

SCOTTISH PROTESTANT VIEW

FREE

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NATIONAL CHURCH FACES CRITICAL YEAR

This year will no doubt turn out to be one of the most critical years in the Church of Scotland's history.

The Commission to report on the ordination of homosexual ministers is to report back to the General Assembly in May recommending the way forward on the issue. This will end the two-year moratorium on the discussion of the issue.

Whatever else the Assembly discusses, the issue of homosexual ministers

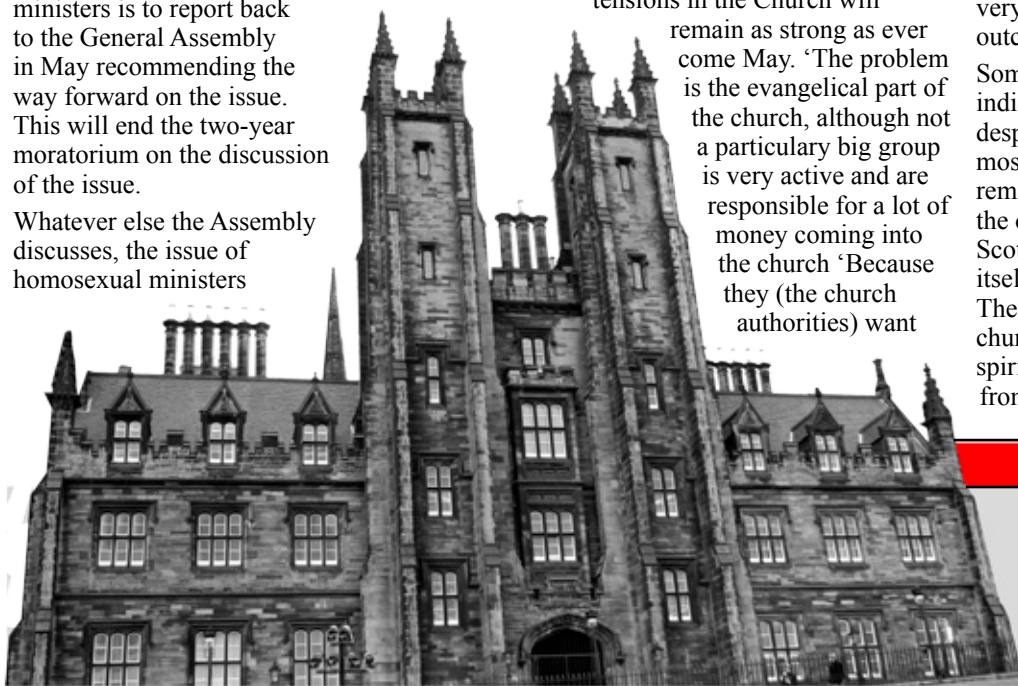
will take centre stage with not only local media attention but also world-wide interest. One senior minister, Dr John Cameron commented that the issue was 'the biggest challenge to the Church since the Second World War' He considers the tensions in the Church will remain as strong as ever come May. 'The problem is the evangelical part of the church, although not a particularly big group is very active and are responsible for a lot of money coming into the church 'Because they (the church authorities) want

to keep them there they may be put in a situation where they have to sacrifice Scott Rennie, although that would be a public relations disaster.'

It is only apparent from Dr Cameron's comments that financial expediency may very well carry the day in regards to the outcome.

Some figures have recently been published indicating that the Edinburgh Presbytery despite being by reputation perhaps the most liberal presbytery in the church, remains divided over the issue. Whatever the outcome in May, the Church of Scotland has brought great shame upon itself and may lose clergy and members. The day has long gone when the national church could guide the nation both spiritually and morally. May God save us from those who

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Critical decision will be made at the Church of Scotland Assembly Halls, Edinburgh

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Could 'unifying force' cause division?

With the formal creation of the personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in place this month, GERALD WARNER asks whether or not this path to conversion to the Faith could prove to be divisive

THE Pontificate of Benedict XVI, viewed in the perspective of historians, bids fair to be regarded as one of the most significant in recent times.

If the Pope had achieved nothing beyond his *epochal motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*, his reign would be assured of a notable place in Church history. His achievements, however, have been even more wide-ranging, the most important probably being the change he has effected in the tone, the psychology—in popular terminology, the 'mood music'—of the Church. This is a Pontiff of real significance.

That said, could one of his initiatives—his concession of an ordinariate to traditionally-minded Anglicans converting to Rome en bloc—eventually be seen as a wrong turn? On January 15 the Vatican announced the formal creation of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, in implementation of the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*, for Anglicans collectively converting to Rome. Fr Keith Newton, a former Anglican bishop, has been appointed ordinary to head the organisation.

Why is it thought necessary to make such concessions to Anglicans, when such privileges are not extended to any other converts? Why do Anglicans insist on converting collectively, when personal faith can only be dictated by individual conscience? Once an individual becomes convinced of the truth of the Catholic Faith, he or she is under an immediate obligation to make submission to the Sovereign Roman Pontiff and any delay in doing so is a sin against the Holy Ghost, imperilling his salvation. The notion that formal adherence

to objective truth can be made conditional upon being allowed to retain the cultural expression of other practices defies the spirit of conversion. One either believes or disbelieves: it is as simple as that.

There are many question marks hovering over those Anglicans who are forever, Hamlet-like, tottering on the brink of going over to Rome. Why should acceptance of the doctrines of the One True Church be contingent on what happens at the next Anglican General Synod? In what sense

'Why should acceptance of the doctrines of the One True Church be contingent on what happens at the next Anglican General Synod?'

can those who accepted priestesses but cannot now tolerate women bishops be said to be Catholic in belief? The Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus*, providing for the ordinariate, speaks of 'formation in Anglican patrimony,' employs the term 'presbyter' rather than '*sacerdos*' and provides for '... the admission of married men to the order of presbyter on a case-by-case basis.' Some might regard that as a Trojan horse for priestly celibacy.

The most troubling section of the document, to my mind, is Article III: "Without excluding Liturgical celebrations according to the Roman Rite, the ordinariate has the faculty to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and the other Sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours and other Liturgical celebrations according

to Liturgical books proper to Anglican tradition, which have been approved by the Holy See, so as to maintain the Liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the Catholic Church, as a precious gift nourishing the Faith of the members of the ordinariate and as a treasure to be shared."

If the Anglican Liturgy is 'a precious gift nourishing the Faith', why did the restored Catholic Church burn its author Cranmer as an apostate? Earlier this month Fr Marcus Stock, general secretary to the bishops of England and Wales, said he expected an Anglican use of the Roman Rite would be developed. Why? The original Anglican Liturgy cannot be employed because it does not constitute a valid Mass. Any that 'developed' would be a modern creation, not an ancient tradition. Why is the Roman Mass not enough for people who have 'converted' to Rome?

The ordinariate will also involve extra administration and expense at a time when the Church should be slimming down bureaucracy. The pastoral consequences of this concession could be counter-productive. Converts notoriously have difficulty assimilating themselves to the Catholic Faith; by encouraging them to maintain many of their old practices, as members of a church within the Church, that break will be made more difficult.

And could privileges for people who have 'abandoned Anglicanism' for Catholicism impact the Society of St Pius X, currently in negotiation with Rome over its formal reintegration into the Church? Apart from the illicit consecration of four bishops—an infraction of discipline for which the sanctions have already been lifted—what is keeping the SSPX apart from the Holy See? Is the society not bound to ask itself—and the Vatican negotiators—why it is still ostracised for retaining the beliefs and practices of the reign of Pope Pius XII, while people who insist on retaining the heritage of Henry VIII are welcomed?

The ordinariate may as yet prove a divisive force rather than a unifying one.

Scottish Catholic Observer 28.01.11

ALL ARTICLES IN THIS MAGAZINE ARE REPRODUCED AS EVIDENCE

HOPE AND HARMONY

Thomas Baldwin reports from an historic ecumenical conference.

THE churches must be willing to go into 'places of discomfort' if they are to move towards greater unity, the Church of Scotland's ecumenical relations secretary, the Very Rev Dr Sheilagh Kesting, told a groundbreaking conference in November.

The conference, exploring the legacy of the Scottish Reformation, itself represented a major step forward in ecumenical relations. It was organised by the Joint Commission on Doctrine of the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland; and included speakers from both denominations as well as the Scottish Episcopal Church.

It was followed by a service at St Giles, including the first use of a joint Liturgy for the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows.

Although acknowledging before the event that it would have been impossible only 10 years ago, Dr Kesting said that churches 'seem reluctant to acknowledge the added value in commitment to do more of our work together'.

She added: "If the ecumenical pilgrimage is to go anywhere the Churches Together model (of ecumenism) is only one stage on the journey..."

"If we can say that God gave up what was most precious to him then perhaps we have to face the possibility that what most inhibits the expression of Christian unity is the inability of churches to give up that which they consider most dear in their traditions, in order to come to a new place that cannot be predicted in advance."

Dr Kesting made the comments during a discussion of Receptive Ecumenism, a new model which encourages participants to ask what their own tradition can learn from others.

Introducing the concept, Prof Paul Murray, a Catholic lay theologian based at Durham University, said: "The natural tendency is to put it the other way round: assume it's the others that need to do the learning and we the preaching. It's perhaps particularly clear at times that the Catholic Church can play this game but, if we are honest, we can all come to the table assuming that it would be easier if others were more like us."

While accepting that Christian unity remains distant, Prof Murray argued that it was the churches' duty to always strive for it. "It is not our calling to construct the Kingdom of our own efforts, but it is our calling to lean towards it, to be shaped by it, so we can bear witness to it."

The importance of denominational co-operation, especially in tough economic times, was emphasised by the First Minister, Alex Salmond, opening the conference, who described the adoption of the joint Liturgy as a 'significant event'.

"The percentage of the population of Scotland that will be mobilised by that significant event will be low," he added. "But it is my firm belief that ecumenism preached in the pulpit flows down to the public houses. The attitudes of faith groups to each other have a fundamental influence on the wider community."

He added "The role of faith groups is not just to minimise harm. The progressive interventions of the faith groups across Scotland and the world deserve to be more widely recognised. Social solidarity is well represented in Scotland's faith groups and they will have a major part in taking us through this testing time."

"People throughout the denominations in

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NATIONAL CHURCH FACES CRITICAL YEAR

call evil good and good evil. We cry with David, 'Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men' Psalm 12:1.

As to the question of whether there will be a mass exodus of evangelicals should the vote go against them, I would place a big question mark over it. If it failed to happen when Scott Rennie was inducted to the church in Aberdeen, why should it happen now?
by the editor, **Mr Jack Bell**

Scotland can hold their heads up and say not just that we can see the best in each others' traditions, but we are contributing together to build a better Scotland for everyone."

The conference was also addressed by both the Joint Conveners of the Panel on Doctrine, Archbishop Mario Conti and the Rev Dr Alan Falconer, as well as the Rev Dr Alison Peden of the Episcopal Church and historian Prof Tom Devine.

Giving the sermon in St Giles, the Very Rev Dr John Miller called for the repeal of the Act of Succession, which bars Roman Catholics from the thrones of England and Scotland, as a further step to reconciliation.

Dr Miller said: "In August of 1560 the Scots Reformation Parliament explicitly removed all papal authority in Scotland and abolished the mass. In September of this year, 450 years later, Scotland gave an affectionate welcome to the visit of Pope Benedict XVI. The years have made a difference. We are not where we were. But we have far to travel."

"There is no place for triumphalism. As a parish minister for almost 40 years in a Glasgow housing scheme I am familiar with the poisonous taste of sectarianism. Religious intolerance is intolerable. We recognise real incompatibilities between the traditions. But we cannot condone or support the conflict which has accompanied this difference. We have to leave behind the historic rivalry, the aspirations each of us has cherished for ascendancy. It is time to repeal the Act of Succession. It is time to remember the crucified Christ's words of forgiveness."

We have to find a harmony."

With kind permission from Life and Work

Editorial Comment:-

It is of note that the conference mentioned in the Life and Work magazine is described as 'an historic ecumenical conference'. I thank the Lord that Zion Baptist Church protested at the betrayal of biblical and reformed truth at St Giles back in November, and in light of the Life and Work article, what a betrayal! For Sheila Kesting to mention that God's great sacrifice should be a motive for ecumenism is nothing short of blasphemy. Paul Murray speaks of coming to the table no doubt without an open Bible, and John Miller speaks against the reformation and speaks affectionately of the papal visit. He closes with a call to find harmony and forgiveness. God save Scotland from such treachery and send us a mighty outpouring of His Holy Spirit.



Members from Zion Baptist Church protest outside St Giles, Edinburgh

Living by Faith in Glasgow with God

My name is Frances and I was born in the 1950's in the Southside of Glasgow, Govan. Like most working class families, life wasn't Play Stations, TVs and iPods. It was single tenements and outside toilets and we had to come up with our own entertainment. I had lots of brothers and sisters and we all had to live in the same little tenement.

My father, like many men at that time, was an alcoholic and a petty criminal in and out of jail. He treated my mum and brothers and sisters with disdain, often calling us horrible names and beating my mother, often telling her that she was a terrible parent and that he was going to report her to social services and have us children taken from her.

When my dad was not at home, the house was totally different, it was a happy environment where we would do glory marches all the way through the house, singing and dancing despite the abuse we received from my dad. My mum tried to make the house a happy environment for us all. We didn't have a lot, but then again, most people where we lived were in the same situation.

I used to entertain myself by having wrestling matches with my brothers and sisters and play hide and seek in the back greens of the tenements. As my mum was so busy, I tried to help out by looking after my little sister, Anne, and tried to protect her from my dad.

I left school at 15 years old and started work at the National Saving Bank where I worked and enjoyed meeting friends. I also met my future husband and father of my children at a work dance. The romance lasted a few years and we even were engaged to be married despite our parents' disapproval, as I was a Catholic and my fiancé was a protestant. However, things didn't work out at the time and we broke up.

I met and married my first husband shortly after and gave birth to a beautiful little girl I called Sharon, I was only 19 years old at the time. I thought things were starting to go well however my marriage was not easy and my in-laws didn't like me and treated me and Sharon very poorly. My husband left me and kicked me out the house with

Sharon shortly after the marriage began. I tried to reason with my husband and his family but they were not interested and we got a divorce. In the 1970s there was no such thing as child support or rights for single mothers.

Homeless with a baby in the 1970's was very hard and I often broke down in tears thinking how I was going to cope. My family didn't help as my dad wasn't interested in me and my mum had so much to contend with being married to such a man. I was in my early 20's, homeless and had to somehow provide for my baby girl and myself. Life was unbearable and things looked hopeless but I knew in my heart that I was a mother and had a responsibility to be the best mother I could be for this beautiful little girl in my arms. So I had to strive to provide a better life for my daughter and myself. I went door to door looking for a place to stay.

I eventually met this elderly woman who let a room out to me. I had to hold down three jobs just to pay the bills while making sure Sharon my baby girl was ok. The elderly woman watched me put so much work into providing for Sharon and that I worked myself to exhaustion everyday. She offered me the opportunity to buy a tenement from her and pay her up every week.

When I moved into my new home and got Sharon to sleep I just burst into tears and thanked God, I have an outside door and my own flat. There was no furniture and I had to scrimp and save to get food on the table and pay the bills, but I knew that the little tenement was mine.

I was rejected from so many jobs because I had a daughter, so I had to lie in applications saying I didn't have children. I got a job telling them I didn't have any dependents and this was hard as I had to get myself and Sharon ready every morning, get Sharon to nursery and get to work on time. I often got to work late because I had to drop Sharon off. At work my boss didn't like me and often made life hard for me.

I met an amazing woman called Charlotte in this job. She was a born again Christian and told me all about the Lord Jesus Christ and how he came into her life and transformed her life. I was in my 20's and

I thought that I was a good person and a good catholic and told my new friend I went to mass and all the good works I did for the church and my family. However, Charlotte told me that my good works were not enough to get me to heaven and that the only way to heaven is asking the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive me for all my sins, past, present and future and ask him to save me from hell and that none of my good works were good enough for God. This really annoyed me. I felt I deserved to go to heaven on my own merit. But I loved my new friend and it was so much easier for me at work to have a friendly face in the work place.

I eventually bought my flat through paying the old woman and continued to save the money I was paying the old woman up once I paid the house off. The Council wanted to buy the flat through a compulsory purchase programme. The council bought my flat from me and I moved to a new flat in exchange for the one I was in, so I now owned my new flat and Sharon was a little bit older. I met Jim, my old boyfriend a few years later and we started seeing each other and we eventually got married. Soon after I fell pregnant and I gave birth to a boy and we called him Gary. Gary was not very well from the very beginning and he had breathing problems and had other health issues that took up most of my time and attentions. I had to give up my position working in a very well paid role in Paisley where I got paid a lot more money than my new husband. Before I gave up my role, I bought the big essential items that I felt the house needed like a new fridge and washing machine.

My new baby boy was really ill and often his breathing became so bad I had to take him to the hospital. I was called an anxious mother but I knew something was not right. One day I was in hospital and a midwife told me she thought my son had a rare condition. I got this checked out with my doctor and it turned out he had a condition where he could not sweat and had bad asthma. It was such a relief to finally know what was wrong with my son. Gary spent a lot of time in hospital and I had to put him into a special needs

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nursery as he was not well enough to be in the mainstream nursery.

Then one day, I was sitting in my living room praying to God to help my son and the door bell rang. I answered the door and there were two women standing at the door and they started to speak to me about the Lord Jesus. Once again, as I did with my dear friend Charlotte, I started to tell them how I was a good Catholic. I began to tell them that I was praying to God to help my precious little boy as he was my pride and joy. They started telling me that I should cast my cares on Jesus. They said that Jesus won't take the problems out of my life but he will help me through my troubles. I knew in my heart what they were saying was true and I asked the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive me for my sins and save me from hell and help me to cope with life.

From that day on, I started to feel a change in my life and attitude to things. I started attending the church that the women who told me about Jesus were from and started to love hearing the Word of God and all about Jesus. I really enjoyed talking about the Lord Jesus and my husband Jim noticed the change in my life as well. I no longer enjoyed going to the pub and wanted to talk about the Lord Jesus all the time. I knew I was born again and that the Lord Jesus had come into my life. I felt I was a new woman, which I was. I was a new woman in Christ like the apostle Paul says in Romans 6 in the Bible. I loved everything to do with the Bible and told everybody I met about what happened in my life and how Jesus came into my heart and changed my life, praise God.

My son was still in and out of hospital and there were still problems in my life but I had changed and my approach to these

problems had changed. Instead of asking why, I said thank you to God for giving me a child to love and care for.

I definitely wanted another child, but my husband thought that due to the pressure of having Gary, he felt that having another child would be too much. However every Tuesday night I went to my dear friend Charlotte's house and we prayed to God for a new baby if it was God's will. One Tuesday night when I was up at my friend Charlotte's, I said to her that there was no need for anymore prayers for me to be pregnant as God had blessed my womb with a child.

I changed the church I was attending and started to attend Zion Baptist church, as I was invited to it by my friend Charlotte. She told me how she felt that the Church she attended was so on fire for God, so I attended the church and fell in love with the place. I just knew that this was the church that God wanted me to go to. The preacher of the church was Pastor Jack Glass and he was full of the fire of God and loved God so much. When he preached it was like he was preaching directly to you. I felt that he was a real man of God and that this was where God wanted me to worship.

I continued to attend the Church and my faith in God grew stronger and stronger. Living the Christian life was so amazing. Whenever situations arise, I just take the issue to God and leave it with him. An example of this was when I wanted another child but had an issue with my womb and had to have a hysterectomy. This was really a hard challenge for me to work out because I prayed for this new baby.

But I believe that God gave me an answer. Sometimes when we pray to God we always expect the answer to be yes, but at times the answer is no, and it's how we react to that answer that shapes our lives

and relationship with God.

I fell ill in 2003 and I went into a coma and had to have major surgery to my brain as it was inflamed due to a condition called encephalitis. I have been seriously affected by this and suffer from fatigue and find it difficult to process day to day things which can be very frustrating as I want to get things done straight away. Also, my social life has been greatly affected as a result of this condition. However, my faith in Jesus Christ has never been shaken. In fact, it has been intensified and I love him more and more each day. When I awoke from my coma after my operation, all I could do was talk about the Lord Jesus and I haven't stopped. I attend an organisation that provides support for people with brain injuries and I am able to attend this organisations help groups and be able to share my experiences and gain advice on how to cope with day to day things. When I attend this help group, I share my experience of having Jesus Christ in my life and how he has blessed my life.

I want you to know that without the Lord Jesus in my life, I don't know if I could have coped because he has done so much for me. I completely trust him with my life and have no doubt at all if you ask the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart, he will be there for you in every circumstance in your life. He doesn't take problems away from your life but he shows you that your reaction to things in your life can change through your belief in him.

May God richly bless you and thank you so much for taking the time to read a bit about my life and I hope and pray that God moves in your life in a mighty way and might meet you in heaven one day.

Love in Christ Jesus, Frances Coburn

THREE PROTESTANT MARTYRS

6 July, 1415—John Huss, the "Apostle of Bohemia", condemned at the Council of Constance, died at the stake. "What errors shall I renounce? I call God to witness that I have preached to rescue souls from sin and perdition, and joyfully confirm with my blood the truth that I have taught".

13 August, 1680—Archibald Alison, Covenanter, was hanged at Edinburgh. "I bless the Lord that I have a life to lay down for His sake....that I have blood and wounds in His cause".

24 September, 1518—John Stilenen, who through fear of burning had renounced his Protestantism and, suffering great distress of mind, had again openly witnessed to God's truth, was brought before the Bishop of London. He declared himself a Lollard, a follower of Christ saved through the writings of John Wickliffe. He was put to death four weeks later.

GERMANS FORSAKING ROME IN DROVES

Thousands of Germans have quit the Roman Catholic Church in the wake of a series of sex and corruption scandals that have left the institution reeling.

In one diocese alone, Rottenburg Stuttgart, by mid December, 17,659 had turned their back on the Church, compared to 4,563 for the whole of 2009, according to new research by the Frankfurter Rundschau newspaper and the DPA press agency. Augsburg, reflecting a downward trend experienced by most dioceses, saw its flock decline as 11,351 left the Church in comparison to the 6,953 last year, while in Trier 7,029 people quit, a 2,500 increase on the previous year.

"I have never experienced anything like this since my ordination in 1969," said Bishop Friedhelm Hofmann of Wurzburg. The bishop suggested that the exodus was linked to the sex and corruption scandals.

It also appears that many disenchanting Catholics are turning to the Protestant church. The diocese of Baden said the number of Catholics converting grew by 20 per cent in 2010.

(VirtueOnline)

A divine irony

With an ominous rattle of wheels and the crack of a whip, a cart was driven through the gates of an Edinburgh hospital. Another casualty was being rushed in, a man critically injured in some industrial accident.

With the lower half of his body horribly crushed, he was in desperate pain. There seemed little hope of saving his life.

Dr William Mackay, a senior Edinburgh doctor in the 1860s, with a reputation for success in such emergencies, hurried to the scene. Surely, thought he, with a rush of adrenalin, he was just the right man for the situation.

Such a conquest over the course of nature gave him yet another opportunity to glory in his own prowess and to gain the admiration of his colleagues.

An avowed atheist, Mackay believed that each time he managed to drag yet another patient back from the gates of death, it proved his theory that man was indeed the master of his own destiny and God a mere irrelevancy.

Atheist

A leading member of a society known as the Infidel Club, he openly and coarsely disparaged all Christian values. But it had not always been so. Born in 1839, William Mackay was brought up in a family where God was loved and the Scriptures honoured.

When the young man left his Montrose home to begin his medical studies, his mother gave him a parting gift — a Bible. Carefully she had inscribed it with both his name and hers, together with a Scripture verse to be a guiding beacon for her son's new life.

Week after week the Bible lay neglected in his room gathering dust, as young William mixed with society far different from all he had known at home. His new friends had no time for the truths William had been taught to value and gently mocked him for his naivety.

Gradually the young man began to entertain doubts about the Christian faith himself and, before long, he too was laughing at the beliefs his parents held dear. Throwing aside all restraints he indulged a careless lifestyle, becoming addicted to a regular tot of whisky until it became his master.

When his student finances could no longer support his indulgences, his thoughts

turned to ways of raising extra cash. He remembered the local pawnbroker. Was there anything he could pawn? His eyes fell on the Bible. That would surely fetch an excellent sum!

Telling himself that he would soon be able to redeem it and hardening his heart against the one whose hand had inscribed it, William took the Bible to the pawn shop. Now he could afford more whisky. But far from redeeming the Bible, he soon forgot all about it.

As the years passed, Mackay excelled in his chosen career despite his lifestyle, earning a prominent position in an Edinburgh hospital.

Diagnosis

As he stood weighing up the new arrival's injuries, his spirit rose to the challenge. Then the patient suddenly spoke. Despite his pain his words were calm and measured. 'What is the diagnosis, doctor?'

'Oh, I guess we will pull you through', replied Mackay with a cheerful chuckle.

'No, doctor', replied the man, 'I don't want any guess. I want to know if it is life or death'.

Mackay glanced in amazement at his patient. He had seen many with faces twisted and distorted in agony, but here was one enduring intense suffering, yet with a strange calm expression. 'Just lay me down easy. Anywhere, doctor, I am ready. I am not afraid to die'.

Never had Dr Mackay heard a patient in the throes of death speak like that before. But the man had not finished. Even though his words now came slowly and with great difficulty, he continued: 'I trust in the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. If I have to die, I know I am going to be with him. But I would like to know the truth. Just what is my condition?' William Mackay had indeed heard such words before; long ago— similar words spoken by his own mother. His defences began to crack. Then he blurted out, 'You have at the most three hours to live'.

'Thank you, doctor', replied the man simply. Finding himself unexpectedly moved, the hardened cynic suddenly asked: 'Is there anything special you would like us

to do for you?'

The answer was now laboured and slow. 'In one of my pockets is a two-week's pay packet. Please could someone take it and give it to my landlady to pay for my lodgings. And yes, there is one more thing. Could you ask her to send me the book?'

The book

Book? 'What could a dying man want with a book?' wondered Mackay. 'What book is that?' he asked kindly.

'O just the book', the young man replied faintly. His strength had almost gone. 'She will know'.

Issuing instructions for his patient's care, William Mackay hurried off on his duties. If he could not gain the upper hand over the approaching power of death, he did not wish to stay.

But try as he might, he could not erase the picture of that man's calm face. The words echoed and re-echoed in his mind. 'I am ready, doctor, just lay me down easy. Anywhere. I am not afraid to die'.

Unafraid to die? This was a dimension William Mackay had long since blotted from his code of life. Normally he never returned to a ward once he had admitted defeat. Now he felt an irresistible urge to see what had happened to his patient. Did he get his book in time?

The nurse in charge was startled when the doctor reappeared. 'He died a few moments ago', she told him. 'Did he get his book?' asked Mackay. 'What was it? A bank book?'

'Yes, he got his book', replied the nurse, 'And no, it wasn't a bank book. It's still there. You may look at it if you like. It's under his pillow'.

Dr Mackay strode across the ward and felt under the dead man's pillow. He pulled out the book. It looked strangely familiar. A Bible!

He opened the cover and glanced at the fly leaf. There to his astonishment he read his own name, his mother's name and the Scripture she had given him so long ago. This was the very Bible he had pawned for whisky when he had been a student.

Transformed

Stunned and shaking, William Mackay pushed the Bible inside his coat, and hurried to his private office. Locking the door, he fell on his knees and with bitter tears begged the forgiveness and mercy of God ... of the God he had spurned, whose name he had despised, whose glory he had shamed.

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At last he rose from his knees a new man, a deeply chastened man, a forgiven man. By a divine irony God had arrested this proud atheist, broken him down and turned his entire life around.

How could he remedy the harm he had done by his unbelief? William Mackay was acutely conscious of the debt he owed to his generation, and determined by God's help to do all in his power to point men and women to the grace and mercy of God.

Wherever he could, he spoke to others, to his friends, his associates, to anyone who would listen to the account of the mercy God had shown to a poor sinner. Eventually in 1869 William Mackay, now 29 years

of age, abandoned his successful medical career and became a preacher of that same gospel he had long tried to destroy.

Making a small church in Hull, East Yorkshire, his base, Mackay travelled the length and breadth of the country, with large crowds gathering to hear him preach.

Testimony

Only 14 short years were left to Mackay, for he died in 1885 at the age of 43, as the result of an accident.

On the last Sunday of his life he had preached on the words, 'the glory of God'. And before the next Sunday came round, he himself was standing in the presence of the God of glory.

A hymn he wrote, which is still sung today, dwells on this theme. It is his life's testimony:

*All glory and praise
to the Lamb that was slain,
who has borne all our sins
and has cleansed every stain:
Hallelujah, yours the glory.
Hallelujah we sing!
Hallelujah, yours the glory,
our praise now we bring.*

Faith Cook

Evangelical TIMES December 2010

Proof that last Pope told Irish not to report child abuse to police

Leaked letter provides best evidence yet of Vatican cover-up of child-abusing priests

A Vatican letter proving that the Papacy ordered Ireland's Catholic Bishops not to report child abuse to the police has been leaked to Irish broadcasters RTE and to Associated Press (AP). AP and The Guardian published a photo of the letter last week (18 January). RTE claimed that an Irish Bishop had handed them the letter, marked 'Strictly Confidential'.

As the published letter, written in 1997, made clear, it documented the Pope's rejection of a 1996 Irish church initiative to help police identify paedophile priests. Signed by the late Archbishop Luciano Storero, Pope John Paul II's envoy to Ireland, it instructed Bishops that their new policy of making the reporting of suspected crimes mandatory 'gives rise to serious reservations of both a moral and canonical nature'.

Storero's letter added: "Canon law, whereby allegations and punishments are handled within the church, must be meticulously followed. Any Bishop who tried to go outside Canon law would face the highly embarrassing position of being overturned on appeal in Rome".

In the very same year as the letter was sent, the soon-to-be-made-a-saint Pope John Paul II asked the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, then led by Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, to handle such cases in future.

APPEAL

An Irish government report in 2009 found that the Vatican diktat of 1997 was followed in the case of Tony Walsh, one of Dublin's

most notorious paedophiles. He exploited his role as an 'Elvis impersonator' in a popular 'All Priests Show' to get closer to children. In 1993, Walsh had been defrocked by a secret church court, but successfully appealed to a Vatican court, and was reinstated into the priesthood in 1994.

He raped a boy in a pub rest room later during the very same year that Pope John Paul II's court allowed his 'defrocking appeal'. Walsh has received a series of prison sentences, culminating in a 12-year term imposed last month. Investigators estimate he abused over 100 children.

Colm O'Gorman, Director of the Irish section of Amnesty International, and who, as an altar boy, was raped repeatedly by a priest, commented: "The letter is of huge international significance. It shows that the Vatican's intention is to prevent reporting of abuse to criminal authorities. And if that applied in Ireland, it doubtless applied everywhere".

CONCEALED

O'Gorman also claimed he had mounting evidence that some Irish Bishops continued to follow the 1997 Vatican instructions. A state investigation of Cloyne Diocese is due out soon, concerning child abuse crimes concealed as recently as 2008.

Joelle Casteix, Director of the US advocacy group Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, described it as: "The smoking gun we've been looking for". Irish taxpayers, rather than the church, have paid over most of the estimated £2

billion to 14,000 claimants who suffered abuse over the past six decades.

In 2010 Pope Benedict condemned child-abusing priests, whilst at the same time criticising Bishops for 'not following canon law'. The letter contained no explicit endorsement of efforts by the Irish church or state to protect children, leading to widespread criticism in the Republic.

Stormont plans to hold an inquiry into historic child abuse in Northern Ireland.

British Church Newspaper 28.01.11

Pope announces multifaith meeting

Pope Benedict XVI has invited leaders of other 'faiths' to a meeting to 'renew the commitment of the faithful of all religions to live their own religious faith as a service for the cause of peace'.

In an announcement on the World Day of Peace, 1 January, the Pope said that he would host the interfaith meeting in Assisi, Italy, in October - 25 years after John Paul II held a similar ground-breaking meeting there.

Some see the move as significant because, as Cardinal Ratzinger in 1986, Benedict was reported to have strong misgivings about the original meeting. While head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he also drew criticism from other faiths for his defence of Christ as the only way to salvation.

(Bible Society, New York Times)

Vatican discovers a miracle so the late Pope John Paul II can be beatified

The Vatican's Congregation For the Causes of Saints - the Roman Catholic Committee that makes recommendations for sainthood - has discovered that the previous Pope, John Paul II, has performed a miracle, thus paving the way for his beatification, probably in October this year.

The miracle is said by the Congregation to have been performed by John Paul II in relation to a French nun's recovery from Parkinson's disease. Sister Marie Simon-Pierre, was said to have developed an 'aggressive form' of Parkinson's Disease in 2001, and then made an 'unexplained recovery', or 'miracle' in the view of the Vatican board of doctors and theologians.

EMBARRASSING

After provisionally approving this miracle last year, however, there were embarrassing reports that she had suffered a relapse. The Vatican was forced into a rapid rethink, but the Congregation's Medical Commission nevertheless decided she had made a sufficient recovery for it to be accepted as a satisfactory miracle.

Catholic tradition has deemed that there should be a decent interval of at least five years after the death of an individual before

any attempt is made to canonise them. But this tradition was swept aside by the Vatican top brass, who recognised that John Pope Paul II had been immensely popular in his native Poland and regarded as a hero by many in the former Soviet Union and East European bloc, who felt that he had done more than anyone to engineer the downfall of Communism. He was greatly admired by Margaret Thatcher, who visits his tomb every time she is in Rome. At his funeral, thousands in St. Peter's Square chanted 'Santo subito' - 'Saint immediately'.

His now-official miracle will count as one of the two miracles he needs in order to - eventually - be proclaimed a saint. Beatification is invariably followed by the Vatican discovering a second miracle which then means he can become an official saint.

ISRAEL UNEASY

The Israeli government had an uneasy relationship with Pope John Paul II. It lobbied regularly for a definitive Vatican statement on the Holocaust and the Roman Catholic Church's involvement in the persecution of the Jews. The outcome, the 1998 document: 'We Remember: A

Reflection on the Shook [Holocaust]1 was considered far from satisfactory by many Jews, partly because it blamed individuals, excusing the Roman Catholic Church as an institution. The document ducked the issue of Hitler's 1933 Concordat with the Papacy, and praised Pope Pius XII despite his silence over the atrocities against the Jews.

Israel has long viewed the Vatican as pro-Palestinian. When the Vatican signed a 'Fundamental Treaty' with Israel on 30 December 1993, it did so only after the 'Declaration of Principles' was signed by Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat a few months earlier on 13 September. The Vatican has persistently criticised Israel for its 'lack of respect for UN Security Council Resolutions' and for unjustly 'annexing a part of the city of Jerusalem'.

John Paul II signed an agreement between the Vatican and the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 2000. The agreement failed to mention Israel by name, and stated that: "Unilateral decisions and actions altering the specific character and status of Jerusalem are morally and legally unacceptable".

British Church Newspaper

DO YOU BELIEVE IN SIGNS?

The widespread disrespect for governmental authority, the tottering of thrones, the rise and fall of dictators, the existence of the United Nations as a mediating body, the unrest and suspicion between nations, wars and rumors of wars, the opening of Palestine as a homeland for the Jews, the apostacy of the churches, the extreme worldliness of the age, and the incorrigibility of "flaming youth" are considered by many thoughtful persons to be signs of the rapidly approaching "the end of the age."

Whether these "signs" are correctly interpreted or not, there is an urgent need of preparation for the Lord's Return. The Lord Jesus has definitely promised to return. He said: "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2-3

As the Lord Jesus was ascending, this

comforting message was given to the awestruck disciples: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." Acts 1:11

That the Return of the Lord shall be a personal, physical return is evident from the following inspired words: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." I Thessalonians 4:16-17

The closing chapter of the closing Book of the Bible contains the thrice repeated assurance of the speedy Return of the Lord Jesus Christ. "I come quickly." Revelation 22:7,12,20 And the last prayer of the Book of God is: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20

He may come at any time. Are you ready?

If not, why not? To be ready at His Return will mean - to be caught up and to meet the Lord in the air, and be forever with Him. What a prospect!

If the Lord Jesus Christ were to come today and find you unprepared, it would mean that you would be left for the series of unparalleled judgments which shall be poured out on the earth, after the believers have been taken out of the world.

Why expose yourself for one moment of time to eternal doom? "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation;" II Corinthians 6:2, and you may be accepted and saved now by repenting of your sin and receiving Christ as your personal Saviour; placing your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins, and was buried and rose again. Receive Him, know Him, love Him, serve Him, and wait for Him!

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Brethren pray for us

Muslims in Pakistan Burn, Beat Evangelist Unconscious

An evangelist is still recovering from burns after six young Muslim men beat him with clubs and belts and set him on fire last month in a village near this Punjab Province city, the Christian told Compass.

Area Christians said they found the Rev. Wilson Augustine, 26, of Village No. 44-SB, unconscious with burns on his head, hand and arm on Nov. 22 near the bus stop of Village No. 101-NB on the outskirts of Sargodha. He had been distributing pamphlets and proclaiming Christ door-to-

door the previous day among area Christian families.

Rustam Masih, a Christian of Village No. 99-NB, told Compass that Augustine was going door-to-door in Village 96-NB when the sons of a powerful local land owner saw one of the pamphlets. Augustine later identified the six as Muhammad Usman Ghani, Muhammad Taha Khan, Talha Mehmood, Nisar Warriach, Zareen Cheema and Jamshaid Ali Ansari.

Aamir Masih, a Christian elder of the

same village, said that the young Muslim men mistakenly regarded verses in the pamphlet describing the resurrection of Jesus as derogatory to Muhammad.

"After setting me on fire, they started thrashing me again," Augustine said. "Because they were beating me with clubs the fire was extinguished, and they dragged me to some nearby shrubs." Police registered a First Information Report (FIR No. 1135/10) for gang attack and attempted murder but declined to name the suspects the victim identified Augustine said.

A police representative told Compass that officers declined to register the case against the named men because it was dark and the Christian could be mistaken, but the evangelist's father said police were bribed.

(Compass Direct)

A Solid Foundation

IT WAS a great engineering challenge, but Shreve, Lamb and Harmon Architects believed it could be done. In March of 1930, machinery was put into motion on two acres of land at Fifth Avenue and 34th Street in New York City, and the ground was broken. For months, powerful shovels dug deep until bed rock was reached 55 feet below. Upon this solid foundation, 365,000 tons of material was used to form one of the greatest man-made structures this world has ever seen. Still towering 1250 feet above Fifth Avenue, the 102-story Empire State Building stands firm, as a tribute to engineering skill — all because of a solid foundation.

Now I'm sure none of us claim to be great builders like those who erected this building, but it may interest you to know that the Lord Jesus speaks of two builders — one wise and the other foolish. He applies the builders to those who are true Christians, and those who profess to be, but are not.

The Wise Man

The wise man "built an house, and digged, deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock" (Luke 6v48).

In view of the coming storm, he built accordingly, and his house "fell not." The secret was, he started with a solid foundation. The "wise man" speaks of born again believers who have laid "the foundation of repentance from dead works" on solid Rock (Hebrews 6v1)! Now who is this Rock? Scripture answers! "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect" (Deuteronomy 32v4). Christ revealed Himself as the Rock, saying,

"Upon this Rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,"

(Matthew 16v18)

The apostle Peter affirms our Lord's words and quotes the prophet (Isaiah 28v6), who spoke this prophecy 725 years before Christ came into the world, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded." (1 Peter 2v6)

At Calvary, the vast foundation of redemption, justification and salvation was laid, through the shed blood and death of the Lord Jesus. All who come to Him are safe and secure from coming judgment. NOTHING can separate them from the love of God (Romans 8v35-39). NOTHING can pluck them out of the Father's hand (John 10v28,29). Christ is their Rock and the gates of hell shall never prevail against them. They can sing with confidence:

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand."

The Foolish Man

In contrast, the foolish man "built an house upon the earth (sand); against which the stream did beat vehemently, And immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Luke 6v49). Perhaps he worked as hard as the wise builder, and put in good material, but one thing was lacking — there was no foundation!

Many today are building for eternity without a foundation. They are putting excellent material into their lives (the house) such as good works, church participation, baptism, reformation, penance, tithing and prayers. However, they have never been convicted of their sins, nor brought to Christ for salvation. They are decent, moral, and respectable, and grown up into their religion; but have never been "born again" (John 3v3). Sad is their case indeed, for unless they get to Christ, they shall in no wise enter heaven.

At death, when the stream of God's wrath beats vehemently against their house, it will fall. All their hopes of heaven will crumble, their good works will fail to support them in the flood, and they shall launch away into a dark eternity — forever lost!

The Lord reveals how each builder can be recognized. Those on the Rock hear and DO the sayings of Christ. Their whole life is characterized by obedience to the Word of God. They read it daily, and bow to its claims. Jesus said, "If a man love Me, he WILL keep My words" (John 14v23).

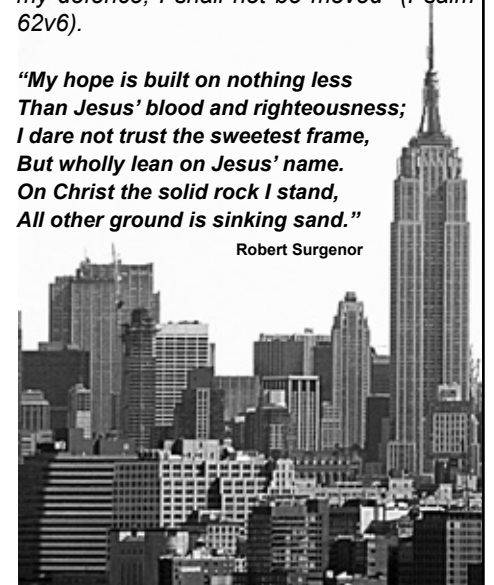
Those without a foundation, hear and DO NOT (Luke 6v49). They claim to be Christians, but consider some portions of the Bible too old-fashioned or extreme, so they make allowances. Rarely do they read it, for they prefer worldly entertainment.

Friend, do you have a solid foundation, or a house on the sand? Remember, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3v11). Nothing less than Christ will do!

"He only is my rock and my salvation: He is my defence; I shall not be moved" (Psalm 62v6).

"My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, But wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand."

Robert Surgenor



Empire State Building, New York City, USA

My faith in Jesus Christ the Messiah

I was born to a very religious Somali family, in a small village in western Somalia. I am a Somali.

I grew up in Mogadishu where I worked and finished high school. My father was a well-known religious leader and also a well-respected tribal leader. He memorised the entire Qur'an in Arabic, even though he could not speak Arabic very well. The Qur'an is roughly the size of the Christian New Testament.

My father trained Muslim religious teachers for the propagation of Islam. In his pursuit of spreading Islam he enjoyed the moral and material support of the military government in Somalia.

My father gave me a solid Muslim religious education for he wanted me to succeed him as a religious leader. Little did he know that I would become a follower of Jesus the Messiah.

How the Lord found me

Since the Qur'an says a lot of good things about Jesus the Messiah, I decided to study Jesus and his teachings as well.

So I obtained the Holy Bible, *Kitaabka Qudduuska Ah*, in the English language. I shared with my father about my growing interest in Jesus Christ and my suspicion of Muhammad's claims to be the last prophet from God. He threatened to take my life away if I ever again openly questioned the claims and trustworthiness of Islam.

After three years of studying the Bible, the Lord found me in 1986. The Holy Spirit was certainly working in me since 1983, but I continuously resisted his conviction until 1986.

Many passages in the Bible spoke to me directly, like the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), but it is the totality of the Scripture and its authenticity which impacted me the most. I remember the day I totally surrendered to the Lord. I spoke to the Lord in my heart and confessed my ignorance and arrogance towards his Messiah and *Injeel* (New Testament).

I repented of my sins and started a new life with the Lord. The radio broadcast *Codka Nolosha Cusub* (Voice of New Life) personnel in Nairobi, Kenya, helped me by answering many of my questions, through

correspondence, and guided me in my walk with the Lord. It was a difficult journey but worthy of the effort.

The Lord used radio ministers to convict me of my sins and to help me understand my need for redemption. I always knew that I could never please God and earn salvation on my merits.

The Bible assured me that all I needed to do to be saved was to repent and turn away from my sins and accept Christ as my Saviour — no more dogma or empty rituals, and no more constant fear of whether I will end up in hell or in heaven. I got solid assurance in Jesus the Messiah.

Codka Nolosha Cusub (CNC) beamed from the Seychelles blessed me beyond measure. CNC sent me invaluable Bible study materials and I faithfully listened to their radio programmes. Before I met any flesh and blood believers to learn from them and to worship with them, CNC was my main source of spiritual growth during my lonely walk with the Lord.

My family

CNC sent me many materials that were extremely helpful, like Somali Christian hymns, praise and worship songs, and Bible study materials. The fact that I heard Somali Christians speaking my own mother tongue on the radio was also encouraging. It was evident to me that Somalis could also follow the Messiah.

My family was terribly disappointed when I shared with them my faith in Jesus the Messiah. My mother was the first person I confided my new faith in. I first told her that I found the *Injeel* (New Testament) of Jesus, which our religious leaders tell us was lost a long time ago. Then I showed her the entire Bible and told her that the Torah and Psalms were also there.

Needless to say, my mother did not believe me and dismissed my claims as baseless. I remember her telling me to fear Allah and not to abandon Islam. I could see she was red with anger and disappointment. She thought I was becoming a rebellious son — that was her concern.

Some of my relatives were growing very impatient with me. They first thought I was beside myself and they repeatedly questioned my sanity. They threatened me with every conceivable punishment if I did not recant my faith.

But I insisted on my newly found faith and freedom in the living Messiah, who died on the cross for our sins, and who was resurrected from the dead on the third day and now sits in heaven at the right hand of God.

I explained to them my reasoning for choosing Jesus over Muhammad. My point was clear and concise. I told them that God did not send any prophet to abrogate the *Injeel* of the Messiah. I told them that the *Injeel* was the final revelation of God and the Messiah Jesus Christ — the last messenger sent from God.

I was finally told to leave home and I was disowned. This was a very painful experience in a culture where your identity and self worth are derived from your family. I automatically forfeited the acceptance and the protection of my clan and almost lost my job because of my faith in the Messiah.

Restoration

The Somalis, like most Muslims, do not understand the Christian faith because they have never read the Bible. They only rely and trust what their religious leaders tell them. For a Somali, Christianity and paganism are synonymous.

My family finally took me back as their son when their fear of 'paganism' did not materialise. As a devout Muslim, I was always well behaved and was considerate. My good qualities increased when the Lord found me and that surprised my Muslim-family, relatives and friends. They couldn't believe that the Messiah had made me a better person.

Though the Lord found me in 1986, I did not meet any other Christians until 1992. My shortwave radio was my 'church' and 'pastor'. But things suddenly changed

continued on page 11

continued from page 10

in 1992 when I met my first Somali Christian.

I was introduced to him in Mogadishu by a Swedish missionary. Though I already knew this young man, I never knew he was a follower of the Messiah. He was an underground Christian, just like me.

Liibaan Ibraahim and I planted an underground house church in Mogadishu in 1993 and pastored it together. We had 14 members by early 1994. Things got out of hand in 1994, when Muslims found out that there was a small but growing Christian community in their midst. Then, an unprecedented persecution broke out.

Liibaan was the first Christian martyr. He was shot to death early one morning when he was reporting to work. He was a nurse by training. Dr Ahmed Gobe was the next Somali Christian to be murdered. He was shot one evening when he was returning from his clinic. His bullet-ridden body was found the next morning.

Persecution

Another member of our underground church who was martyred was Mohammed Haji. He was a former university professor, who

was educated in Canada. Mohammed was rebuilding the school system in Mogadishu that suffered under the civil war. He was then kidnapped and assassinated.

Another Somali Christian to be murdered was the famous Sheekh Doon. Sheekh Doon was shot and killed, along with his Muslim wife, in their bedroom when some gunmen had broken into their home one night. Their children escaped physical harm.

Another Somali Christian member, Saleebaan Mohammed, was snatched from the bus that he was riding home on from work, and was executed publicly in broad daylight because of his faith in Jesus the Messiah.

Only two members of our underground church in Somalia have survived the carnage — myself and another believer. Of the 14 in our church, 12 were martyred. The murderers are still roaming in the streets of Mogadishu with impunity. The local authorities are not holding them responsible, but the Lord will.

God has accepted those martyrs into his glorious kingdom of heaven. They were faithful to Jesus Christ and his testimony until the end. As Jesus said in Revelation

2: ‘Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life’.

Study

May God grant that those murderers will come to see the light that Jesus Christ is Lord. May they ask Jesus Christ to forgive them of their sins, or they will burn and suffer eternally in the lake of fire, the second death. For God alone has power over the second death.

After several attempts on my life, I left Somalia for another country in 1996 for fear of my life. I joined a Bible college there where I earned a Bachelor of Theology degree after four years of hard work. While in school, I periodically travelled to Somalia to plant underground house churches.

This underground ministry produced strong house churches and capable church leaders. I am now pursuing a Master of Divinity degree in an evangelical seminary. I am the only Christian in my family.

Brother Warsameh

<http://somalichristians.org>

Somali mother of four killed for her faith

A mother of four was killed for her Christian faith on Jan. 7 on the outskirts of Mogadishu, Somalia by Islamic extremists from al Shabaab militia, a relative said.

The relative, who requested anonymity, said Asha Mberwa, 36, was killed at 5:15 p.m. in Warbhigly village; the Islamic extremists from the insurgent group had arrested her outside her house the previous day at 8:30 a.m. She died when the militants

cut her throat in front of villagers who came out of their homes as witnesses.

She is survived by her children - ages 12, 8, 6 and 4 - and her husband, who was not home at the time she was apprehended. They had married in 1993.

Her relative, whose location is also withheld for security reasons, said he had phoned her on Jan. 5. Al Shabaab, who control large parts of Mogadishu, were able

to monitor the conversation and confirm that she had become a Christian, he said. “Asha had been receiving threatening messages” after al Shabaab monitored her previous communications with him, he said.

A relative said a “good Samaritan” in Mogadishu was caring for her four children. The traumatized children continue to weep and cry out for their mother, he said.

Evangelical Times

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Hello Boys and Girls,
We have just passed a time of giving of gifts and I am sure that you all looked forward to receiving gifts.

The Bible mentions various gifts that people were given and I have printed some here for you:

In Matthew 9 we read of a little girl who received the gift of life

In Mark 7 we read of the man who received the gift of hearing and speech

In Luke 5 we hear of two men who were given the gift of good health for they were very ill

And
In John 5 we read of a man who was given the gift of being able to walk for he was lame and it was only when Jesus healed him that he was able to walk

Now these are all wonderful gifts but in Romans 6 verse 23 we read of the very best gift of all, for there we read that the gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Make sure you receive this gift.

Love from Mrs. Glass



WOMEN'S VIEW

Hello Everyone,

Many months ago one of the tabloid newspapers reported on what a leading research group had come up with regarding what they thought was wrong with modern society. The newspaper called it the seven evils that scar our society and listed the following:

1. Individual greed
2. Drugs and alcohol
3. Declining values
4. Social virtues
5. Family breakdown
6. Poverty
7. Failed institutions

1. Individual greed is covered in the 10th Commandment "Thou shall not covet"..
2. Drugs and Alcohol become a god when a person is addicted to them, so we could say this is covered in the 1st and 2nd Commandment in not having any other gods before Almighty God.
3. Declining values, of course, is covered by the whole of the 10 commandments
4. Social virtues, we see in Commandments Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10
5. Family breakdown can come about when children no longer honour their Mother and Father
6. Poverty can come through greed of others which we have already seen is covered in Commandment No. 10
7. And failed institutions come about because men do not put God first

It goes without saying that keeping the 10 Commandments will never bring salvation to anyone, but when a land tries to at least follow the teaching of God in Exodus 20 then God will bless that land.

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people Proverbs 14:34

God bless.

M.Glass

We only have to turn in our Bible to the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20 to see how it covers this list:

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