

## COLLOQUIUM: Religion In The Public Square

IN the midst of a rising tide of evil, un-righteousness and secularism, the age-old question confronts us again: 'What can the righteous do?' The Church And Nation Committee of the Presbyterian Church Of Victoria held a 'colloquium' on 7,8 August to inform interested Christians on various social and moral issues of the day.

Rev Darren Middleton, Convener of the Church And Nation Committee, sees the colloquium as a means by which the church and the world can be informed about social, ethical and political issues predicated on a high view of the Bible with the conviction that Christianity should be defended in the public square and in the context of the absolute sovereignty of God.

A number of top-line speakers were brought in to lead the thinking of some 100 attendees on current issues, ranging from *Business And The Common Good – Not An Oxymoron* to *Why The State Needs The Church to Worse Than Irrelevant: Apologetics Under Pressure*.

**Elizabeth Kendal** addressed the question: *Who Will Save The Persecuted Church?* 'Ultimately God saves His people by grace, through faith,' she said.

'Here are three ways in which we can exercise faith on behalf of the persecuted:

- "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, defend the rights of the poor and needy" (Proverbs 31.8,9) so as to shatter the silence on the street and in the halls of power.
- Give! Share with those in need (Luke 3.8,11) in the knowledge that as we do it for the least of Christ's children, we do it for Christ Himself (Matthew 25.31-46).
- Pray! "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood ..." (Ephesians 6.12-18)

'But why are Christians NOT stepping out in faith on behalf of the persecuted?

- Christians in general are ill-informed and genuinely unaware of how incredibly serious the situation is.
- Many Christians genuinely believe the "world" will save the Church. Alas, they are living in airy-fairy land. Here in the fallen, corrupt, real world, policy is determined by political realism, the politics of "vital interests" and power, not moral principles and ideals. The world cannot and will not save the Church.
- It all just seems so hopeless. Yet despite appearances, it is not hopeless, for God is part of the equation and as the Cross reveals, God's way of tackling evil is to come and enter hostile territory Himself, not only to subvert evil and defeat it from within, but to redeem it for good in fulfilment of promise. And God is most certainly at work; for amidst all the persecution, the Church is growing.
- The current persecution is not unprecedented. What is unprecedented, however, is our ability to respond. Today the Church can be aware of a crisis taking place on the other side of the world, often as it unfolds, and respond immediately for the saving of many lives. Never before in the history of the world has it been so possible for the Church to demonstrate, to a global audience, what it means to be One Body, a holy nation to the glory of God. Christians will only step out in faith if they accept that the world is not going to save the Church, they have hope and work together co-operatively.

(Continued on p.5)



Dr Scot Rae addresses the Colloquium.

VOLUME 78 NUMBER 4

ISSUE DATE:  
15 August 2015

FILE NO: NL 2015-08-15

ISSN: 1033-7903

**FOUNDER:**

Eric J. Daley  
(1910-1992)

**EDITOR:**

Rev Bob Thomas  
**Phone:** 0417 592 646  
**Email:** [editor@nlife.com.au](mailto:editor@nlife.com.au)

**BUSINESS MANAGER:**

Mignon Goswell  
**Phone:** 0434 313 646  
**Email:** [office@nlife.com.au](mailto:office@nlife.com.au)

**POSTAL ADDRESS:**

PO Box 457  
Mitcham VIC 3132

**WEB-SITE:**

[www.nlife.com.au](http://www.nlife.com.au)

**SUBSCRIPTION:**

Free On Request

**ACCEPTANCE OF  
ADVERTISING  
DOES NOT IMPLY  
ENDORSEMENT**

**PUBLISHED BY:**

New Life Australia Ltd

**ABN: 15 005 035 138**

**CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE  
NOTE:**

*New Life* is archived by the National Library of Australia. It is assumed that contributors agree with this arrangement and so are willing to be published on this basis.



## The Good News Behind The Bad

RECENTLY I was asked to speak to a group of men about *How Christians Read The Newspaper*.

The news is usually confronting: ISIS, travel entitlements, single gender marriage, human trafficking – as well as the natural disasters of fire and drought. So, how do we Christians cope with reading the newspaper?

The starting point for the believer is the sovereign rule of God over all things. 'There is not a single square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!' said Abraham Kuyper.

In Luke 12 and 13, Jesus urges His hearers that just as they read the signs of the weather (Luke 12.54–56) and take appropriate action, and as they read their legal chances (Luke 12.57–59) so they should understand the days in which they live and take appropriate action.

The crowd then asked Jesus to interpret two events, an act of political atrocity (Luke 13.1) and an industrial accident (Luke 13.4). Jesus tells them that neither event could be understood in an automatic way, as though these people suffered like this because they deserved it. After all, you could not be more innocent than worshipping God at the temple and yet Pilate had the worshippers cut down so that their blood mixed with the blood of their sacrifices. Jesus repeats the key to understanding these events and those we read about every day, in verses 3 and 5, 'unless you repent, you too will all perish!'

The Sovereign God is transmitting a consistent message through good events (Romans 2.4) and bad events: we must repent, turn from rebellion and submit to Him.

Our world view begins in Genesis 1-3 where Adam and Eve rebel against the Creator and are expelled from paradise into an environment of pain, friction, frustration and death (Genesis 3.16-19), an environment which is God's curse on their rebellion. The world in which we live is that post-Fall world, the environment into which we have been expelled; it is the result of human rebellion.

Now, through the very events from which we recoil, God is reminding us that this world is the way it is because of His judgment on human rebellion. The newspaper reports the realities of a fallen world and is a reminder to us of our part in the rebellion that led to this curse. A friend described the English martyr John Bradford's walk with God: 'If he did hear or see any plague or misery, he noted it as a thing procured by his own sins and still added, "Lord, have mercy upon me"'. Bradford's response is a model for ours.

Paul's message to the Athenians is both the message of the Christian preacher and according to Jesus, it is the message God is transmitting through the news: 'God commands all people everywhere to repent' (Acts 17.30). By turning away from our rebellion and submitting to the Lord Jesus, we will still experience the curse of the fallen environment, but will now have the strength of God's Spirit to thrive in this reality, and we will have the hope, through Christ, of re-entering the paradise of God again, so tragically lost through human rebellion.

The newspaper leads the believer to penitence to God, faith in Christ and a refreshing of hope for the future.

'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.' (Matthew 4.17)

- *David Cook*

## NEPAL: Constitution Puts Religious Liberty At Risk

**Background:** Until recently Nepal was the world's only Hindu Kingdom. Things changed in February 2005 when King Gyanendra seized absolute power in a bloodless coup, sending anti-monarchy sentiment soaring. By November 2005 Nepal's previously disparate opposition parties had united in a 'Seven Party Alliance' to oppose totalitarian royal rule. By April 2006 Kathmandu was paralysed, crippled by mass demonstrations. King Gyanendra was forced to step down. The Maoists then declared a ceasefire and on 18 May 2006 Nepal's new SPA parliament publicly declared that Nepal would no longer be a Hindu Kingdom but a secular democratic republic. In historic polls on 10 April 2008 Nepalis elected a Constituent Assembly tasked with drafting the new secular constitution, something Hindu nationalists vehemently opposed. In May 2012 the Assembly dissolved after failing to meet its fourth and final deadline for a new constitution. What followed was years of procrastination and Hindu nationalist agitation. Propelled into action by the devastating April 2015 earthquake, Nepal's parliament agreed on 8 June to move forward on the constitution.

**Constitution 2015:** Nepalese hopes that a new constitution will be finalised by mid-August 2015 are under a cloud as protesters continue to express their displeasure over the draft. The main concern for Christians is the loss of religious liberty. Though Article 31 enshrines the right to profess and practise one's own religion, it also enshrines anti-conversion legislation. Clause 3 of Article 31 reads: 'In exercising the right entrusted by this article, any act which may be contrary to public health, public decency or morality or incitement to breach public peace or act to convert another person from one religion to another or any act or behaviour to undermine or jeopardise the religion of each other is not allowed and such act shall be punishable by law.' Nepal advocacy officer for Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Martin Dore, rightly observes, 'That would make it "illegal" to change religion, evangelise, or even explain one's religion.' Lokmani Dhakal, one of the four Christians in Nepal's 601-member Constituent Assembly, is left asking, 'Without freedom to speak about one's faith, what is the meaning of religious freedom?'

Christians are also concerned that, after public consultations, the term 'secular' has been dropped. As the General Secretary of the National Federation of Christians, CB Gahatraj, explains, Nepalese Christians want to see secularism institutionalised in the constitution, with Christianity recognised to protect Nepali Christians from discrimination and persecution. However, it now seems likely that Nepal will be declared a Hindu state with 'religious freedom' – but not the religious freedom described in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Not only is conversion being portrayed as an abuse or 'misuse' of religious freedom, it seems that Hindu nationalists have convinced Nepalis that secularism would result in mass conversions, to the detriment of Nepali culture. As the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt Rev Dr Angus Morrison, observes, 'The growing threat to religious freedom around the world is, I believe, one of the most pressing issues of our time.' His appeal 'on behalf of our partners and friends in Nepal' is that this matter be raised with the Government of Nepal, to 'help ensure that, in its proper sense, freedom of religion for all people in Nepal is enshrined in the country's new constitution'.

In an excellent opinion piece entitled 'Religious Tolerance' (*Kathmandu Post*, 29 July 2015), Nepalese Christian David Kainee goes right to the heart of the matter. 'The current debate over secularism is taking place partly due to the resurgence of some political leaders who are exploiting the religious sentiments of the people to purge their tainted images in a bid to bounce back into politics. These leaders are inciting hatred against religious minorities which is polluting the environment of religious tolerance for which Nepal is known all over the world. The concept of secularism holds that the government or other entities should exist separately from religion and religious beliefs. But sad to say, secularism has been wrongly interpreted in Nepal. If the constitution of Nepal enshrines secularism, it does not mean that every Hindu will be converted into Christians or Muslims; it is only a movement towards the separation of religion and government.'

Secularism will not weaken nationalism. For peace and prosperity, we need to defeat the forces of religious extremism in the country, otherwise Nepal is sure to take the path of communal politics like the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries where hundreds of people are being killed in religious violence every day. Let's close the chapter of giving a political colour to religion which is polarising Nepali society – and instead plant the seed of tolerance and unity which is my fervent prayer for our country Nepal.' Let us join our Nepali brothers and sisters in fervent prayer for their country. – Elizabeth Kendal,

*Author of Turn Back the Battle: Isaiah Speaks to Christians Today*

### Please Pray That God Will:

- intervene in Nepal to preserve religious liberty; may our great redeeming God redeem this divisive debate on secularism and religious freedom and use it to open eyes, hearts and minds to the dangers posed by communalism, the risks inherent in rolling back liberty and the blessings to be gained from freedom.
- grant influential Nepalese Christians divine wisdom and authority as they seek to influence the debate, advocate for religious freedom and counter Hindu nationalist propaganda.

## **South Sudanese Pastors Accused Of Spying Freed**

TWO South Sudanese pastors on trial in Sudan for, amongst other things, 'spying' have been freed by the Judge of Khartoum North Central Court, Ahmed Ghaboush. Had they been found guilty of this, they could have faced the death penalty.

Yat Michael had taken his child to Khartoum for medical treatment when he was arrested on 14 December, 2014, after being asked to preach at a local church during his stay. Peter Yen was arrested in January 2015 when he went to enquire about Michael's whereabouts. The two men were then reported as missing until Sudanese authorities revealed that they were being held in prison for 'crimes against the state.'



*Pastors Yat Michael and Peter Yen during their trial in Khartoum, 2015.*

The DPA German news agency reported that the judge found Yat Michael guilty of 'a breach of the peace' and Peter Yen (also known as David Reith) guilty of 'managing a criminal or terrorist organisation' (Article 65). But he ordered both be released, as they had already served the sentences for these offences through their eight-month stay in prison.

Experts said there were fears that they would have been convicted of the more serious charges; it was felt the judge was under pressure to balance local expectations on him to uphold the principles of the Sharia-governed state, with adherence to international human rights standards.

The families told Radio Tamazuj, an online independent news service broadcast in Sudan and South Sudan, that they were 'delighted.'

### **Olive Gardens Christian Retirement Association**



**35 Olive Road, Eumemmerring, Vic.  
Modern, fully renovated two bedroom unit  
in a popular retirement village  
close to shops, public transport and freeway.**

**Unit must be owner occupied.**

**Price only \$140,000.**

**Contact: Herman Schuring: 0400 131 339.  
or Tony Smit: 0418 591 765.**

## Religion In The Public Square *(Continued from p.1)*

**Rev Campbell Markham, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church Of Tasmania**, addressed the topic: *How Should The Church React To Redefined Marriage?* He defined several evil effects which would arise from the redefinition of marriage: it will undermine and pervert Jesus' gift of marriage: 'A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'; it will legitimise homosexual practice, which is explicitly condemned in the Bible in Leviticus 18 and 20, Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, 1 Timothy 1, and Jude; it will weaken marriage norms and culture; if marriage is no longer an objective reality, but is whatever the society of the day chooses it to be, then not only the male-female norm, but also marital norms of exclusivity and lifelong faithfulness will come under question; it will open Pandora's Box to other perversions of marriage: including polygamous, polyamorous, and incestuous marriages.

'The coming marriage crash will be catastrophic for our nation,' he said. 'That is why we must not give up fighting for marriage and demanding that our government leave the Marriage Act alone.' He posed the question: how should the Church react to redefined marriage? 'As marriage is redefined, as marriage culture is weakened, Christians will need to re-teach our society what it means to be married,' he said. 'That means building strong Christ-centred marriages, getting marriage counselling and marriage enrichment. As family and parenting culture weakens, we will need to set an outstanding example of valuing children and fathering and mothering, and of being the fathers and mothers that God is calling us to be. We must face the catastrophe with prayer, love, and calm confidence in God's goodness and power – and prepare our people to do the same.'

**Rev Dr John McClean**, of Christ College, Sydney, spoke on *Apologetics Under Pressure*.

He said that at the present time, moral issues are at the centre of dispute, so our apologetic thinking has to focus on ethics at present. We need to understand the accusations in order to deal with the reality, even possibility, of the truth of the accusations. We need to be very clear on the connections between Christian ethics and the Gospel, both for our own living and to explain the case to outsiders.

If lots of our debates will be about ethics, then we have to be able to connect ethics to Jesus. We have to look for ways which present the Christian view and the Christian life with an appeal to the imagination. A lot of the assessment of Christianity is not about rational viability or evidence, but feel and perception. Our response is not to be playing the game of superficial appearances. Rather, we have to think about how we appeal to the aesthetic as well as the rational. We have to ask how our communication feels as well as what it argues. We need to consider what vision of life we are expressing in the way we defend the Gospel and to work hard at living out our worldview.

**Dr Scott Rae, Professor of Ethics at Talbot School of Theology in Los Angeles**

was the keynote speaker. He challenged his brothers and sisters to consider how to respond to abortion, euthanasia, reproductive technologies and the business world.

**Dr David van Gend of the Australian Marriage Forum** addressed the consequences of redefining marriage in our nation, emphasising that the battle has not been lost, but that Christians need to be proactive in defending this precious institution. He said that marriage is not a social invention to be refashioned according to political whim; it is a social recognition of timeless biological reality: male, female, young. All our marriage laws and customs exist to reinforce this biological foundation, helping bind a man to his mate for the sake of social stability and for the sake of the child they might create.

Homosexual relationships obviously cannot fulfil these requirements. They do not bring together the two great halves of nature in a one-flesh union; they cannot give a child the relationship with a mother and a father that a child needs. Same-sex relationships cannot create children and therefore society has no institutional interest in regulating such friendships. They are of importance to the individuals involved, and demand neighbourly civility, but they do not meet nature or society's job description for marriage. Whatever such relationships are, they are not 'marriage'; and they need to find a different word.



## CHURCH AND NATION:

### Religion In The Public Square (Continued from p.5)

Dr Stuart Robinson, Senior Pastor Emeritus of Crossway Baptist Church, spoke on *The Middle East And Us*. Drawing on his 14 year's experience as a missionary in the Middle East and frequent visits since, he set the recent meteoric rise of ISIS in its historical context going right back to the beginning of Islam. Dealing with the question of how Christians should deal with Islam, he said that Moslems are not the problem – Islam is the problem, and noting that there is a weariness among Moslems with the infighting in Islam and a yearning for true peace, he said: 'Don't hate Muslims to death, love them to Life', reminding those present of Brother Andrew's acrostic: **I Sincerely Love All Muslims**.

Dr Robinson's address is in print and available from Koorong Books and in electronic formats from Amazon under the title *Islam Rising – The Middle East And Us*.

Rev Darren Middleton, Convener of the Church And Nation Committee, opened each morning with inspiring and uplifting devotions, asking everyone to consider the question, 'How BIG is your God?' and remind the gathering that, 'We don't need to know what the future holds, but who it is that holds the future.'

– Rev Michael Jensen, of Clayton, Vic, and Bob Thomas

### FAITH IN SCIENCE? Allan Day Memorial Lecture On The Relationship Between Faith, Wisdom And Science

THE Allan Day Memorial Lecture *On The Relationship Between Faith And Science* will be held at Ridley College, 170 The Avenue, Parkville on Friday 11 September at 5.30pm for 6pm.

Professor Tom McLeish takes a fresh approach to the 'science and religion' debate, taking a scientist's reading of the enigmatic and beautiful Book of Job as a centrepiece, and asking what science might ultimately be for. Rather than conflicting with faith, science can be seen as a deeply religious activity, and the current form of a deep and continuous thread in human culture. Tickets are \$20. Contact Ridley at [www.ridley.edu.au/](http://www.ridley.edu.au/) for further information and to purchase tickets.

**YOU**

Can Advertise Here  
Contact Mignon  
Email:  
[office@nlife.com.au](mailto:office@nlife.com.au)

### Prestige Pianos & Organs

102 Bell Street, Preston, Victoria 3072 (MELWAY Ref: 31 B2)

- The largest range of new and reconditioned pianos, organs, keyboards and digital pianos
- The best advice in selecting your next instrument

Phone: (03) 9480 6777

[www.prestigepianos.com.au](http://www.prestigepianos.com.au)



### How Can YOU Help New Life?

By Praying For Us? By Sending In A Donation? By Advertising? By Forwarding It?  
Yes Please! Because WE Want To Go On Helping YOU!

**96threeFM**

Today's Christian Music, Inspiring Talk  
[www.96three.com.au](http://www.96three.com.au)  
Phone: 03 5241 6550

**Ramon A Williams**  
– Worldwide Photos –  
WANT TO SEE MORE?

*New Life* can only publish a small selection of photos, but you can see more of those attributed to Worldwide Photos by contacting Ramon Williams,  
e-mail: [rlgmedia@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rlgmedia@ozemail.com.au)

### UK MP Calls For Anti-Terror Laws To Be Used To Silence Dissent On Same-Sex Marriage

CALLS by a UK Government MP for anti-terrorism legislation to be used to silence believers in traditional marriage should serve as a warning to Australian parliamentarians about where this political agenda is heading overseas. Mark Spencer, the Conservative MP for Sherwood recently said in a letter to a constituent that controversial new *Extremism Disruption Orders* should be used to silence Christian teachers who say marriage is a heterosexual union.

Australian Christian Lobby Managing Director Lyle Shelton said Mr Spencer's remarks were disturbing and mirrored recent actions of Australian same-sex marriage activists. 'Mr Spencer's comments demonstrate the intolerance to dissent of the same-sex political agenda,' Mr Shelton said. 'Wanting to silence dissent is intolerant. Using *Extremism Disruption Orders* to silence dissent on marriage is itself extreme intolerance. I wonder how ethnic communities who will never waver on the definition of marriage would feel about anti-terrorism laws being used to silence their beliefs on marriage. Supporters of redefining marriage keep telling us that we should follow the lead of countries like the UK that have redefined marriage. The more Australians see of the consequences of redefining marriage overseas the less attractive the same-sex marriage agenda becomes.

'Recently the prominent same-sex marriage lobbyist Rodney Croome called for people to complain to the Tasmanian Human Rights Commissioner because the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Hobart had dared to distribute a booklet outlining the church's teachings on marriage in Catholic schools. This latest example of intolerance from the UK should cause Australian MPs considering a political debate on marriage to think twice about rushing into legislation that will take away freedoms from millions of Australians who will never accept a politicians' definition of marriage,' Mr Shelton said.

### Coalition Marriage Decision Gives Everyone Permission To Keep Speaking – ACL

THE Coalition's overwhelming party room decision for the traditional view of marriage is a win for the millions of Australians who will always believe it is between one man and one woman, says Australian Christian Lobby Managing Director Lyle Shelton, who thanked the Prime Minister and Coalition Senators and Members for speaking so clearly. 'The Prime Minister and Coalition parliamentarians have shown great courage and leadership in speaking for marriage at a time when a powerful minority have made it difficult to speak,' he said. 'This decision means all Australians remain free to speak what they believe about marriage without fear. It is so important we keep speaking without fear about the benefits of marriage and why its definition should be preserved.

'Coalition parliamentarians have shown great courage in staring down a determined political campaign driven by a small minority who have co-opted the media, celebrities and even corporate Australia.

'It is clear from polling that same-sex marriage remains, as it was at the previous election, a low order issue with voters. No doubt debate will continue and that's fine. That is the right of every citizen in a free society. But it is important that words like 'bigot' are set aside and the demonisation of marriage supporters now ceases.'

#### Marriage Referendum Questions Must Canvass Consequences

ANY referendum questions on marriage must canvass the consequences of change, allowing a free and open debate, Australian Christian Lobby Managing Director Lyle Shelton says. 'This debate can't continue with television networks like Channel 7 and Channel 10 refusing to run innocuous advertisements putting the other side of the argument,' Mr Shelton said. 'The word "bigotry" used again and again by journalists on social media must be dropped from the public discourse so that there is complete freedom to put the alternative view.'

Mr Shelton said the Prime Minister Tony Abbott's floating of a referendum or plebiscite next term of Parliament gave breathing space for ordinary Australians to be allowed to know what is at stake, noting that any referendum questions must canvass the harms to freedom of speech, religion and conscience raised by the Australian Human Rights Commission's 'freedom commissioner' Tim Wilson.



### TURN BACK THE BATTLE: Isaiah Speaks to Christians Today.

With persecution escalating globally, **Elizabeth Kendal** calls us to revisit the prophecy of Isaiah, maintaining that Isaiah 1-39 provides an unambiguous treatise on how God's people are to respond to persecution, suffering and existential threat. For purchasing options, visit:

[www.turnbackthebattle.com](http://www.turnbackthebattle.com)

## Mobile Mission Maintenance Turns 40!

MOBILE Mission Maintenance, now known as 'MMM International', celebrated 40 years of service on 1 August 2015.

Since the inception of the Ministry, MMM has trusted the Lord for all its needs. God has been gracious and supplied many dozens of full-time volunteer staff and literally thousands of volunteer helpers over these 40 wonderful years.

The ministry has worked all across Australia and in many parts of Asia, Africa and the South Pacific. There are permanent established centres in New Zealand, Zambia, Thailand, Hong Kong and South Africa, as well as all Australian States.

David Dawson, founder of MMM International, spoke of the launch of MMM in Melbourne in August 1975. As he shared the vision God had laid on his and others' hearts, he said that they had no way of knowing that God would take the Ministry around the world, blessing countless people. God only knows of the hundreds of projects undertaken for His glory and the furtherance of the Gospel.

At the celebration, many past full-time staff shared highlights of their time in MMM, most serving many years. Prayers of thanksgiving were offered for past blessings, and prayers for guidance for future ministry.

MMM can be contacted via the CEO, Terrence Baxter on (03) 9837 2700.



David Dawson, Terrence Baxter and John Walder (L - R) prepare to cut the cake.

### Learn How To Share Your Faith With Muslims

ACCORDING to Africa Inland Mission Australian Director Len Lesleighter, a training seminar at the Melbourne School of Theology on Saturday 29 August will give people a new outlook that will help change their churches view and approach to Muslims. Seminar speaker Fouad Masri, from the [CrescentProject.org](http://CrescentProject.org) will explain why and how Christians can share the Hope of Jesus with Muslims. People will be equipped to go back to their church and potentially run a six-session DVD course, *Bridges – Helping Christians Connect With Muslims*.

Fouad Masri is President of the Crescent Project in the USA and believes now is the time to share Jesus with Muslims. Muslims around the world are grieving from the action of groups like ISIS and are looking for something better. Fouad is speaking at events in four states in late August, sponsored by Africa Inland Mission.

Fouad Masri speaks in Melbourne on Saturday 29 August at Melbourne School of Theology, 5 Burwood Hwy, Wantirna from 9am to 5 pm. Meals are provided. Registration is essential and will be taken up to Monday 17 August. Register now by phone on (02) 4322 4777 or on-line at <https://guestlistapp.com/events/317793>

**YOU CAN  
ADVERTISE HERE.**

**Call Mignon**

**0434 313 646**

**Email: [office@nlife.com.au](mailto:office@nlife.com.au)**

**Would You Like To Hear  
Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones?**

**Go To: [www.nlife.com.au](http://www.nlife.com.au)**

**Click on: 'Downloads & Resources'**

**Scroll Down To: 'Other Resources'**

**Enjoy!**

*(Courtesy Rev Iain Murray)*

## GET MORE OUT OF NEW LIFE

**Learn more about a particular article, advertisement, contributor or advertiser!**

**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](mailto:editor@nlife.com.au) ; [www.nlife.com.au](http://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**.

## UPCOMING EVENT:

# JESUS RACING FAMILY EVENT 2015

MANY Christians find it a challenge to share their faith with unchurched family, friends and work colleges and inviting them to church seems way too big a step. This why the Jesus Racing team puts on a thrilling trackside family event each year which provides a relaxed and informal setting for people of all ages to attend.

The *Jesus Racing Family Event* at Sydney Motorsport Park will feature a massive multi-million dollar display of exotic supercars and classic cars, precision on-track driving demonstrations, and a variety of fun activities and entertainment for the whole family. It is presented by versatile racing driver Andrew Fisher who not only competes and wins at the front of what is Australia's most competitive and robust racing series, but has been able to use his motor sport involvement as a 'vehicle' (pardon the pun) to engage with unchurched people across the nation.

Andrew takes his *Life Choices* multimedia presentation to High Schools, Gaols, Correctional Centres, Breakfast, Dinners and Community events all over the country where he inspires people to think carefully about the decisions they make and to consider their future direction.

At the *Jesus Racing Family Event* your friends, family, neighbours and work colleges will get to experience the team first hand, with Andrew providing some on-track entertainment as well as an understanding of why someone would put the name of Jesus on his race car.

Last year the team hosted over 700 men at the same venue and the success of that led the team to expanding the format in 2015 to an all-day event for the whole family. This will be an ideal opportunity for Christians to invite the people they care about to an event that has something for everyone – this is not just for 'petrol heads' or people who follow motor sport – it is a fun day that caters to the whole family with a special kids zone with jumping castles, face painting, a massive 200m flying fox, racing simulators, music and great food.

The *Jesus Racing Family Event* will be held on Saturday 31 October from 2-7pm at Sydney Motorsport Park, Brabham Drive, Eastern Creek. Admission: Adults \$20, Children \$15, Family of four \$50. Food and drink will be available for purchase. Register now at [www.jesusracing.com.au](http://www.jesusracing.com.au)

## VISITING MELBOURNE?

You're welcome at *The Faith Factory*:

**ST KILDA:** Cnr Alma Rd/Barkly St. Every Sunday 11am & 7pm;  
*Living Stones* Korean Presbyterian Church. Every Sunday 12.30pm;  
**BALACLAVA:** Cnr Hotham St/Denman Rd. Every Sunday 9.30am.

**MINISTER:** Rev Bob Thomas 0417 592 646

*You're Welcome At The Faith Factory*  
– A Friendly, Caring, Bible-Believing Christian Fellowship –



## GLORIOUS THINGS - A PROTESTANT'S GUIDE TO LONDON

• Revised! • Updated! • Illustrated!

Now Available As An e-Book!

*Glorious Things* will help visitors to London arrive well prepared to make the most of their time there.

The guided tours will take you to places like Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral, but *Glorious Things* will take you to important sites linked to our Protestant heritage.

**COST:** \$10 for the PDF version, with the right to print two hard copies.

### PAYMENT OPTIONS:

1. Cheque for \$10 payable to New Life Australia. Mail to: PO Box 457, Mitcham Vic 3132. (Please include a letter with your name and email address so that we can email the PDF to you.)
2. Direct deposit \$10 to Bank: Westpac; A/c name: New Life Australia Ltd  
BSB: 033-112; A/c No: 16-8239 (Please also notify us by email).



### Syrian Humanitarian Crisis Must Be A Priority – ACL

THE Australian Christian Lobby has renewed calls for the Australian Government to more adequately address the growing humanitarian crisis in Syria and Iraq. Following calls from Intelligence and Security Committee Chairman Dan Tehan for Australia to join an international air campaign against IS in Syria, ACL said the government needed to do more to assist the millions of people fleeing the conflict.

ACL Managing Director Lyle Shelton, said that while it was appropriate for the government to be considering military options for dealing with the international security threat caused by IS, greater attention needed to be paid to the growing humanitarian crisis.

‘This is the largest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War,’ Mr Shelton said. ‘Frankly, Australia’s response has been inadequate. Millions of people have been displaced by this conflict and Australia ought to be doing much more to address this crisis.’

Mr Shelton renewed calls for the Australian Government to adopt a response similar to the Howard Government’s ‘Kosovo Solution’, which offered temporary asylum for people affected by that conflict.

### Did You Know ...?

... that Australians placed same-sex marriage 13th on a list of priorities in a recent survey and 16th in another?

... that German Chancellor Angela Merkel has ruled out same-sex marriage?

... that Austria’s Parliament voted 110 to 26 in favour of traditional marriage?

... that of the world’s almost 200 countries, only 22 allow same-sex marriage?

– Extracted from *The Case Against*, Sophie York, *Herald-Sun*, 13-8-15.

Do you desire a fresh and arresting approach to the *Gospel of Mark and Revelation* in particular? To help increase your memory of God’s Word? Contact Edmond Smith, the author of the new *Mirrors In Mark* ... to purchase a copy at a good reduced rate.  
Email: [eksmith.email@gmail.com.au](mailto:eksmith.email@gmail.com.au)  
Phone: (03) 9764 9085

### COMING TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA?

Come to Scots Church, Fremantle,  
90 South Terrace  
(next to Fremantle Markets)  
Reformed and Evangelical  
10am and 5pm Sundays  
12:30 pm Wednesday Lunch Time  
Worship

Also at Southern River,  
Bletchley Park Primary School,  
Balfour Road  
9am Sunday  
Rev Stuart Bonnington  
08 9398 1304  
[melbonn@bigpond.com](mailto:melbonn@bigpond.com)

Check Out Our Website  
[www.nlife.com.au](http://www.nlife.com.au)  
For Latest News Daily

### We’re Counting On YOU! YOUR Donations Keep Us Going!

Through the generous donations of members of the *New Life* family, *New Life* is now available free on request by email to everyone, everywhere, who wants to receive it.

### PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION:

- **By Cheque To:** New Life, PO Box 457, Mitcham 3132 Vic.
- **By Direct Deposit To:** Account Name: New Life Australia Ltd.  
Bank: Westpac. BSB: 033-112.  
Account Number: 16-8239.  
(Please email [office@nlife.com.au](mailto:office@nlife.com.au) when you direct deposit).
- **From Our Web Site:** ([www.nlife.com.au](http://www.nlife.com.au)) using the *Make A Donation* button.

## PERSECUTION WATCH

### Islamic State Militants Capture Christians In Seized Syrian Town

AN estimated 260 Christians were kidnapped on Thursday 6 August by Islamic State militants just hours after the jihadists seized the Syrian town of Qaryatayn, in Homs province, a local Christian leader told Barnabas. Militants searched out Christians and anyone else they accused of 'collaborating with the regime', and their names were on a list used by the jihadis, said Rami Abdurrahman, head of the Syrian Observatory For Human Rights. Those who tried to escape were hunted until found, and taken. Some were taken from inside a church building.

As IS militants entered the town, the Christians were placed under house arrest, said Bishop Matta al-Khoury, secretary at the Syrian Orthodox patriarchate in Damascus. Local Christian leaders fear that those held hostage will soon be made to stand before an Islamic court. The exact number of Christians among those being held is uncertain at this stage, with initial reports indicating that at least 230 people were kidnapped, including many Christians, women and children.

A simultaneous attack was attempted on Hawareen village, close to Saddam, forcing hundreds to flee to Homs and around 2,000 to Saddam. A further 1,500 Christian families have fled Saddam; many of the men have decided to remain in order to protect the houses, but have sent the women, children and elderly to safer locations.



*Barnabas Fund supports hungry Christians in Homs, Syria.*

#### **TURKEY: Trilogy Of Terror**

TURKEY is dealing with a trilogy of terror: the Islamic State, the Kurdish separatists, and the Marxist rebels. At the same time, they're dealing with 2,000,000 refugees from Syria and Iraq. It's overwhelming. The task is being taken up by the Christians. International Needs' Behnan Konutgan says along with physical aid, spiritual support is desperately needed. 'Pray for Turkey and the Middle East. There is fire going on, and nobody knows what is happening. Every day, people are killing each other. Pray that God would send His peace and bring new peace to this country, and that people may know God. Please pray also for Behnan's safety as he ministers to the refugees and meets with leadership of the Evangelical Church.

– [www.mnnonline.org/news/turkey-trilogy-of-terror/](http://www.mnnonline.org/news/turkey-trilogy-of-terror/)  
**SUDAN: Pastors Freed, But Unable To Return To SS**  
TROUBLE strikes again for the two South Sudanese pastors who were recently freed – they're still waiting to make it home. There is currently a travel ban on both pastors, preventing them from leaving the country, but lawyers are hopeful this will soon be overcome. They've discovered that the ban was not filed properly, so a new appeal has been launched.

<https://www.mnnonline.org/news/trouble-strikes-again-for-south-sudanese-pastors/>

#### **SYRIA: Praying For The Lord's Intervention**

HAVING seized Idlib in the north, the Turkey-Saudi-Qatar-backed, al-Qaeda-led Jaish al-Fatah alliance is now pressing south into Hama. Fierce fighting rages as Islamic jihadists with US-made weapons fight the Syrian Army and loyalist forces comprised largely of local people desperate to defend their villages. Having seized Palmyra in the east, Islamic State is now pressing west towards the M5 Highway linking Damascus with Homs and the north. These are critical days. On 6

August IS abducted some 150 Christians from Qaryatayn, west of Palmyra. Thousands have been displaced from the Assyrian village of Hawwarin and the nearby town of Sadad. Intelligence indicates IS (which holds over 300 Christians in captivity) may be planning a 'mass casualty terrorist attack'. Please pray for peace in Syria and for its Church. – Elizabeth Kendal

#### **PAKISTAN: Christian Mother Kidnapped And Forced To Convert To Islam**

A YOUNG, married, Christian mother of three was kidnapped, forcibly converted to Islam and married to her kidnapper on 23 July in the town of Burj Mahalam, Chak No. 35, Pattoki, in Pakistan's Punjab province. Fouzia's family work as bonded labourers for Muhammad Nazir Fouzia Sadiq, aged 26, was abducted by her Muslim employer, Muhammad Nazir Ahmad, aged 56, while she was working in a field. When the family went to his house to find out what happened, Nazir's brother promised the family that Fouzia would be returned soon. But when the family again requested her return the next day, Nazir told the family that Fouzia had converted to Islam and had entered into an Islamic marriage with him. Fouzia was now his property, he said, as he warned them not to report this to anyone or make it a legal issue.

The whole family, including the children, work for Nazir as bonded labourers, receiving very little money in return for their work. 'Our landlord is a cruel man and we have been starving since he stopped the little payment that was due to us,' said Fouzia's sister, Iqra. 'We have no power and have to face such injustice.'

– Barnabas Fund

#### **NIGERIA: Boko Haram Targets Christians Again**

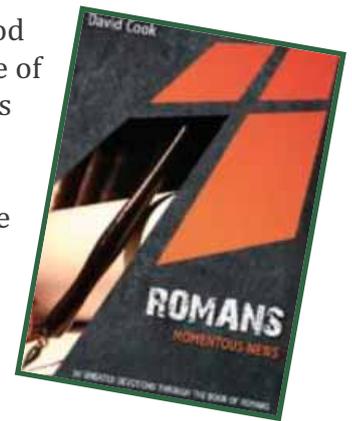
BOKO Haram fighters raided two Christian villages on 27 July in Nigeria's Borno state, killing at least 29 people. 16 Christian fishermen were also slaughtered.

**'All One In Christ Jesus'**

**Romans 16:1-16**

AT the very beginning of *Romans* Paul has said that the Gospel is the means God powerfully uses to bring people to salvation (Romans 1.16). He now lists some of those who have been saved through this powerful Gospel. Paul sends greetings to 27 people, some of whom he names, but he mentions more: the church, the household, the brothers, a mother, a sister and the saints.

Some are men, some women. Some have Jewish names like Mary, some have Greek names like Hermes and some have Roman names like Julia. Some are people of wealth, heads of households like Aristobulus and Narcissus. Some have an obviously close bond with Paul like the mother of Rufus, Andronicus and Junias. Some are known to us, like Priscilla and Aquilla, others we have heard of, like Apollos. All their work is elevated and reported to be significant,



**FOR REFLECTION:**

*If Paul were to include your name in this list of greetings, how do you think he would describe you?*

*What do these verses teach about our unity in Christ, the nature of ministry, Paul's relationship with the Church and the power of the Gospel?*

whether it was teaching like Priscilla and Aquilla, the 'very hard work' of Mary or the hard work of Tryphena and Tryphosa. We don't know what their work was, but it was recognised and affirmed by the apostle. The description that dominates this section is 'in Christ' and 'in the Lord'. All these people have this in common: they were once outside of Christ, then they were in Christ (when Paul wrote to the church), now they are all with Christ, enjoying the fulfilment of their hope.

The First Century was a rough, hard world, but believers knew they were part of God's family: knowing God as Father, Christ as elder brother and one another as brothers and sisters together in one family. Thus Paul urges them to greet each other as siblings 'with a holy kiss' (v.16). Paul's words regarding Phoebe in vv.1,2 are significant, as it was most likely that she was the carrier of the letter to the Romans he had just completed. We can thank God for her safe arrival at Rome, her warm reception and the preservation of this First Century letter that strengthens the church today.

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

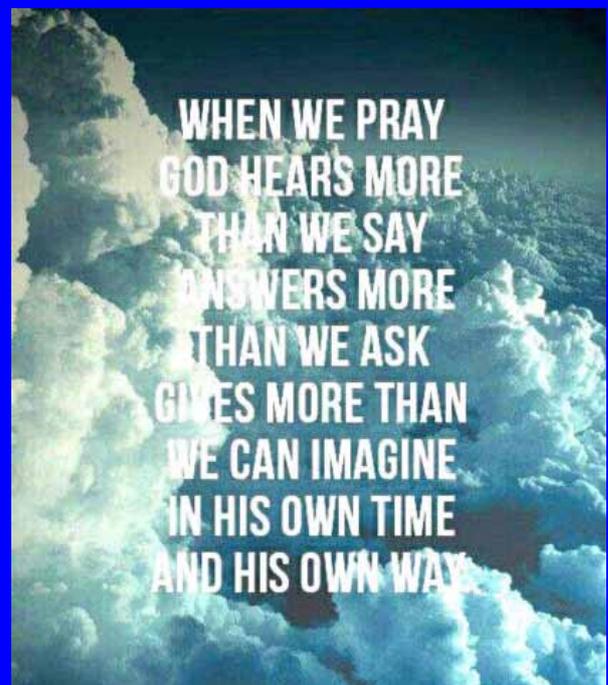
**QUOTABLE QUOTE:**

"I BELIEVE THAT ONE REASON WHY THE CHURCH OF GOD AT THIS PRESENT MOMENT HAS SO LITTLE INFLUENCE OVER THE WORLD IS BECAUSE THE WORLD HAS SO MUCH INFLUENCE OVER THE CHURCH."



- CHARLES H. SPURGEON (1834-1892)

**Seen On Facebook:**



To Look Up Back Issues Of *New Life*  
 Right Back To August 2007  
 Go To: [www.nlife.com.au](http://www.nlife.com.au)  
 And Click On: Previous Issues  
 Bound Volumes Back To Vol 1, No 1  
 Are Held In The Library Of MST,  
 5 Burwood Hwy, Wantirna 3152

## BOOKS WORTH READING

### YOU MUST READ – Books That Have Shaped Our Lives, Banner Of Truth, 2015, also available in ePub and Kindle.

THIS is a book about books, reading and readers. Thirty two different writers associated with Banner Of Truth (including Australia's Peter Barnes) tell of a favourite book published by Banner and commend it to readers. The result is a tasty casserole of a book in which readers meet the writers (often with personal stories of how a book has changed their lives), the historical author (with a sketch of their lives and circumstances) and the book itself. The individual contributions not only introduce a treasured word from the past but are also often a significant contemporary word in themselves. It is good to see contributions from Australia, Cyprus, Latin America, Africa and Asia to balance the mostly Northern Hemisphere authorship.

Banner has been instrumental in blowing the dust off many old authors and volumes and putting them on today's bookshelf. Banner publishes in the particular niche of works in the puritan tradition. This tradition may be unfamiliar to some and can be a challenge to read, but it is a hearty read. It is hearty both in the sense of being substantial and hearty in the sense of being addressed to the affections. In a day of much light writing and writing that neglects the heart for head and hands, this is a good corrective.

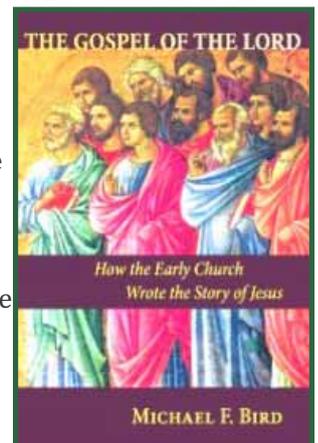
Many pastors and preachers find Banner books a good read to warm the heart. This is especially useful on Saturday nights when the sermon is all ready to go, the family is in bed and the preacher seeks to feed himself before feeding others. This particular book can act as a road map for those starting in the field. – David Burke  
(Yes, we did review this book in NL 2015-07-01 p.13, but David Burke gives us additional insights into it. – Ed)

### THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD: How The Early Church Wrote The Story Of Jesus, Michael Bird.

ANY review of a Michael Bird book starts with a comment on his amazing output. I liked this comment from Nijay Gupta. 'Now that Michael Bird has finished a major book on systematic theology as well as numerous works on messianism, the historical Jesus and the Theology of Paul, I wonder if it is time for Mike to extend his brand into cook books and romance novels! ... Let's see if the Romans commentary he is working on kills him first.'

Michael Bird lectures in Theology at Ridley College, Melbourne, but has an extensive background in New Testament studies. *The Gospel Of The Lord* has received excellent reviews and was listed by *Christianity Today* as one of the books of the year in 2014. *The Gospel Of The Lord* is concerned primarily with the questions of how the Gospels came to be, what kinds of literature they are, and how they relate to Christian discourse about God' (viii). It is not a Gospel survey, but rather a book that covers the complex issues related to the origins and development of the books we call 'Gospels' in the context of the Early Church. Michael covers such matters as the transmission of the 'Jesus tradition', the Synoptic problem, the genre question, and the canonisation of the 'Four-fold Gospel'; Mike deals with the non-canonical Gospels – why they were written, what they are about and how they were received by the early Christians.

In our highly skeptical age it is critical that we have a clear understanding of how the primary source documents for our knowledge of Jesus came into being and can be relied upon. Bird uses his typical aussie humour to enliven the book and traverses many scholarly disputes and discussions with clarity and a genuinely fresh perspective. I enjoyed the book and gather from other reviews (from genuine Scholarly types) that it should become a standard academic text for years to come. – Reviewed by Bishop Stephen Hale



### 'And The Winner Is ...' SparkLit Book Of The Year Awards

THE Australian Christian Book Of The Year Award is given annually to an original book written by an Australian citizen. This award recognises and encourages excellence in Australian Christian writing. It is administered by SparkLit (formerly the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia and the Australian Christian Literature Society).

This year's awards for Young Australian Christian Writer went to Tim Sharp for *Undying*. Second Prize was awarded to Trudy Adams for *The Sunshine List*. Third Prize was awarded to Sarah Backholer and Rebecca Nisbett for *Seasons Of Grace*.

The winner of the 2015 Book Of The Year Award was Michael Gladwin (pictured, right) for his book *Captains Of The Soul – A History Of Australian Army Chaplains*. The judges commented: '(In this book) acts of heroism by "the soldier without a gun" abound, providing a treasury of inspiring home-grown stories. This is a history of national importance and an insight into the Australian character.'

SparkLit encourages and empowers Christian writers and publishers around the world and encourages Australian Christians to help them 'fan the flames of faith' by donating to various partners in the developing world.

For information about how to do this go to: [www.SparkLit.org](http://www.SparkLit.org)



## BOOKS WORTH READING

### JOHANNINE THEOLOGY: The Gospel, The Epistles And The Apocalypse Paul A. Rainbow, Nottingham: Apollos, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8308-4056-4

HERE in one volume, Dr Paul Rainbow, Professor of New Testament at Sioux Falls Seminary, makes an ambitious attempt to summarise, evaluate and synthesise the whole corpus of John's writings: Gospel, Letters and Revelation. Rainbow acknowledges the difficulty of what he aims to do, but pursues his goal by organising the teaching of John around the themes of the *Three Divine Persons*, *Unbelieving Humanity (The World)* and *Believers*. He orders his material in this way because, as Rainbow notes, 'the Johannine universe consists of persons and personal relationships.'

He argues cogently that the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, is the author of all five texts, so that there is a common creative and inspired mind behind them, and it is a valid procedure to use one text to help illumine another. Behind this traditional and conservative conclusion stands a wealth of scholarship and research, as evidenced by the many footnotes and a full bibliography of scholarly works on the writings of John.

Rainbow clears John of the charge of falsifying the teaching of Jesus, or to put it another way, of sacrificing historical accuracy for theological claims. Even though the teaching of Jesus often sounds quite different to what we find in the Synoptic Gospels, what we have in the writings of John is the teaching of Jesus refracted through concentrated meditation on what Jesus said and did.

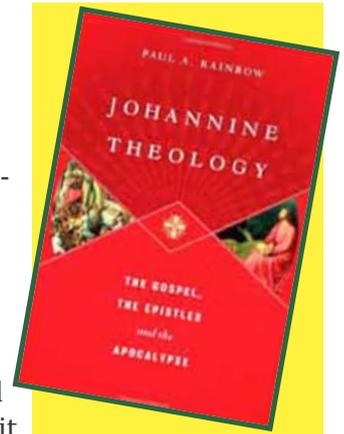
It may sound surprising on first hearing, but Rainbow shows that the centre of the theology of John's Gospel is not Jesus, but the Father, with Jesus as the only way to the Father. Jesus was sent by the Father and came to do the Father's will. None of this undermines or obscures the truth of the equality of Father and Son, for Johannine Christology is a robust affirmation of the full deity of Jesus. This reviewer found Rainbow's exposition of John's Trinitarian Theology a deeply moving experience. According to John, Jesus' whole purpose in coming was to complete the work that His Father had given Him to do, a work that climaxed at the cross. As Rainbow points out, this is announced from the beginning of the Gospel as He is identified by John the Baptist as 'the lamb of God' (1.29).

John's teaching about 'the world' rests on the teaching of the Old Testament and is in line with his Jewish environment. A strength of Rainbow's analysis is that he shows how deeply grounded Johannine theology is in Old Testament revelation. John cannot be condemned for antisemitism, for his condemnation of 'the Jews' is not owing to their ethnicity nor to their religion rooted in the Old Testament, but due to their hostility to and rejection of Jesus and His followers. Rainbow shows that, despite what is often said, John's chronology of Jesus' passion is the same as the other Gospels: the Last Supper was on Thursday evening and his death on Friday.

John also has a profound theology of the Holy Spirit, so that this Gospel is explicitly Trinitarian, with the Spirit as the personal bond of love between the Father and the Son, as Augustine taught. The emphasis in John is on the present reality of salvation through Christ, though these blessings are also viewed as anticipations of the future consummated state of salvation.

Rainbow expounds the great Johannine themes of faith, truth, love and life, all of which centre on Christ. While affirming the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, Rainbow shows the necessity of obeying, loving and abiding in Christ if we are to be saved. Finally, the author shows that John's ecclesiology is a window into Asian Christian life at the end of the First Century (John being located in Ephesus). John calls on Christians to be in the world but not of the world, so that an isolated sectarianism is not an option for the Christian community in terms of faithful involvement in a hostile world that needs to be confronted by Christ's truth and see Christ's love in action.

– Greg Goswell



*'Rainbow expounds the great Johannine themes of faith, truth, love and life, all of which centre on Christ.'*

*'While affirming the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, Rainbow shows the necessity of obeying, loving and abiding in Christ if we are to be saved.'*