and shark attack victim Bethany Hamilton shared her faith in Christ, skateboard legend Eddie Elguera (now serving as a pastor in Palm Springs, California) spoke, musical acts included SkyPilot from Brisbane (a young edgy surf band), and Fatai (*The Voice* semi-finalist in 2012). The time had finally come for the Gospel to be preached in the heart of Manly and God flung the door open wide as Eddie shared a brief Gospel message and invited people to respond to Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Hands went up all over the audience and people prayed in response to Eddie's invitation. It was a glorious night as we all rejoiced over the lost being found! For details of when and where *Beyond Sight* can be seen, go to: www.beyondsightmovie.com – Rosemaree Knight via Worldwide Photos

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~ J.C. Ryle

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GETTING ON WITH THE JOB

AMTI – Because Our Kids Deserve The Best!

ACCESS Ministries, the accredited provider of Christian Religious Education in Victorian public schools, opened their new ACCESS Ministries Training Institute on 24 February to provide training courses from Certificate 4 to Postgraduate level in teaching, chaplaincy, pastoral care, ministry and leadership in conjunction with a consortium of theological colleges. Board Chair Elida Brereton (far right, below) welcomed those present and spoke of the need for spiritual values in all curricula and the need for well-trained, committed teachers who are not ashamed of the testimony they uphold.

ACCESS CEO Rev Canon Dr Yvonne Paddison (at lectern, below) said: 'Our kids deserve the best', which is why AMTI has been set up – to pursue excellence in training and commitment of those engaged in CRE. She thanked Victorian Minister For Education Martin Dixon for his support in setting up the institute, including an annual grant for training.

Martin Dixon (below, centre) urged ACCESS to 'keep on reaching for the stars, keep on lifting the bar and keep on building expertise.' He spoke warmly of the way in which school principals always speak well of the work of school chaplains in times of tragedy. He looks forward to being of continuing support in the work of ACCESS.



MISSIONAL OPPORTUNITY – Melbourne City

Lygon Street Christian Chapel is an independent evangelical church located on Lygon Street, Melbourne City, Victoria.

We are seeking expressions of interests for a theologically trained associate pastor to join the team with a heart to minister to retirees/near retirees in a new area of ministry that we hope to establish.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- has a missional heart to establish a new ministry for growing congregation of retirees;
- is well versed in the Word of God and passionate in proclaiming it;
- has a passion for retirees and senior citizens;
- has a consultative relationship and leadership style;
- has the ability to work with a team of pastoral staff/elders and lay people.

FOR ENQUIRIES OR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST, PLEASE APPLY IN WRITING TO:

Melvin Lo (Pastor)

54 Lygon Street, Carlton 3053, Victoria.

For further information please ring (03) 9663 5706 / 0402 227 506

or visit our church website: www.lycc.org.au

APPLICATIONS CLOSE: 30 April 2014

HELPING FIND 'THE ANSWER'

Australian Missionary Arrested In North Korea; 'Short' By Name, Strong In Faith

Eternity Newspaper, backgrounding recent reports in the secular press, reports that Australian missionary John Short has been arrested and detained in North Korea under allegations of possessing religious material. If found guilty, he could face up to 15 years imprisonment.

John is originally from South Australia, a member of the Christian Brethren, who has worked in missionary service and the printing of Christian literature in Asia for 50 years. He is married to Karen, and has three children. He was detained for allegedly being in possession of Christian tracts translated into Korean.

North Korea is a notoriously difficult place for both missionaries and North Korean Christians, being listed at Number One on the *Open Doors 2014 World Watch List* as the most dangerous country in the world for Christians to openly practise their beliefs. It is estimated that some 50,000 North Koreans are in prison camps because of their Christian faith.

Eternity talked to Merv Knight, a colleague of John for over 20 years. Merv said, 'John is one of those people who took the attitude that if people say you can't do it, then it needs to be done. John has always had a burden for the places that it was the most difficult for the Gospel to go—to China, Burma, Vietnam—which was why he went to North Korea.'

The possibility of a successful diplomatic resolution to the arrest is potentially difficult, as Australia has no official diplomatic ties to North Korea. Australian interests in North Korea are currently channeled through the Swedish embassy. In a previous case, US Missionary Kenneth Bae was arrested in November 2012, and is currently serving a 15 year sentence of hard labour, despite his public appeals to US diplomatic relations. However, Merv said he believed that, while John and Karen would love continuing support in prayer, John would remain resolute in the face of his arrest.

'I have the greatest confidence in John that he will be somebody that will be very hard to intimidate in any way, and he will stand up for what he believes in. His feeling will be "Here I am, so God has put me here, so I have to use this opportunity". He will refuse to deny his faith, no matter what treatment he may face, and use the opportunity wherever he is, and to tell others that, in his view, the answer is to be found in Jesus Christ.' See more at: <http://www.biblesociety.org.au/news/australian-missionary-arrested-north-korea-answer-found-jesus-christ#sthash.8w5dW3Ny.dpuf> – *Eternity Newspaper via Bible Society*



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Hillarys	(08) 9562 7263
Mandurah	(08) 9319 2208
Melville	(08) 9417 1976
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)

HYMNS ALIVE

Community Singing
LOVED TRADITIONAL HYMNS
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Upwey Baptist Community Church
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Afternoon Tea and Trading Table
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GOOD NEWS FROM ABROAD

Christmas – Taking It To The Street In Turkey

SAT-7 TÜRK reports that as crowds bustled through Istanbul's popular shopping district of Kadikoy in December, they were serenaded by the Christmas carols of a group of Turkish Christians.

The choir sang, 'Christ our Savior has come to us. Happy Christmas! ... Jesus Christ, the Son of Righteousness. He loved you. He saved you. Holy Lord, Holy Lord. I will praise Him with all my strength!' As the carolers formed a parade, they carried banners and signs proclaiming the birth of Christ. One sign read, 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'



SAT-7 TÜRK had also filmed the Christmas service at the local Anatolian Protestant Church. The pastor, Rev Kinran, appeared on camera beside the Christmas parade in the street and said, 'Today, as Christians in Turkey ... We are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, not only here, but we join with others throughout the whole world ... This celebration is not just for ourselves. We want to invite everyone here to join us. Because along with the coming of Jesus Christ into the world came real joy, real peace, and real forgiveness. Jesus Christ came from God and brought these blessings to the world with Him.' As Rev Kinran concluded his message of good tidings, the choir sang *Silent Night*. The Christians who gathered to sing praise in the streets of Istanbul last December are part of a tiny minority—less than half a percent of Turkey's population. Yet when SAT-7 TÜRK released this unique event on YouTube, it attracted over 2,000 views in just two days! Pray that Christians in Istanbul will not feel isolated, but that they will be

At 60, Fruitful Past Heralds Future For Ministry Of TWR

TRANs World Radio just marked its 60th anniversary of Gospel broadcasting by expanding its reach to even more people needing hope in places like Cuba, China, and Afghanistan. Not content to rest on yesterday's accomplishments, TWR officials offer thanks for six decades of God's blessings but insist on keeping the spotlight on the media ministry's newest initiatives. 'It's a privilege to be living under the call of God for 60 years,' says Lauren Libby, President of TWR International. 'Not only a privilege, but also a legacy that we go with into the future. Our founder, Dr Paul Freed, believed God for big things. We're still doing that. And the goal is still the world, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and producing lasting fruit by mass media.'

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Bank: Westpac. BSB: 033-112. Account Number: 16-8239.

(Please send an email to office@nlife.com.au when you direct deposit).

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PERSECUTION WATCH

Kazakhstan: Criminal Conviction, Large 'Moral Damages' And Possible New Criminal Case

RETIREED Presbyterian Pastor Bakhytzhan Kashkumbayev was given a four-year suspended prison term in Kazakhstan's capital, Astana on 17 February. According to Felix Corley of Forum 18 News Service (www.forum18.org), he was convicted of harming the health of a church member, even though that church member has repeatedly insisted to state authorities that her health was not harmed. He also has to pay his alleged 'victim' large 'moral damages' of 2,000,000 Tenge (about \$11,500).

Lyazzat Almenova, the only person whose health the state claims was harmed, told Forum 18 in July 2013 that Kashkumbayev is 'totally innocent and has not harmed my health at all'. She had earlier written to Astana Prosecutor's Office to say she is psychiatrically healthy, that a 2012 assessment of her was conducted illegally, and calling for the case to be abandoned.

Prosecutors, for reasons they did not explain, dropped four other criminal charges levied during the two year investigation. Forum 18 notes that on one of the charges a new criminal case could be launched. The state Agency of Religious Affairs has also stated that Grace Presbyterian Church's legal status may be under threat.

'In my experience as a lawyer, this is one of the strangest cases I have seen in terms of legality', Pastor Kashkumbayev's lawyer Nurlan Beysekeyev told Forum 18 News Service after the verdict was handed down orally. 'It was not just strange, but from the standpoint of the law, all types of violations occurred, when the case was opened, when it was being investigated and during the trial.' Corley said that Kashkumbayev will appeal against the verdict. Other violations of freedom of religion or belief continue, including ongoing raids on meetings for worship without state permission.

– Dan Wooding, Founder of ASSIST Ministries



Pastor Kashkumbayev
(Photo: www.persecution.org)

Nigeria's Deadly Winter

THE new year has begun in exceptionally violent fashion in north-eastern Nigeria, prompting Christian organisations to renew their pleas for more government security.

26 Jan. Waga Chakawa village, Adamawa state: Attackers stormed St Paul's Catholic Church during mass, blocked the main door, detonated homemade bombs, and opened fire. Parts of the town were burned. As many as 53 people were killed.

31 Jan. Sabon Gari Yamdula village, Adamawa state: Militants broke into an evening prayer service and started shooting. The pastor and ten members of the congregation were killed.

31 Jan. Manchok village, Kaduna state: A Christian family of seven was killed by attackers described to news

media by witnesses as being Fulani herdsmen. In all, 367 people of different faiths have been killed at the hands of Boko Haram, the militant group that wants to set up Islamic rule across Nigeria, in 22 separate incidents during the first six weeks of 2014, according to the Christian Elders Forum of Northern States.

'Not a week has gone by this year that our Christian brothers and sisters in Northern Nigeria have not been threatened, beaten and murdered,' said a forum statement, signed by its chairman, Olaiya Phillips, and national secretary, Emmanuel Danjuma Subilim. The forum called on Nigeria's federal and state governments to 'fulfil their obligation as enshrined in the constitution and guarantee the protection of all Nigerians and their freedom to worship in safety'. worldwatchmonitor.org

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Join The Party – Wycliffe's 60th Anniversary

ON Sunday 9 March 2014 it will be 60 years since Wycliffe Bible Translators was formed. In the last 60 years, in print alone, Wycliffe Australian members participated in the production and completion of 3 Bibles, 82 New Testaments and 59 portions of Scriptures in 126 language programs as well as providing services in the area of translation and literacy consultancy, typesetting, distribution, and more.

WBT humbly acknowledges that God enabled this through the Australian church and other partners both in Australia and overseas who share their belief in the importance of Scripture in the everyday language of people. Churches and Christians everywhere are invited to celebrate together as they reflect on God's faithfulness and greatness, and the privilege of being a partner in the Bible translation movement.

Celebrate by featuring Wycliffe Australia's 60th anniversary in your church service or small group. Resources are available by emailing Wycliffe for a USB to be posted to you. If your church is interested in inviting a Wycliffe speaker, please go to www.wycliffe.org.au and they will do their best to arrange that.



New Director Of St Mark's

THE Rev Dr Andrew Cameron, Senior Lecturer in Christian Thought at Moore Theological College where he teaches Christian ethics, social anthropology, public theology, philosophy and ethics, has been appointed as the new Director of St Mark's National Theological Centre, Canberra.

The appointment follows the resignation as director by the Rt Rev Dr Tom Frame and will be effective from 1 July 2014. Dr Cameron says that he is really honoured to be invited to take part as its director and impressed by the Centre's Australia-wide work in theological education, ministry development, counselling and public theology.

Commencement Service For NSW Parliament

AN Interdenominational Church Service to mark the commencement of the 2014 sittings of the NSW Parliament will be held at St Stephen's Uniting Church, Macquarie St, Sydney, on Tuesday 4 March commencing at 1pm. The Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev Dr Glenn Davies, will be the preacher and other senior Sydney clergy will be taking part. The President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly will participate in the Service. For seating arrangements please RSVP to: judy.russell@parliament.nsw.gov.au or call (02) 9230 2478.

HCJB Australia Becomes *Reach Beyond*

ON the 22 January 2014 HCJB Global announced that the 82-year-old ministry, founded in Quito, Ecuador is changing its name to *Reach Beyond*. 'The new name is much more than a brand change,' said Dale Stagg, Australia's *Reach Beyond* CEO. 'Our new name will better reflect our mission. It is a little change but one that profoundly, yet simply, cap-

tures the heart of all we do.' HCJB Australia will gradually implement the change to *Reach Beyond* over the next few months. In the meantime their web address remains www.hcjb.org.au

Enjoy Autumn At *Songs Of Praise*

THE annual Autumn *Songs of Praise* has been arranged for Sunday 30 March 2014, from 2pm to 4.45pm at Diamond Valley, Vic, Baptist Auditorium, 309 Diamond Creek Rd, Plenty. (Melway 11 D7). There is no charge and a delicious Afternoon Tea will be served following the program. A pre-program of music and DVD'S starts at 1.30pm. Enjoy singing many favorite hymns and songs. Guest items will include: Kaye Harrison – *A Tribute To Dame Vera Lynn*; The Walton Sisters – *Violin Duet*; Dale Philip – SOP Baritone will also sing, and Ron Ellis will again comper the event.

Enquiries to the Honorary Organiser, Ron Ellis OAM on 0407 306 353 or by email:

ron@ronellis.org

DIARY DATES:

RBC Ministries Pastors and Ministry Leaders

Gathering, *God's Help For Ministry*, Tuesday 20 May 2014 from 2pm to 4pm, with two sermons by Rev Bill Crowder, at RBC Ministries Australia Office, 4 Eastspur Court, Kilsyth South VIC. There is no admission charge, and refreshments will be provided. www.rbc.org

Africa Inland Mission: Annual Australian Conference will be held on Saturday 30 August 2014 at Naamaroo Uniting Venues, next to Lane Cove National Park Sydney. Learn what God is doing in Africa. Meet the new AIM International Director, Luke Herrin and his wife Jenny. Bookings will open in March. www.aimint.org/au

GREETING THE NEW YEAR AT BHC (CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE)

DOMINIC Smart was born in the village of Morley, Yorkshire. When he was 13, his brother, who had become a Christian two years earlier, invited him to hear the evangelist, Arthur Blessitt, at Bradford Football Ground. That night Dominic gave his life to Christ. Later on, his mother also became a believer. In 1979 he was accepted at the University of Aberdeen to study Geography and Science; then theology. The church he attended was very hospitable, inviting students home for meals. Dominic regularly had a meal with one couple who had two daughters. Thus began the relationship with Marjorie, which led to marriage. He settled in Aberdeen, married Marjorie in 1984, and has three daughters and one son. He is now the minister at Gilcomston Church, a thriving independent inner city church that recently withdrew from the Church of Scotland. As well as preaching at churches, universities and conferences, Dominic has written several books, including a series of small study books *40 Days With David*, *40 Days With Jesus*, *40 Days With Paul*. Over the years he has learned to rest in the Lord and listen to Him while preaching. He comes to the pulpit to learn as well as expound the Scriptures. His advice to readers is: Keep your life centred on Christ and establish a secure sense of identity as a child of the Father. Dominic's studies on *The Kingdom And Its King* were from the New Testament.

Normal Christianity (Philippians 1.12-30)

Everything Paul says about himself is applicable to the Philippian Christians and to us. He is describing the way to be a follower of Christ, which is to learn Christlikeness. The most important thing in Paul's life was that

Christ be preached ... whatever!

Faithful To The King (Matthew 24.36-51)

The disciples asked two questions, 'When will the Temple be destroyed?' 'What will be the signs of the coming and the end of the age?'

This parable answers the second question. Parables usually have one main point in order to elicit a response. If you understand the kingdom, you will understand the parable. Parables separate believers from unbelievers.

We need to listen with the heart, and obey the message revealed. Remember His Kingdom is not an Earthly realm. Christ reigns now in the hearts of men. But at His future Coming every knee will bow in submission to Him.

We live each day with the increasing proximity of Christ's return. But we also live on the edge of life, as His return could be today! We need to expect the unexpected. We long for His return, but don't know the time. So we need to be faithful and wise, obeying our Master and serving Him until He comes. 'The unknown date of a certainty impinges on right now! Realistically, we can only live today. The only other certain event is His return. Because of *that Day*, we live this day completely for Him.'

– Barbie Prout ('Mrs DP')



(Left-right) Ian Hamilton, Dominic Smart, David Price.

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Knowing God's Plan

(Read Romans 6.15-30)

FOR REFLECTION:

Sinless perfection is not a reality for life on Earth (see 1 John 1.5-10). But do you take seriously enough your responsibility to resist temptation?

Paul is still talking about holiness. Here, he takes us to the slave market. A person can claim to be anyone's slave, but the reality is that the master they obey enslaves them.

Paul pursues the question of those who are justified and their attitude to sin. There are only two possible masters (v 16) – sin ('Master Sin') or obedience and righteousness ('Master Righteousness'). The essence of sin, therefore, is disobedience.

Paul further identifies and describes these two 'Masters' in verse 19. 'Master Sin' pays a wage: it is earned, it is deserved (vv 21, 23), it is death. Death is separation from God. However, slavery to obedience ('Master Righteousness') brings about a benefit or gift. That benefit is eternal life, life in relationship with God.



Since we were born to the slavery of 'Master Sin', how did we come to obedience? The answer comes in verse 17. Paul gives thanks to God that 'you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted'. In other words, they placed their confidence in the Gospel.

Notice that the Gospel was not entrusted to them; they were entrusted to it. Through the obedience of the Gospel that comes from faith (1.5), we come under the shelter and security of the Gospel, which now keeps us safe. So why go back to the former master, Sin? We owe him nothing. He pays us death and we are ashamed of what we did with him (v 21).

This is the second image regarding holiness: first, union with Christ in death and resurrection; second, set free from 'Master Sin' and enslaved to 'Master Righteousness' (v 18). Verse 23 provides the summary: sin pays a wage (death), God gives a gift (eternal life). The gift comes to us because of the work of Christ Jesus our Lord. We cannot have life apart from Him.

Content taken from 'Romans: Momentous News' by David Cook, published by 10Publishing, used with permission.

'To The Jew First' In 2014

CELEBRATE Messiah, mission to the Jewish People, has much to be thankful for and much to pray for going forward with Yeshua's message of hope in 2014. The core mission is *Bringing The Message To The Original Messengers*, with the continual prayer that they will be inspired by God to find new, innovative ways to bring the living water of Messiah Yeshua to this wasteland. Although the mission field is centred in Caulfield, it's far wider, stretching throughout Australia, to New Zealand, Far East Russia, and Israel.

Recent Activities Of Celebrate Messiah

- Lawrence has travelled to Canberra and Sydney over the past weeks, and soon to Perth, to hold Jewish Evangelism seminars and to launch *The Centurion's Legacy* – The Caulfield Messianic Centre Project.
- Rita is about to leave for Far East Russia to encourage the Messianic leaders in Artyom and Birobidzhan, and to plan for two family camps in July. Meanwhile, the local Russian ministry is thriving, with monthly outreach lunches seeing many come to know Yeshua as their personal Saviour. The monthly Russian-speaking Shabbat service will expand from monthly to fortnightly later this year.
- Jay is training seven members of his young adults group *B'Yachad* in discipleship so that they will go on to make disciples of other young people and multiply disciples into the future.
- The new *Chavurah* (home) group network is being set up, hoping to roll out groups around Australia very soon.
- The *Tikkun Olam* benevolent ministry is expanding to provide food parcels to needy people not only at festival times, but throughout the year. Israel has the highest poverty rates among the elderly in the developed world. Many of the poor are Russian immigrants including Holocaust survivors. Celebrate Messiah is helping to support a Russian speaking messianic congregation in Tel Aviv.

Thank you for the support and encouragement you give to this ministry.

– Lawrence Hirsch <www.celebratemessiah.com.au>

VIEWPOINT ...

Thanks To Fred Nile For Mentioning The Elephant In The Room

'REV Fred Nile has committed the unpardonable sin in Western society – he mentioned abortion's mental health risk. It's "the elephant in the room" that no-one wants to talk about,' FamilyVoice research officer Ros Phillips said.

The public outcry that followed Fred Nile's *Facebook* comment on Charlotte Dawson's tragic death following years of depression ignored the fact that Charlotte herself wrote about her abortion in her autobiography. She said her despair following the abortion was her first serious experience of depression. The marriage ended not long afterwards.

'Charlotte was not alone,' Ros Phillips said. 'Several long-term studies published in peer-reviewed journals have found that women who have had an abortion are significantly more likely to suffer serious clinical depression that may persist over many years.'

Some of the studies were by Professor David Fergusson and others, who have followed up 1265 children born in Christchurch in mid 1997. Dr Fergusson has been hailed for his gold standard research on many different issues, including criminality, education, drug use, smoking harm, adoption and mental health. These studies were immediately accepted by prestigious journals – but he faced reluctance to publish his studies showing the link between abortion and mental ill-health.

'Abortion harm was the elephant in the room then, too,' Ros Phillips said.

A more recent study by Drs Bellieni and Buonocore has found that women face a significantly higher risk of mental illness following an abortion, compared with giving birth. 'Fred Nile's respectful comment has alerted Australian women to the very real health risks of abortion. He deserves our sincere thanks,' Ros Phillips said.

A View Of Melbourne

CHRISTIANITY has had a place in Melbourne's maturation since the earliest days in the 1830s but it has never been accepted as the way and the truth and the life. It is a worldview that is fine to hold so long as it remains your belief and you don't try to impose either the belief or its values onto others ...

We are a multi-cultural city, and one of the by-products is that we are a multi-faith city. Today when one drives along Springvale Rd (major north-south road in the East), one passes not churches but temple after temple built for Buddhist worshippers. 58% of the population still identify themselves as Christian (this is gradually declining) and around 12% identify with one of the many other religions represented in the city and these numbers are growing ...

The second largest group are the 'no religion' demographic ... Because there are so many people and so few Gospel-centred Churches, there are opportunities to plant churches and revitalize dying churches everywhere. We have millions of people who have never heard the Gospel explained to them ... there is an immense task ahead for Gospel-centred churches in Melbourne; there is apathy from unbelievers, criticism from mainstream Christianity, and competitiveness and sectarianism from within the Reformed camp.

But the opportunities are huge. Every region in this city has hundreds of thousands of people who are made in the image of God and who need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. We need to pray and preach for God to awaken sleeping Christians and give life to the dead, and a humble Gospel-centred vision to work together in prayer, training and resourcing so that we might reach this great city for Christ.

This is a heavily edited version (due to the exigencies of space) of a blog by Murray Campbell, Pastor of Mentone Baptist Church. To read the complete text of this excellent article go to:

http://mentonebaptist.com.au/blog/view-melbourne#.Uw_KkFzDPfO

VISITING MELBOURNE?

You're welcome at *The Faith Factory*: St Kilda Presbyterian Church,
Cnr Alma Rd/Barkly St. Every Sunday 11am & 7pm;
Living Stones Korean Presbyterian Church. Every Sunday 12.30pm;
St Margaret's, Balaclava, Cnr Hotham St/Denman Rd. Every Sunday 9.30am.
Minister: Rev Bob Thomas 0417 592 646

You're Welcome At The Faith Factory
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BOOKS WORTH READING

THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY: A Biblical Theology Of The Old And New Testaments, Thomas R. Schreiner, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013. ISBN 978-0-8010-3939-3.

AS the title implies, Thomas Schreiner, Professor of New Testament Interpretation at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, reads the storyline of the Bible through the lens of the theme of the Kingdom of God, which he views as having three main aspects: *God As King, Humanity As His Subjects, and The Universe As His Realm*. Schreiner proceeds book by book through the Bible. He makes constant use of biblical theologies written by Bill Dumbrell, Scott Hahn, Bruce Waltke and others, but this reviewer at times wishes that he showed a little more exegetical finesse or nuance in handling some key texts. This may be the result of wanting to keep the discussion at a popular level – a worthy aim, but accuracy need not lead to complexity.

When looking at the early chapters of Genesis, Schreiner comes close to equating the image of God with the mandate for humans to rule the world (under God), and, if he had simply equated the two, this would have been a mistake, but he is right in seeing Adam and Eve as the divinely-appointed king and queen of creation. He understands God's dealings with Noah and Abraham as part of His plan to restore a sin-ravaged created order.

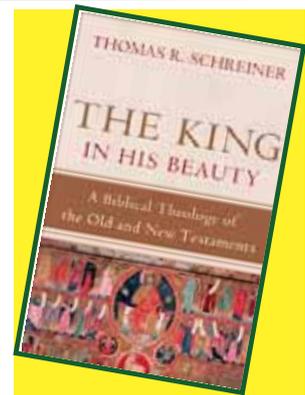
Schreiner is right to see the covenant at Sinai as based on grace, with the basis of Israel's obedience being gratitude for their redemption from Egypt. Unfortunately, his thoughts on Israel as a king-priest shows no familiarity with John A. Davies important work on this subject. Schreiner makes much of the tabernacle as the place of God's presence, but fails to say that it represents God's palace (as does the later temple), so that it is God's presence as King that is fundamental. This omission is odd in a book that wants to focus on the kingdom theme throughout Scripture.

In an insightful way, Schreiner shows the connection of the laws of sacrifice and holiness with their fulfilment in Christ. He sees the call for obedience in *Deuteronomy* as based on Israel's redemption and choice by God, so that salvation is by grace in both Testaments. He errs, however, when he claims that Joshua had a kingly role and anticipated the later phenomenon of Israelite kingship. As well, his thesis that *Judges* recommends kingship is an unlikely one.

God's providence is on display in *Ruth*, as He preserves the family that produced great King David. *Samuel* and *Kings* show that we need a king like David, indeed, one better than David. Solomon is depicted as a new Adam figure and Israel under Solomon was an Edenic paradise. All this points forward to the coming of Jesus, the perfect King. Despite the non-mention of God in the book of *Esther*, Schreiner still wants to make Him the main character in the book, which strikes this reviewer as perverse. He is on a firmer footing when he decides that the main theme of the Psalter is the reign of God, which also fits the thematic focus of Schreiner's survey of biblical theology. It is pleasing to see him refuting the idea that *Proverbs* can be used to promote the Health and Wealth Gospel. The larger prophetic books are given a chapter of explanation each, and the Minor Prophets are discussed as a canonical grouping in one chapter, outlining the main recurring themes in these 12 booklets.

Turning to the New Testament, Schreiner highlights the fulfilment theme in Matthew, notably the dawning of God's Kingdom in the person and work of Christ. The prominence of the kingdom theme in all three Synoptic Gospels and Acts justifies the focus on this theme in Schreiner's preceding survey of the Old Testament.

(Continued P.17)



'In an insightful way, Schreiner shows the connection of the laws of sacrifice and holiness with their fulfilment in Christ. He sees the call for obedience in Deuteronomy as based on Israel's redemption and choice by God, so that salvation is by grace in both Testaments.'

BOOKS WORTH READING

'BUT I SAY TO YOU ...': Christ the Controversialist, John Stott, New Format, Inter Varsity Press, Nottingham, 2013.

THIS book takes as its basis the discussions cum confrontations of Jesus with the Pharisees and Sadducees. This may not be at first what the reader would expect but it does not take long before we see the immense value of this approach to understanding the teaching of Jesus. John Stott always urges Christians to know the Bible better in order to follow Jesus more carefully and fully. As these controversies show, the Jewish leaders of the time knew the Scriptures but did not wish to follow Him of whom the Scriptures spoke.

This book gives the reader insight into who the Pharisees and Sadducees were, how they came to have the traditions they had and how their teachings blinkered them to the truth. Stott has chosen eight areas of controversy, and these form the bulk of the book: *Religion: Natural Or Supernatural?*, *Authority: Tradition Or Scripture?*, *The Bible: End Or Means?*, *Salvation: Merit Or Mercy?* *Morality: Outward Or Inward?*, *Worship: Lips Or Heart?* *Responsibility: Withdrawal Or Involvement?* *Ambition: Our Glory Or God's?* In each issue Stott uses the Gospel accounts to show the differences between Christ and the Jewish leaders. His explanations of some of the parables of Jesus are wonderful, such as the Pharisee and the tax collector at prayer. Always the truth, justice, compassion, love, righteousness and rightness of Jesus shine through. In every chapter we are challenged as to how we modern Christians are in danger of falling into the same traps as the Jewish leaders.

Two things have always stood in my mind about John Stott in the 40 years since I first heard him speak and began reading his books: Stott's focus on Jesus in all He is and has done for us and Stott's constant call to maintain balance in our Christian thinking contrary to our tendency to swing from one end of the pendulum to the other in all sorts of areas of life as a Christian Church. We see these two things again in this book. In line with this, the titles of every chapter are couched in terms of alternatives.

Don't skip reading the *Foreword* and the *Preface*. Both are helpful in putting the book into context, especially as this is a reprint of a book originally published in 1970. Don't read this book in a hurry, either. Mediate on the words of Jesus and the challenges presented. Don't shy away from analysing our personal tendency to not be clear on some of these issues. Think about our own lives and those of Christians we meet with regularly. Use this book as a

basis of discussion with others. Stott's prayer for his readers is 'having listened to His (Jesus) words, we will give Jesus the honour He deserves by our humble belief and wholehearted obedience.'

– Mignon Goswell

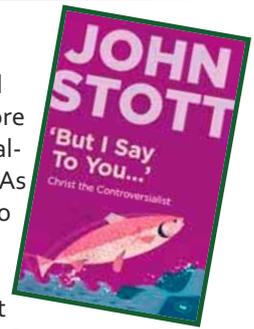
(Continued from P.16)

He is simply reflecting how the New Testament itself views the Old Testament. In the ministry of Jesus, we have the coming of the Davidic Messiah and the Divine King. John in his writings scarcely uses the word 'kingdom', but does present Jesus as the 'King of the Jews', so that God's rule dawns in the ministry of Jesus. The kingdom theme is present but not prominent in the writings of Paul, but Jesus is proclaimed as the reigning Messianic king, and Paul's 'new creation' theology is all about the in-breaking of God's kingdom in human history through Christ, the Son of God.

Schreiner succeeds in showing the essential unity of the Old Testament and New Testament, the consistent purpose of God in establishing His Kingdom, and the centrality of the work of Christ in this process. If you have had trouble seeing how the Bible fits together, you will find Schreiner's book a helpful guide.

– Greg Goswell

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