

SAT-7 Responds To Egypt Church Bombings

On Palm Sunday a bomb ripped through the Communion Service at St George's in Tanta in Egypt, killing 27 and injuring many more. It was followed shortly afterwards by a suicide bomb detonated outside St Mark's Cathedral in Alexandria where Pope Tawadros, the leader of the Coptic Church, had led worship.



A woven palm leaf used in a Palm Sunday procession lies bloodied in a church aisle; bags of shoes and other effects are gathered in plastic bags – monuments to the scores of worshippers whose lives were snatched by the two horrendous bomb attacks. Islamic State (ISIS) claimed responsibility for both bombings and vowed to continue murdering Christians.

Although Christians are being targeted, it appears to be part of a wider strategy to destabilise and undermine the Egyptian state. Lower-level attacks against Christians – especially in rural areas which are ineffectively policed – has been an ongoing problem in Egypt. But Christians are now being selected as a soft and easily identifiable target for large-scale attacks. For the jihadists of ISIS, they are also seen as one group who have no place in their vision of a strictly Islamic society.

CANTERBURY'S WORLD-WIDE CALL TO PRAYER

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is inviting Christians around the world to pray as one for people to know Jesus Christ. The *Thy Kingdom Come Wave Of Prayer* is gaining momentum as churches across the world signal their support. The hope is to see at least 80% of churches taking part.

Leaders from Churches Together in England, including, Pentecostal, Baptist and Methodist churches, Free Churches, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have signalled their support.

Archbishop Welby says the aim of the Wave Of Prayer running from 25 May to 4 June is to unite Christian churches in a focused time of prayer for more people to come to know Jesus Christ and for the Holy Spirit to give Christians confidence in being witnesses about their faith.

Details and resources on running events or setting up prayer stations, prayer walks or finding ways to pray as a family are available on the resources section of the website [Thy Kingdom Come/global](http://ThyKingdomCome/global). – Anglican News

Christian satellite TV broadcaster SAT-7 has its largest production team based in Cairo and has freelance and associate producers based in other cities. During each outbreak of violence against the nation's Christians, SAT-7 has stood alongside believers with a mixture of programs, offering prayer, interviewing those affected as well as church and society leaders, and seeking to remind believers of God's presence and greater purposes even in their suffering.

SAT-7 Founder and CEO, Dr Terence Ascott, stresses that the ongoing priority for SAT-7 has to be one of changing hearts and minds: 'In the end, winning the battle for people's minds is the only way to stop such carnage. As a media organisation serving in this very troubled region, may God give us wisdom in what to say; and give our viewers the ears to hear and respond to His Love for all people – yes, even those who, at this moment, may be rejoicing at the successful murder and maiming of our brothers and sisters.'

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‘Easy Come; Easy Go’ – No Option For The Christian

In 1 Chronicles 5.20,25 we read: ‘They were helped in fighting them, and God handed the Hagrites and all their allies over to them, because they cried out to Him during the battle. He answered their prayers, because they trusted in Him ... But they were unfaithful to the God of their fathers and prostituted themselves to the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.’

What an interesting commentary this is on human nature! In this chapter, the Chronicler is recounting the genealogies and experiences of the two and a half tribes that were allowed to settle on the east side of the Jordan during the conquest of Canaan. Because of this provision they were the first to receive their promised inheritance, and they received it with the least effort. But it was a case of ‘easy come, easy go’, because they were also the first to lose it!

The genealogies are given to confirm their place among God’s chosen people; but the recording of their [mis]fortunes shows us how dangerous a presumptuous, complacent attitude to God’s grace can be. There is here a foreshadowing of John the Baptist’s harsh condemnation of the Jews who came to him for baptism (Luke 3.7-9)!

When they remained true to the Covenant, and trusted God, and cried out to Him for help, He rescued them. But subsequently, when they committed spiritual adultery by compromising with the sensual religion of the people they had conquered, God gave them over to its dire consequences.

What a clear warning this is to us as we enjoy the many gracious blessings God showers on us because of our rich spiritual heritage!

Are we in danger of making the same mistake by allowing the pressure of our media-driven society to ‘press us into its mould’ (JB Phillips translation of Romans 12.2)? (It is also interesting that the Chronicler here refers to the ‘outside-the-Covenant’ Ishmaelites by their mother’s name instead: ‘the Hagrites’.)

– Bruce Christian

On A Lighter Note:

I realised I was growing old when sales people started asking if I was a Senior. This was confirmed when they stopped asking and just gave me the Senior’s Discount. But recently I was invited to sign up for a Chemist’s Discount scheme. ‘Date of birth?’ the young lady asked. ‘8-9-44’ I replied. ‘1944?’ she asked, seeking clarification.

Do you know any Seniors who aren’t sufficiently tech-savvy to read *New Life* from a computer? A friend of *New Life* in Ballarat (thanks Trevor) prints 35 copies of each issue and distributes them to friends in his church, most of them born before ‘44 (that’s 1944.)

Hint! Hint!

– Bob Thomas

MATTERS FOR PRAYER:

TURKEY, INDONESIA: Islamic Zeal To Soar Over Easter

This RLPB is longer than usual as it covers two situations over which we must watch and pray from now, through Easter and beyond. Whilst some might consider this bulletin alarmist, it arises out of a deep, evidence and experience-based conviction that the situations in both Turkey and Jakarta are potentially explosive with serious implications for the church. So the call is to watch and pray.

TURKEY: Turkey will hold a constitutional referendum on Easter (Resurrection) Sunday 16 April. If passed, the position of prime minister will be abolished and the president will gain sweeping executive powers, including the right to veto legislation, dissolve parliament, appoint 12 of the 15 justices of the Constitutional Court and run for three 5-year terms, all while enjoying the guarantee of life-long immunity from prosecution. Pre-polling indicates that the vote will be extremely close. Though youths are overwhelmingly pro-'yes', they are expressing also a reluctance to vote. It is to be expected, therefore, that President Erdogan will play the ultra-nationalist ethnic and religious cards relentlessly. Of all the issues that could be exploited for political gain, surely none is as powerful or as sensitive as the issue of Hagia Sophia.



Istanbul's Hagia Sophia (Church of Holy Wisdom) was built by Roman Emperor Justinian in the 6th Century after the original church, founded by Emperor Constantine in the 4th Century, was destroyed by fire in 532. Dedicated on 27 December 537, Justinian's Hagia Sophia remains an architectural masterpiece, its dome still unsurpassed. Long the greatest church in the world's greatest city (Constantinople), Hagia Sophia was converted into a mosque after the Ottoman Islamic conquest of 1453.

In November 1934, having already abolished the Caliphate, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk announced that Hagia Sophia would be converted into a Museum, its doors first opening to tourists on 1 February 1935. The Islamist campaign to restore Hagia Sophia as a fully operational mosque has gathered momentum under Erdogan, who yearns to be Caliph, the leader of Muslims. During Ramadan 2016 (6 June to 5 July), *Qur'an* recitations were performed at Hagia Sophia for the first time in 81 years. In October, Turkey's powerful ministry of religious affairs (Diyanet) installed Onder Soy as Hagia Sophia's first imam in 81 years, although at this stage Soy's primary responsibility is to oversee the Hunkar Kasri site next door, a former sultan's 'mini palace'. The appointment is purely political.

This year Ramadan will extend from Friday 26 May to 24 June, meaning Conquest Day, 29 May, when Turks celebrate the day Constantinople fell to Ottoman forces, will be celebrated during Ramadan. If ever there were a time to announce or even just promise the conversion of Hagia Sofia into an operational mosque, surely it would be now, ahead of the constitutional referendum, maybe even on Friday 14 April (Good Friday). Would the promise of President Erdogan leading prayers in Hagia Sofia on the first day of Ramadan, Friday 26 May, ahead of Conquest Day on 29 May, entice Turkey's radicalised youths to the polls? If Erdogan takes the path of ethno-religious 'populism', trampling Christian sensitivities in the process, the result would doubtless be an explosion of ethnic (Turkish) and religious (traditional Sunni Islamic) nationalism and supremacism. This would certainly bode ill for the Church in Turkey. Please watch and pray. *(Continued on Page 5.)*

PLEASE PRAY THAT GOD WILL:

- no matter what happens in the coming weeks, Turkey and Jakarta will remain peaceful and the Church safe.
- May the 'God of our salvation, the hope of all the ends of the Earth ... who by His strength ... stills the roaring of the seas', interpose Himself into the politically-charged situations in Turkey and Jakarta, and 'still ... the tumult of the peoples' (from Psalm 65.5-8 ESV).
- the Lord of Glory will redeem the situations in Turkey and Jakarta so they will ultimately work for the good of the Church. 'And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.' (Romans 8.28 ESV)

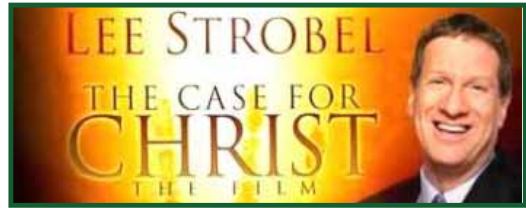
Elizabeth Kendal is the author of *Turn Back The Battle: Isaiah Speaks To Christians Today* (Deror Books, Melbourne, Australia, Dec 2012) which offers a Biblical response to persecution and existential threat; and *After Saturday Comes Sunday: Understanding The Christian Crisis In The Middle East* (Wipf and Stock, Eugene, OR, USA, June 2016). See www.ElizabethKendal.com

Wife's Witness Wins Husband For Christ

If you're a committed atheist and your spouse becomes a follower of Jesus, it might just rock your world. That's what happened to hardnosed *Chicago Tribune* legal affairs editor Lee Strobel, who marshalled his skills in journalism and law to find out what had happened to his wife.

Educated at the University of Missouri School of Journalism and Yale Law School, Mr Strobel sifted evidence, evaluated reliability, considered alternatives. He studied history, archaeology, and ancient literature and interviewed experts. He determined to study from a fresh perspective the faith he had thought was a fairy tale. His quest became a bestselling book, *The Case For Christ*, and now a movie to be released this month.

He concluded that, "The atheism I had embraced for so long buckled under the weight of historical truth ... It would require much more faith for me to maintain my atheism than to trust in Jesus of Nazareth!" Film critics say *The Case For Christ* is a compelling movie that is sensitive toward those who disagree and aims to get viewers thinking about matters that can make a world of difference in their lives and families.



– ASSIST News Service

Christianity is now making a comeback in Europe due to Muslim conversions, according to Matthew Kaemingk, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, who says many parts of Europe are becoming more secular, and in some areas churches are losing congregations. But an increasing number of Muslims, many of them refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, are converting to Christianity. Local faith leaders say they have found Muslim immigrants open to the message of Christianity, and converts are embracing various Christian denominations. Professor Kaemingk says many Europeans are wealthy and comfortable, and in short, don't think they need God. 'Conversely,' he says, 'Muslim immigrants are intensely spiritual and sense a deep need for the healing and Salvation the Church offers.' – *Gospel Herald*

Someone's Got To Do It

A Canadian couple is challenging the way Christians holiday. Helen Williams of World Missionary Press says this couple, whose names are withheld to protect their privacy, have been taking an annual cruise on which they spread the Gospel. Ms Williams says their passion for mission is intense and next to their vacation attire, they pack copies of *The Jesus Film* and Scripture booklets from World Missionary Press. 'Wherever they go, this couple continues to see opportunities to share,' Ms Williams says. 'While they are taking a break from their usual work, they recognize that Christians never need to take a break from sharing the Gospel.' On their last cruise they were able to share the Gospel with all the workers on the cruise, many of the passengers, and inhabitants on the islands the ship stopped at. Not only has this simple ministry touched the lives of those who previously didn't care to know about Jesus, but it's inspiring other Christians to get involved. On one cruise they met

an Australian couple who decided to be involved in an outreach ministry to Muslims in Australia.

Like Father, Like Son; Like Grandfather, Like Grandson

Evangelist Will Graham, son of Franklin Graham and grandson of Dr Billy Graham, held the *Celebration Of Hope* in Mexico last weekend, marking his first time preaching in the country. Almost 14,000 people attended the three-day Celebration with more than 1,300 responding to Mr Graham's invitation to make a commitment to Jesus. An additional 1,400 attended a special dedication service, with 68 decisions for Christ. Will told his audience: 'God wants to take all of your brokenness, all of your shame, all of your guilt, but God won't take the broken pieces of your life and try to glue them back together. He'll give you a whole new life if you are willing to surrender your broken pieces to Him. The *Celebration Of Hope* was Mr Graham's first multi-day evangelistic event since returning from China in February.

– *Christian Newswire*

WHO CAN YOU INVITE TO SIGN UP FOR A FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO NEW LIFE?

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

INDONESIA: Jakartans To Elect A Governor On Wednesday 19 April

(Continued from Page 3.)

Jakarta's gubernatorial run-off election on Wednesday 19 April will be the most hotly contested poll in the city's short democratic history. The race pits the incumbent ethnic Chinese Christian Governor of Jakarta, Basuki 'Ahok' Tjahaja Purnama, against Anies Baswedan who has the support of the Islamists. Former President and current Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle chair, Megawati Soekarnoputri, is imploring women to vote for Ahok. First round loser Agus Yudhoyono is refusing to endorse either candidate, telling his supporters they are free to choose for themselves. Therefore Ahok stands a good chance of winning.

Unsurprisingly, hard-line Islamist groups are increasing the pressure, ramping up the rhetoric and the volume, posting hate banners around the city and threatening Muslims. On 31 March they held another rally in the city, which, despite being denounced by Indonesia's largest organisations, Nadhlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, still attracted an estimated 200,000.

Islamists have also formed a mass movement called Tamasya AlMaidah (Al-Maidah Tour). They claim it has attracted more than 100,000 members to date, although they say they are aiming for one million. They plan to post 100 Tamasya AlMaidah activists – men dressed in all white, women in all black – at 1,000 polling stations they maintain are at risk of election fraud or tampering. Aiming to post 'observers' to all 13,032 polling stations, Tamasya AlMaidah says it will bring in Islamists from across the country. Many Jakartans fear the stage is being set for voter intimidation and violent clashes.

Meanwhile Ahok's blasphemy trial continues, with analysts surmising that he may well be acquitted on the grounds that, as a man long-friendly to Muslims, he never intended to blaspheme or offend. (Intention is a critical element of Article 156A of the Criminal Code as it pertains to blasphemy.) The trial is expected to conclude in May. Meanwhile, Jakarta is polarising and tensions are running high. If Islamic hard-liners do not get what they want, we might see an explosion of 'Islamic resistance'. Please watch and pray. – Elizabeth Kendal

Take Action Today For Persecuted Christians

Last year, 215 million Christians experienced high or extreme levels of persecution in the 50 countries where it's most difficult to be a Christ follower. Christians are facing beatings, abductions, rape, torture, forced marriages and death.

Those of us living in safety cannot stand by and let these atrocities continue. That's why the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is hosting the first-ever *World Summit In Defense Of Persecuted Christians* in Washington, DC, this May.

The Summit will bring together more than 600 victims, advocates and leaders from 130 countries to help raise global awareness and do something about this crisis. You can take a stand by joining Franklin Graham's 24/7 prayer for the persecuted church during the week of the Summit, 7-13 May 2017. – BGEA



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A FAITH TO PROCLAIM

UK To Display Bible Verses Across Buses During Easter

Buses in the UK are set to feature quotes from Scripture this Easter season as part of a campaign called the *Quote Jesus* bus campaign, reports *Christian Today*. The buses will carry quotes of Jesus including: 'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die', 'In my Father's house there are many mansions' and 'I am the way, the truth and the life'.

Howard Conder, founder of Revelation TV and man behind the campaign, said: 'In the

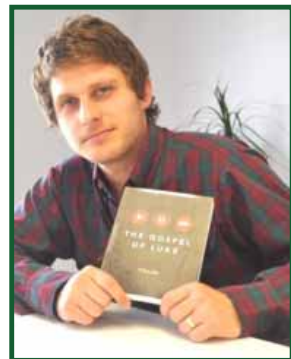
wake of the Westminster attacks it is clear that hope, or to be precise the lack of hope, is becoming an issue in this generation. We think the Bible has a lot say about "hope", and our vision for this campaign is to influence the hearts, minds and perceptions of this generation, to offer them hope and faith for a better future.'



– Will Maule in *Christian Today*

10,000 NZ Youth To Encounter Luke's Gospel This Easter

Bible reading barriers are being directly addressed by Bible Society in this year's Easter Gospel distributed at Easter camps around New Zealand. The barriers were revealed in the organisation's 2016 *Youth Bible Engagement Research*. Not knowing where to start reading, having trouble connecting with God, time pressures and simply not understanding the Bible content were the key barriers uncovered in the research. To help youth overcome some of these, Bible Society has published a special edition of the *Gospel Of Luke*. The publication features chapter summaries, an eight-week youth group discussion guide, and new reflection sections called 'pause'. The pause sections invite readers to imagine themselves in a Bible scene using their senses of sight, smell, hearing and touch, inviting youth to discover the Bible for themselves, hear what God is saying, and for them to reflect on what God is doing in their community.



Since 2011, when the Bible Society first began preparing specially designed Bible resources for Easter Camps, more than 50,000 Gospels and other resources have been given away to youth throughout the country. The material is often used post-camp by youth group leaders as a discussion resource. 'This Gospel is about encountering and following Jesus. In *Luke* we encounter Jesus who (often over a meal) challenged common understandings about what it meant to follow God. *Luke* is an invitation for all of us to come and see if the way of Jesus is better than the way of the world,' commented NZ Bible Society's Jeremy Wood (pictured). A key goal in producing these resources is to give youth permission to grapple with their understanding of their faith with others. 'It is important that they own their faith,' Jeremy said. So this Easter, the NZ Bible Society, through the generosity of its supporters, will give away 11,500 *Gospels Of Luke* at the following Easter camps: Baptist Central (Feilding), Baptist Northern (Mystery Creek, Hamilton) and Canterbury Youth Service's Southern (Christchurch), the nine Presbyterian Easter camps held around the country and the Central Division Salvation Army Easter camp at Silverstream, Upper Hutt.

– Mark Tronson, *Press Service International*

A promotional banner for Jon Seccombe Music. The background is a vibrant sunset with silhouettes of people standing in a field. The text is white and yellow. At the top, it says 'Jon Seccombe Music' in a large, bold font. Below that, it reads 'Worship music with delightful melodies and inspirational lyrics'. Further down, it says 'Click here to listen to Jon's award winning song Now is the Time and to download songs, music and PowerPoints'. At the bottom, there is a white box containing the website address 'www.jonseccombemusic.com' in blue text.

Rev Fred Nile Challenges Medical Abortions

The Rev Hon Fred Nile, Leader of the Christian Democratic Party in the New South Wales Legislative Council, after reviewing information on Medical Abortions, put the following Question on Notice in the Legislative Council on Thursday 6 April 2017: 'Mr President, I wish to ask the Hon Sarah Mitchell representing the Hon Tanya Davies, Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Women, a question on notice.

1. Is it a fact that 1,800 women have been given access to medical abortions over 18 months who are charged \$250 for the abortion drugs?
2. Is it a fact that some women still had viable pregnancies and excessive bleeding, taking these abortion drugs?
3. Will the Minister conduct a detailed investigation into this procedure where there is no face-to-face contact with a qualified doctor so as to ensure there is no harm to the mental or physical health of these women?'

The question was placed on notice.

Happy Easter From CMS Victoria!

Easter reminds us that Jesus died and rose again! This means that everything is different. Easter is a reminder of the amazing hope that we have. Jesus has defeated death – He made the perfect sacrifice for our sins – and history is changed forever. This resurrection means everyone can be reconciled to God by accepting Christ as their Saviour.

How many people don't know this, though? Across the world, there are more than 200 CMS missionaries who share this hope with others – many in places where it's risky and even dangerous to do so. There are missionaries scattered across 35 countries on every continent except Antarctica!

Many Australians will be familiar with the story of Jesus' death, but the significance is so often lost within the bizarre mix of rabbits, chocolate and eggs that Easter can be. Hot cross buns and long weekends quickly replace the true meaning of the season.

Do they know that Easter is so much more than this? This Easter, let's spark conversations with others around us about the hope that we have – and let's pray for our missionaries as they continue to share their hope too.

Have a blessed Easter!

– CMS Victoria

Ramon A Williams
- Worldwide Photos -
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e-mail: rlgmedia@ozemail.com.au



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BODYBUILDING

WPC Builds Up The Saints In Chin State, Far Northern Myanmar

Rev Bob Burnett, Tony Walker, Julian Bull, and Mr Andrew Fowler of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Australia, with the approval and assistance of the West Australia and Queensland Presbyteries of the WPC, visited the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Myanmar in Yangon and Chin State, Myanmar in February 2017. This is their report on the visit:



The Westminster Presbyterian Church of Myanmar is a Reformed and Presbyterian denomination with congregations in several areas of Myanmar, most notably in Myanmar's Chin State. It's relationship with WPC Australia was recognised and encouraged through a 'memorandum of understanding' adopted by both denominations at the 2016 National Assembly. Chin State is in the North West of Myanmar and borders Bangladesh and India. It has a population of more than 500,000, a large majority of whom profess Christianity and who inhabit a predominantly mountainous and isolated area of the nation. The principal cities of Chin are Hakha and Matupi.

On arrival in Yangon we shared in a meeting of delegates from the Synod of WPCM with Elder Brian Wong and Mrs Bethel Hutchison from Bull Creek WPC. The purpose of this meeting was to hear firsthand the 'Macedonian call' of 'come over and help us' from the WPCM requesting that Bethel be sent to Hosanna Bible College and Mustard Seed Orphanage to teach the students and young people English Language and Grammar. This is thought to be very strategic and helpful as Myanmar pursues progress toward full democracy and opens its borders to more foreign visitors and investment and will provide the graduates and young adults much better opportunities of finding employment in the future.

On our first weekend we visited the Yangon WPC and the Hosanna Bible College. Yangon WPC meets in the fine Hosanna College facility. We were grateful to minister the Word of God in both the 2017 Graduation Service of HBC and the Lord's Day Worship of the Yangon WPC. Hosanna Bible College is an Independent Reformed and Presbyterian training college, established through the help, guidance and gifts of WPC Australia, and offering recognised Tertiary courses to both Bachelor and Masters level in Theology and Ministry. Timothy Thang Lyan is both the Principal of HBC and the Pastor of the Yangon WPC as well as being responsible for the oversight and directorship of the Mustard Seed Orphanage, located near the College.

Our main purpose was to conduct a week-long Bible Teaching Convention on the theme *Keeping Christ At The Centre*, covering John 1-6 and all of *Philippians*. During the week we met in the large Matupi Baptist Church building and the Saturday and Sunday meetings were held in the Matupi WPC building. All the preaching was done through three translators, all of whom were theologically trained and are themselves Ministers. A key to the success of this whole venture was the tremendous help and constant Diaconal ministry role that was undertaken by Andy Fowler from Bull Creek WPC. Andy was a great help and encouragement to the team and proved to be a keen evangelist. He shared his personal testimony of faith in Christ at one of the evening meetings.

Bob Burnett and Tony Walker preached on the opening chapters of John's Gospel and I was responsible for dealing with *Philippians*. The numbers attending grew as the week progressed and peaked for the evening meetings and on the final Sunday, with people filling the compound overflow as well as the WPC building, while others who could not be accommodated had to be turned away. The congregations were made up of both committed Christians, nominal Christians and locals who wandered in off the street. By all accounts the WPCM churches are orthodox, faithful, viable, eager to learn and growing. The number of young people present, particularly in the weekend meetings, was quite amazing and very heartening to see.

(Continued on Page Nine)



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

BODYBUILDING

(Continued from Page Eight)

We were greatly impressed with the humility, spiritual hunger, spiritual mindedness, hospitality, joy, love for each other and the Gospel, and the evangelistic fervour that we witnessed. We came away convinced of the tremendous usefulness of such an opportunity and willing to seriously consider their invitation to return in February 2018 to repeat such an event, this time with the guarantee of an even greater hearing for the preaching and teaching as word about the blessing and encouragement received spreads further afield.

We would like to commend to the wider church for your prayers and financial support the opportunities and needs which our visit revealed. There are two pressing needs in particular: the first is support, both prayerful and practical for the

sending of Bethel Hutchison to Yangon for a period of time as a Teacher of English. The other is the pressing need of extending the Matupi WPC church building to properly accommodate its growing congregation and its significant role in the life and leadership of the WPCM. I think it would be fair to say that the Matupi WPC is regarded by the churches there as what we would think of as the 'mother' or 'flagship' church of the denomination, occupying as such a position of influence and leadership which can prove a model for the other WPCM congregations. The team was so struck by this need that we commenced an informal building fund amongst ourselves there and then, and have established an account here in Australia for this purpose. Let us know if you would like the details.

- Julian Bull. Phone +61 435 245919. Email: Julianbull@optusnet.com.au



Matupi WPC needs enlarging.

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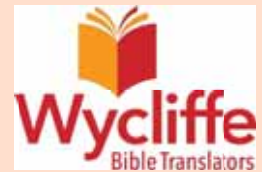
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QUOTABLE QUOTE:

*Religion says, 'attain';
the Gospel says, 'obtain'.
Religion says, 'attempt';
the Gospel says, 'accept'.
Religion says, 'try';
the Gospel says, 'trust'.
Religion says, 'do this';
the Gospel says, 'it is done.'*
- Ajith Fernando,
The Supremacy of Christ

Expressions of Interest
Chief Executive Officer
Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia

- Commence May 2019
- Based in Kangaroo Ground, Melbourne
- CEO to raise their own financial support



About the Organisation

Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia (WBTA) is a not-for-profit, volunteer-based Christian mission organisation. We have the deepest commitment to people of all cultures and to the uncompleted task of Bible translation bringing God's Word to life while simultaneously serving people's needs holistically.

About the Role

Reporting directly to the WBTA Board, as CEO you will be primarily responsible for managing and directing WBTA. You will be consolidating current direction and developing innovative ways to further the organisation. You will be working in partnership with the Wycliffe Global Alliance and will represent WBTA outside the organisation and develop partnerships. As CEO, you will value our Members - helping them succeed and do the best they can. This role will involve travel to other locations.

About the Person

We seek a person who is secure in their faith in Christ, seeks to fulfil His will and purpose in life, and has the capacity to relate well to the wider Australian church and community. This person must have significant leadership experience, be able to manage budgets, and oversee our financial, regulatory and compliance obligations. This person will promote trust, empower others, acknowledge the power of teamwork and be accountable. Careful and constrained exercise of power and authority is necessary, as is the ability to garner a high level of loyalty and commitment from the team.

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Email: ceosearch@wycliffe.org.au

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YEMEN: For A Christian Woman, Life Is About Survival

Life in Yemen is not easy for a woman. Especially if you are a woman who has decided to become a Christian. Yemen is a tribal country, where leaving Islam is seen as a betrayal of that tribe, punishable by death.

Nadeen (not her real name), a born-and-raised Yemeni woman in her late 20s, became a Christian before the civil war broke out in 2015. She had to keep her new faith hidden as her family would probably disown her if they knew. Yemen ranks 9th on the Open Doors



2017 World Watch List of the 50 countries in which it is most difficult to live as a Christian.

It meant for Nadeen that she had to live her faith in isolation, as she could not meet with other Christians. Not only can Christians not openly gather in Yemen, for her as a single woman it was especially hard to get away from the house. 'My family strictly controlled everything I did,' she says. However, via Facebook she connected with other Christians living in her area. After finishing her studies, she found a job with a bank and was able to move more freely, allowing her to meet up with them. That's also how she met the man, also of the same faith, who is now her husband. Their wedding day did not have any references to their Christian faith: 'As only Islamic wedding rituals are allowed in Yemen, I had an Islamic wedding that was arranged by the family,' Nadeen explains.

As she has decided not to tell her family of her faith yet, it is easier for her and her husband to stay in Yemen. Those who expose their faith often have to flee and to sever family ties. Almost 26 million people live in the Arab world's poorest nation, which has been ravaged by war for more than two years. More than 10,000 civilians have been killed, including 16 people killed in an attack on a Christian-run care home for the elderly, and over three million Yemenis displaced. Earlier this year, it was reported that a hunger crisis is threatening the lives of approximately 3.3 million people. US drone strikes have become an almost daily feature and have intensified since late January, when US President Donald Trump took office, causing unrest and fear among the population. – *World Watch Monitor, Open Doors*

Young Girl Beaten For Faith In Christ

A young Deaf girl in Central Asia who we'll call 'Saida' was recently hospitalized after her family learned about her Christian faith and beat her. Rob Myers, with DOOR International, says the screams she emitted caused the neighbours to call the police. When the police came, they saw it was her family beating her and decided not to get involved in a 'family issue.' The family continued to beat her, to the point where she had to be brought eventually to the hospital and placed in intensive care. The latest report from the mission is that Saida's family threatened to beat her again once she's released from the hospital. But members of the local church were hoping to intercept her before family members could. – *Mission Network News*

SUDAN: Evangelical Presbyterian Church Elder Killed During Peaceful Protest

Christian Solidarity Worldwide has learned that an elder of the Sudan Evangelical Presbyterian Church was killed on 3 April during a peaceful protest at

the Evangelical School in Omdurman against the unauthorised sale of church land. Younan Abdulla, a 28 year-old SEPC elder, was fatally stabbed during the peaceful sit-in organised by school teachers and church members, which took place during the school holidays. The school is part of the Khartoum Bahri Evangelical Church's property and is the subject of a long-running dispute between the church's land and buildings committee and an illegally-convened rival church committee backed by the government. The protest was aimed at preventing the sale of the land on which the school is located by the illegally-convened church committee. An altercation occurred when approximately 20 members of the illegally-convened committee reportedly arrived at the school armed with knives, machetes, and firearms. Mr Abdulla and another man were stabbed and transferred to a nearby hospital, where he died from his injuries several hours later. His funeral was held on 4 April and he is survived by his wife and two children.

Christian Voice Goes Out To Arabs From Israel

The State of Israel took another step in its prophetic calling to be a light to the nations by licensing the *Voice Of Hope* radio network to broadcast from Israel to Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Jordan, Egypt and Turkey. By providing a radio broadcast frequency to the evangelical Christian network, Israel is helping *Voice Of Hope* to reach out to Arab Christians suffering intense persecution in many Middle Eastern countries.

Israeli Communication Minister Tzachi Hanegbi says: 'The State of Israel supports any message of peace to the people in neighbouring countries and this is why we decided to support the re-establishment of the *Voice Of Hope*.' He says it will be 'an uplifting tool and a benefit to our neighbours.' *Voice Of Hope* is owned and operated by the Strategic Communications Group, a global evangelical radio network also reaching Latin America and Africa.

John Tayloe, President of Voice Of Hope, says the programming will feature Christian Arab presenters, Arabic Christian music, news, education, drama and inspirational messages.

– CBN Christian World News

Taking The Gospel Behind Enemy Lines

A number of Chinese pastors are on their way to North Korea to proclaim the Gospel. While remaining anonymous for security reasons, the pastors are able to travel there with the help of a Christian who has a registered travel agency. North Korea is well known for its severe persecution of Christians. One pastor was stabbed 17 times to death after residing and evangelizing in North Korea for 17 years.

The travelling pastors have 'no fears' in their quest to preach in this dangerous country, saying they are willing to die if they have to. 'We love them, and God loves them,' they say. 'We are willing to dedicate ourselves to them because all that matters is God's Kingdom.'

– Gospel Herald

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The Unseen Hand Of God At Work – Acts 12

Here is evidence of God’s hidden hand at work. Chapter 12 begins so well for Herod. James is decapitated and Peter is imprisoned. Yet the chapter ends with Herod being struck down, eaten by worms and dying (v 23). The turning point is verse 5, where we are told the church earnestly prayed to God for Peter.

Luke contrasts Herod’s political authority with God’s sovereign control.

Peter is very well guarded in prison, but the angel of God delivers him (vv 6–10). The callous Herod has the soldiers who had been assigned to guard Peter executed (v 19).

Luke could have omitted verses 12–17, but he doesn’t. He deliberately shows the church’s unbelief in its own prayers. Their prayer is effective, but imperfect. Their prayer is answered, but the pray-ers themselves find it unbelievable.

When we are tempted to have faith in our own prayers, or to think that prayer is somehow forcing the hand of a reluctant God, here we see that God is greater than our praying. Here, he graciously answers unbelieving prayer.

During the course of his quarrel with the people of Tyre and Sidon, Herod had cut off their food supplies. Why else would they respond as they did to his speech in verse 22? Then Herod is struck down. It is ironic that the one who denied food to Tyre becomes food for worms.

Peter is delivered, Herod is dead and Luke tells us that the Word of God is healthy indeed (v 24). This is an encouraging start to the Gentile mission (v 25). These radical reversals are evidence that the progress of the Gospel is unstoppable.



REFLECTION:

In what ways are you encouraged by the vitality of the Word of God and its messengers, in contrast to Herod’s wormy death?

Dark days come to all of us. How does this chapter provide reassurance in the midst of darkness?

Content taken from 'ACTS – To The Ends Of The Earth' by David Cook, published by 10Publishing, used with permission.

SEEN ON FACEBOOK:



And Spurgeon would know. When he was severely afflicted with illness, Mrs Spurgeon made a tapestry wall hanging to place on the wall opposite his bed: 'I have called thee in the furnace of affliction.'

Acts 1.8
Power for witnessing

Words Of Wisdom:

*'O God, please give me
a deep humility,
a well-guided zeal,
a burning love
and a single eye,
and then let men
or devils
do their worst!*

- George Whitefield

Who Can YOU Forward New Life To?

BOOKS WORTH READING

CHANGING LANES, CROSSING CULTURES, Equipping Christians & Churches For Ministry In A Culturally Diverse Society. Andrew Schachtel, Choon-Hwa Lim, Michael K. Wilson. Great Western Press, Sydney. 2016. ISBN: 0 86901 080 8.

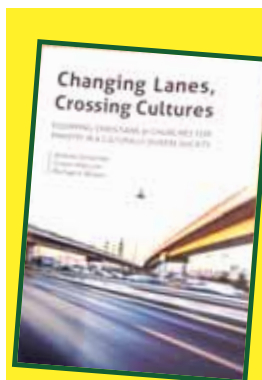
All major Australian cities (metropolitan and regional) are now profoundly multicultural and many rural communities have their pockets of new Australians. We Christians feel that we should do all we can to reach across our local cultures but are clueless about how to start.

This book is written to help Australian churches change lanes and reach the cultures next door. The three writers bring a variety of global and local cross-cultural experiences and this enriches the book. The book is designed to help local Australian churches understand the cultures around them and make connections for the sake of Jesus. It has a workbook format and is designed for use by individuals or groups.

The six modules cover motivations, possible barriers and methods. A glossary and appendices including tables, diagnostic instruments and a list of resources support these modules. Individual modules typically call readers to prayer, give a Biblical reflection, provide input material for reading and end with a summary and questions to work on.

The modules are not so much a 'how-to' textbook, but rather a guide to help local churches figure out what is going on in their community and make the connections. That's the strength of this book – it is a tool not a blueprint. Local church cultural mission is not easy and the book is frank about such challenges as motivations, practical hindrances and just getting to the first step of knowing and engaging with our neighbours. The book will push churches to look at themselves, their communities and ask the hard questions about how to connect.

This book is a timely and useful tool to help Australian churches transfer ministry wisdom from overseas mission to the local scene. It will be on my course lists. – David Burke, Lecturer in Ministry and Practice at Christ College, Sydney.



'This book will push churches to look at themselves, their communities and ask the hard questions about how to connect.'

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The Key To Happiness Is More Stuff . . . Right?



What Is Enough?

When people don't have very much, they often think that if things would just change, then they would be content. But I would gently ask them if they've ever seen that to be true. In their experience, do people become more happy when they get more? I haven't seen that to be true. As a pastor, I get to visit with people from all different types of backgrounds and all different types of circumstances, and I've seen people that have quite a lot and aren't very happy. And I see people that don't have very much who are happy.

We learn from the Bible, from the apostle Paul, that the Christian's contentment should be able to survive both the highs and the lows. The reality of contentment in Christ, and the beauty of it, is that the bubble always stays in the centre of the level. The highs and the lows don't affect the centre because our contentment is in the unchanging God.

I have a friend who at one point was really struggling financially, and things were very difficult. He was thinking: 'If I could just have a little bit more, then I would be kinder to my wife, I'd be more patient, I'd be a better dad, I'd be more active in the church. If I just had a little more. And God did answer that prayer—the guy's gotten a lot more. A lot of material things have come to him in the last several years, but I'm actually having a similar conversation with him: 'Even though you have more, you still have the same issues. There are just different types of pressures.'

So the presence of stuff or the lack of stuff are circumstances. They're external. They actually can't get inside and change the heart. Whether you have a lot or you have a little, that doesn't really move the needle for the bottom line of contentment. Contentment actually is inward rather than outward, and it's a work of God's grace rather than a work of our flesh.

– Erik Raymond, preaching pastor at Emmaus Bible Church, Omaha, Nebraska,
is a frequent contributor to many websites and periodicals,
and blogs regularly at Ordinary Pastor, hosted by the Gospel Coalition.
This article published by crossway.org

Elizabeth Kendal's New Book ...

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For hundreds of thousands of now destitute Christian families, this is the new reality.

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– Jeff M. Sellers, Editor, Persecution News Service, Morning Star News.

For more information go to: www.ElizabethKendal.com



2017 ONE DAY IN MELBOURNE

...Whose leaf shall not wither - Psalm 1:3

SATURDAY 3 JUNE

Time 10:30am – 4:00pm
Location Salvation Army
Moonee Ponds
Address 880 Mount Alexander Rd,
Moonee Ponds
Cost FREE
RSVP Dr Mark Tronson
info@markt.id.au
0419 917 713

PROGRAM

10:30 AM MORNING TEA
11:00 AM CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATIONS TODAY with John Sandeman and his ETERNITY team
12:30 PM LUNCH
1:30 PM MISSION PUBLICATIONS PHILOSOPHY with Cheryl McGrath (CMS Communications)
2:15 PM ONLINE OUTREACH with David Goodwin (Christian Writer and Editor)
3:00 PM BLOGGING IN A CHRISTIAN CONTEXT with John Lemmon (Christian Blogger)
4:00 PM CUPPA & CLOSE

This year's 'One Day in Melbourne' is for editors, writers, designers, social media mavens, authors, bloggers, self-publishers — anyone in Christian media whose aim is to maximise the Gospel.

Its philosophy is to provide a top-of-the-line presentation to the forgotten Christian media: Missionary/mission publication editors, bloggers, social media mavens and small Christian media.

The top-of-the-line presenters give their time at no cost so as to ensure such mission agencies received a thorough concordant. Moreover the venue is close to Tullamarine Airport - Moonee Ponds Salvation Army – as last year, people might fly in and fly out on the same day.

SPEAKERS



John Sandeman

John was with Fairfax for 30 years and envisioned an opportunity for a weekly Christian magazine housed by the Bible Society and it is now a heralded Christian fixture.



Cheryl McGrath

Cheryl works as the Communications Coordinator at CMS Victoria, and lives in Melbourne. Cheryl is a columnist in Christian Today Australia and writes for the Press Service International young writer program with an editorial blog for their international young writers.

On Being A Christian Athlete

As we stood on the sideline of the soccer pitch, I asked my friend from church, 'Chris, how does being a Christian effect the way you play sport?' There was a puzzled look and long pause. 'I guess it means I don't cheat,' he replied.

That's a good answer. Christian ethics and living has a firm set of rules. Obeying the higher authorities such as the umpire, the code, the coach etc is a Biblical example of following the Lord and giving respect to God. But there has to be more than a Christian's faith lived out in sport than simply following the rules of the game.

So what does it mean to be a Christian playing sport? Among other things, it means playing to win. Just because a Christian should play by the rules doesn't mean he or she shouldn't play to win. In 1 Corinthians 9.24 we are urged to go after victory, just as an athlete does. Playing to win and trying our best is what a Christian athlete should do, but is that all?

However, this verse says more. This process of playing sport also has a spiritual lesson. What we learn on the pitch also teaches us about our faith. The Bible has a constant stream of types or metaphors that move from an earthly concept we know to a new spiritual dimension. Philippians 3.12-15 use the sporting metaphors of staying focused, endurance and striving towards a goal.

These physical skills are transferable to the way we live our faith. Sport can be a tool to strengthen our faith through these transferable concepts. This is the method used by the author of Hebrews chapter 12 by using the sporting concept of endurance applied to our faith. The Bible is full of verses that explain how sport is a useful tool for developing our faith. These give a richer meaning to our sport and give it context within the Bible's eternal framework.

An important document in the early Protestant Church was the Westminster Catechism. It asks questions about faith and provides answers based on Bible verses. Question One asks, 'What is the chief end of man?' The answer gives us the meaning of life: 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.' When applied to sport, this means our recreation brings Him honour through our thoughts and actions. Part of this is our enjoyment of activities. It brings us joy, and God has designed it this way.

Chariots of Fire runner Eric Liddell commented that when he ran he could feel God's pleasure – a deep intrinsic enjoyment from doing what we are designed to do and using the gifts we have been given. This might be running fast to win Olympic gold or it could be enjoying the scenery as you do your morning walk. Next time you go for a walk or play your sport meditate on the way your activity is centred on God. It is a gracious gift that helps us live out our faith as well as enjoy the life we have been given.

– Jeremy Dover, sports scientist and pastor, writes for Press Service International.

His previous articles may be viewed at www.pressserviceinternational.org/jeremy-dover.html

You're Invited To Hear An Amazing Testimony

Mukti Australia welcomes Rebecca Alexander to Australia. Rebecca is the founder and CEO of Mukti's partner in Sri Lanka, *Wings Of Hope*. She will be visiting SA and Vic from 6-21 May 2017 and will be accompanied by Glenda de Jager, Mukti Australia's National Director.

Rebecca was born to illiterate tea pickers in a mud hut in the highlands of Sri Lanka. Her story is one of incredible restoration and transformation. From her parents' journey to faith, to Rebecca's own journey of being a sponsored child, to leadership in ministry, to her daughter's journey with a congenital heart condition, Rebecca's story is an amazing testimony to God's faithfulness and to the amazing difference that empowering opportunities can make in the lives of disadvantaged and marginalised women and children in Sri Lanka.

Mukti invites you to come and hear Rebecca as she shares about her life and the life-changing work she and her team are doing with families living in slum conditions in Sri Lanka through after-school programs and women's groups in partnership with local churches. The *Melbourne Mukti Dinner* will be held on Saturday 20 May in Bayswater North. To make an online booking to attend the Melbourne Dinner please go to: <https://www.mukti.org.au/dinnerregistration.php> . Rebecca's full itinerary will be on the website shortly: <https://www.mukti.org.au/events.php>