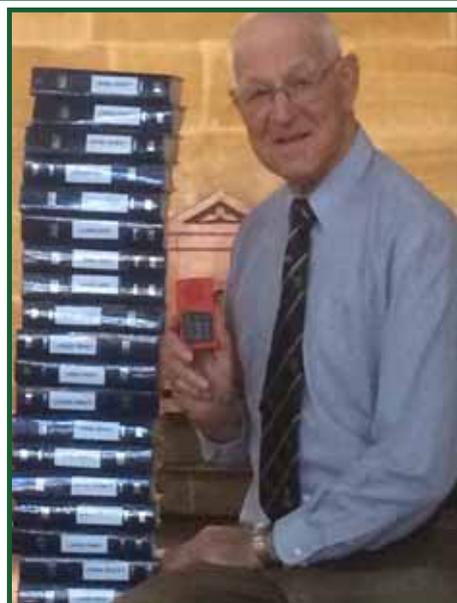


MEGAVOICE: The Mini Machine With The Mighty Message

Tom Tresider, Founder and President of Megavoice, recently demonstrated to his local church the capacity of the latest version of *Megavoice, The Envoy*. He made a stack of 20 Bibles from the pews, which equates to the amount of data that can be stored on the device for playback of the Bible and other devotional material. It has 1600 hours capacity. Divided by 80 hours to read the Bible, this equals 20 Bibles or 26,000 pages or 620,000 words – all on one 'tablet of stone!' 'Thirty years ago,' Tom says, 'I could store just ten seconds of spoken words!'

To find out more about Megavoice go to: www.megavoice.com



Scripture Union Celebrates 150 Years Of Gospel Witness

This year, Scripture Union celebrates 150 years of spreading the Gospel, largely among young people. John Prince, now 94, remembers how he came to faith through the ministry of Scripture Union. John has had a long association with Scripture Union, beginning in England and then moving to Australia. He believes the organisation is still tuned in to current culture and has so much to offer through its army of volunteers. John Prince became a Christian at a Scripture Union camp called *Iwerne Minster* in 1940 with the Battle of Britain raging overhead. 'The more I look back on that event, now that I am 94, the more radical I realise the change in me was as a consequence,' John says. It was here that some of the camp leaders included Royal Navy Chaplain and later Bishop of Norwich, Maurice Wood, as well as other big names in the Christian world like John Stott and John Pollock.

After that initial camp experience, John went on to become 'camp commandant' many times. Hand in hand with his late wife, Moyra, he served in or led 49 beach missions, starting in the UK in 1946. In 1950 John and Moyra moved to Sydney, where John joined the staff of The Kings School, Parramatta. From here he continued his work on camps and beach missions in Australia. During the next few years he saw beach missions in New South Wales grow from 10 to 25.

John chaired a variety of SU committees in New South Wales and Western Australia. He was part of the SU conference at Mt Victoria which led to the formation of ANZEA (the Australia New Zealand East Asia) Region. As this developed there were many conferences and tours of 12 East Asian countries to encourage development of SU movements which included the launch of the Korean translation of *Early Harvest*. John also had a hand in getting SU off the ground in Papua New Guinea during the 1960s. As this emerged Moyra majored on schools' work and John concentrated on Bible Reading, organising the writing, printing and distribution of the SU English Notes and then SU Notes in Pidgin for Papua New Guinea.



SU Camp – a familiar scene.

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Are You Sure About This?

Converts in one of the Welsh revivals were nicknamed, 'the Assured ones.' Certainly, assurance is a sure fruit of the Christian Gospel, it is the Siamese twin of the Gospel, so that to have the Gospel is to have assurance. Any religious system which requires any contribution from its adherents to their salvation, will rob such adherents of assurance.

Some people see assurance as a sin, since salvation is a matter of trusting in Jesus plus one's own works in order to achieve eternal life. Because the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the only and sufficient ground of being right with God, the believer can be sure of salvation because Christ's work never depreciates. Even the belief we need to link us to Christ is God's gift to us.

It is tragic to find religious people who are uncertain, anxious that they may not have done enough to please God. Such anxiety is a heavy life-long weight to bear. The way to break a faithful Pastor's heart is to ask at the end, 'Have I done enough?' Even the best have not done enough. That is why God sent Jesus – to do what we could not do, to live a perfect life, to die as our substitute and then be raised, as God's guarantee of His acceptance of His work. A right standing with God is entirely God's achievement, which he accomplishes through the life and work of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is what we celebrate at the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation: salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, giving glory to God alone. The fruit of such salvation is a humble assurance, knowing that it is all by God's gracious undeserved activity on our behalf. None of us deserves such kindness; it is amazing because it is contrary to our desert; by grace alone!

Paul gives us the complete picture in one complete sentence in Titus 2.11-14. Leaving Titus on Crete to establish the young church, Paul sums up God's word which has been entrusted to him (Titus 1.3) like this:

- God's gracious work to bring salvation has appeared;
- this grace trains us to say, 'no' to ungodliness and, 'yes' to godliness;
- this is how we live while we await the appearing of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ;
- His gracious work sets us free from the bondage of sin and sets us apart as His very own people, with an eagerness to do good.

Here is the vital truth: Jesus Christ redeems us to do good works. We are very keen to do good, however our good works do not redeem us for Jesus Christ! Our good works are the product of God's gracious work. We must never make our works the object of our faith, since they will fluctuate and we will then wallow in uncertainty.

Preaching good works as a means to eternal life is as powerless as an A380 jet without engines. You and I are perfect Christians because we stand before God in a perfect Redeemer – Jesus Christ. God does not want His people to wallow in anxiety and uncertainty. That's why He tells us that we can be sure of our eternal future. Our confidence is not self-confidence, but confidence in the completion of the work of God on our behalf.

That's what we celebrate on Reformation Day, 31 October. (John 10.27-30; Romans 5.10; Ephesians 1.13,14; Hebrews 10.12-14.)

Here is a good prayer to start your day: Heavenly Father, I thank you for making me right with You. I ask that Your Holy Spirit who lives in me might give me a clean mind, a humble heart and an attentive consciousness to the good works You have prepared for me to do today. I pray trusting in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ my Saviour and Lord. Amen.

– David Cook

MATTERS FOR PRAYER:

PAPUA (EASTERN INDONESIA): A Desperate And Risky Plea

The indigenous peoples of Papua (formerly Irian Jaya), the eastern-most province of Indonesia, are ethnically Melanesian and overwhelmingly Christian. Indonesia invaded the former Dutch colony in 1962. Then in 1969, the UN, the UK and the USA rubber stamped the sham *Act Of Free Choice* (known by the indigenous Papuans as the *Act Of No Choice!*) which transferred sovereignty of resource-rich 'West Irian' to Indonesia. Today, after decades of mass migration of Javanese Muslims, Papua has been thoroughly 'Javanised' and Islamised. It has also been thoroughly militarised. What is more, because Indonesian security forces are now heavily invested in the region, they have an economic interest in remaining there. Gross and systematic human rights abuses are endemic, including arbitrary arrest, torture, rape, and the trafficking of Papuan children who are taken to Java for forced Islamisation. The province is closed to reporters, and indigenous Papuans are banned from talking to outsiders.

On Tuesday 26 September exiled Papuan independence leader Benny Wenda presented a petition to the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation in New York, where the UN General Assembly was in session. The petition – said to contain some 1.8 million signatures of West Papuans in Indonesia – demands an internationally supervised free vote on independence, along with the appointment of a UN representative to investigate reports of human rights abuses by the Indonesian security forces. Defying Jakarta's ban, Papuans conducted the petition in secret, signing at great personal risk, smuggling it throughout the region and ultimately out of the country.

According to Benny Wenda, 57 people were arrested and a further 54 tortured between April and June as the petition was being circulated. As a prelude to the petition's arrival, Prime Ministers Manasseh Sogavare of Solomon Islands and Charlot Salwai of Vanuatu addressed the UN General Assembly on 24 September. They accused the UN of 'turning a deaf ear' to human rights abuses in Papua, called for an official investigation and insisted the UN support the Papuans' legal right to self-determination.

According to Benny Wenda, the UN's Special Committee on Decolonisation officially acknowledged acceptance and receipt of the petition. Not only does the Indonesian government reject this, it is disputing the veracity of the petition, deeming it a 'hoax' and a 'political stunt'. Meanwhile the committee's chair, Rafael Ramirez (Venezuela), claims not to have received the petition at all. Rejecting reports of the petition as fake news, Ramirez clarified: 'West Papua is not on the agenda ... Indonesia is a very good friend of ours.' West Papua specialist from the University of Sydney, Dr Jason MacLeod, has examined the petition and believes it is both genuine and a fair and accurate representation of the will of the indigenous Papuans 'who genuinely feel that they are facing a slow-motion genocide'.

Of course the Indonesian government and Indonesian military will never willingly relinquish control of resource-rich Papua. Indeed, the Indonesian military will be furious. The Indonesian government is currently building the Trans-Papua Highway so it will open up the Central Highlands to 'development'. Unless they get strong international support, the indigenous Melanesian Christians of Papua could see their situation get a lot worse yet.

PLEASE PRAY THAT THE LORD WILL:

- draw all Papuans to prayer; may they put their faith in God, not in 'man' and not in 'the world', and may the living God, who hears and answers prayer, intervene on their behalf;
- fill Papuan Church and community leaders with wisdom and understanding so they will lead the people well in line with the will and purposes of the Lord;
- restrain evil and angry hands bent on retaliation; may He protect and preserve His precious people.
- Pray for the Church in Papua, using Psalm 27.

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

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

Youngest-Ever Willoughby Councillor – A Committed Christian Promising Common-Sense Politics

At just 22 years of age, University of New South Wales student Brendon Zhu is a newly elected independent councillor in Willoughby City Council. And while the reality of entering state politics may be years away, the aspiring lawyer has come looking to bring a new youth perspective. He's well-spoken, local and a Christian leader in the evangelical RICE Movement.

Councillor Zhu is confident in Mayor Gail Gidney's vision for Willoughby and if the city's youngest councillor isn't already in for a challenge, a third of his Sailor's Bay Ward is also home to people under 24 years of age. As a candidate Brendon ran on promises to deliver innovative solutions to

tackle local issues such as public wireless internet, parking, youth representation and reasonable development. 'I'm excited and grateful for the privilege of loving and serving the community with the servant leadership model, as I am elected by the people,' said Zhu, who also expressed his surrealism on election night with Mayor Gidney in three simple words: 'we did it'.

As he becomes accustomed to his new role as Councillor, the parishioner at Roseville's St Andrews Anglican Church often seeks counsel through his Bible reading. When talking about his faith and politics,

he made clear his support for Judeo-Christian values alongside Australian ideals including equality and egalitarianism. 'Being still [for morning Christian devotions] before the day gets busy' added Zhu, 'is an important part of serving the community as a councillor.' Councillor Zhu takes pride in his background as a second-generation Chinese-Australian describing it as a double benefit in being able to deliver the perspectives from 'the best of both worlds' for the community.

While some questioned his age and experience on polling day, Brendon Zhu holds firm that 'merit will always trump everything'.

*- Roydon Ng,
Press Service International*



NAMBOUR (Qld) WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH VACANCY For Full-Time PASTOR

The Nambour Wesleyan Methodist Church is seeking expressions of interest from any Pastor who may feel that God is leading them to pastor our church.

The church has been established for 30 years. The present congregation is made up of mostly elderly people who are retired. The total church constituency is about 55, with an average attendance of 41 on Sunday mornings.

Our vision for the church is for the congregation to continue to grow in their love and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and for outreach into the local community with the good news of salvation.

The position is available for a full-time Pastor, so the stipend is set at that recommended by the National Board.

Should you be interested and would like further information, please contact: **Rev Rex Rigby** on (07) 3211 0066 or email to: rexrigby@me.com

A more detailed resume of the church is available upon request. Nambour is approximately 1 hrs drive north of Brisbane and is part of the Queensland Sunshine Coast. It is a rapidly growing town with a population of almost 20,000.

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Historic Bible Donated To Bible Society

A Bible passed down in the same family since 1572 has been placed in the care of the Bible Society Australia. *Eternity News* reports that at a ceremony in St John's Cathedral, Brisbane, the present owner, Duncan Sanderson, handed an historic *Bishops' Bible* to Rev Dr John Harris, who looks after the Bible Society's collection of rare Bibles. When the Roman Catholic Queen Mary came to the throne in 1553, English Bibles were banned. Anyone who translated or printed the Bible in English was condemned to death. But when Mary died and Elizabeth I became Queen in 1558, the Bible could once more be freely published in English. This means the Sanderson Bible dates from about the time a family could first legally own such a Bible. Led by Archbishop Matthew Parker, who was appointed by Elizabeth, the Bishops of the Church of England created a new Bible. The *Bishops' Bible* marks the crucial moment in history when the Bible could at last be read and heard in English.



– *Eternity News* at biblesociety.org.au

The mass shooting in Las Vegas has stirred a search for answers, including a spike in people turning to the Bible for particular comfort or insights. Bible Gateway analysed its website traffic immediately after the shooting. They found that people were finding solace in Bible verses such as 'In the world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world' (John 16.33) and 'Do not take revenge. I will repay, says the Lord.' (Romans 12.19). Bible Gateway is visited annually by around 150 million people. It contains various Old and New Testament translations and resources.

– *Eternity News* at biblesociety.org.au

Evangelist Bill Newman's Tract Now Available In Mandarin

Australian evangelist Bill Newman recently published a Gospel tract in Mandarin. Working with his team, he translated the English version of his tract titled *Eternity*. Dr Newman says underground churches in China are already using many of his ministry resources for evangelism. He says he is expecting this new tract to be effective with the Chinese speaking community in Australia, as well as in China and throughout the world. The tract outlines mankind's separation from God through sin, God's plan for reconciliation, and the required human response to receive God's gift of eternal life. This year, Christians have distributed close to 100,000 tracts published by Bill Newman Ministries.

– *Bill Newman Ministries*

Spreading The Word On Compassion

A ministry to orphans has joined with Trans World Radio to broaden their work to help train churches in meeting the needs of orphans. The work of RiverCross Global concentrates on training ministries to assist in the healing process of orphans and vulnerable children who've experienced trauma. RiverCross Global's ministry director, Cindy Finley says one of the things that makes their training unique, is that they are using audio dramas

both to train caregivers and communicate with children. 'We're ministering in story-centric cultures,' she says 'and so we take trauma healing truths from experts in the field, and wrap them in a really good story. It's clear from the Bible that God is passionate about orphans and the vulnerable,' Ms Findley says. 'One of our goals for next year is to partner with 30 ministries that want to help children grow into the men and women God has created them to be.'

– *MNN*

Learning From The Number-Crunchers

More than a third of Australian churchgoers were born overseas, according to the latest National Church Life Survey report. Featuring data from more than 280,000 church attendees, it's the largest survey in the country after the census and is conducted every five years. The latest figures demonstrate that first- and second-generation migrants make up an increasingly significant segment of the churchgoing population. Survey director Ruth Powell says the proportion of attendants born overseas was 28% in 2006, and now 36% in 2016. But while diversity is increasing among Australia's congregations, Ms Powell points out that Westerners are still giving leadership. So the church must come up with ways that make all people feel like they belong.

– *Melbourne Anglicans*

CALL TO PRAYER:

Worship Rises From Pastor's Prison Cell

Our American brother Andrew Brunson (right) is still behind bars in Turkey – a year after he was arrested – yet his faith remains strong. He faces four life sentences based on allegations that he was involved in the plot to overthrow the Turkish Government last year. Andrew strongly denies these charges. Pray that God will be with Pastor Andrew in his prison cell in Izmir.

In the midst of persecution and intense stress, Andrew has been inspired to write a worship song to our heavenly Father, which includes the lines:

You are worthy, worthy of my all.

This is my declaration in the darkest hour, Jesus, the Faithful One who loves me, always good and true.

You made me Yours, You are worthy of my all.

I want to be found worthy to stand before You on that day,

with no regrets from cowardice, things left undone,

to hear you say, 'Well done, My faithful friend, now enter your reward!'

Jesus, my Joy, You are the prize I'm running for.

During a visit last week by a delegation from the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, Andrew expressed his thanks to those praying and lobbying for his release. 'Knowing that I am not forgotten is important to me,' he said.

Please use Andrew's song to inspire your prayers for Andrew and his wife, Norine: pray that God will fill them both with His peace and joy. Stress has caused Andrew to lose three-and-a-half stone in weight. Pray that Andrew's legal team will have wisdom and courage in negotiating his release. Thank God that the Turkish Government is coming under increasing scrutiny over Pastor Andrew's case, due



to international prayer and advocacy. Pray they will release him soon. – Middle East Concern, USCIRF

UPDATE

Please continue to pray for our Algerian brother Slimane Bouhafs who has gone on hunger strike after a court rejected his application for conditional release. He is now demanding to be moved to a prison in his home province, Bejia. Convicted of 'blasphemy' over a Facebook post, he has nine months left to serve of his sentence. His family applied for parole after he received a partial presidential pardon in July.

– Middle East Concern

Aussie Creation Museum
VISIT JURASSIC ARK
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The ground is cursed.
Genesis 3:17

Great new mural at Aussie Creation Museum. Fossil thorns found by the Creation Guy John Mackay! There were no thorns on planet earth till after Adam sinned. Therefore these supposedly 300 million year old rocks were only laid down since Adam's day!

Details: www.creationresearch.net



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PLEASE NOTE:

The next issue of *New Life*, NL 2017-11-01, might be delayed by several days due to the editor's attendance at events in Wittenberg, Germany, commemorating the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's nailing his 95 Theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg on 31 October 1517. Please bear with us as we seek to cope with delivering the issue from overseas and as soon as possible after the event. And please be prayerful that the Lord will use these events to inspire His people to uphold and proclaim the great truths rediscovered at the Reformation.

Mission In An Asian Context

For the first time in 23 years, Christians from around Asia are gathering to reflect on mission in an Asian context. The *Asian Mission Conference* – the first since the 1994 conference in Seoul, South Korea – got underway last week in Yangon, Myanmar. More than 600 people are taking part in the conference, under the theme *Journeying Together: Prophetic Witness To The Truth And Light, In Asia*. The Christian Conference of Asia includes churches in Korea, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Myanmar, Japan, Hong Kong and Malaysia, as well as Australia, New Zealand and Polynesia, and many other Christian organisations. On Sunday 15 October, some 5,000 invited representatives of Myanmar Churches joined conference delegates in a public meeting. The Christian Conference of Asia was founded in 1957 by the continent's church leaders meeting in Indonesia under the theme *Our Common Evangelistic Tasks In Asia*.

– *Anglican News*

Bibles For North Korea

Christian humanitarian aid organization World Help has launched a donation drive aiming to secretly provide 100,000 new Bibles to underground North Korean Christians by the end of the year. World Help is taking steps to ensure that the growing number of house churches in North Korea have Bibles to feed the insatiable demand for God's Word in the isolated and oppressive nation. World Help President Vernon Brewer says there are never enough Bibles to keep up with demand, no matter how many they can print and smuggle into the country. Mr Brewer recently travelled to the North Korean border and met with missionary partners who are ready to take Bibles into the country. Many house churches in North Korea share one Bible among the members. So a \$10 Bible could impact at least five people. – *Christian Post*

Billy Graham's 'Verse To Live By'

Evangelist Franklin Graham has revealed that his father, world-renowned preacher Billy Graham, has one Bible verse displayed in large letters all around his house, and he calls it his 'life verse.' Franklin Graham says the verse is 'pinned up on the wall in his bedroom, printed in VERY large letters. In fact, it's in the dining room, his bathroom, and several other spots around the house.' The verse is Galatians 6.14: 'But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.' Approaching his 99th birthday, Billy Graham says it is 'a great verse for us to live by.'

– *Christian Post*

A Dream Comes True For Dut Agwang

It looked like an impossible dream for a young man fleeing catastrophic civil war. But now Dut Agwang will soon be helping other desperate people as a fully-fledged Mission Aviation Fellowship pilot. Growing up during the Sudanese civil war of the 1980s and 90s, there wasn't much space for dreams. Completing high school he found a job next to an office where they were recruiting candidates for a government pilot training scheme. After several interviews Dut was chosen to begin his long journey to become a pilot. During his training in Johannesburg, South Africa, he met two pilots who were learning to fly a Cessna Grand Caravan – an aircraft perfectly designed to land in the remotest places amidst extreme weather conditions. These two men were pilots with Mission Aviation Fellowship, an organisation that quickly found a place in Dut's heart. 'I love the purpose and mission of MAF,' he says, – 'working for a Christian organisation geared towards serving the lives of desperate people in hard-to-reach destinations.' Eventually he heard about a vacancy at MAF, and successfully applied.

– *Inspire Magazine*

Elizabeth Kendal's New Book ...

War! Destruction! Violent Persecution! Martyrdom! Forced Displacement!

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

Yet contrary to all appearances, God is at work in the Middle East.

Kendal's book is a godsend to anyone who is at a loss to understand what lies behind the suffering in the Middle East. Drawing on authoritative voices from the region, her clear-eyed analysis untangles the conflicts with the heart and insight of a prophet.

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

For more information go to: www.ElizabethKendal.com



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PERSECUTION WATCH

If Christian Ministries Are Kicked Out Of India, Who Will Share The Gospel?

Many NGO's, including Christian ministries, have lost their NGO status in India for simply not filing the proper paperwork. But the NGO reporting requirements have shifting demands and sometimes sudden deadlines. Ministries have claimed that it seems as though these are hurdles are meant to make it increasingly difficult for non-Hindu groups to stay in the country. One of the high-profile cases was Compassion International whose licence in India was revoked earlier this year. They were carrying out ministry to vulnerable children through local partners in the country.



The Voice of the Martyrs USA's Todd Nettleton explains, 'Many of those local partners were rejected from a licence to accept funding from outside the country. So what the Indian government basically did is cut off the flow of funds that were helping those Christian organizations do that ministry on the ground in India. Because of that, many of those organizations have had to stop the ministry. Many of the outside groups have had to stop funding ministry in India because that money is not allowed to be transferred into the country.' Since India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi took power in 2014, hostilities against Christians have nearly doubled. His background with radical Hindu nationalists and the RSS have emboldened those groups in their push to make India a totally Hindu nation. **So if Christian ministries are being systematically kicked out of India,** who will carry on the spread of the Gospel? Nettleton says, 'Obviously the local Church is picking up that mantle and carrying it forward and sharing the Gospel. Thankfully, there is a great history of Christianity in India. There are churches and groups that have been operating for decades that are ready to pick that mantle up and carry it forward. But it is a challenge.' The challenge comes when the local Church has to sometimes carry on ministry initiatives that were supported by other churches and organizations outside the country. In that, we need to pray for God to bless these ministry initiatives, and even seek out other Christian ministries to support that are still able to send funds to India. Christian ministries that are still in India have to be cautious with how obvious they are in their Gospel outreach to avoid the crosshairs of the FCRA. And accusations akin to anti-blasphemy under Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code are becoming more frequent. But they don't want to compromise the biblical message of hope in Christ just to stay in the country. So where is the balance?

- <https://www.mnnonline.org/author/lyndsey/>

Christian Group Intervenes To 'Protect' Europe From Sharia Law

Legal group Christian Concern has intervened in a case concerning the application of sharia law in Europe. The Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights is set to rule on an inheritance case concerning the application of sharia law to a dispute between Greek citizens who are Muslims. The ruling will determine whether sharia law can have supremacy over a member state's domestic law. The court granted Christian Concern permission to intervene in the case of Molla Sali v. Greece.

According to Christian Concern, Ms Molla Sali inherited the entire estate of her husband when he died under the terms of a will that he had drawn up in accordance with Greek law. Two sisters of her husband are claiming that since her husband was a Muslim, the inheritance should be allocated according to sharia law, adjudicated by the mufti. There are provisions for sharia law to be applied to Greek nationals who are Muslims.

The charity said the case is important because 'a ruling at this level ... could have dire effects on the Council of Europe's 47 member states, including the United Kingdom.' Also, rulings of the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights

cannot be appealed. Christian Concern said it will highlight in court that Sharia law is out of line with European law. It said in a statement: 'A network of sharia courts is operating across the country, creating a de facto parallel legal system which undermines the fundamental principle of one law for all. [The intervention] also highlights the discriminatory nature of sharia law which means, for example, that non-Muslims cannot inherit from Muslims, and females only inherit half of what is due to males.'

It added: 'Sharia law is fundamentally incompatible with human rights, and our intervention explains that the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights restricts freedom of speech and freedom of religion, as does *The Cairo Declaration On Human Rights*'. Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, whose expertise was used in the intervention, commented: 'Sharia law is based on the inequality of certain kinds of persons whereas western public law is based on the equality of all persons. Muslims, like people of any other faith, are free to practise their faith, but because sharia is incompatible with western public law, it should not be given supremacy over the domestic law of western states.'

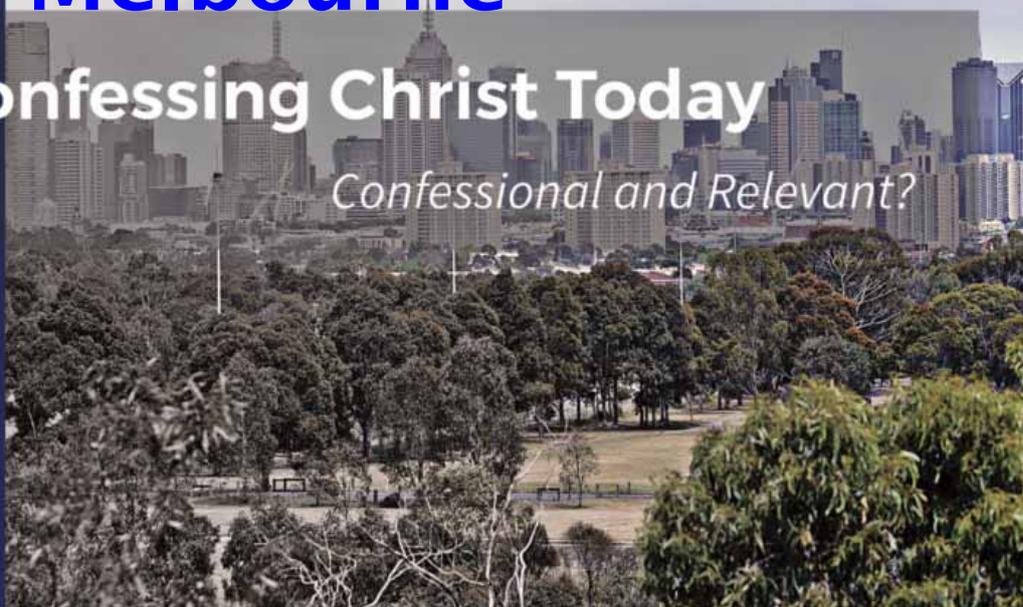
- Tola Mbakwe, Premier News

TOGCON Comes To Melbourne

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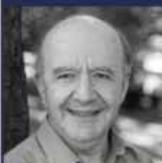
Confessional and Relevant?



Kamal Weerakoon



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Peter Adam

+ More!

Thinking Of God (TOG) is a Reformed interdenominational organisation established in 2014. We cordially invite you to our first Victoria event on 19th October, aiming to encourage and equip people in ministry.

With 2017 celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, **Kamal Weerakoon** (TOG) will be giving a talk on what it means to be confessional and contemporary today. **Darren Middleton** (North Geelong Presbyterian) will share his experience of how being vigorously reformed has strengthened his ministry at North Geelong. There will also be a panel discussion by local ministers on what Reformed ministry looks like today and much more!

Lunch and refreshments will be provided as well as a free gift from Banner of Truth!

When: 9:30am-3:30pm, Thursday, 19 October 2017

Where: St Margaret's Presbyterian Church
106 Hotham St, St Kilda East, VIC

Costs: \$10 (Lunch Provided)

<http://thinkingofgod.org/togrow>

TOG
THINKING OF GOD

New Crossroads Australia Director Knows Anyone Can Change – Because He Did

Mike Eastman doesn't remember much about his first few days in prison. He was in a fog while detoxing from drugs. But he does remember one thing – he prayed. 'I hadn't done that since my childhood. But I prayed that if God was there, He would get me out of this situation,' Mike said.

God didn't remove him from prison but he did something even better. 'He drew me to Himself and never let me go.' Now released, Mike is a new man. He is active in his church, studying theology at Christ College, Sydney, and was recently named the new director of Crossroads Prison Ministries Australia. But it has been a long, winding journey to where he is now – a journey through abuse, ridicule, rapid success, collapse, addiction, incarceration and ultimately redemption.



Mike was born and raised in suburban Sydney. He grew up with Christian parents, attending an Anglican church. He had a happy childhood until age 11 when he began suffering abuse at the hands of an extended family member. 'The experience haunted me for most of my life and played a role in the life choices I made,' Mike said. After his family relocated, he escaped the abuse but began getting bullied in high school. 'This caused me to cry out to the God that I had grown up learning about, but to no avail,' Mike said. 'I was angry with God for not being there for me and not doing what everyone said He would.'

After graduating from high school, Mike set out into the world with two purposes – to gain money and power. 'I wanted to be the kind of person that nobody would hurt or do wrong by,' Mike said. So he grew a successful business and developed a lavish lifestyle, while committing himself to training in the gym to become 'as big and scary' as possible. Mike then got married and a year later had a son. But his fast-paced lifestyle was a strain on family life. 'In 2009, my wife left me,' he said. 'I spiraled into depression, turned to heavy drinking and started using drugs regularly.'

Mike tried to hide his addiction from everyone around him, causing him to become 'enveloped in a cloak of lies and deception'. In 2012, Mike began selling cocaine and methamphetamine to feed his drug habit. But what he didn't know was that he was selling the drugs to an undercover police officer, leading to his arrest. 'I am officially the least successful drug dealer in history, having only sold to undercover police,' he said.

Getting locked up was the breaking point for Mike. 'I was at the end of myself. I had nothing left. No possessions, no friends, no income, no hope,' he said. This led him to cry out to God. Mike was given a copy of the New Testament from the prison chaplain and he began reading it – a lot. He was then introduced to the Crossroads Prison Ministries mentorship program. 'Through the studies, I was able to engage deeply with God's Word. The more I read Scripture, the more I desired it. The words seemed to leap off the page,' Mike said. Over time, through reading Scripture, praying and corresponding with his Crossroads mentors, Mike's heart began to change.

'The gift of life I received was totally transformative. I began hating what I once loved and loving what I once hated. My thoughts changed, my words changed and my actions changed,' he said. Mike began leading Bible study and prayer groups in prison, telling anyone who would listen about Jesus. 'Through this, I had the privilege of seeing Christ use me to bring others into His Kingdom,' he said.

All the while, Mike was dealing with court matters. He decided to give police a full confession. At his sentencing, Mike shared his testimony of how God had changed his life. Police and prosecutors even spoke on his behalf. Although Mike could have faced a 10-year sentence, he was given just 2.5 years. Mike used the remainder of his sentence to study God's Word, using the Crossroads program as a guide. He was released in 2015.

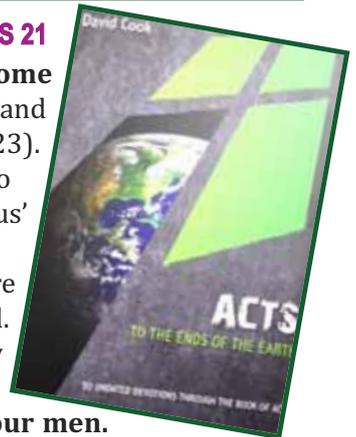
Since his release, Mike has reconciled with his family, received custody of his son and has remarried. He is working toward a degree in theology and is active in his church. Mike is excited as he begins his new role as director of Crossroads Australia. 'I have so much brokenness in my life and have seen Christ redeem my past. I seek to use the rest of my years to equip men and women with broken lives to walk in their brokenness in the light of the Gospel of Jesus.'

– Aaron Mueller

‘... And He’s Watching Over Me’

ACTS 21

Paul has a conviction that he must go to Jerusalem and after that, on to Rome (v 21). He is both compelled and warned by the Spirit (vv 22,23). Both danger and rescue are going to be Paul’s experience. His friends warn him not to go (v 23). Agabus warns him (vv 10,11) and his fellow travellers plead with him not to go (v 12), but he persists, insisting he is ‘ready to die for the name of the Lord Jesus’ (v 13).



Just as it was for the Lord Jesus (Luke 18.31–33), Jerusalem will once more show itself to be a centre of aggressive opposition to the interests of the Gospel. We read that thousands of Jews have believed, but retain their zeal for the law (v 20) and rumours abound that Paul disregards the Old Testament law (v 21).

Anticipating trouble, James urges Paul to join the purification rites of four men.

As is evidenced in the case of Timothy’s circumcision (16.3), Paul’s attitude to the law was probably flexible, in cases where no Gospel issue was involved. It may have been the outworking of 1 Corinthians 9.19,20.

Professor Blaiklock comments on these events: ‘He sought to love, to understand, to act in selfless humility. The result, by that tragic irony which Heaven sometimes permits, was apparent disaster.’

There is a riot. Wisely, the Romans had placed their barracks near the temple and the garrison is on hand to rescue Paul from his own people. This rescue is the first of four. The others are recorded in 22.24; 23.10; 23.20 and 23.31.

Paul is thus rescued from a hopeless situation – four times. Each time rescue comes from an unlikely quarter. The original word spoken to Ananias in Acts 9.15,16 is being fulfilled.

God can be trusted to exercise careful oversight of his church as it seeks to promote the Gospel in the world.

REFLECTION:

Paul earlier listens to Agabus (11.27–30). Why doesn’t he listen to others in this situation?

Paul asks the church at Rome to pray for this visit to Jerusalem (Romans 15.31). What is ironic about the way in which God answers this prayer?

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

**Proverbs 3.5,6
Trust Him, Not Your
Thoughts.**

SEEN ON FACEBOOK:



The Christian’s Challenge:

Walk like Enoch,
Worship like Abel,
Work like Nehemiah,
Weep like Jeremiah,
Obey like Job,
Plead like Moses,
Lead Like Joshua
Bold like David
Pray like Daniel,
Win like Paul,
Witness like Stephen,
Live like Jesus...
Praise ye the Lord

BOOKS WORTH READING

PROVERBS, Lindsay Wilson, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, London: IVP, 2017.
ISBN 978-1-78359-556-3.

Dr Lindsay Wilson is Senior Lecturer in Old Testament at Ridley College, Melbourne, and is a specialist in the area of Old Testament wisdom literature and author of a commentary on *Job* in the *Two Horizons Commentary* series. His doctoral thesis was on the wisdom themes found in the Joseph stories of the book of Genesis (and published by Paternoster). He combines high academic credentials, and international reputation for scholarship, and a thoroughly down-to-earth approach to explaining the Bible, and so he is just the person to write a helpful commentary on a Bible book that brings God into every aspect of our daily lives.

Wilson is an Evangelical scholar who is happy to accept and make sense of the Solomon connection claimed in the book of *Proverbs*. He is right to differentiate the one-verse proverbs or aphorisms written and collected by Solomon from promises and laws. They are not unbreakable rules but instead are generalisations, showing typical connections that allow exceptions. The proper use of proverbs is situation-dependent. They embody wise observations about life, but must be handled and applied with intelligence. **As Wilson shows, *Proverbs* is a practical**, down-to-earth and optimistic book (eg life is good; good deeds and character receive a reward), while still acknowledging life's hardships, challenges, reversals and mystery. In that sense, *Proverbs* does not contradict the books of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes*, even if it has a different tone.

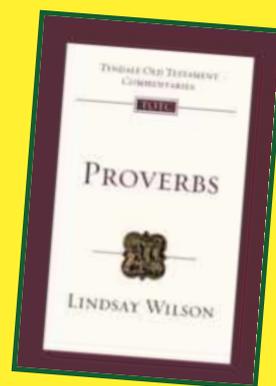
Wilson shows that chapters 10-30 of *Proverbs* are not totally unstructured or random in their arrangement, and he makes the modest claim that the proverbs are at times clustered in meaningful groups, so that when studying an individual proverb, it is sensible to look at neighbouring proverbs to elaborate on or balance what is said for a fuller understanding of the advice given.

Dr Wilson is alert to the theological dimension of *Proverbs*, focussing as it does on God as the transcendent, sovereign Creator, who knows and cares for all His creatures. The book's retribution doctrine is not wooden; its main ethic is the fear of God; it connects faith in God to every aspect of common life; and in that way, it fits into and enriches the Bible's overall theology of God's Kingship.

The author shows that *Proverbs* cannot be used to promote so-called 'prosperity theology', for a close study of the book reveals that there is not an automatic or inflexible connection between righteousness and wealth. *Proverbs* says much that will contribute to happy family life, friendship, wholesome speech, a proper work ethic, and the 'good life' in general, though, as Wilson shows, it avoids an unhelpful perfectionistic or self-righteous stereotype. The book's focus on heart attitudes and core desires prevents its godly ethic degenerating into hypocrisy, enlightened self-interest or Pharisaism.

To aid the use of *Proverbs* by preachers and the general Christian reader, Wilson encourages and gives guidance on how it might be helpfully preached and used in ministry. This is close to Wilson's heart, for he has devoted his entire teaching career to making the wisdom literature of the Bible accessible to God's people.

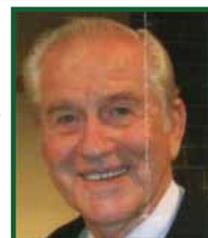
– Greg Goswell



'Lindsay Wilson has devoted his entire teaching career to making the wisdom literature of the Bible accessible to God's people ... (this book is) a helpful commentary on a Bible book that brings God into every aspect of our daily lives.'

'WITH CHRIST, WHICH IS BETTER BY FAR'

REV DR GRAEME SMITH, beloved Pastor of Blackburn North (Vic) Baptist Church, Ashgrove (Qld) Baptist Church and Wodonga (Vic) Baptist Church, was called Home on 16 September 2017.



Throughout his ministry Graeme was also involved in the work of a number of Christian organisations including Campaigners For Christ and the Belgrave Heights Convention. He served for many years as a member and later Chair of the Board of *New Life Christian Newspaper*.

At the Service Of Celebration of his life and ministry in Crossway Baptist Church, Melbourne, many tributes, including the following were made:

Graeme loved to share the Good News of Jesus at every opportunity and with whomever he met. However, like the apostle Paul, he didn't just share it verbally but he shared his life as well. He loved people. He stayed close to people, stayed close to God and sought to bring the two together. Graeme was a gentle and humble pastor who led the services with warmth and understanding for all those who attended. His faith was real and he always had a beautiful welcoming smile and a warm handshake.

Graeme was such an amazing man who impacted our lives through sharing his own love of our Lord and knowledge of His Word. His Sunday morning Bible studies provided some of the best teaching of our lives. He was a terrific friend and example of what it means to serve Jesus.

Graeme was a beautiful man who always taught from the Bible, encouraging and inspiring us to learn, read and trust in God and His Word. Graeme was a warm and very authentic man of God, always challenging in his preaching, especially with his presentation and sincerity. He was an incredible man of faith, an awesome teacher, glorious storyteller and encourager. Graeme was a father in the faith and we thank God for his great ministry to so many.

Graeme was indeed one of the greatest men of God one could ever have the privilege of knowing. His sermons were always deeply thought-provoking and he was a wonderful encourager. He had the wonderful gift of seeing people for what they could become, and he shared a message of hope that invited everyone to encounter the reality of the saving and transforming grace of Jesus Christ.

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



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,
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Living Stones Korean Presbyterian Church. Every Sunday 1pm;

BALACLAVA: Cnr Hotham St/Denman Rd. Every Sunday 9.30am.

MINISTER: Rev Bob Thomas 0417 592 646

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