

Prayer Strategy for the Spheres of Influence

April 2016 - Praying for Business



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Errata

In the article "Jesus Plus...Tradition" on pages 8 of the March 2016 edition, the wrong internet address to John's article was supplied, here is the correct line:

St Mark's 6.3.16 - posted 6 March 2016 by Dr. John Yates - <http://cross-connect.net.au/jesus-plus-tradition/>

These articles reflect the opinion and witness of the respective authors, which may or may not align with your own; consider this with Ephesians 4:1-7 in mind.

From the National Coordinators

These days everyone is using the 2 words "Transformation" and "Unity" and the same people don't understand quite well what "Transformation" is all about nor what "Unity" means...go figure!!!

To transform a city, you must transform yourself first, be a servant and submit yourself to God and to whom you are serving. "Transformation" is being misused because people are not focusing on Jesus and His cross, but instead focused on collecting thousands of followers and broadcasting their own egos, wanting people to follow them instead of following Christ. Is this the Church of the 21st Century?

When we talk about unity we must live "Unity" and practice it, Unity is embedded with the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and knitted in us together with the Trinity upon our Baptism. Don't invite people to come and pray in unity or practice unity unless you truly mean it and submit yourself to the Trinity.

Meditate on Ephesians chapters 1 & 2 which enable us to understand true unity in Christ.

[Ephesians 1 - ESV]

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:
2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

[Ephesians 2]

By Grace Through Faith

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so

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that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

One in Christ

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Grace and peace,
Lilian & Bjorn Schmid

prayerstrategy.org businesswomenhealingministry.org transformingsydney.org

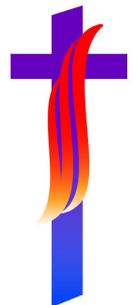


Prayer for Evangelism in the week before Pentecost

In 2015 All churches in Sydney came together under the banner of Jesus Christ to celebrate Pentecost Eve (report at www.transformingsydney.org/TSEventsPentecost2015.html).

Together with the *Parramatta Pastors*, leaders of churches, ministries and intercessors from across Sydney, Transforming Sydney is facilitating another Pentecost Eve celebration at **The Salvation Army, 34 Smith St, Parramatta NSW 2150** on **Saturday 14th May from 7pm to 10pm**. See www.transformingsydney.org for more details.

We are hoping other cities across the world will join us as well and are so excited to read this report below which confirmed our vision, and we are trying to mobilise a Pentecost Celebration City Movement in other part of Australia as well.



TRANSFORMING
SYDNEY

The Archbishop of Canterbury is heading the biggest evangelism project in the UK so far this millennium. Every cathedral, church and clergyman and woman in the land is being urged to share their faith and win new converts to Christianity.

Cathedrals and churches are being urged to set aside the week before Pentecost as a week of prayer for evangelism.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and Dr John Sentamu, are calling cathedrals and other churches to use the week running up to Pentecost Sunday on May 15 to pray for new followers to Christ.

The entire Church is being urged to pray throughout the week for "all Christians to deepen their relationship with Jesus" in order to have "confidence" to share the faith. The aim is for "all to respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow him."

Read more at

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/archbishops.set.aside.pentecost.2016.in.bid.to.evangelise.england/78216.htm>

"Sharing the gift of Christ is an act of love. People who are in love share the news of their love without strain and without force, though of course it can take courage to admit that one loves, and is loved." Bishop of Liverpool Paul Bayes, General Synod report of the Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group



THE WORKPLACE and Life Issues

By John Boland

In the workplace, life happens and is lived out. As God's people, we need to be Biblically prepared to address and minister to everyone as the issues of life bloom before us.

Is it the idea of having to deal with that difficult co-worker? Is it facing the knowledge of being fired or laid-off? Is it the feeling that your current position is now facing a dead end? Is it the impression that you're getting little or no support from upper management? Is it that someone has asked you to lie?

Maybe your problems not confined to the work environment? This brings into focus the difficulties of work vs. home, which one should have priority? Which is sanctuary? Where does one turn to get away from the other? Blame, difficulties, disappointment, discouragement, obstacles, pain, problems, ridicule, trials, tribulations, troubles are all issues of life and all test our metal as Christians!

I do not buy into the popular cliché that we should look at these cases saying, "What would Jesus do"? What we should be trying to do is discover whether we **react or respond** to the issues of life? The answers can only come from a sound personal biblical foundation.

What does the Bible say about facing life's problems? In James 1:2-4 Paul tells us to be content with our relationship in God through Christ even in the various hardships of life. We know that when our faith is tested it will produce patience. As patience matures our personality will be strengthened. Earlier in 2 Corinthians 1:4 Paul told us that the Holy Spirit comforts us in all that we will go through no matter how bad it might seem. Wow, I love that promise! This comfort will give us a testimony before others. Having gone through our own crisis we may be able to ease the stress of others and pass on the blessings of God to them.

As we pass on what we know of God's individual blessing, whether in word or deed, this could be giving relief to those who are going through similar issues. Paul shared in Romans that we should rejoice in the hope that is found in God when going through various burdens because we are told this will come our way! An attitude of contentment will bring us through any kind of distress and as we struggle with each situation that will produce perseverance. This result in endurance which builds character and the building up of this moral backbone brings out the hope found in Christ Jesus (Romans 5:2-4; 12:12). As people see us go through these personal trials with peace and contentment (vs. falling apart at the seams) they will take notice and this then gives opportunity for personal ministry.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

What can we expect when life breaks down and the wheels do fall off?

It is a fact that pain and suffering exists in the world! Such conditions are here even without any thought of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. People endure self inflicted consequences, have medical conditions, experience trouble unrelated to anything they have done, bear burdens of both the physical and/or emotional nature, put up with difficulties and difficult people, go through horrible situations all without knowing the Lord Jesus Christ.

According to early Scriptural accounts Christians can expect problems (Philippians 1:29-30; Job 5:6-7; Isaiah 48:10; 1 Peter 4:12)! Certainly we must understand the political and religious environment back then saw severe persecution, toward those proclaiming to be believers. So what can we say about today? It's pretty certain based on Scripture that we too will see problems in our lifetime. In many parts of the world persecution of Christians still exists! So what does God promise us when things do not go well?

WHAT GOD PROMISES:

God promises to be there for us in time of need. Not necessarily to take us out of the situation or to turn the everyday and sometimes severe problems away from us but as we go through He is there to help us, encourage us, provide for us and meet our every need (Psalm 30:5, 34:19-20; Isaiah 43:2).

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THE WORKPLACE and Life Issues (...continued)

This is not to say that God doesn't deliver us out of problems. Sometimes He will (Psalm 41:1 and 50:15). However, we must understand that unpleasant situations do have consequences which teach us God ordained life lessons without which we would miss the real blessings of an Almighty Father (Proverbs 3:12). The Lord wants us to depend on His Word because it is true, authentic, and believable at all times, and necessary in times of need (Isaiah 43:20). He wants us to call upon Him in our time of crisis (Psalm 34:4).

Paul in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians reasoned that our attitude should be one of boasting about our short comings, because God's strength is made perfect in our flaws, failings, and limitations (2 Corinthians 12:8-9). Finally, the Lord further promised not to allow anyone to go through anything beyond their individual breaking point (1 Corinthians 10:13). Non-believers need to know and see how different Christians deal with stress.

OUR ATTITUDE:

So if stress is a fact of life, what should our attitude be through these stressful conditions?

As Christians, our mind-set should be humble (Isaiah 66:2), we should have a positive outlook, stay thankful (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), and be patient when circumstances are beyond our control and with people (James 1:2-4, 6). We should not be afraid (1 Peter 3:14).

Even if things don't go our way we should remain faithful (2 Corinthians 5:7-9). We should continue doing the right things for the right reasons because that is what we believe (1 Peter 4:17-19). We shouldn't seek ill of others whether in court or otherwise (1 Corinthians 6:3-10). We should pray for and forgive our enemies rather than seek revenge on them (Matthew 5:44).

Be obedient to the direct Word of God. Don't be surprised when adversity, calamity or difficulties come on us. Do not rejoice in the troubles of others but pray for their best. We should not be deceived when others try to take advantage of us. God promises to take on our opponents for us and we believe God (Psalm 34:15; 2 Chronicles 15:4).

THE RESULTS:

Alright, so we act according to the Scriptures, what will happen as a result? The results are many!

As Christians, facing all forms of life issues brings opportunities for us to receive Godly comfort and solace that is not easily understood by those not having a relationship with Jesus. When unbelievers experience similar situations in their lives, we are then afforded the opportunity to express Godly comfort and concern toward them. We must not pass this opportunity up! This is our chance for ministry. This will be a great non-verbal expression of God's love which will be more powerful than any sermon, discussion, or bible study (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 7). We must always remember that our hope is found in Christ, no matter how desperate, difficult, or humiliating the conditions (2 Corinthians 4:8).

Paul reminded us that nothing can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:35)! As stated earlier, we should have no fear concerning anything that would befall us but be ready to explain to anyone who asks about the hope that is in us. We should face every situation, whether it happens to us or we are involved with others, with a clear conscience and stand strong in the Lord (1 Peter 3:13-22).

THE PURPOSE:

Is there really a purpose for pain and suffering?

These twins of misery have been around since the introduction of sin (Romans 5:12, 20)? Jesus suffering was for the forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 2:8-11; 1 Peter 3:18)! Our suffering gives rise an opportunity in which we can experience the peace that passes all understanding as we go through these situations of life. Our affliction could simply be personal torment and pain without value, or bring about glory and honor to God by our conduct and character which will be viewed by those around us. The difference comes down to whether we respond or react to the situation?

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THE WORKPLACE and Life Issues (...continued)

REACTING vs RESPONDING

CHOOSE TO REACT:

If we simply react to the problems of life we set ourselves up for compounding our problems. Scripture tells us to be careful; we could be persuaded to seek things other than God, this could lead us into a lifestyle of sin and death. This road ultimately leads to eternal separation from all things good, honorable and godly. Under such influence desire for worldly things can grip our lives (2 Samuel 11:2-4). We find ourselves continually attracted toward supporting unwise decisions and questionable causes (Matthew 5:28). These things lead away from godly pursuits (1 John 2:16), and eventually take us completely away from God (Romans 6:12, 23).

By always reacting to the issues of life rather than facing up to them opens the door to other problems. One might be dealing with the idea of worshipping things that never satisfy, or being enchanted by unexplainable lifestyles. Another way this might show up in a persons' life is by hating others for no apparent reason, taking on a lifestyle of violent behavior, or having an unhealthy possessiveness of people and things. Further evidence of this is having a reputation known for regular outbursts of anger, being driven by selfish desires, or just being rebellious and irreverent toward things of God, family and anything considered "good and acceptable" (Galatians 5:20). This attitude and way of life even carries over to finding fault in others, combined with the inability to accept one's own shortcomings (Genesis 2:12). After a time this routine leads to a spirit without hope (Proverbs 15:13), uncontrolled greed, being disillusioned with everything good and everyone who even tries to help (Proverbs 15:16-17, 16:8), and then fighting serious bouts of depression (Exodus 6:9).

Check out the downhill slide of and final days of King Saul if you want to read about this in detail (1 Samuel 16 – 28).

CHOOSE TO RESPOND:

There is hope, if we respond to these issues by seeking a higher purpose and a better outcome for our life.

One way is to set your mind on God's Word (Psalm 1:2-3). Another is to pray about each situation or condition. Then put feet to prayers as you can and have opportunity. After that, leave each situation to the Lord without constantly worrying about it. Worry is defined as assuming responsibilities God never intended us to have (Philippians 4:6-7). Give God thanks, because thankfulness should inhabit ones' prayer life (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and give Him glory & praise in everything (good/bad times, trials, tribulations, crisis, illnesses, accidents, etc.)

As stated earlier, believers know these situations develop Christian character resulting in a lifestyle of hope. We also know that true godly optimism does not disappoint (Romans 5:3-5). Finally, in responding to whatever life throws at us we develop godly conduct, character and trust in God because we know He is trustworthy (2 Peter 3:11; 2 Corinthians 1:9).

John W Boland

Adjunct Professor of Political Science & Speech at LeTourneau University & Kilgore College.

His wife Ann (of 45 years) is Professor of Art at Panola College; they have 2 grown children.

Author of:

Workplace Evangelism: Taking Your Faith to Work, Tate Publishing (2013)

Understanding God's Will: The Difference between Knowing & Doing (2015)

News:

John Boland will be in Sydney in Late July and will be available for Discipleship studies, Small Group meetings or church services.

If interested feel free to contact him at jboland2000@earthlink.net



Are you estranged from your grandchildren?

By Lillian Penner, National Prayer Coordinator, christiangrandparenting.net



Recently I received an email from a grandmother who was asking me to pray with her because she was estranged from her granddaughter. Her heart is broken, finding it very difficult to deal with the situation, like many grandparents do today.

When we reach the mid-life years of our lives we look forward to becoming grandparents and very excited when our first grandchild is born and the grandchildren that follow.



However, today there are many grandparents with broken hearts because they are estranged from their grandchildren.

Being estranged from your grandchildren often results in many negative emotions. Sorting out exactly what you are feeling and developing an approach for dealing with your feelings can be vital for your health, both mental and physical. You will feel anguish as long as the separation lasts.

God is still answering prayers, often it is not on our timetable, and so we have to ask for patience to wait until He is ready to answer. Sometimes, we have to wait in His waiting room while He is working in the hearts of our grandchildren and their parents. God's timing is best.

I have found the Scripture verses in Romans 8:26-28 very **helpful when I don't know how to pray for my grandchildren and their parents.** Paul writes, "The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us when we don't know how to pray." When I ask the Holy Spirit to make intercession for me according to God's will, it keeps me from telling God how to answer my prayer, which I love to do. **Ask the Holy Spirit to make intercession for your estrangement** letting him carry the burden instead of you giving him your agenda.

Here are a couple of suggestions for estranged grandparents:

1. Don't stop trying to keep in touch. Send cards and letters to your grandchildren keeping the tone of any communication loving but light.
2. Pray intentionally and regularly for your grandchildren and their parents. If you don't

know how to pray for them sign up to receive my blog regularly and I will send you "31 Scriptures to Pray for your Grandchildren" which you can download without cost and print.

Prayer

Dear Father, I pray that you will give the estranged grandparents wisdom how to approach their separation from their grandchildren.

I pray your Holy Spirit will make intercession for them allowing you to carry out your agenda in your timing for their healing.

Encourage them and give them peace as they intentionally pray and patiently wait for the parents to allow them to be a part of their lives again.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Imagine the impact on our grandchildren if Millions of Grandparents worldwide are intentionally praying for their grandchildren and their parents. **If you grasp the urgency of our post-Christian culture today,** then I urge you to sign up for the **Million Praying Grandparents.** When you join the **Million Praying Grandparents Movement** you are declaring your commitment to pray regularly for your grandchildren. It is time for grandparents to join in deliberate prayer for our grandchildren.

As a way of saying thanks for your commitment, you will receive a free downloadable, printable copy of a **Million Praying Grandparents Prayer Resource** to help you intentionally pray for your grandchildren using God's Word.

Now you must make a decision:

For the sake of the hearts, minds and souls of your grandchildren, will you say, **"YES I will join the Million Praying Grandparents movement?"**

Go to the **Million Praying Grandparents** website <http://www.millionprayinggrandparents.com> and follow the instructions to sign up to be a part of the Million Praying Grandparents movement.

Lillian Penner
National Prayer Director
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Club or Church

St Mark's 9.4.16 - posted on 10 April 2016 by Dr. John Yates - <http://cross-connect.net.au/club-or-church/>

Lev 11:1-12; Ps 26; Gal 2:11-14; Mark 7:1-23

"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. 13 And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

14 But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?" (Gal 2:11-14)

Introduction

(Continuing our series on Galatians)

I was at a dinner recently where a friend described how he had been to a professional meeting and where he talked with a woman he didn't know well. She proceeded to criticise him for the rest of the evening; his crime, belonging to an all male private club. Most people in Australia think of the Church in this way; after all, a club is a society that exists for the sake of its members, has a clubhouse, people pay fees to belong and expect certain services for their money. Members are insiders who understand the club culture while others are outsiders.

Today's passage describes a fight over the future of Christianity, would the growing Gentile Church become like the Jews, inward looking and clubbish, or would it be a dynamic group of people always looking to help the needy outside its borders. This little story of the clash between the two greatest apostles of all time, Peter and Paul, is a shocking episode in Church history. It is such an embarrassment that some of the Early Church writers came up with ingenious interpretations to remove its offensiveness (Clement of Alexandria, Jerome). The hard truth is that even someone who had been as close to Jesus as Peter could turn into a hypocrite. And if that happened to Peter, what makes us think it could not, or has not, happened to us?

Condemned

"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned." (v.11)

Most people fear confrontation because it makes them feel uncomfortable, but Paul felt so strongly about the situation in the church of Antioch that he felt he had no choice but to confront Peter publicly.

Please note that this is a different scenario from that described by Jesus; "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone." Peter hadn't sinned against Paul personally but had openly denied the truth of the gospel (Matt 18:15). If Paul had remained silent he would have sinned against the Lord cf. 1 Tim 5:20.

No-one enjoys rebuking others openly, and even when I have felt constrained to do this, and the correction has been accepted, other pastors have made it very clear that they were embarrassed by my initiative. When we were attending one church I sent the pastor an email challenging him about how his preaching avoided the biblical language of judgement, wrath and eternal punishment. When we did get to talk face to face to my amazement he repented with tears and thanked me for calling him *calling him back to the gospel!*

When Paul says Peter "stood condemned" he means that this great apostle who was personally commissioned by Jesus to preach the gospel had a guilty conscience. He knew he had done the wrong thing by his Lord and the Church. Apparently when Peter was confronted by Paul he was left speechless, that's what a guilty conscience does to you, it robs you of moral and spiritual authority. If you have a clear conscience before God nothing and no one will be able to stop you speaking of Jesus; that's what this famous quote is trying to say,

"What goes deepest to the conscience goes widest to the world." (P.T. Forsyth).

If however your conscience is compromised you cannot speak with authority. This issue gets deeper and deeper.

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Club or Church (...continued)

Hypocrites

If you read through the Gospels many of the important scenes in Jesus' life happen at the dinner table. One example is found at the start of Luke chapter 15 where tax collectors and other notorious sinners were drawing near to Jesus;

“And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”” (Luke 15:2)

The Jewish religion of Jesus' time divided the world into two, just as there was unclean food (pork) so there were unclean people; people you weren't to mix with because they would contaminate you. All non-Jews (Gentiles) were unclean, sinful and idolatrous. This was Peter's mindset *before* he met Jesus. In fact, this incident in Antioch should never have happened.

Years before this story Peter had received a vision from heaven about the Gentiles being accepted by God without their need to keep the Jewish law. The Holy Spirit told him,

“What God has made clean, do not call unclean.” (Acts 11:9).

In Peter's own words in Acts, when the Gentiles heard the gospel and believed in Jesus,

“God... cleansed their hearts by faith.” (Acts 15:9).

Peter knew just as much as Paul did that God accepted Gentiles by faith alone without the need to keep the Old Testament law (Gal 3:26-28). Earlier in the piece in the church at Antioch Peter was happily enjoying table fellowship with the Gentiles. But then “certain men came from James”.

James was the half brother of Jesus and the leader of the Jewish Church in Jerusalem; some of their members had come to Antioch and were preaching to the Gentiles that you needed to be circumcised and keep the Jewish food laws to be saved (Acts 15:1; 21:20). These men were, in Paul's own words, “false brothers” (2:4). They were not true believers at all because they were more attached to religious regulations than they were to Jesus. These people preached a “Jesus plus” form [of] salvation; they said that to be saved you needed not only to believe in Christ but also keep the Jewish law. This is not the gospel

and Peter knew this. Why then did he draw back and separate himself from his Gentile brothers?

Fear, fear of rejection can be a terrible thing. I will never forget the paralysing fear of rejection I experienced before I met Jesus I was so fearful of people that I could not walk down a public street. In this situation in Antioch Peter felt fearful that by mixing with Gentiles his Jewish pedigree was being threatened.

This matter of identity goes very deep. When an Indigenous friend of mine became a Christian his father asked to see him in the presence of his brothers. His dad said he could follow Christ just as long as he put his own aboriginal law and culture first. When my mate replied that he had to put Jesus first his dad took up a big beating stick and bashed him. The orthodox Jews of Jesus' day really did think they were in every way culturally, ritually and religiously superior to all Gentiles and sinners. This is a powerful spiritual reality we might struggle to understand.

Jesus told a parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector who went up to the temple to pray;

“The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.’” (Luke 18:11).

This sense of superiority is not just a Jewish problem. Without the gospel we will always find some way, education, intellect, wealth, race, nationalism, of feeling superior to others people. Peter might have felt very threatened about losing his Jewish sense of identity, but *how did the Gentiles feel when he wouldn't eat with them?*(Rejected)

Back in the 1950's and early 60's one of the most popular TV shows in America was called “I Love Lucy” starring Lucille Ball. I recall watching her appearing on a programme where various champion athletes were being presented with awards by Hollywood stars. I well remember my mum and dad pointing out that she held her hands tightly behind her back so she wouldn't have to shake the hand of the African-American sportsman she was supposed to be congratulating. How do you think that made him feel?

.....(Rejected)

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Club or Church (...continued)

The intensity of Paul's rebuke of Peter continues with this very pointed language.

"And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy." (v.13)

The word "hypocrite" comes from the practice of Greek actors holding large masks over their faces. Hypocrites profess to be one thing but act in an opposite way.

"Hypocrite" was one of Jesus favourite terms for the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23:13, 15, 23). His most damning criticism of them, "They don't practice what they preach", has been used against Christians in Australia again and again (Matt 23:3). Why?... (Because it's often true.) The church is full of hypocrites people say; just look at the Royal Commission into child abuse. There's no point in denying such accusations. The only person I know who is never hypocritical is Jesus.

Paul's comments reach boiling point when he says "even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy." It was Barnabas who was Paul's early mentor and went with him on the first overseas mission to preach Christ to the Gentiles. Hypocrisy is infectious. Think about some workplace situation where someone is doing wrong; "I know it's the right thing to do this person in to the boss but no one else is saying anything, so why should I?" As a result of Peter's sinful hypocrisy the Church in Antioch split into factions, there was a Jewish group and a Gentile group. None of this had anything to do with Jesus! Paul got straight to the point.

Gospel Confrontation

"But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?" (v.14)

Paul is shocked that Peter should by his two-faced behaviour try to "force the gentiles" to live like Jews, especially since he had just recently been enjoying table fellowship with them. Christians too can have a habit of wanting other believers to adopt their own cultural habits.

When I was at university most of us had long hair and beards. I remember a certain older brother

who worked in the university administration sending over a hand written note to my friend which said, 1 Cor 11:14. "Is the Bible the word of God?" This was a text which according to him meant we should get our hair cut. Thank God we attended a congregation where we were used to turning up in bare feet, jeans and a tee-shirt, and Jesus didn't seem to care. But back in the 1970's there were churches here in Perth which threw out their youth who wouldn't get a haircut. Can you believe it?... Now to get to the very main point of this passage.

"But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel". The behaviour of the Christian Jews in treating the Christians Gentiles as if their Christianity was defective was out of step with the gospel. Paul knew that the Gentile believers needed someone to stand up for them and that Peter himself was in danger of losing the spiritual freedom from law-keeping that Christ brings. If Peter had stood firm in the approval of Christ then he wouldn't have needed the approval of his Jewish brothers. Applying this passage John Piper puts it well;

"This is the most important question we can ask about any habit or action or behavior that we have—does it contradict the gospel? Or positively, is it in step with the truth of the gospel? Does our action say true things about the gospel? Does it reflect the gospel? Does it look like the kind of action that would flow from the gospel?"

A few years ago I attended a fairly large gathering of pastors convened by some influential Christian leaders here in Perth. Each of these well known preachers spoke in turn and then opened the floor for responses. An older friend of mine spoke first, but when his remarks were totally dismissed

I knew I had to say something despite feeling very uncomfortable about it. So I went to the front and pointed out a major biblical truth that was completely omitted in what the convenors of that meeting had said. None of them answered my point and I am not welcome in that group any more, but my conscience is clear. When I got back to my seat a couple of the young ministers said, "You don't fear anyone do you." Of course this isn't true, but it's *not how you feel that counts, it's what you do*. Paul took a stand in Antioch because he knew if the fear-based hypocrisy of

(continued next page)

Club or Church (...continued)

Peter was allowed to go unchallenged the disease of compromising the gospel with legalism could spread throughout the Church.

History has vindicated Paul and today the Gentile churches across the globe enjoy the freedom from having to keep the Old Testament law. We may be free from food laws, but it would take a bold or foolish person to claim that the average church is free from the inward looking behaviour that is characteristic of clubbishness.

Conclusion

A famous Archbishop of Canterbury once stated,

"The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members." x2 (William Temple).

This is God's design, but I have been amazed over the years at how few people really want the church to grow through giving to the community outside its walls.

On our journey here at St Mark's we have come a long way since Alison came 3+ years ago, but we must keep taking stock of where we are up to in terms of looking beyond ourselves. In the last few years we have multiplied our giving to mission agencies that operate outside the church, but around 90% of our finances still go to taking care of ourselves. The Benefit Shop (Op Shop) has a good ministry, be it would be more Benefit to the community if all profits went to help those who are not church members.

I was praying very early Friday morning and I clearly sensed that the Lord is unhappy about our evangelistic endeavours. We are under the discipline of God and he is calling us to radically reorder the church so that Alison can be released back into her original *calling as an evangelist* (Heb 12:5-11). Which is why God brought her to Australia and to us! She needs clear space to get onto the streets, into businesses, pubs and the homes of non-believers so she can have extended conversations with them and lead people to Christ. Bringing the lost to Jesus was Paul's great priority and the bottom line for the controversy we have read about today. What would an evangelistically reordered church look like?

Last week I was down south speaking at the Yarloop Christian Fellowship whose motto is "We're here to rebuild you." This group started a

couple of years ago with a small team travelling down to Yarloop to talk and pray with the people in the town in order to plant a church there.

Then in January bushfires devastated the community and drove many people into trauma and poverty. But in the wisdom of God this disaster has opened a door to the gospel. Many folk are now far more open to care and prayer and Yarloop Christian Fellowship has been distributing significant amounts of donated money no strings attached to those in need, and doing it far more efficiently than the government and charities. You can sense the pleasure of Jesus in this and I could sense people in the district softening to the gospel.

This is an example of the church as a "society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members". the difference between Yarloop Christian Fellowship and the average church has nothing to do with denomination, doctrine, age, class, education or wealth; the difference has to do with the power of the good news of Jesus. Any church which truly centres on Jesus will be welcoming to all comers and will be led in creative ways to meet the needs of outsiders for the glory of God. If we ask God for ways of giving outside of ourselves into the community he will give us strategies to do this and we will see local people soften to the gospel and we will see people converted to Christ. I believe this, do you?.....

Churches have a reputation of being like clubs because clubs are powerful things and people love their clubs deeply. (Anyone football follower knows that it's more than a game.) Only one power is great enough to break down our hypocritical nature and move us out from our natural clubbishness into the community. If you look around the walls of our church you will see we are surrounded by symbols of this power in The Stations of the Cross.

Jesus was crucified in order to pour out his life through the Church into the world. At every baptism and confirmation service we hear the question, "Do you turn to Christ?" To which the candidates answer?....."I turn to Christ." Do we turn away from every element of self-centredness and clubbishness to Christ today; this is a very hard decision but the blood of the cross has power enough to strengthen us to make it.

Let us pray.



How to make your business blossom

Written by someone whose only interest is your success; AND who practises what he preaches.

If you were going to start a business there is no end of help available to you.

Friends, relatives, an endless supply of books written by successful entrepreneurs, government departments, university and TAFE degrees, professional networking groups. No doubt you can think of others.

A close friend of mine runs a business to help businesses succeed and his prime message is to think about the client needs and systemise ways to delight your customer.

Banks have personal lenders who are keen to lend against your home to fund your efforts provided you can service the loan and will offer some advice (note this is usually an employee who more than likely has never taken a risk and somehow knows how to grow a business?)

Accountants can set you up on how to account for things.

There are so many places to turn, so why read this? Because what I propose is a no lose strategy. Whatever happens you will 'win'.

How about you complete this sentence before we move on. (No peeking at the answer!)

My business will succeed if only.....

Now let's be brutal here... when we use the words 'my business' what you are really saying is 'I'

Let us also be candid, what follows is not new but it is revolutionary...it is based on biblical principles as I understand them, and it has taken me longer than it should to understand and apply them.

Rather than disclose the principles up front, it may be better to give you examples of what has worked in this business...note I have not told you what it is because actually it does not matter. This business started with a blank piece of paper and a desire to provide an honest service which was fair to the client, transparent in its fees and utilised my skills and training. With God's blessing I was able to start it with 6 months leave in my pocket, five children and one on the way. I believe God led me to this business which was not actually my first choice (in fact it was my last!)

After 15 years this business now employs 7 people; four of whom are partners. It has allowed me to bless my family and others materially and establish a well-regarded practice in an industry that does not have a great reputation. It pays nothing for marketing, does not advertise has two offices, no debts and money in the bank.

Now here is an inconvenient truth for me and perhaps for you the reader. Even though I have achieved everything I could ever imagined wanting, I am certainly not the biggest earner in my industry, however, I have a very clear conscience about how we run our business and no regrets.

It is sad in many ways that the practices that makes our business successful are very simple but do not necessarily yield quick results.

These are some of the practices that have made our business successful. I will summarise these later to provide a theoretical framework which may help you.

- Answer the phone
- Reply to emails promptly
- Keep the client informed about when you will do the work and if circumstances prevent it let them know as soon as you do.
- Let clients know in simple terms what you do
- Ring them before during and after your job
- Ask for feedback after major work
- Admit mistakes before the client realises it and work out a way to rectify in a way which delights the client
- Care about clients when things go wrong in their life
- Charge fairly and do not take kickbacks unless you disclose these to the client and take it off your charge
- Let the client know your success requires them to be happy with the work you have done

By now you may have worked out I am in the service industry... and hopefully if you the reader are in this industry then the principles are easy to apply...if you are in hospitality or manufacturing it will require some adapting.

What does the above look like in real terms (what do we do day to day)

1. In our office we play a game...the phone should be answered before the end of the first ring. My staff know that if they do not pick up; I will because I want the caller to be looked after. We resist the idea of endless voice messages. We call back ASAP.
2. When we first see a prospect we make it clear that our intention is to work out how we can

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How to make your business blossom (...continued)

- best help them. If another solution is best we will tell them. If we can add value to a point we will do that. If we think we can offer genuine long term value we will invite them on a journey they can pull out of at any time. Imagine if you are plumber and someone asks for a quote for a bathroom and you know that there is a cheaper solution...what would you do?.. it's a bit like Santa in the movie 'Miracle on 34th Street' who tells the child's mother that she can get the toy the child wants at another store! The last line that customer says (and I know it's only a Christmas movie) is from now on I will only shop at....
3. We make it clear that what we offer is personal ongoing advice and if the client wants something else then we will point them to a no advice solution. If a client is not yet ready for what we offer we will give them a timeline for when they might be....and then we stay in touch. We have some clients who come to us 10 years after the initial contact...why ... because we have established genuine trust and interest. We try hard to keep a servant heart what is the best way to serve our client.
 4. I reply to emails ASAP even if only to give a timeline for response. This honours the client and differentiates us from big organisations.
 5. If a client tells us a problem we will do one or both of two things...if it is a lady we will send flowers to the hospital or home. if appropriate we will also offer to pray for our clients condition and ask permission to do so. It does not matter if the client is 'big' or 'little' Christian or not; we treat them all with the same respect.
 6. If a clients is on our books I will ring them at least 4 times a year outside our usual service to ask how they are going. We are in the finance area and clients sometimes worry about markets. If markets are up we ring them to not get carried away and if they are down to remind them of the last call! And to wait patiently. Our business motto is that if we are doing our job well, our clients will sleep well at night. Our logo is a SWAN for this reason.
 7. We are a small business and sometimes we make mistakes. We have and will continue to tell the client when this happens and offer to compensate them for the error. Paradoxically I believe we get more referrals from this honest act than any other. And it has paid dividends in terms of client loyalty and trust. Being honest with clients builds and maintains trust and this is priceless. Learning how to listen to what the client is really saying builds upon this trust.
 8. We do not send Christmas cards or birthday cards...everyone knows they are the equivalent of junk mail...we do not take our clients to lunch or take them to the football... but we do treat them as 'arm's length friends' and show respect.
 9. We do not make things up...we work hard at knowing our limits and finding out the best option for clients if we are not sure and are open to a better solution. In this respect it is imperative that you know your own limits and perhaps where to go when you have reached them.
 10. Occasionally we advise clients that we believe they may no longer need the service we provide. This may be due the price we charge or the needs they have. We have a few clients who love the fact that we have told them this but still want to stay for the time being.
 11. Perhaps an unconventional practice has been to reject the notion of sales targets. Our target is to look after our customers. We do manage our cash flow to ensure we can meet our bills when they fall due.
 12. As your business grows make sure that the people you bring in share the same values... not just the skills you need. If you ignore this principle your business may succeed for a while but it will eventually lose its soul
- In truth, if I live my life the way I run my business I will indeed be blessed whatever may happen.
- The biblical principles which support the above work practices...
- Look after your customer (use accurate weights and measures)
 - Understand your customer (love your neighbour)
 - Be good at what you do (use the gifts God has given you)
 - Know that God is in your business (whatever you do, do for the Lord)
 - Involve like-minded people(Do not be unequally yoked)
- In business as in life often the spirit in which you do something is as important as what you do.
- I hope that you get at least one good idea that will help you in your endeavours
- Guy Amon B Comm LLB CPA CFP
ACD Financial Pty Ltd



The bomb attack in Lahore is just the tip of the iceberg – my experience with Pakistani asylum seekers in Thailand

By Andrea Tokaji, Fighting for Justice Foundation - andreatokaji.com - April 2016

The reports out of Lahore this Easter were shocking.



At least 69 people killed and scores injured in an explosion at a public park crowded with families, celebrating Easter in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore. Many victims are said to be women and children.

A Pakistan Taliban faction said it carried out the attack. Police told the BBC it appeared to be a suicide bomb.

Unfortunately, this terrorist attack is not the first of its kind.

Suicide bombers target Christians in Pakistan during Easter and Christmas, either in their place of worship, or at their place of gathering, as in the Church attacks in Lahore last year in which 14 people were killed – reported by Al Jazeera.

Persecution of minorities in Pakistan is commonplace – but, why is that?

Persecution in Pakistan:

Blasphemy laws in Pakistan strongly contribute to the persecution non-Muslims face on a daily basis in Pakistan.

The story of Asia Bibi as reported by CNN is a perfect example: Asia Bibi, a mother of five from the Punjab province, was accused of defiling the name of the Prophet Mohammed during a 2009 argument with Muslim fellow field workers. The workers had refused to drink from a bucket of water she had touched because she was not Muslim – an infidel.

In November 2010, a Pakistani district court found Asia Bibi guilty of blasphemy. The offense is punishable by death or life imprisonment, according to Pakistan's penal code, and Bibi was sentenced to hang. Asia Bibi has been in detention since 2009.

A more recent case is of a disabled Christian man and his wife sentenced to death in Pakistan for blasphemy have claimed they were tortured into confessing. Shafqat Emmanuel and Shagufta Kausar, from Gojra, east Pakistan, were found guilty of sending a text message which 'blasphemed' against the Prophet

Mohammed to their local imam in 2013. Mr Emmanuel, who is paralysed from the waist down, claims the only reason he confessed to the crime was because he could not stand watching his wife be tortured by police.

Section 295C of the Penal Code in Pakistan ensures that those accused of blasphemy receive the death sentence – often without a fair trial, access to representation, and even without viable evidence.

Pakistan has over 8,000 prisoners on death row – one of the world's largest numbers of prisoners facing execution. Pakistani law mandates capital punishment for 28 offenses, including murder, rape, treason, and blasphemy. Those on death row are often from the most marginalized sections of society.

So, where are these persecuted minorities fleeing to? One of the quickest and easiest destinations for persecuted Pakistani minorities to travel to legally is Thailand.

Pakistani Asylum Seekers in Thailand:

According to UNHCR Thailand's January 2015 statistical report, approximately 8,000 asylum seekers in Thailand are Pakistani Christians.

During my visit to Thailand last year for an international conference, I met with persecuted Pakistani Christians who were residing in Thailand as asylum seekers - Visiting Pakistani asylum seekers in Thailand - in apartment seekers.



I had the privilege to meet families in Bangkok who fled persecution from their communities and as a result of the apostasy and blasphemy laws in Pakistan.

I heard the story of one family, where their 15 year old son was targeted by extremist groups, beaten until he developed a brain injury and a resulting disability. For the safety of their daughter and son, they fled Pakistan. I met another family who told us that, due to persecution and violence, they had no choice but to flee.

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Pakistani asylum seekers in Thailand (...continued)

Unfortunately, these families once again faced persecution in Thailand, due to the non-human right complaint conditions asylum seekers are subject to in Thailand.

Thailand is not a signatory to the *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*¹, but I was still shocked at the level of injustice asylum seekers in Thailand faced.



Asylum seekers in Thailand are not able to place their children in school, able to work, they are neither provided with accommodation, food, water or anything on which to subsist. If an asylum seeker does not work illegally in Thailand, or does not have money, they are destitute.

Asylum seekers in Thailand are also subject to cruel and inhuman treatment and punishment – their crime – seeking asylum – which, of course, is not a crime, and allowable under international law. (*Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*²)



For example, I met with Christian Pakistani Asylum Seekers who described their experiences and current circumstances in being locked up in criminal prisons, their ankles placed in shackles, stripped and hair shaved, families separated, mothers from their babies – they were not provided with food, water, the right to legal representation, the right to due process, and were being further persecuted and beaten – including the sick, the elderly and the vulnerable.

They were also thrown in detention centres and criminal prisons without due process, legal representation, the provision of food, water or basic health care or welfare services.

These families have the option of bail for at least \$1,000 per person – which is impossible for them to afford.

NGO's in Thailand have been bailing out families – but this is unsustainable, as, due to constant police raids on places where asylum seekers live, the persecuted Pakistani asylum seeker families are placed back into criminal detention within a few months of receiving bail.

Due to a language barrier, mothers are unaware why their children are being taken away, and to where.

The Thai Government is not taking care of these children and their mothers – these vulnerable asylum seekers in detention are denied services such as health, education, welfare and medical – they do not have access to a social workers, teachers or access to legal representation.

Reports indicate that asylum seekers have been placed in criminal detention facilities.

One young man was arrested during a raid in March 2015.

He was initially detained at Samut Prakarn prison and made an appearance at the Samut Prakarn court. He and other asylum seekers were sentenced to 14 days in the Central Jail, where they suffered bullying, and beating. It was reported that the prison staff would beat the men with sticks, and physical scars have been left on their bodies.

In addition, the prisoners are required to wear large

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¹ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfRefugees.aspx>

² <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

Pakistani asylum seekers in Thailand (...continued)

iron chains, weighing nearly 5 kilograms, that left their ankles swollen and in pain. They were also required to walk nearly 4 kilometers to court in these chains along hard terrain that has left them with severe back pain and discomfort.

I have received the news from credible NGOs working in Thailand directly with asylum seekers that 91 asylum seekers were arrested on 10 September 2015 in what appeared to be a police raid, while 53 were arrested on 6 October 2015. Furthermore, countless more raids were conducted throughout the month of December in 2015.

I have also received confirmation that 250 refugees remain in the Immigration Detention Center without the option to be released on bail.

During a trip recently to Bangkok, Lord David Alton of the British Parliament discovered an 18-foot by 36-foot cell in which over 90 detainees were kept. A detainee had stated that because of the overcrowdedness, half of the detainees sleep during the night while the other half sleeps during the day. He explained, "This leaves enough space to stretch out straight, but not turn over. We just lie side by side, including our children."

Moreover, there have been two deaths of asylum seekers while in Thai custody due to neglect of their health needs.

These actions by the Thai Government goes against international human rights standards, and various principles of international law, such as the right for all persons to access health, education and other welfare services, the right of all persons to due process and legal representation, and the right of all persons to subsist.

Chris Rogers of the BBC went undercover in Thailand to expose how the country treats its asylum seekers. Pakistani Christians fleeing extremist violence are among the second largest group of asylum seekers in Thailand. Many are routinely rounded up and sent indefinitely to immigration detention centres or locked up in jails. Their crime: to be seeking asylum, in a country which does not recognise refugees.

This BBC Documentary will give you a good idea of how Thailand is treating asylum seekers, and some of the things I also witnessed during my time there.

The world is taking note:

These reports of the horrific conditions for asylum seekers in Thailand were confirmed by the recent BBC broadcast titled, *The Christians Stranded in Thailand*.³

Another BBC Radio report titled: *Entire families flee Pakistan and head to Thailand*⁴ goes inside the Immigration Detention Centres in Thailand.

The UK Times also published an article titled: "The



Advocacy engaged in directly to the UNHCR office in Thailand, representatives from: Germany, America, Australia and the Netherlands through the Jubilee Campaign and Fighting for Justice Foundation.

*Persecuted Christians with nowhere to run*⁶ about the situation Pakistani asylum seekers face in Thailand.

The reporter Chris Rogers posing as a charity volunteer delivering much-needed food and water to asylum seekers who were detained in 'filthy, overcrowded cells'. The report goes on to say: Thailand is known for its hospitality, but the country criminalises asylum seekers, who risk arrest and detention for illegal immigration. Many of those rounded up are Christians, who have fled persecution in Pakistan.

An Advocacy Response:

While I was in Thailand last year, representatives from Germany, America, Australia and the Netherlands confronted UNHCR in a meeting at the Thailand office about the inhuman conditions asylum seekers face in Thailand.

Unfortunately, it appeared that UNHCR was part of the problem – or, at least exacerbated it.

UNHCR are of course part of the United Nations, therefore maintains independence from local governments, aside from the fact that it is signatory States that fund UN operations.

UNHCR in Thailand have given some Pakistani asylum seekers an initial refugee status determination assessment date in 2019. Until then, asylum seekers are just meant to somehow survive -without having access to legal work, or provided with any welfare by which to subsist.

Of course, it is understandable that, due to the Syrian crisis, UNHCR are beyond capacity. This leaves asylum seekers in Thailand with no UN assessment, or refugee status determination for a long time, during

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³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03jxdps>

⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03kn8dj>

⁵ <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4700597.ece>

Pakistani asylum seekers in Thailand (...continued)

which time, children miss out on school, the elderly get older, and the sick get sicker, pregnant women are at risk, and there is an ongoing risk of further persecution and criminal imprisonment.

It has been reported that during police raids, the Thai policemen tear up their UNHCR certificate of recognition of asylum seeker status – which holds their UNHCR number, photo, family accompaniment and personal details. This can be detrimental to them.

UNHCR Thailand were not willing to hear of individual hard cases, and responded that they did not have the capacity or resources to assist.

We wrote a 30-page report of our findings, and sent it to UNHCR in Geneva, and also lobbied our own parliamentarians in our respective nations.

I met with the Immigration Minister last year to discuss this, and other matters.

I have also written an advocacy letter to the Thai Ambassador here in Australia.

So, what else should be done?

First and foremost, the Thai government needs to stop arresting asylum seekers who have already endured enough persecution in the countries they fled.

The Thai Government should consider cooperating with, and working alongside UNHCR in Thailand through NGO's to assist asylum seekers – who have the legal right under international law to seek asylum. (*Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*⁶)

Furthermore, those currently detained who are elderly or have health issues need to be released into medical care immediately.

Australia has a long standing history with Thailand, and these impunities by the Thai Government may place a strain on international relations and Thailand's reputation as a popular holiday spot.

Secondly, Thailand should become a signatory of the *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*⁷.

Thirdly, Australia, and other Signatory States should



give more to UNHCR – so that they can provide adequate, timely and ample resources and assistance to vulnerable persons.

Fourthly, The Australian Government should consider accepting the persecuted minority Pakistani Asylum seekers who find themselves in situations such as the one in Thailand – after being properly scrutinised for security checks and given a legitimate refugee status, there is no reason why the Australian Government cannot accept these refugees as part of our increased humanitarian intake.

What can you do?

You can do your own research and be informed.

You can advocate – that means sharing this information with others.

You can write a letter of advocacy about your concerns regarding asylum seekers in Thailand based on the above information, addressing it to the Thai Embassy in Canberra as follows:

To: Thai Ambassador, Mr Chirachai Punkrasin and the Political Affairs Office, Royal Thai Embassy, Canberra 111 Empire Circuit Yarralumla ACT 2600

Email: thaican@mfa.go.th

For further information about the Thai Embassy in Canberra.

You could also write to the

**Australian Immigration Minister
The Hon Peter Dutton MP**

**PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600**

Email: Peter.Dutton.MP@aph.gov.au

Your advocacy makes a difference – add your voice to the campaign.



Justice for all - speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves

Posted 29-March-2016 by Andrea Tokaji on <http://andreatokaji.com/>

⁶ <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

⁷ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfRefugees.aspx>





Papua New Guinea World Mission

P.O. Box 2456 Lae 411 Morobe Province.
Papua New Guinea

PNGWM APRIL 2016

Dear Partners in Missions,

It is not just at Easter we celebrate the resurrection of our LORD, but it should be everyday of our lives.

JESUS LIVES! He walks with me and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own.

In this April edition, I would like to give you an update on the progress work so far on the PNGWM Land at Nasuwapun (Lae, PNG) and thank you all for your prayers and support. It is not in vain! So much has been accomplished in the short space of time with limited resource and man-power. God is faithful!

PROJECT 01: SHELTER FOR MISSION TEAMS



A temporary shelter has been built for our missionaries.

This was home for the first group of missionaries (6 of them) who spent five (5) weeks staying in it and accomplished a lot of work on the Mission land.

Our second group of missionaries arrived yesterday, and will live in this shelter and continue work.

This is on the job training for mission field with Spiritual input early mornings and evenings and during the day is physical work.

PROJECT 02: WATER WELL



With little knowledge and resource, we decided to dig and build a water well with God's help. The end result was over-whelming when our missionaries dug 10mtrs down deep and water started bubbling up. We sang the chorus "*He's a miracle working God*" and danced for joy around the water well.

The LORD ministered to us to dig our own well according to John 4, and our obedience paid if off.

Water well completed and we are now getting water for use. Exciting!!

PRAYED ANSWERED FOR A WATER PUMP: A generous giver visited the Mission land during the week and seeing the need made a pledge to buy a Water-pump and donate it to the Mission Block. We are grateful to God!

(continued next page)

PNGWM APRIL 2016 (...continued)**PROJECT 03: BATHROOM & LAUNDRY AREA**

Cement foundation laid, frames built and put on and with walls and iron roofing put over. Working is in progress to complete the two doors and footpath from the bathroom/laundry area to the water well.

PROJECT 04: BANANA GARDEN PRUNING & HARVEST

On the Mission Land, we have planed about 200 banana suckers and all area growing well.

We have a big job of pruning and maintaining the bananas so that we can get a good harvest. We will be selling bananas in few weeks time.

WHAT'S NEXT TO DO?

1. **CUT DOWN TREES; urgently need a Portable Chainsaw.** We are praying and believing for provision of a small portable chainsaw, so we can cut down few of the trees on the Mission land and get timbers to later build a semi permanent house for our missionaries and intercessors to live in on rotation basis for our meetings and on the job trainings.
Have checked some hardware and got a good quote for a good small portable chainsaw which will perfectly get the work done. Your prayers and support is appreciated!
2. **COMPLETE THE BATHROOM/LAUNDRY & RELOCATION OF TOILET**
Pray for provision for cement bags and some more timbers so that work can be completed on the bathroom/laundry and relocation of the toilet.
3. **TUFFA WATER TANKS**
Pray for provision of at least two (2x) medium Tuffa Water Tanks that we can put up to store water from the well and have them connected into the bathroom and laundry areas for use. Where the Mission land is, there is not flowing river nearby so we want to make things happen for us.

A Faith Project and a Faith Journey to see these Projects accomplished at the Mission Land.

Thank you for prayers and support where you can; by donating a cement bag or an iron roofing towards the Mission Land Project. Thank you to the PNGWM Lae Team and Partners for bringing water and food up for missionaries at the Mission Land out of your busy schedules. It means so much to the missionaries on the site!

We also acknowledge the support of our PNGWM Perth & Kalgoorlie Logistic Team for your generous support toward these Projects too.

Every blessing in Christ Jesus,

Ms TEMA MANKO

PNG World Mission Inc

Email: pngworldmission@gmail.com



WATCHMEN SCHOOL OF INTERCESSION

http://ausprayernet.org.au/Prayer_School/

The Australian Prayer Network (APN) has moved into a new gear, conducting Watchmen Schools of Intercession (WSOI) across the Nation. The concept was given by the Lord two years ago at the APN National Leaders Summit and has quickly developed into one of its major ministry activities. Schools of Intercession have been developed for the purpose of training Christians in how to pray for our Nation and the Nations of the world, as well as for the Church in Australia and beyond.



National Coordinator Brian Pickering said, "We were totally unprepared for the response we have seen to these Schools. The depth of interest shown by Christians across the nation, in some cases bordering on desperation, has revealed to us the deep hunger people have to understand, not only how to pray, but how prayer can be used to turn our nation back to God."

[Editor: Transforming Sydney supports and encourages all churches to invite Mr Brian Pickering and his team to run the Watchmen School of Intercession.]

The School Consists of Different Levels

The Australian Prayer Network (APN) has moved into a new gear, conducting Watchmen Schools of Intercession (WSOI) across the Nation. The School consists of 3 levels. Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced. Each is a self-contained module, with each module building on the other and participants in the School must attend all sessions of each level in order to progress through the School to completion. The APN has stated, there is "no skipping of levels allowed, irrespective of previous experience". The Foundation Level is hosted and run locally. The Intermediate and Advanced Levels, are however 'live-in' (no exceptions), and held at State and National level respectively. There is no registration fee to participate in the WSOI although faith offerings are taken at each to assist with costs.

Calendar of Upcoming Schools

If you would like to attend one of the Watchmen Schools please see the Calendar below. Select which school you want to attend and email your request to the contact indicated in the Comments field or email you request to apn@ausprayernet.org.au.

Foundation Level School Calendar

School Date	School Location	School Venue	Information/Registration
15 Apr - 16 Apr 2016	Charters Towers Qld	Christian Family Church	Registrations Judy Stillwell email jstillwell@internode.on.net
6 May - 7 May 2016	Seven Hills NSW	Servants of Jesus	Registrations Christine Chaplin email events@servantsofjesus.orgn
20 May - 21 May 2016	Cairns QLD	The Lakes Church Manunda	Registrations Melissa Haigh email melissa@cairnsmarketplacechurch.org
27 May - 28 May 2016	Gerringong NSW	Gerringong Uniting Church	Registrations to be advised
2 June - 4 June 2016	Gold Coast Qld	City Link Resource Centre Carrara	Registrations Sue Bell email scribetothekings@gmail.com
10 June - 11 June 2016	Kalgoorlie WA	Oasis Assembly of God Church	Registrations Kerry Phillips email kerryphillips@westnet.com.au
13 June - 14 June 2016	Concordia Perth WA	Concordia Lutheran Church (Evening School)	Registrations Robin Walker email walker.prr@bigpond.com

(continued next page)

WATCHMEN SCHOOL OF INTERCESSIONT (...continued)

Intermediate Level Schools

Important!

To attend the Intermediate Level School you must have first completed the Foundation Level School.

School Date	School Location	School Venue	Information/Registration
29 April - 1 May 2016	Kurrajong NSW	Merroo Conference Centre	School is full - Registrations have closed
17 Jun - 19 Jun 2016	Tahlee NSW	Tahlee Ministries Conference Centre	Registrations Carol Prosser email prossercs@gmail.com
1 July - 3 July 2016	Phillip Island Vic	Phillip Island Adventure Resort	Registrations Ruth Leon email ruthmleon@gmail.com
8 July - 10 July 2016	Adelaide SA	Adelaide Shores Resort	Registrations Alison Ridley email riddles@bigpond.net.au
22 July - 24 July 2016	Perth WA	Orchard Glory Farm Resort Bindoon	Registrations Robyn Walker email walker.prr@bigpond.com
28 Oct - 30 Oct 2016	Townsville Qld	To Be Advised	Registrations Yvonne Kilah email kykilah@bigpond.com
4 Nov - 6 Nov 2016	Canberra ACT	To Be Advised	To Be Advised
18 Nov - 20 Nov 2016	Caloundra Qld	Monaco Apartments	Registrations Yvonne Kilah email kykilah@bigpond.com

Advanced Level Schools

Important!

To attend the Advanced Level School you must have first completed the Intermediate Level School.

School Date	School Location	School Venue	Information/Registration
8 Apr - 10 Apr 2016	Kurrajong NSW	Merroo Conference Centre	School is full - Registrations have closed
14 Oct - 16 Oct 2016	Caloundra Qld	Monaco Apartments	Registrations Kenn and Yvonne Kilah email kykilah@bigpond.com
21 Oct - 23 Oct 2016	Perth WA	Orchard Glory Farm Resort Bindoon	Registrations Robyn Walker email walker.prr@bigpond.com
2 Dec - 4 Dec 2016	Tahlee NSW	Tahlee Conference Centre	Registrations Carol Prosser email prossercs@gmail.com

40 Hour Prayer Weekends

Important!

To attend a 40 Hour Prayer Weekend you must have completed the Advanced Level School.

School Date	School Location	School Venue	Information/Registration
22 Apr - 24 Apr 2016	Sydney NSW	Travelodge Motel Blacktown	Registrations Alison Ridley email riddles@bigpond.net.au
24 June - 26 June 2016	Perth WA	Metro Hotel South Perth	Registrations Alison Ridley email riddles@bigpond.net.au

Churches Combined Service

All too often churches are known for their differences rather than our unity. Throughout the ages there have been many theological debates that have created division within our church body.

From the second century, just years after the death of the apostles, the church began to show signs of division.

Unfortunately for church, as it grew, so too did the bureaucracy. So too did human intervention. I suppose it's inevitable. A larger community requires organisation and with it structure and leadership.

This was accompanied by more and more rules – the legalism that the Pharisees were criticised for!

For centuries we have witnessed church splits and Christians fighting against Christians.

Against this backdrop, how wonderful that in a small community based in the Northern districts of Sydney, three churches ignored all our differences, and joined together to celebrate as one body in Christ.

Starting with the deep harmonies of the Galston Uniting Church men's choir, to the great worship of St Jude's Anglican Church; how wonderful it was to join as one body praising the one and only head.

For me it has been a highlight of my ministry and I pray for it to grow as we welcome other churches in our district to join together for a service about coming together – regardless of any preferences.

Pastor Corri Byrne,

Hillslife Church - enquiries@hillslife.com www.hillslife.com <http://one80tc.org/golf-day>



Beto Bebeto in Sydney

If there is any church who feels the Lord is moving them to welcome me in their Sunday service between 9-27 May in Sydney (or other communities), please contact me on my email bebeto1979@hotmail.com

Beto's Biography

Born in Indonesia and raised in a multi-cultural Christian family both in Indonesia and Macau, where he is based now, Beto is the senior pastor of Jesus Alive Ministry (JAM) International, a non-denominational cell-church planting movement and fellowship, with ministries in Hong Kong, Macau, China and Indonesia. Where he is based, he ministers mainly the Indonesian domestic helpers but he has the heart and actively ministers to other nationalities, societies as well as generations.

He is an active travel itinerant speaker across Asia through his mission-based M28.19 Ministries as well as several international groups – Beto is a conference catalyst of 4/14 Window Movement and the international art sphere facilitator of Transform World Connections. He is currently also the regional secretary for Asia of the Indonesian Assemblies of God, with portfolio including church planting and other mission-related work.

In addition, Beto is a passionate revivalist and worshipper and is heavily involved in the prophetic ministry, particularly through prayer, praise and worship. He runs Macau House of Prayer, mobilizing the Indonesian domestic helpers to pray for different aspects of the world today, including governments and lifestyle – and of course the Church.

Locally, Beto is the national directors of Day of Prayer of the Peace of Jerusalem (DPPJ) Macau and Global Outreach Day (GOD) Macau, President of Macau Indonesian Church Council, as well as President of JAM Academy, a church- and short-course-based school of ministry, mission and worship.

Personally, Beto is simply a servant who is up for anything that the Lord moves him to; He has ministered across Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong, Macau, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia from big churches such as Word of Hope (Philippines), ICA (Hong Kong), GBI (Indonesia) to the underground church around China, as well as to the street kids under the bridge in Indonesia and the plantation workers in Malaysia.

So if God is stirring your heart to do something in your country that Beto can be a part of, do not hesitate to contact us via e-mail JesusAlive@mail.com or contact him directly to his personal e-mail and we can start by praying together, seek Him and His plans, and see where the Holy Spirit leads us. All the Glory to God!



PRAYER FOR SYDNEY

P E N T E C O S T 2 0 1 6

Transforming Sydney and the Parramatta Pastors Network

Dear fellow servant of Christ,

We invite you to join together with Christian leaders, pastors, ministers and intercessors from across the Sydney region on the evening of 14th May at the Parramatta Salvation Army.

Last year on Pentecost, over 120 leaders came together in Newtown to pray and intercede for you and us.

This year we have been invited by the Parramatta Pastors to pray in and for their region.

Why at Pentecost?

According to Jewish tradition, seven weeks after Passover is the time of Shavu'ot ('Pentecost' in Greek – the 50th day), a commemoration of when the Law of God was given by the Lord God to Moses at Mt. Sinai for the people of Israel (and the entire world). On the night before Shavu'ot, many Jews stay up all night reading the scriptures and praying.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote of the promise that God made regarding His Law:

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord.

“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” (Jer. 31:33-34)

John the Baptist prophesied of the first Pentecost when Jesus would baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Mt 3:11).

Jesus confirmed this prophecy with the promise of the Holy Spirit to the disciples (John 14:26). He told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Father's gift of the Holy Spirit, from whom they would receive power to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:3-8).

On the Day of Pentecost “when it had fully come” (i.e. in the morning after a night of prayer and reading the scriptures), just as promised the disciples were baptised with the Holy Spirit and given the power of communication, which Peter used to begin the ministry for which Jesus had prepared them. After the coming of the Holy Spirit, the disciples did not stay in the room basking in God's glory but burst out to tell the world. This was the beginning of the Church.

For Christians therefore, Pentecost is a celebration of the day the Church was truly born.

What are We Praying For?

We will stand together in faith and in the unity of the Holy Spirit and call out to God for:

- All people in our communities across Australia to receive a revelation of the glory of Christ
- Our homes and our churches to be known as places of prayer; our Father's house
- Brothers and sisters out in the marketplace: for courage, wisdom and love towards each other and towards those who do not yet know God

Where and When?

This prayer event will be at

The Salvation Army, 34 Smith St, Parramatta NSW 2150

Saturday 14th May from 7pm to 10pm.

Buses and limited street parking are available along Smith St and Phillip St.

Parramatta Station and the Horwood Place Council Car Park is nearby.

Let us know you are coming and bring your people; we look forward to seeing you.

Bjorn Schmid and Rev. Peter Robinson – info@transformingsydney.org – 0411 562-751

For the Parramatta Pastors: Ps. Gerald James, Ps. Simon Black and Ps. Lois Barron



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