

# Red Wednesday Display Shows Solidarity For Religious Freedom



Britain's Houses of Parliament were among many landmarks in the UK, Ireland, Iraq and the Philippines to be floodlit in red on Wednesday 22 November to highlight the persecution of faith groups for their 'peacefully held beliefs'. The *Red Wednesday* initiative is in its second year and has been pioneered by Aid to the Church in Need. This year it is also organised by Christian Solidarity Worldwide. Both charities advocate chiefly for persecuted Christians.

**ACN, a Roman Catholic charity, said in a communique:** 'Red is the Christian colour of martyrdom. Christians are the most persecuted faith group in today's world ... Red Wednesday will shine a light on Christian persecution but also highlight the injustices perpetrated against other faith groups.' Some 50 buildings in the UK were lit up in red, including London's Houses of Parliament, 12 cathedrals, some Anglican and some Roman Catholic, as well as schools and universities. More than 80 Roman Catholic churches and universities in the Philippines were floodlit for the event. In Iraqi Kurdistan, Chaldean Catholic Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil said his church would be lit in red. Warda, whose diocese has been caring for more than 100,000 mainly Christians who fled Islamic State in 2014, said local Catholics would also take part in a prayer vigil that will end in a church he opened last year, to cater for the influx of refugees.

**According to ACN, the decision to illuminate the Houses of Parliament in red** was made jointly by Commons Speaker John Bercow and Lords Speaker Lord Fowler following lobbying from parliamentarians.

**WE'RE  
PRAYING  
FOR  
PERSECUTED  
CHRISTIANS  
ALL  
AROUND  
THE WORLD**

## PLEASE NOTE:

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ACN spokesman John Pontifex said the event aimed to highlight not only the suffering of persecuted Christians but also the role of UN institutions and the international community, which he said had so far 'failed to help persecuted faith communities'. Writing for the *Christian Today* website, Pontifex cited Christians facing state-sponsored oppression, militia violence or community-level hostility in China, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Sudan, Iraq and Syria.

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**newlife**  
AUSTRALIA'S CHRISTIAN NEWSPAPER

## 'That's A Good Question'

**You might have noticed** that when someone being interviewed is asked a question they find difficult to answer, they say: 'That's a good question.' Then they try to hedge, evade and confuse as they answer. Rev Fred Nile asked a pearler in the NSW Legislative Council recently:

**'My question without notice** is directed to the Hon Don Harwin, representing the Attorney General, the Hon Mark Speakman. Is the Attorney General aware of the huge mural in (the Sydney suburb of) Newtown which shows Cardinal Pell and former Prime Minister Tony Abbott in a sexually explicit pose? Are there laws against the depiction of sexually explicit conduct in public places? Why is legal action being contemplated against the Christians who covered up the mural and not against the so-called artist who painted it in the first place? What steps does the Attorney General propose to take to stop the impression that the authorities are acting in a highly biased manner?'

**Though Mr Harwin didn't acknowledge it as 'a good question'**, he certainly answered it as though it was. 'I have no doubt that honourable members like me have been following this story in the media, because it is one of some interest. However, Rev the Hon Fred Nile has probably been following the story far more closely than I have. I think the artwork was reproduced in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which first ran the story, although I might be wrong. The artwork is certainly idiosyncratic and it might not be to some people's taste. No doubt some members of the community found it amusing, but for others, no doubt it was highly offensive and that is often the way with art. Art challenges people and sometimes it inspires people and delights people.

**'I do not know whether the artwork was done with the permission** of the owner of the premises, and therefore I will not canvass some of the aspects of the question. I suspect the granting of permission may be highly relevant to some of the aspects the honourable member raises in his question, such as any possible action taken against those persons who defaced the mural – and I use the word "deface" because those people are being charged with defacing the artwork. Since I do not know whether the artist was granted permission in the first place, I do not know whether it was in fact graffiti. It is best if I leave my answer there and, in the first instance, refer the honourable member's question to the Attorney General, who may or may not be the appropriate Minister to answer this question, and seek a response from him.'

**Apparently, in this mad, mad, mad, mad, topsy-turvy world**, it's okay to paint an explicit and offensive (to Christians at least) mural on a wall, but possibly illegal to paint over it.

**Christianity and the world are certainly at cross purposes** these days, and the world is in dire need again of being 'turned upside-down'. But is the Church up to the task? Historically, outbreaks of prayer have preceded revivals. Revivals have been accompanied by mass acknowledgments of sin and consequent repentance. Revivals have been associated with earnest preaching of Christ, crucified, risen, ascended and returning. Revivals have started in the church and spread over into the world. Revivals have sparked renewed fervour for mission and evangelism. Revivals have resulted in deeper spiritual life that has been contagious. Revivals have brought more love for Christ in His Being, Word and Works. May our King and Head have mercy on His church, inspiring and strengthening us, as He deepens and widens the pockets of prayer now existing, and turns an upside-down world right-side-up.

– Bob Thomas

## 'TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE'

# New Buildings To Give Young People A Future Of Hope

'Thanks to the wonderful efforts of The Property Industry Foundation's PIF House Program and support from Lendlease this new centre is now a warm and welcoming environment,' said Wesley Mission CEO the Rev Dr Keith Garner at the opening on 27 November of two fully refurbished and renovated buildings at Ermington (Sydney) which will accommodate up to 22 young people transitioning from foster care to independent living.

**Representatives of Wesley Mission, The Property Industry Foundation and Lendlease**, and young people, joined together to celebrate the official opening of the premises as part of the ground-breaking Wesley Take Charge Of Your Life program.



*Joel Stringer, Lendlease General Manager NSW Building, Tamara Saliba, Wesley Take Charge of Your Life program client, Rev Dr Keith Garner, AM, CEO Wesley Mission, Rosemary Smithson, Chief Executive Officer of the Property Industry Foundation, Steven Gatt, NSW Chair, Property Industry Foundation*

**Wesley Take Charge of Your Life will help young people transition** from foster care to independent living. It is a well-known fact that young people who leave foster care are less likely to enter tertiary education, and have higher levels of unemployment and homelessness. Few have extended family support. Young people living in the two buildings will receive 24-hour support and ongoing case management as they study or seek work, and learn life skills like cooking and budgeting. By engaging with case workers, they will move into supported private accommodation and, eventually, gain full independence in the long-term.

## PCEA Building New Church

**The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australian is well advanced in building a new church** at 8 William Road, Carrum Downs (Vic). The land purchased three years ago for a place of worship has received all the necessary permits. These included requiring an Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan in the event that human bones or aboriginal artifacts were found, as the area was at one time used by local indigenous people. Excavation commenced in the last week of September and by mid November the slab, frame and colourbond roof were completed.

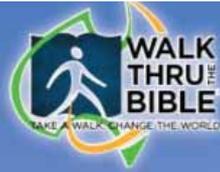
**The location is just off the Frankston-Dandenong Road** opposite the new Bunnings store and is on a major bus route. Apart from a small Anglican Church, there is no ordinary Protestant Church in Carrum Downs (population 21,000)

which is also convenient to such suburbs as Frankston, Skye and West Cranbourne. The Knox Congregation is meeting the cost as it did for Narre Warren in 1990.

**The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia is a daughter church** of the Free Church of Scotland and maintains the tradition of singing only Metrical Psalms unaccompanied by musical instruments and upholds a strong commitment to the Scriptures and the Westminster Standards.

*- Our Banner, PCEA*





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## TOG Conference Throws Out The Lifeline

'When persecution comes, the church will be our lifeline' was the assurance underscoring the theme of TOGcon4 (the fourth *Thinking Of God* conference, held at Christ College, Sydney, on 29 November on the theme *Living For Christ Amidst Tribulation*.) To the end of making the lifeline strong and secure a series of faith-building lectures and seminars covered topics including *Being Faithful Despite Adversity: Holding To God's Word In The Reformation* (Mark Thompson); *A Reformed Approach To Missiology* (Kamal Weerakoon); *Faithfully Ministering And Proclaiming God's Word Despite Adversity* (Martin Foord); *Puritan Portrait 1 – Anne Dutton* (Stephen McKay); *Puritan Portrait 2 – Richard Baxter* (Rachel Ciano); and *Puritan Portrait 3 – Samuel Rutherford* (Peter Barnes).

**How the saints who have gone before handled and endured the trials of their day** is surely instructive for us in our day. According to Mark Thompson, Martin Luther took the boldest stand at the Diet of Worms in 1521, declaring his firm stance on the Word of God at a time when truth was not welcomed. There are many similarities between then and now. Thirty years ago there was respect for the church, but today there are attempts to stamp it out, the church suffering from aggressive intolerance from without, due in no small measure to the church's own failures in failing to be the people Christ wants us to be. Many Christians are reluctant to take their stand for Jesus. Desire to engage with the present-day culture of the world makes life all about us, conceding much to today's accusers. The present danger for the church is that cultural engagement loosed from evangelism inevitably leads to liberalism.

**Luther took his stand on the supremacy of Christ** and the relevance of His Word, and this stand on Scripture was enhanced in his confidence in the sovereignty of God.

**TOGcon is looking to holding a national conference in 2018.** Go to [thinkingofgod.org](http://thinkingofgod.org) where details of purchasing DVD's will soon be posted.



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## **BURMA (MYANMAR): Pastors' Appeal Imminent**

Burma's human rights issues revolve around the unchecked power of a politically active military which is, at its core, ethnic Burmese and Buddhist supremacist. When the policies of the central government clash with the aspirations of Burma's ethnic peoples, the military enforces government policy with the extreme violence one would expect of soldiers consumed with ethno-religious hatred and confident of impunity. This is precisely why Burma's non-Buddhist peoples refuse to disarm, and for this they are deemed insurgents and enemies of the state.

**On 20 November 2016 clashes erupted** between the Northern Alliance (a coalition of four ethnic armed groups) and the Burmese military in Mong Ko town, Mu Se District, on the Burma-China border in northern Shan State. Burma Air Force fighter jets targeted churches, schools and homes until the Northern Alliance withdrew on 4 December 2016. Then the Burma Army moved in, torching properties and farmlands. Despite Mong Ko being closed off and subjected to a news blackout, ethnic Kachin Pastor Dumdaw Nawng Lat (67) of the Mong Ko Kachin Baptist Church, and his nephew, Youth Pastor Langjaw Gam Seng (35), both of the Kachin Baptist Convention, courageously helped journalists gain access to the town so they could document the destruction. When the reports and photos subsequently hit the press, the Burmese military determined to punish the pastors in a way that would deter any other would-be human rights advocates.

**On 24 December 2016 the Burmese military ambushed and abducted Nawng Lat and Gam Seng.** The pastors spent the next three weeks illegally and secretly detained in Kalaya 123 military base in Nampaka township, northern Shan State, being repeatedly interrogated. After an international outcry over the pastors' disappearance, the military confessed on 19 January that it was indeed holding the two men whom they accused of recruiting and spying for the Kachin Independence Army. The KBC demanded the military hand the pastors over to police, which it did. However, it also handed over their 'confessions' signed under severe duress. The police then charged the pastors with 'unlawful association' with the KIA. Major Kyaw Zin Tun of Brigade 99 acted as plaintiff and filed the complaints at the Muse Township Court. Further to this, Muse police chief and captain Aye Myint charged the pastors with possession of unlicensed motorcycles. The case was initially investigated in Muse township court before being transferred 174km south to Lashio, a four-and-half-hour drive away. In June, Nawng Lat's wife told *Morning Star News* that conditions were bad and her husband's health was deteriorating.

**On Friday 27 October Nawng Lat and Gam Seng appeared in Lashio District Court** in northern Shan State to hear the verdict. The pastors were found guilty of all charges and convicted under the oft-exploited Unlawful Associations Act section 17(1) and the Export and Import Law section 8. The court was tightly controlled, with journalists banned from taking photos of the accused outside the court. Pastor Dumdaw Nawng Lat (who is also the chairman of the KBC) was sentenced to four years and three months imprisonment: two years with hard labour for unlawful association, two years for criminal defamation under Penal Code section 500 for having 'defamed' the Burmese military in an interview and three months under the Export Import Law. Youth Pastor Langjaw Gam Seng was sentenced to two years and three months imprisonment: two years with hard labour for unlawful association and three months under section 8 of the Export Import Law. The only evidence presented against the pastors were their 'confessions' signed under severe duress while in military detention. Human Rights Watch has called for the verdicts to be quashed and for the two pastors to be released immediately.

### **PLEASE PRAY THAT GOD WILL:**

- intervene for Pastor Dumdaw Nawng Lat and Youth Pastor Langjaw Gam Seng, to protect them from violence, illness, despair and spiritual attack;
- intervene in the appeal process, to provide guidance, wisdom and clarity to the defence, and courage to the judge, so that justice will prevail;
- amplify the voice of the Kachin Baptist Convention, so it might be heard, heeded and acted on by intercessors, politicians, lawyers and media.
- bless, protect and sustain Burma's Christians, most of whom belong to persecuted ethnic minorities. May the Lord Jesus Christ continue to build His Church in Burma, and may the Holy Spirit enable a breakthrough with the Burmese-Buddhist majority.

**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](http://www.ElizabethKendal.com)**

# State-Sanctioned Killing Betrays All Victorians

The Victorian Government has again rejected saving lives and opened the door to state-sanctioned killing, according to Christian advocacy group FamilyVoice Australia. 'Not satisfied with introducing the worst abortion laws in the Western world, resulting in the death of more than 100,000 babies since 2008, Daniel Andrews is a former Health Minister who has little interest in promoting health,' said FamilyVoice Victoria State Director Peter Stevens.

**'Premier Andrews and his ministers bullied upper house MPs** as they debated amendments to the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill, by forcing them to sit well beyond their physical limits, resulting in one MP being rushed to hospital. After an inhumane four days and two nights of almost non-stop debate, the Bill passed the upper house by just four votes (22 to 18) after an amendment to narrow eligibility to patients that doctors guess have six months to live,' Mr Stevens added. 'FamilyVoice is alarmed that motor neurone disease and multiple sclerosis are eligible for assisted killing when doctors tell them they have 12 months to live. This opens the door to highly unreliable predictions on when a neurological condition will end in death,' said Mr Stevens.

**This is the first time any Australian state has legalised both assisted suicide and euthanasia.** FamilyVoice fears for the future of vulnerable aged and sick people, as the state pressures them to remove themselves from this life.

**Mr Stevens commended the 18 MPs in the Upper House,** and those in the lower house, who worked tirelessly against this bill. 'Your courage and passion is beyond praise,' Mr Stevens said.

<p><b>Eastern Metropolitan</b></p>  <p>Richard Dalla-Riva</p>	<p><b>Eastern Victoria</b></p>    <p>Melina Bath      Jeff Bourman      Daniel Mulino</p>
<p><b>Northern Metropolitan</b></p>   <p>Nazih Elasmr      Craig Ondarchie</p>	<p><b>Northern Victoria</b></p>    <p>Wendy Lovell      Luke O'Sullivan      Daniel Young</p>
<p><b>South Eastern Metropolitan</b></p>    <p>Inga Peulich      Gordon Rich-Phillips      Adem Somyurek</p>	<p><b>Southern Metropolitan</b></p>    <p>Georgie Crozier      David Davis      Margaret Fitzherbert</p>
<p><b>Western Metropolitan</b></p>   <p>Rachel Carling-Jenkins      Bernie Finn</p>	<p><b>Western Victoria</b></p>  <p>Josh Morris</p>

**Members of the Legislative Council who voted AGAINST the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2017**



## From A Doctor's Point Of View:

**While Victoria has passed legislation** and New South Wales is currently considering legalising the practice, a doctor has spoken out against the legalisation of euthanasia, saying he doesn't want to kill people.

**Experienced geriatrician Dr John Obeid,** says he doesn't want assisted suicide or euthanasia as options in his 'medical toolbox'. He says medical science has provided a plethora of medications for pain management and for all other symptoms one might experience at the end of life. In one study almost half of those who underwent doctor-assisted suicide did so on the basis that they felt a burden on their family or caregivers.

**Dr Obeid told My Christian Daily** that politicians should rather be legislating on the lack of funding given to palliative care services.

—My Christian Daily

## Could Greater Tolerance Be On The Agenda For Saudi Arabia?

Political developments in Saudi Arabia have some wondering if the strict Muslim-ruled kingdom could become more tolerant of Christianity. *Christianity Today* reports that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has said he intends to return Saudi Arabia to 'moderate Islam' and open the country to all faiths. As part of his reform several thousand imams have been dismissed from mosques for spreading extremism and dozens of officials, including 11 princes, have been arrested on corruption charges.



While the percentage of Saudi Arabian citizens who are Christians is officially zero, because conversion from Islam to Christianity has long been punishable by death, it is estimated that up to 5% of the population is Christian – mostly guest workers who are not allowed to worship openly.

Time will tell whether Prince Mohammed can bring reform to a nation that has known little to none of it since its founding.

– *Christianity Today*

## Taking It To The Streets To Reach Schoolies

At first glance the partying teens holding banners aloft in Surfers Paradise look just like any of the thousands of celebrating Schoolies. But there's something different about these placard-bearing adults-to-be. Enterprising church groups have descended on Schoolies with a mission to turn teens to God. Signs seen during Schoolies include, *Ain't no high than the most High* and the simple classic *Jesus loves you*. Youth for Christ Australia is one of the organisations behind the signs. David Ridley, YFC's National Missions Director, told the *Daily Telegraph* the signs are evangelical, but they are not bashing people with a Bible. He says that the young people who have created these placards have had a genuine experience of the love of God and want to share it around.

– *The Daily Telegraph*

### New Movie On The Life Of Paul

The trailer for a new major motion picture about the life of the Apostle Paul has been released online. The movie titled *Paul, Apostle Of Christ* brings to life the New Testament story of the man who went from persecutor of the church to its most powerful proponent. Andrew Hyatt, the film's director told CBN each aspect of Paul's life is based on what is known from the Bible. The story is set in the perilous world of Rome in the time of Nero's persecution of Christians. Producers of the film say it offers a gripping account of what the early Christian community faced in Rome simply trying to practise their faith with the threat of imprisonment and death always looming. *Paul, Apostle Of Christ* premieres in March next year.

– *CBN Christian World News*

### New Life For An Old Neighbourhood

After praying-out drug dealers from their area, an inner-city church in the US is thriving. The New Life Church in Iowa had been exposed to an area of loud parties, burglaries, and illegal drug deals. The church leaders organized a 'Jericho March' around one of the drug houses, which the next day inexplicably moved away. Another drug dealer was arrested later, after the church asked God to either

save him or move him out. Pastor Jamel (sic) Crawford told *PE News* that because of prayer and outreaches, drug infestation and gang violence are gone. These days, instead of drug addicts, the neighbourhood is populated with immigrant arrivals. The church has invested in 49 units which provide affordable housing and a source of income for the ministry. Next year, New Life Church will launch a music studio, clothing shop, eye and dental care clinic, a foster care program and a footpath Sunday School.

– *PE News*

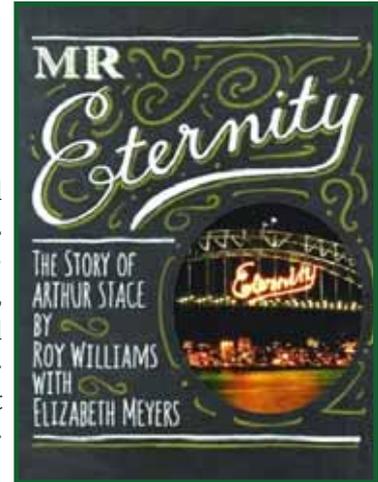
### When Shoe Boxes Bring Joy

Operation Christmas child has delivered a shoebox gift to every child on Barbuda. The early Christmas gifts on the Caribbean island were given in response to the devastation of Hurricane Irma. Members of the Samaritan's Purse distribution team included Baptist pastor Mark Brumbelow, and his wife, Cherry. Their home was destroyed in Hurricane Harvey. Pastor Brumbelow told the *Christian Post* that the children whose lives had been turned upside down in the storm had something to smile about as they received their gifts. Amid the joy and excitement, he says, the children and their parents were also presented with the Gospel message.

– *Christian Post*

## Mr Eternity: The Story Of Arthur Stace, Launched

The long-awaited biography of Arthur Stace, *Mr Eternity*, was launched by Bible Society Australia in Sydney on Thursday 23 November, 2017). Appropriately, the launch was held in Darlinghurst, at the Eternity Playhouse, formerly the Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle where, in 1932, Arthur Stace heard evangelist John Ridley cry out 'Where will you spend Eternity', and felt called to write Eternity on the streets of Sydney – something he did for the next 34 years. (Stace had become a Christian at St Barnabas' Broadway two years earlier, saved from a life of despair and alcohol.)

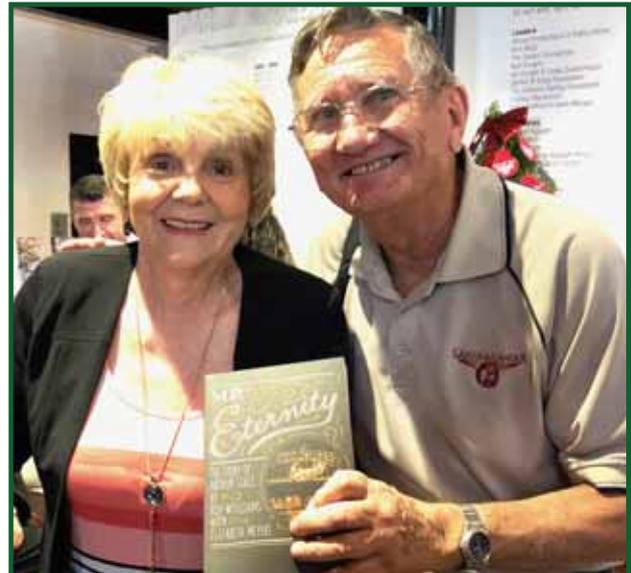


***Mr Eternity: The Story Of Arthur Stace* is the fulfilment of a long-term project** by Elizabeth Meyers, daughter of the Rev Lisle Thompson, Minister of Burton Street Tabernacle 1951 – 1964. She was joined by Roy Williams (author of *In God They Trust*) who continued her research to help complete the book. The pair uncovered previously unpublished details of Arthur Stace's life and background.

To coincide with the publication, Lisle Thompson's 1956 tract, *The Crooked Made Straight*, has been updated and reissued. The book, published by Acorn Press, is available from Bible Society.



Roy Williams introduces the book  
– Photo by Trevor Dallen.



Elizabeth Meyers at the launch, with Fairfax  
photographer Trevor Dallen, who took the iconic  
photos of Arthur Stace in 1963.

**Read: *Can The Theory Of Evolution Survive  
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[www.defenceofthefaith.org](http://www.defenceofthefaith.org)**

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**Sign Language – A Gap In Bible Translation Yet To Be Filled**

In Kenya, where deaf children may be considered demon-possessed, a ministry is spreading the Gospel in sign language. DOOR International is sharing Scripture in Deaf schools and training Kenyan Deaf church leaders. A new study shows that 10% of the Kenyan population has significant hearing loss. Rob Myers with DOOR International says often parents of Deaf children think they have been cursed with a demon-possessed child. Deaf children eventually become deaf adults and have little to no access to education and employment. Mr Myers told Mission Network News that up until now they have been cut off from the most important resource of all – God’s Word. Now, for the first time, people can receive God’s Word because they have it in their heart language, he says. Kenyan Sign Language is one of more than 350 sign languages worldwide. But none of them yet has a complete Bible translation.

– MNN

**Calling All Schoolies**

At first glance one group of partying teens, holding banners aloft in Surfers Paradise, look just like any

of the thousands of celebrating Schoolies. But there’s something different about these placard-bearing adults to be. Enterprising church groups have descended on Schoolies with a mission to turn teens to God. Signs seen during Schoolies include, ‘Ain’t no high than the most High’ and the simple classic ‘Jesus loves you’. Youth For Christ Australia is one of the organisations behind the signs. David Ridley, YFC’s National Missions Director, told the Daily Telegraph the signs are evangelical, but they are not bashing people with a Bible. He says the young people who have created these placards have had a genuine experience of the love of God themselves and want to share it around.

– Daily Telegraph

**Battling For The Bible**

800 Israel Defence Forces soldiers have signed a petition to continue a weekly Bible study. The popular class was cancelled without an explanation by General Aharon Haliva, known for his anti-religious sentiment. *Breaking Israel News* reports that *Sunday Happiness* was conducted to give soldiers purpose and understanding about the Holy Land and the importance of protecting it.

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## GOOD NEWS FROM ABROAD

### Television Reaches Young People In Afghanistan With The Gospel

While the younger generation in much of the Persian world is disillusioned by its hard-line religious leaders, their thirst for spiritual reality remains strong. Christian TV SAT-7 PARS, Farsi/Persian language channel, hears from young people every week seeking spiritual advice and prayer. Many speak of how their lives have been transformed after turning to Jesus Christ. Ramin, an Afghan viewer in his 20s, made contact wanting to give his heart to the Lord. His call became the first step in a chain reaction among his friends. Eventually, the PARS audience relations team also led Darius and Roozbeh to the Lord. The three friends say they have more friends with whom they wish to share the love of Jesus. *Inspire Magazine* reports that the men are now eager to be baptised and connect with other Christians. – *Inspire Magazine*

Missionaries with Operation Mobilisation look for open windows when doors shut for sharing the Gospel.

### Radio Reaches There Too

Missionaries with Operation Mobilisation look for open windows when doors for sharing the Gospel

are shut. OM reports that radio programs are reaching people for Christ in Afghanistan where there hasn't been a viable church for centuries. After small beginnings, today a Western phone number makes it possible to engage with Afghans in live conversation. Phone calls every day from Afghanistan have led to the production of effective follow-up. The OM radio team tracks every call. Many people have come to faith in Christ and are eager to be disciplined. In order to help new believers, OM has launched a Virtual Bible School. Team members call Afghans weekly using Internet and mobile phone, to study God's Word. More than 4,500 Afghans are in the database. Many are sincerely interested in following Christ but feel isolated. – *Operation Mobilisation*

### An Attitude Of Gratitude Is Good For You

Health experts are agreeing with the Bible that being grateful is good for our overall well-being. In an interview on CBN News, neurologist David Perlmutter told how having an attitude of gratitude makes for good health. Dr Perlmutter says the expression of gratitude that extends to kind actions produces positive chemical change in the body and in the brain. – *CBN Christian World News*

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

With persecution escalating globally, **Elizabeth Kendal** calls us to revisit the prophecy of Isaiah, For purchasing options, visit: [www.turnbackthebattle.com](http://www.turnbackthebattle.com)

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## Turkish Protestant Church In Malatya Vandalised A Second Time

A vandalism attack in Turkey's south-eastern city of Malatya damaged a small Turkish Protestant church. The assault came just two days after the targeting of 13 minority Alevi families in a nearby neighbourhood. Rising sectarian tensions over the two incidents quickly prompted local police investigations, followed by a concerned visit by an opposition member of the Turkish Parliament to meet church members as well as local Alevis, a large percentage of Turkish citizens who follow a heterodox form of Islam.

**In the new church attack, a lone suspect heaved a brick through the display window** of Malatya's Kurtulus (Salvation) Church shortly before midnight on 24 November and then fled the scene on foot. But with the incident captured on security camera footage, local police arrested the assailant the following day. Just two days before, in the early hours of 22 November, unknown suspects had painted huge red 'X' marks on the front doors of 13 homes of Alevi families in the nearby Cemal Gursel neighbourhood of Malatya.

**Similar targeting of Alevi homes and properties in Malatya** had occurred during the chaos surrounding the attempted military coup in July 2016. For the Kurtulus Church's congregation, this was a flashback as well to the night of the failed coup, when unidentified assailants had broken glass panels in the church's door. 'Those who are repeating these activities here, one after another, must answer before the courts,' Republican People's Party parliamentarian Veli Agbaba told the press. 'If they remain unpunished, these kinds of attacks will continue,' the opposition lawmaker warned.

**After examining the damage on the night of the attack**, church representatives posted this message on the broken glass, visible to all the passers-by: 'Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.' – Jesus Christ. 'This is a chance for our church to live out our faith, to respond with love and forgiveness,' American pastor Tim Stone told World Watch Monitor. 'This is how we act on Jesus' words, not just say them.' Located on Ismet Pasa Boulevard in central Malatya, the Malatya branch of the Kurtulus Church Association averages 40 in attendance during Sunday worship services.

**Malatya became notorious 10 years ago as the site of the 'Malatya massacre,'** in which two Turkish converts to Christianity and a German Christian worker were tortured and killed with knives in the offices of the Zirve Christian publishing house on 18 April 2007. After nearly 10 years of trial proceedings, the five young Turkish killers caught at the murder scene were convicted in September 2016 and sentenced to 39 years in prison. They had claimed they were trying to stop the 'harmful activities' of Christian missionaries who they claimed were trying to destroy Turkey and the honour of Islam.

– World Watch Monitor

### SUDAN: US Calls On 'Immediate Suspension' Of Demolition Of Churches

The Sudanese Government has marked a number of Churches, including the Sudanese Church of Christ, Roman Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Presbyterian and Pentecostal churches, for demolition. The Sudanese authorities claimed they have violated designated purposes for their land. John Sullivan, US Deputy Secretary of State, has called for the Sudanese Government to hold a roundtable discussion with Christian leaders to resolve disputes. Mr Sullivan told *World Watch Monitor* that a recent *International Religious Freedom Report* also noted instances of the arrest, detention, and intimidation of religious leaders, and the denial of permits for the construction of new churches. His comments come as Sudanese church leaders continue to face calls from the government to hand over control of their

churches.

– World Watch Monitor

### British Missionary Slain After Singing Hymn

A British missionary kidnapped in Nigeria last month was shot dead after performing *Amazing Grace* on his guitar, one of his fellow hostages has revealed. Dr David Donovan said Ian Squire from Shepperton in Surrey was trying to cheer up his fellow captives before a gang member opened fire.



The former GP from Cambridgeshire told the *Daily Telegraph*: 'We didn't see who did it, but it was obvious that someone in the gang had shot him.' Mr Squire, Dr Donovan and his wife Shirley, and Alanna Carson were kidnapped in Nigeria's southern Delta area in the middle of the night on 13 October.

– Alex Williams, Premier News

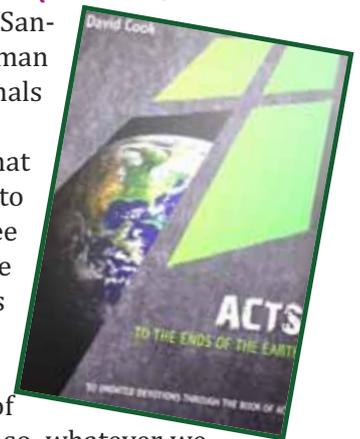
**The Christian’s Testimony – Never Vain Or Pointless (ACTS 24)**

Having stood before the crowd in Jerusalem (chapter 22) and before the Sanhedrin (chapter 23), Paul now comes before the Roman tribunal, led by the Roman governor, Felix. In Acts, we read that Paul testified before five separate tribunals on his way to Rome. This is the third.

**Paul’s primary purpose is not to prove his innocence** – although that is what transpires – but to persuade his audience of the truth of his experience and to encourage them to investigate the matter of the resurrection for themselves. See Acts 24.21; 26.7,8; 26.23; 28.28,29. Surely it is Paul’s conviction regarding the resurrection of Christ that keeps him going. He makes it clear when he writes to the Corinthians, that the resurrection of Christ keeps our preaching from being useless (1 Corinthians 15.14), our faith from being futile (1 Corinthians 15.17) and the believer from being pitied (1 Corinthians 15.19). It is because of the resurrection we know that there is life beyond this earthly existence and so, whatever we do for the Lord is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15.58).

**Paul’s and our testifying ministry is never empty, vain or pointless.** This is the conviction that gives Paul his persistent focus in every arena, wherever and whenever he speaks. Drusilla (vv.24–26) is the daughter of Herod Agrippa I who, earlier in Acts, was recorded as eaten by worms (12.23). She is Felix’s third wife – he persuaded her to leave her husband and join him.

**Felix seems to be tantalised by Paul’s preaching.** Luke tells us he was hoping for the offer of a bribe from Paul (v.26). Paul’s preaching was about righteousness, self-control and judgment (v.25). Felix and Drusilla needed to realise that if they came to Christ, they couldn’t just add Him as an extra to their indulgent lifestyle. Instead, they would be fundamentally changed.



**FOR REFLECTION:**

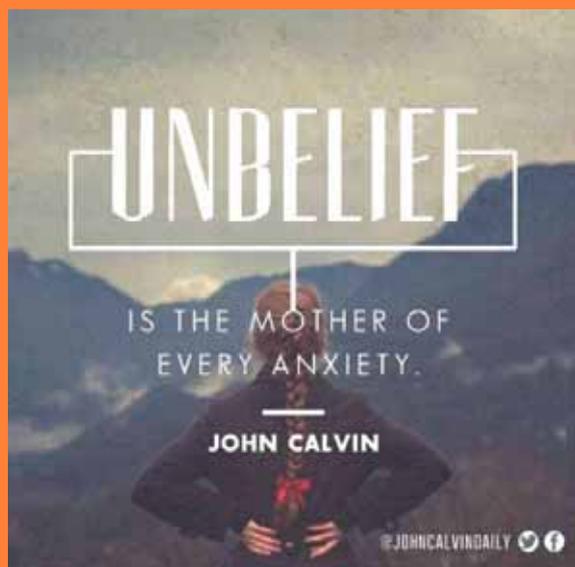
The Jews take the threat of Paul’s ministry very seriously. We see this in the naming of their representatives (v.1), their opening remarks (vv. 2–4) and their charges (vv .5–8).

Why did they treat the case so seriously? Was there any truth in their charges?

For other examples of similar charges, see Acts 6.11; 21.21 and Luke 23.2.

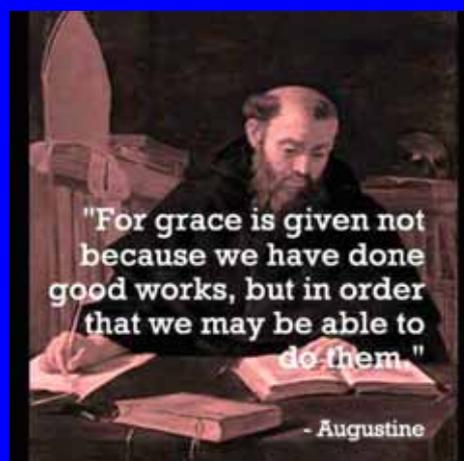
*Content taken from 'ACTS – To The Ends Of The Earth' by David Cook, published by 10Publishing, used with permission.*

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**Matthew 8.13**  
**Your faith works.**

**Words Of Wisdom:**



**Four Little Books Of Great Value!**

**INTRODUCING TYNDALE: An Extract From Tyndale’s Answer To Sir Thomas More’s Dialogue, Edinburgh: Banner Of Truth, 2017. ISBN 978-1-84871-755-8.**

**This booklet has a 29-page introduction by John Piper,** with the title: *Always Sing One Note – A Vernacular Bible: Why William Tyndale Lived And Died*. The great passion of Tyndale’s life was to see the Bible translated from Hebrew and Greek into ordinary English for every person in England to read. Piper draws two lessons from the dedicated labours of Tyndale: 1. The need to work hard; 2. It is God’s grace that brings lasting achievements, not our hard work. These complementary truths are summed up in the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15.10. Tyndale worked, suffered, was forced into exile, betrayed and martyred, doing and enduring all this so that people might be able to read and understand the Gospel of salvation so clearly set out in Scripture. The value of Tyndale’s feisty reply to his bitter enemy, Thomas More, is that it is full of sound Scriptural good sense, and Tyndale has such a clear grasp of the Gospel. Too many modern theologians and teachers are woolly-thinkers. Finally, the late Robert J. Sheehan in an *Epilogue* writes about Tyndale’s legacy, most notably the fact that 90% of the King James Version of the New Testament comes from him.

**THE CROOK IN THE LOT: What To Believe When Our Lot In Life Is Not Health, Wealth, And Happiness, Thomas Boston, Edinburgh: Banner Of Truth, 2017. ISBN 978-1-84871-758-9.**

**This is ‘a masterpiece of pastoral theology’, says Ian Hamilton in the Preface.** The title is based on Ecclesiastes 7.13, and by ‘lot’ Boston means our lot in life, and the ‘crook’ is the adverse conditions that believers often face. We need to see God’s hand (and His wise and loving purposes) in our many difficulties. Boston writes about what he knows, for in his ministry and family life (losing six of his ten children) in 18th Century Scotland, he patiently endured many troubles. Boston was taught by Scripture and discovered in his own experience that God uses difficulties, limitations and disappointments to bless (Romans 8.28; Genesis 50.20). Our losses have done us a great deal of good if they humble us and make us dependent on our Heavenly Father, and Boston also expounds Proverbs 16.19 with great power and insight into the perverse way people think.

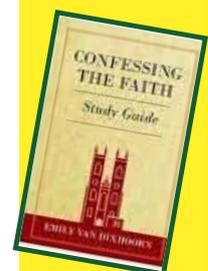
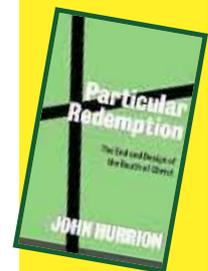
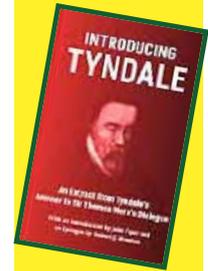
**PARTICULAR REDEMPTION: The End And Design Of The Death Of Christ, John Hurrion, Edinburgh, Banner Of Truth, 2017. ISBN 978-1-84871-752-7.**

**Hurrion was born in 1675, and wrote in response to the errors of Richard Baxter** on the subject of justification. Originally these were lectures, based in Titus 2.14, and they were published soon after his death. His argument is that Christ did not die indiscriminately for all, but rather to redeem a set group of people (His sheep), our Lord doing all that was needed to infallibly save them. Properly understood, this Gospel truth is one of the greatest comforts to believers, though, of course, not all in the church have this understanding of the atonement, hence the need for these lectures. Hurrion does not shy away from the difficult texts, and in everything he seeks to honour the ‘all sufficient Saviour’, who has done all that is needed to ensure the salvation of all His people. Do not dismiss his view without reading his arguments!

**CONFESSING THE FAITH STUDY GUIDE, Emily Van Dixhoorn, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2017. ISBN 978-1-84871-761-9.**

**This booklet provides a tool for studying Christian doctrine with a group of interested people.** It is based on Chad Van Dixhoorn’s exposition of the *Westminster Confession Of Faith* (also published by Banner). It contains questions that help participants to tease out the meaning, implications and application of key Bible truths. This guide supplements the usual run of Bible study booklets available for group use.

– Greg Goswell



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