

Prayer Strategy for the Spheres of Influence

August 2016 - Praying for Education



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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

Dear friends,

Education has to be one of the 'hot' issues at present, particularly if you believe in the scripture *"Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it."* (Proverbs 22:6). It is tragic that in spite of the deal done in the past to enshrine Religious Education in our public schools, either through lack of support or indifference to media-driven policies, the legacy established by our forefathers is being steadily eroded in favour of so-called 'popular' ideals, which as we know are turning out generations of nice people that can't handle or resolve conflict of any type and rush onto to social media to hide themselves.

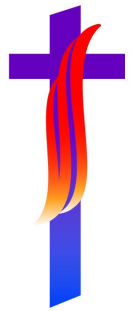
The passing of Marjorie Liddy

This week we note the passing of an amazing sister and indigenous woman of God, Marjorie Liddy who died in her sleep whilst on a flight from Melbourne back to Darwin. Marjorie's story is incredible; how she saw a vision of the Holy Spirit like a great bird across Australia, and 'Marjorie's Bird' became one of the enduring symbols for World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney. You can read more and see a video of her on Fr. John Corrigan blog at <http://www.acountrypriest.com/marjorie-liddy-rip/>

Grace and peace,

Bjorn Schmid, Public Officer for Transforming Sydney

prayerstrategy.org businesswomenhealingministry.org transformingsydney.org



TRANSFORMING
SYDNEY



Education. Not the last thing, but the first thing

Trying to fell a mighty oak by going at it 'head on' as it were, is nearly impossible for they are one tough tree. But the mightiest oak can be destroyed by attacking its roots, hacking away bit by bit until its very life, vitality and all strength is gone.

The roots of good education lie not only in pedagogy but in what lies beneath. The values that drive the system or if you like, the reason behind education.

In Victoria (and it is much the same in other States) ever since the Churches gave over their schools to the State in the 1870s, the real values base of education has been gradually eroded.

To counter this in recent decades we have seen the rise of Christian Schools, often founded by groups of concerned parents worried about the incipient drift towards not just a neglect of or indifference about Christian values, but a growing antipathy towards faith in the government school system.

Generally speaking governments, especially those of a conservative nature, have looked favourably upon this growth, not least because it costs them as least one-third less per child to have them in these schools than in the notoriously inefficient government system!

Now however we are entering another, far more dangerous phase. Note the destruction of Special Religious Instruction in Victoria, the recent 'investigation' into the Connect syllabus in Queensland, and of course the multiple attack on school Chaplaincy in the Courts.

All of the above pales into insignificance when we consider the so-called 'Safe Schools' program that I regret to say also had its genesis in Victoria. Unless you have been hiding under a rock, you will already know how evil and nasty this program is and how those who support are so driven. Premier Daniel Andrews of Victoria considers us all bigots for even daring to ask questions about the program. The Governments of NSW and QLD do not even trust you enough to let you know if it is being run in your child's school, with all lists removed from their websites. Opt out? sorry no such luck, your child must attend these indoctrination classes.

So what are we to do? Pray and act.

Pray that God will stir the hearts of those in authority, both secular (Government and Education) and spiritual (Church leaders) to act to bring this program down.

Act by speaking up yourself. Parents, grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, we all have a voice. Do not be intimidated by the name-calling. Defend the children.

There is too much at stake for us to do nothing.

1 Corinthians 16:13 Remain alert. Keep standing firm in your faith. Keep on being courageous and strong.

Rob Ward

Melbourne. August 2016



Pray for Education

By Daryl Castellino, Teaching Educator in Catholic Schools

John 14:6 'I am the way and the truth and the life'

Education is always a topic of conversation and one, which is not only confined to school staff rooms. This in itself is not surprising as the pursuit of education is paramount to all people, especially to children of all ages, as their future depends heavily on it. Unfortunately, far too often the topic of education is centred about: funding, the latest technology or the most efficient teaching methodologies. Whilst these areas are of importance to Christian education, it is important to remember that the goal of education is the pursuit of 'truth'. Christians recognise and understand that truth is ultimately Jesus Christ.

The rise of secularism is a definite indicator, that the 'evil one' is roaming around and influencing culture. The sad thing is, that the madness found in the errors of today's culture is now making its way into education. One sure way to tackle this problem is prayer and good leadership in Christian school settings.

Today's world is one, which is very anti Christian and definitely needs brave Christian witnesses to stand up. The evil one is cunning and people fall into the trap of his lies. Programs such as 'Safe School Coalition' (<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/>) which promotes things such as: pre school children to question their gender, promotion of genderless toilets and the eradication of unique role of fathers and mothers in marriage and in a child's life. In our fallen world all of us struggle against temptations and struggles, but our hope is always in Jesus Christ, who has defeated all things.

There is a significant number of Christians, who are unaware of the pressures that education systems are under to adopt anti Christian erroneous programs and oblivious to the fact that these programs have made their way into schools. Parents should ask these questions to schools and pray that God can really change hearts and common sense prevail in our society and educational systems.

Let us all pray that God can bring inspirational leaders to schools. Leadership demonstrated by great biblical figures like Paul of Tarsus and Moses allowed God to break through the society and lead people to the 'truth'. Schools should be encounters with the 'truth' being Jesus Christ and not places where demonic ideologies are passed to the young innocent lives of children. There are many great teachers and leaders in Christian and non-religious affiliated schools, but we must encourage and support them. There are supernatural battles going on, and therefore supernatural weapons such as prayer are needed.

Let us allow the Holy Spirit to transform Australia, especially the educational system.

Blessed be God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, glory and praise to you, now and forever.

Prayer for Christian Education

Dear God,

We pray to you who is the source of all Truth.

Let our children in schools come to know and love your Son, Jesus Christ.

Dear Father, send your Holy Spirit to all schools in Australia. We pray for school leaders and teachers be swept by the love of God and be witnesses to all students. Let all schools be places of encountering Jesus Christ, who is the Way and the Truth and the Life.

We pray that students, parents and school communities are not only protected from the evil one but also be leaders in society, helping others to be led to friendship with Jesus Christ.

We pray this in the holy name of Jesus Christ who is our king and saviour.

Amen



The Battle for the Hearts and Minds of Young Australians

By Stephen Leslie

I have been an educator for over 40 years. In that time I have worked in grammar, Catholic, Government (state) and in Christian schools. This has given me a broad overview of how schools operate and what is the driving vision and mission of the school. I have always loved teaching, loved the process of engaging with students and getting them excited about learning. The last 25 years of my work in schools was in school leadership, but there was never one year when I did not take a teaching role as a vital element of school leadership.

The challenge for me and for many Christian teachers, regardless of what type of school or what level of education they are working in, is how to live and teach with integrity and consistency, as a true representative of Christ and the gospel. This challenge for teachers is really no different than the call that is on every Christian to be a bearer of the Good News in whatever setting we find ourselves, and to whomever we interact with during the day. But perhaps the onus on teachers is especially sensitive, because we work in the realm of ideas and the integration of theory and practice, and because we work with children (under 18 years) who are in their formative years. I have always been very conscious of Jesus' words regarding children:

'Let the children come to me, do not prevent them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.' (Luke 18.16-17).

'...but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone put around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.' (Matthew 18.6)

You can't get much more forceful expression of the value that Jesus places on a child and the importance of them coming to Him, unhindered and undamaged, than these verses. We don't have the benefit of hearing his voice as he made these statements or seeing his facial expression. His disciples did and I have no doubt that it made a deep and lasting impression on them. The words of Jesus need to have a deep and lasting impression on us!

Education is focussed on children. Teaching and learning, or education, is the business of schools, but not only of schools.

- **The home** is the primary unit for instilling beliefs, values and behavioural standards in a child. Children observe their parents behaviour far more than they absorb their words and reflect the modelled core beliefs in their own behaviour. Christian parents must accept that we live in a post-Christian or even anti-Christian society, and that children are being bombarded with messages from every quarter that are at odds with Kingdom values and beliefs.
- **The church** has a powerful role to play, although I am not sure the church realises how important ministry to children is and thus how vital planning and running it should be. It worries me that many kids' programs run in church are shallow and inept.
- And finally, we would be deluding ourselves if we thought that **the state** and **many powerful interest groups** are not seeking every opportunity to influence the thinking and choices of children. Schools are swamped with material and the expectation that they will include in the curriculum programs that seek to influence children's thinking and values profoundly. Some are overtly political or philosophical or behavioural.

When I began teaching in the seventies, there was a concept that state education was to be accessible to everyone, and that a teacher was not to influence a child to take on their personal beliefs around religion, politics or sexuality. I doubt if it is possible to maintain such a neutral position in the classroom today, or if, in fact, education has ever been value-free or neutral. This is where faith-based schools come into the story.

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, a remarkable movement took off in Australia; the Christian School movement. In that period, more than 300 new Christian schools sprang up all over Australia. It was a grass roots movement where Christian parents wanted to have a say in who taught their children and how it would be taught. Some schools were begun by a single local church, others by

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Hearts and Minds of Young Australians (...continued)

groups of Christians within a community, from a number of denominations. These schools held certain things in common: they would employ teachers who were committed to a personal relationship with Christ and who were able to model and teach Christian beliefs and practices with integrity; they would be governed by parents; they would develop a model of Christian Education that filtered the state curriculum content through the lens of Scripture. They would seek to *'support parents in their God-given responsibility to bring up children to know and serve God, reinforcing the beliefs and values of the Christian home'*.

I don't think many people can fully appreciate the blessing that we have had in Australia, where not only the freedom to establish such a school is enshrined in law, but that, as long as the criteria for registration is met, fee-paying students who attend these schools will also *receive government funding*, based on their socio-economic status. Similar schools in North America and Great Britain are not funded, and have to raise their own funds. So, this has led to a new kind of school, the fastest growing sector in education: the low-fee, faith-based independent school. You can find Christian schools from Darwin to Hobart, from the inner city to the outback, and hundreds of thousands of young Australians are being educated in them every year. Despite this, I don't underestimate the impact Christian teachers are having in every kind of school and system. God speaks through His people!

If you want to pray for education in Australia, to uphold our young people and future leaders before God, then here are some key points to direct your prayers:

1. **Pray for Christian teachers**, whether they work in government or non-government schools. A teacher has access to the hearts and minds of child for 6 hours per day, 5 days per week and 200 days of the year. Apart from what they say, a Christian teacher can live in a way that allows the light, love, joy and integrity of Christ to flow in the classroom. This 'incarnational gospeling' is powerful and effective. Christian teachers who pray for their students and care for and guide them with exceptional grace and wisdom are a blessing and can have a mighty impact on our culture!
2. **Pray for our government and civic leaders**. The Bible instructs us to pray for our leaders and governing bodies. Pray specifically that the freedoms that currently exist in this country –freedom to employ people of faith and practice, freedom of choice for schooling, freedom to receive religious instruction or to withdraw from programs that are at odds with the beliefs and values of the home – pray that these freedoms will not be taken away. Pray that Christian men and women will take up roles in government and the courage of their convictions to stand against fear and evil.
3. **Pray for Christian schools**, for wise leadership that can hold true to the vision to provide a Christian education that focuses on building character, honesty and wisdom, not just knowledge and skills, on pointing young people to Christ and teaching them the joy of loving service.
4. Finally, **pray for the young people of Australia**. I doubt there has ever been a time when young people are so exposed to messages of every intent and purpose. They are constantly immersed in media that has made an art form of getting a message across, and playing on the great weaknesses of the human fallen condition – materialism, self-interest, lust and power. Pray that the light of Christ will shine out in this nation, through the humble, consistent lives of his people, through intelligent, honest and courageous commentary into the issues of the day, through communities that live by the values of the Kingdom and demonstrate the power of God, through His Spirit, to save, renew and transform lives.

Education is a battle-ground for the hearts and minds of young people. It is also fertile ground for the gospel to be planted and nurtured. It is not just teachers who are involved in education. Every parent, grandparent, relative, church member or employer can speak into the lives of children and young people, can 'see' them, recognise them and encourage them, 'be' Christ for them. The prayers of my parents and older Christians have been vital to my faith and trust in Jesus. Your prayers and love and words of encouragement can be the same for the young people in your sphere of influence.

(Stephen Leslie was a teacher and principal with Christian schools Australia until 2014. He is now the National Development Officer for Christian Venues Association, serving some 200 Christian camp and conference centres around Australia. He liaises between camps and schools to promote the power of learning beyond the classroom to develop young people in their learning, social and spiritual well-being.)



The Death of Education and the Death of a Culture

Posted on CultureWatch by Bill Muehlenberg, Jul 5, 2016

<https://billmuehlenberg.com/2016/07/05/death-education-death-culture/>

I have written often about cultural Marxism and the war on the West. I have written often about the radicals' assault on Western education, and the dumbing down of a generation. And I have written often about how the best way to take over a nation is to hide its history, or rewrite it altogether.

And I have provided plenty of examples of this. Just yesterday in my article on America's Fourth of July I featured a video of college students being asked what the day was all about. Most of the responses were utterly woeful, and indicate just how successful this war on history and education has been.

George Orwell had it exactly right when he said this: "The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history." While there are of course notable exceptions, I cringe over the current generation of Westerners who seem to know next to nothing of their own history.

And along with that is the complete inability of most young people today to think critically, to logically assess, and to rationally engage with the issues of the day. Most people today simply emote their way through life. Their feelings determine how they respond to all the crucial matters being discussed and debated.

Thomas Sowell nailed it when he said, "The problem isn't that Johnny can't read. The problem isn't even that Johnny can't think. The problem is that Johnny doesn't know what thinking is; he confuses it with feeling." This too is a product of our education system which has deliberately aimed at dumbing down our populace. It is frightening to behold.

That is why so many folks are now voting with their feet and going elsewhere – millions for example are home-schooling. That is why conservative evangelical schools like Patrick Henry College near Washington DC are doing so well. That is why private and independent schools are thriving.

That is one way to fight back. But unless public education itself is reclaimed and taken out of the hands of the radicals and secular leftists we are pretty well goners in the West. But this will not be

easy. Indeed, it will take decades and longer to achieve – if it is at all achievable.

But recall that it only took a few short decades for the radicals to subvert and take over public education. A committed handful of radicals made it their aim to capture the institutions of power and influence – of which education is a major part. This is what we call cultural Marxism, and this has been very successful. And I should know, since I was once a part of this revolutionary movement.

So what was done by an active minority over a short period of time can perhaps be reversed. But we will need the same commitment and dedication which the radicals on the left had. And even before that, we must be aware of the magnitude of the problem.

Thankfully I am not alone in such concerns about the frightful state of Western education. Many others have lamented this dangerous and downward trend in education. One academic to recently sound the alarm in a powerful and timely fashion is Patrick Deneen of Notre Dame in the US.¹

He has also taught at Princeton University and Georgetown University, and he is shocked at the tragic state of learning in American schools. He pulls no punches as he lays out his case. He begins:

My students are know-nothings. They are exceedingly nice, pleasant, trustworthy, mostly honest, well-intentioned, and utterly decent. But their brains are largely empty, devoid of any substantial knowledge that might be the fruits of an education in an inheritance and a gift of a previous generation. They are the culmination of western civilization, a civilization that has forgotten nearly everything about itself, and as a result, has achieved near-perfect indifference to its own culture.

He praises these top students at these top schools, but is dismayed at their basic lack of knowledge and lack of learning:

But ask them some basic questions about the civilization they will be inheriting, and be prepared for averted eyes and somewhat panicked looks. Who fought in the Peloponnesian War? Who taught Plato, and whom did Plato teach? How did

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¹ <http://www.mindingthecampus.org/2016/02/how-a-generation-lost-its-common-culture/>

The Death of Education and the Death of a Culture (...continued)

Socrates die? Raise your hand if you have read both the Iliad and the Odyssey. The Canterbury Tales? Paradise Lost? The Inferno?

Who was Saul of Tarsus? What were the 95 theses, who wrote them, and what was their effect? Why does the Magna Carta matter? How and where did Thomas Becket die? Who was Guy Fawkes, and why is there a day named after him? What did Lincoln say in his Second Inaugural? His first Inaugural? How about his third Inaugural? What are the Federalist Papers?

Some students, due most often to serendipitous class choices or a quirky old-fashioned teacher, might know a few of these answers. But most students have not been educated to know them. At best, they possess accidental knowledge, but otherwise are masters of systematic ignorance. It is not their "fault" for pervasive ignorance of western and American history, civilization, politics, art and literature. They have learned exactly what we have asked of them – to be like mayflies, alive by happenstance in a fleeting present.

He explains why this has come about:

Our students' ignorance is not a failing of the educational system – it is its crowning achievement. Efforts by several generations of philosophers and reformers and public policy experts — whom our students (and most of us) know nothing about — have combined to produce a generation of know-nothings. The pervasive ignorance of our students is not a mere accident or unfortunate but correctible outcome, if only we hire better teachers or tweak the reading lists in high school. It is the consequence of a civilizational commitment to civilizational suicide. The end of history for our students signals the End of History for the West.

He continues:

Our students are the achievement of a systemic commitment to producing individuals without a past for whom the future is a foreign country, cultureless ciphers who can live anywhere and perform any kind of work without inquiring about its purposes or ends, perfected tools for an economic system that prizes "flexibility" (geographic, interpersonal, ethical).

In such a world, possessing a culture, a history, an inheritance, a commitment to a place and particular people, specific forms of gratitude and indebtedness (rather than a generalized and deracinated commitment to "social justice"), a strong set of ethical and moral norms that assert definite limits to what one ought and ought not to do (aside from being "judgmental") are

hindrances and handicaps.

And he concludes;

I love my students – like any human being, each has enormous potential and great gifts to bestow upon the world. But I weep for them, for what is rightfully theirs but hasn't been given. On our best days, I discern their longing and anguish and I know that their innate human desire to know who they are, where they have come from, where they ought to go, and how they ought to live will always reassert itself. But even on those better days, I can't help but hold the hopeful thought that the world they have inherited – a world without inheritance, without past, future, or deepest cares – is about to come tumbling down, and that this collapse would be the true beginning of a real education.

Yes it is tragic indeed to witness this assault on education, on learning, on history and tradition taking place, and taking place so effectively. As noted, a major part of this dumbing down process is the deliberate attack on history. Kill off one's history and you kill off one's future.

Some words of C. S. Lewis on learning and history are well worth closing with here. They are taken from a sermon he delivered in Oxford on October 22nd 1939 called "Learning in Wartime":

If all the world were Christian it might not matter if all the world were uneducated. But, as it is, a cultural life will exist outside the Church whether it exists inside or not. To be ignorant and simple now—not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground—would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defence but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered. The cool intellect must work not only against cool intellect on the other side, but against the muddy heathen mysticisms which deny intellect altogether. Most of all, perhaps, we need intimate knowledge of the past. Not that the past has any magic about it, but because we cannot study the future, and yet need something to set against the present, to remind us that the basic assumptions have been quite different in different periods and that much which seems certain to the uneducated is merely temporary fashion. A man who has lived in many places is not likely to be deceived by the local errors of his native village; the scholar has lived in many times and is therefore in some degree immune from the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and the microphone of his own age.

"...unless public education itself is reclaimed and taken out of the hands of the radicals and secular leftists we are pretty well goners in the West."



The Freedoms Project

By *Kathy Clubb: For freedom. For Christ - www.miracleeducation.com.au*

Since this newsletter's theme is education, I thought I'd write about a form of education that is very dear to my heart, and in my opinion, vitally important for all of us. It is education in the sphere of freedom, and especially as it pertains to the life issues.

We Australians have never been as appreciative of our Constitution in the way that, for example, our American counterparts have been: we can't 'claim the Fifth' or quote relevant amendments, and many of us assume that the freedoms we hold dear are guaranteed by our Constitution. However, only five individual rights are explicitly mentioned in that document: the right to vote, protection against the unjust acquisition of property, the right to a trial by jury, freedom of religion and freedom from discrimination based on the State of residency. In 1992, the High Court ruled that there also exists an implied right to freedom of political communication, which is obviously necessary in a democratic society such as ours.

This right to freedom of political communication is relevant to me as a prolife activist, since I believe I have the right to inform others about abortion and that others have the right to be informed.

But this year in Victoria, 'Safe Access Zones' were introduced, ostensibly to relieve aborting mothers from being exposed to life advocates outside abortion businesses. In reality, the law reduces choices for ambivalent mothers and infringes on the freedoms of Christians and other prolife people. Tasmania and the ACT have

bufferzones too, which have led to the arrests of prolife advocates in both states. I was also recently arrested for offering help outside a Melbourne abortion business.

The witness from prolife advocates at an abortion business serves three main purposes: practical, moral and spiritual.

In practical terms, we offer help to mothers who aren't completely committed to going through with an abortion: they may be under pressure from a partner or

relative, or be on a work or student visa, which means they aren't covered by Medicare and simply can't afford the cost of delivering their babies. Such mothers are often grateful to learn that there are organisations who will help them to go ahead with their pregnancy and so they choose life for their babies. Most don't stop and take our literature, or accept our offer of help, but some do, and we call these 'turnarounds'. Turnarounds are then given whatever help is needed for them to carry their babies to term and are often helped financially, with moral support, with accommodation and baby supplies. Life advocates sometimes stay friends with their 'turnarounds' for years, attending birthdays and other important events in the life of the child they helped to save.

Morally, we believe our presence serves as a witness to the injustice of abortion. As valuable as private prayer in our homes and churches can be, the sight of people who are prepared to be abused, insulted, spat on and sometimes even

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The Freedoms Project



The Freedoms Project (...continued)

physically assaulted for standing up for the Truth is a great testimony. Life advocates are dedicated individuals who often persevere for decades, regularly witnessing in all kinds of weather, regardless of their personal problems and preoccupations. Solzhenitsyn said that the greatest force for change is public opinion, and public witness influences public opinion, and this is what influences our lawmakers for better or for worse.

Last but not least, is the spiritual aspect of our witness. Most, but not all, active proliferers are Christian, and for us, it is very important to maintain a prayerful presence outside abortion businesses. We are there to pray for the babies in their last moments on the earth; we pray for the mothers and fathers who are making a terrible choice and who will suffer greatly after this experience; we pray for the staff the doctors, anaesthetists, nurses and office staff who have performed abortions or enabled abortions to take place. We also pray that mothers and fathers will never be tempted to see abortion as an option, and for those parents who have chosen life for their children under difficult circumstances. This prayer is an essential part of our witness and although the bufferzone laws are somewhat vague in this regard, prayer is generally deemed to be an illegal activity within the zones.

After the 'bufferzones' were enforced, my colleagues and I were forced to witness 150 meters from our local abortion business, or be arrested and face penalties harsher than for aggravated assault. Now there is virtually no opportunity for us to speak to mothers and fathers who are about to abort their children.



The idea for The Freedoms Project came to me exactly 150 metres from the Marie Stopes



abortion business in Croydon, Melbourne. It is the result of an inspiration from my son and much prayer. I was one day wondering aloud if there was a new sign we could produce for our witness, that could invite passersby to think about abortion, the bufferzones and the burdens being placed on our rights and the rights of abortion business clients. My son suggested, "Free speech ends here" for a sign, and over the next couple of weeks, an idea grew as I prayed at the bufferzone to end abortion.

The result is The Freedoms Project (thefreedomsproject.com): a new collaboration of Christians from various parts of Australia who write on the themes of freedom, abortion, law and faith. Although from many different backgrounds and denominations, we are all passionate about safeguarding the freedoms of Australians and especially the freedom to be born. It is my hope that through The Freedoms Project website, we can continue the conversation about threats to our freedoms in Australia, and about the injustice of denying the right to life to our preborn brothers and sisters.

You may like to follow our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FreedomsAus/>) for news about freedom and the life issues, or sign up to our website and you'll receive a free ebook about using social media to share the prolife message. You can also find information on the website about my legal challenge to the unjust "SafeAccess Zones."

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (Gal 5:1)



Education, Fact or Fiction?

By Rev. Dr Jeffrey David Camm JP, Christ to the Nations Bible College

<https://www.facebook.com/Christ-to-the-Nation-Bible-College-cttnbc-823441201035935/>

When I was going to school in the early 1950's (before the Wyndham Scheme was introduced & when we still had pounds, shillings & pence) we were taught an education and subjects which we thought were all facts.

1. For example; we were taught that Captain Cook "**discovered**" **Australia**. It was only after further study that this "fact" was proven to be incorrect and that many civilizations knew about the "Land in the South" and each civilization gave Australia a name.
2. The following compilation of facts is from the book entitled: **Pyramids in the Pacific** by Rex Gilroy.¹ This table shows some of the civilisations that knew of the existence of a "**land in the south**" beyond the Indian Ocean. This great southland was referred to by various names, at various times, by various civilisations, but all refer to our nation, right here - **Australia**.

Year	Civilisations	Country was known as
	Phoenicians	Ophir – Land of Iron
	Chinese	Chui Hiao
	Aztecs	Culhuacan
	Sumerians, Maoris & Peruvians	Uru
	Malays	Giava
	Hebrews	Sinim
2000 – 1788 BC	Egyptians of the Middle Kingdom (12 th Dynasty)	Punt and also Kenti-Amenti
950 BC	King Solomon (King of Israel) sent out Hiram (King of Tyre - a Phoenician city) with a fleet, to find the legendary "Ophir" and get its riches.	Ophir – land of iron
800 - 700 BC	Hebrews: The Prophet Isaiah refers to the land of Sinim in Isaiah 49:12 Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.	H5515, סִינִים <i>Çiyiniym</i> , see-neem' Plural of an otherwise unknown name; Sinim, a distant Oriental region: Sinim.
600 BC	Anaximander in Myletus drew a map describing a southern continent	
300 BC	Theopompus of Chios (drew a similar map and wrote that far beyond India there was a great island where Australia is now situated.)	
239 BC	Eratosthenes, the Greek Scholar drew a world map as a sphere, on which he described the great southern continent as "Ausio". It is interesting to note that in 239 BC people knew that the world was round – NOT FLAT, as was told by the people in the reformation times in Europe and in Britain.	Greeks "Ausio" It is clear from this and other evidence that the Greek maritime and geographical knowledge was far more advanced than many scholars of later years have given them credit.

So, we have just touched on one subject in our "education system" which is teaching our children incorrect data. What about other subjects? Are they the same?

Recently there was a hue and cry in Federal Parliament when an MP showed the porn links which were included in the so called "safe schools" program, for which taxpayer funds were being distributed to the states, to teach this program in the schools. This "safe schools" program turned out to be anything BUT safe, and Federal Funding was stopped, until these porn links are removed.

For many years I have been proclaiming that we need to be promoting **Honesty, Integrity, Honour,**

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¹ Pyramids in the Pacific by Rex Gilroy: ISBN 0-646-39633-1 (1995)

Education, Fact or Fiction? (...continued)

Righteousness, Rule of Law, Unity, and the love of Jesus Christ in our nation. Because where there is righteousness, God exalts a nation. Where there is unity, God commands a blessing.

Unfortunately this call has fallen on deaf ears. As a result, we have adopted the Roman civilization's way of appointing new leaders. We elect them, but if we do not like them, we stab them in the back and appoint another. The people of Australia have no say in this new appointment. It is done behind closed doors. As a result we have had 5 Prime Ministers in 5 years and now we anxiously wait for the election results for this latest election.

But how do we, as Christians react to these situations? How do we remain true to our Christian ethos, when we are being constantly targeted by Satan's messages from all sides, both in the worldly media, and with subtle overtures from within the church?

This begs the question: If Christianity was made a crime, would there be enough evidence against you to charge you with this crime? In other words, do people know that you are a Christian by what you say and what you do?

Have you been taught correctly from the scriptures, or does your church have great programs, but is light on spiritual teaching? Do you know if what you are being taught is accurate and correct? Paul told us to test what is being preached from the pulpit against the Word of God. If it lines up with the Word, then accept it and the person preaching it. But if it does not, then you to reject the teaching **and the teacher!**

I was so concerned about this that in 2010 I developed and had accredited a Certificate IV course in Practical Ministry and Theology. This is available free of charge to anyone to makes a pledge before God to teach 12 other people what they have learnt. Now there are 560 students undertaking this course in 19 countries.

Here is a free of charge link to the fully accredited Bible College Course:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/032kq319q5c1cso/AADijMXgSrbJ1qsYyqvPKwYba?dl=0>

Jesus told us to go and make disciples. Here is the challenge!



American Public Education and LGBTQ Curriculum

Schools have the obligation to ensure non-discrimination on the basis of sex, which has brought about the latest in the ongoing agenda items of the LGBTQ community, with the required inclusion of "anything goes" school toilet areas, to be based on gender identification of the student (or adult) rather than on the biological identity.

This is just the latest from the U.S. Department of Education, presented in a "Dear Colleague" letter of May 13, 2016, relating to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Interestingly, a total of 23 states have now sued the Obama Administration over the transgender directive.

When it comes to school curricula, LGBTQ education is not required to be covered in America's public schools--yet. As one might imagine, there is strong disagreement about whether such sex education should be included in regular "health and sex education" curricula. Advocates say inclusion of these issues would serve to reduce homophobic bullying, and decrease instances of poor self-esteem and depression among LGBTQ students. Opponents argue that such education programs force a political point of view on students, potentially misuse tax money, and show disregard or disrespect for family and religious values.

Teachers and instructors who would be required to teach such programs are often opposed; and some suggest that students themselves are often unreceptive toward discussing LGBTQ issues in school. Parents often object, particularly in earlier grades, where they argue that children will "lose their innocence," as reported by the liberal Think Progress organization in a June 17, 2016, article titled, "This is How Americans Learn LGBT Hate Starting At A Young Age."

The LGBTQ community has a strong, well-financed lobby, often used to demonize opponents to the inclusion of their agenda in classrooms. The issue will not go away any time soon; and, in fact, is something that churches and congregations should be addressing in prayer on a regular basis.

Note: If the "Q" designation [in "LGBTQ"] has not reached Australia, it is being used to mean "Questioning" – sometimes also called Fluid.

Peggy Bayless Gustave,
Insight Edition Editor,
The Presidential Prayer Team

"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." 1 Timothy 2:1-2



Mobilizing America to pray - www.presidentialprayerteam.org

Since 2001, The Presidential Prayer Team has been the source millions of Americans have turned to for encouragement and inspiration to pray for America, our President, our national leaders, and our Armed Forces.



What environment are we creating for our children?

Helps and hindrances

By Graham McDonald, Executive Officer, The DIDUNO Network - diduno.info

What is shaping the environment in which our children are growing up?

I am sure there are many 'things' that come to mind.

Is there something that I can do to contribute and help?

Well we may get a clue about one of the 'things' that contribute to the problem from the comment below.

"The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of the government in the next".

This is attributed to the sixteenth President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln.

Assuming that there is some truth in what Lincoln said, what is contributing to the philosophy of the current classroom?

The current classroom in government schools in particular, is grounded on a secular, non-religious philosophy of life that views the health and wellbeing of our children as contingent upon research-based evidence.

Such evidence points to the need for example to increase the strength of the relationship between students and their teachers (World Health Organisation, 2002) and to improve students' abilities to respond flexibly and appropriately to the opportunities and demands in their environment, through focussed learning on their social and emotional development (Durlak et al, 2011).

However, what any of us regards as important is influenced by our philosophy or set of values. Our education system is committed to secular humanism which can be understood as a belief system that disregards the existence of anything beyond the physical here and now and supports an ethical system based on consequences, rather than on a set of principles as part of an external belief system (Flynn, n.d.). This framework influences how relevant research is referenced.

For example, a recent report published by Theos, an English academic think tank (<http://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/>) notes that evidence from nearly 140 academic studies conducted over the last three decades examining the relationship between religion and well-being in a wide range of countries and contexts, suggests that overall, holding a religious worldview contributes positively to a person's wellbeing (Spencer et al, 2016). This position is also supported from research by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2002).

Another very extensive research report from The Commission on Children at Risk, a panel of 33 leading children's doctors, research scientists and youth service professionals in the U.S.A., suggests new strategies to reduce the currently high numbers of U.S. children who are suffering from emotional and behavioural problems such as depression, anxiety, attention deficit, conduct disorders, and thoughts of suicide.

Despite a decade of unprecedented economic growth that resulted in fewer children living in poverty, large and growing numbers of American children and adolescents are suffering from mental health problems. Scholars at the National Research Council in 2002 estimated that at least one of every four adolescents in the U.S. is currently at serious risk of not achieving productive adulthood. Twenty-one percent of U.S. children ages 9 to 17 have a diagnosable mental disorder or addiction; 8 percent of high school students suffer from clinical depression, and 20 percent of students report seriously having considered suicide in the past year.

One aspect of the report noted this very important factor:

To date the influence of religion on U.S. young people has been "grossly understudied," according to Byron Johnson of the University of Pennsylvania. However, existing research is highly suggestive. For adolescents, religiosity is significantly associated with a reduced likelihood of both unintentional and intentional injury (both of which are leading causes of death for teenagers.

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What environment are we creating for our children? (...continued)

Homicides, suicides and accidents account for 85 percent of all deaths among early to late adolescents). Religious teenagers are safer drivers and are more likely to wear seatbelts than their less religious peers. They are less likely to become juvenile delinquents or adult criminals. They are less prone to substance abuse. They are less likely to endorse engaging in high-risk behaviour or the idea of enjoying danger.

On the positive side of the coin, religiously committed teenagers are more likely to volunteer in the community, to participate in sports and student government, to have high self-esteem and more positive attitudes about life. Much of this research is based on large national studies.

One religious quality that appears to be especially beneficial, in terms of mental health and lifestyle consequences, is what some scholars call personal devotion, or the young person's sense of participating in a "direct personal relationship with the Divine." Personal devotion among adolescents is associated with reduced risk-taking, more effectively resolving feelings of loneliness, greater regard for self and for others, and a stronger sense that life has meaning and purpose. These protective effects of personal devotion are twice as great for adolescents as they are for adults. This last finding clearly reinforces the idea; found in many cross-national studies, that adolescence is a time of particularly intense searching for, and openness to, the transcendent. Here is how Lisa Miller of Columbia University puts it: "A search for spiritual relationship with the Creator may be an inherent developmental process in adolescence."

For this reason, the Commission is recommending that our society as a whole, and youth advocates and youth service professionals in particular, should pay greater attention to this aspect of youth development. This task will not be easy, the Commission's warns in its report. Because we are a philosophically diverse and religiously plural society, many of our youth-serving programs and social environments for young people will need to find ways respectfully to reflect that diversity and pluralism. But that is a challenge to be embraced, not avoided. One of the many problems with the avoidance strategy is that denying or ignoring the spiritual needs of adolescents may end up creating a void in their lives that either devolves into depression or is filled by other forms of questing and challenge, such as drinking, unbridled consumerism, petty crime, sexual precocity, or flirtations with violence (Commission for Children at Risk: Hardwired to Connect)

A report about the Australian situation only confirms what is very obvious to many involved with children and families in our society.

Professor Patrick Parkinson AM in his report, "For Kid's Sake - Repairing the Social Environment for Australian Children and Young People", presented in 2011, makes this point "Rightly we are thinking about what legacy we are going to leave our children, and their children, in terms of the natural world on which we all depend". (p6).

However, Professor Parkinson also notes, "Little attention has been paid to the social environment which our children are growing up, and the dangers that the deterioration of this environment presents for the future. Indeed, many of us may not even be aware of how bad things are becoming." (p6)

This was demonstrated in the "canary in the coalmine" data found in the Parkinson report, that show from 1997 to 2009 the total number of children in out-of-home care has more than doubled, from 15,674 to 35,895 and increasing at an ever increasing rate. (p7)

The dramatic increase in child abuse and neglect is only part of the overall deterioration of the wellbeing of our children. More than 25% of young people aged 16-24 have a mental disorder. A further 24% of young people, who have never experienced a mental disorder, are experiencing moderate to severe psychological distress. (p7)

The psychological distress is reflected in the 66% increase in the number of 12-14-year-old children hospitalised because of intentional self-harm from 1996 to 2006. In the same period there was a 90% rise in hospitalisation of girls 15 to 17 years of age due to self-harm incidents. (p7)

Other manifestations of psychological distress include binge drinking and sexual promiscuity. The rate of hospitalisation due to alcohol intoxication in young women 15-24 years of age more than doubled between 1998 and 2006. (p8)

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What environment are we creating for our children? (...continued)

In the last ten years there was a four-fold increase in chlamydia infections in the 10-14-year age group. Girls reporting unwanted sex increased from 28 to 38 per cent from 2002 to 2008 (p35).

What is contributing to this deteriorating social environment? Might the loss of recognition of the positive contribution of Christianity be a factor in this?

One group that answered this question was the Minnesota Correction Centre, albeit working with adults. In partnership with a Christian organisation, Prison Fellowship of U.S.A., they introduced the inmates to the teachings of Christianity. One of the measurable outcomes was a saving of \$3million over the first six years of the program, due to the decreased incidence of crime (Johnson, 2011).

Another report based on research conducted by Rosemary Aird (as part of her studies at the University of Queensland's School of Population Health) indicated a positive correlation between traditional religion and mental health. (2007) Aird, an agnostic, conducted a survey of the effects of spiritual thoughts and behaviours with more than 3,000 21 year olds looking at two different belief systems; belief in God as associated with traditional religions and new spiritualities with no recognition of God. Aird's research demonstrated that the newer non-traditional beliefs were linked to higher rates of "anxiety, depression, disturbed and suspicious ways of thinking and anti-social behaviour" (p6)

Why? Aird says, "Traditional religion tends to promote the idea of social responsibility and thinking of others' interests, whereas the New Age movement pushes the idea that we can transform the world by changing ourselves." (p6) Aird concluded that individualism was the common thread in the shift away from traditional religious thoughts to non-religious spirituality and that popular culture "has fed this trend toward non-traditional beliefs with the popularization of spirituality." (p6)

The research would indicate that the wellbeing of our children depends at least in part on them developing a healthy, others' focussed spirituality, a spirituality that has been traditionally found in communities of faith. For Australia, many of these have been Christian communities of faith. Maybe it's time to take note of what the broader research is saying and consider the important place that Christianity has played and might continue to play in shaping the social environment in which our children are growing up.

You are invited to view some resources that outline the contribution that Christianity has played and continues to play in the lives of everyday Australians.

Go to www.diduno.info to view these free resources.

Together we can change our social environment for the better.

Graham McDonald, Executive Officer, The DIDUNO Network graham@diduno.info

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The Future of Education is Glorious

By Di McRae, coordinator Miracle Education - www.miracleeducation.com.au

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” (Proverbs 9:10).

This is a foundational truth for education. Yet even in the book of Genesis we read that man was building a monument to his own way of doing things, without acknowledging the Lord.

Essentially nothing has changed in 2016, since with the so called Safe School Programme man is still advocating that he can educate whilst ignoring God. The good news is, that God did visit Babylon and put an end to their tower and likewise He will only let man go so far in our day.

When I pray for education I focus on the end result and that is found in Habakkuk 2:14, “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Educational trends are fashionable, they come and go but the word of God is constant.

In 1984 Pastor Tom Inglis received a vision from the Lord regarding the end time church. That vision is recorded in his book “The Worshipping You.” Part of that vision included the move of the Holy Spirit in schools which totally reflects Habakkuk 2:14.

Pastor Tom says “Christian schools will experience a revival that will be way beyond our wildest imaginations. Praise and prayer meetings will take place continuously not only with the children but also the teachers and parents. Despite the efforts of some critics within the Church to stop this movement in the name of ‘education’, the children will maintain their grades, and more importantly, experience changed hearts. Out of this will come a generation of leaders who will occupy positions in almost every field of endeavour, in both the church and the world. They will have godly wisdom that will be acknowledged throughout the entire earth.

With secular schools also experiencing revival, even the critics of the movement will not be able to deny that something supernatural is taking place. Children will arrange praise and prayer meetings before school, during recess, and after school. Many children will be powerful witnesses for Christ, and great evangelistic crusades will take place on the sports field with children sharing testimonies to the goodness of God.

Entire schools will be converted to Christ in a few days.

During recess, inquisitive unsaved teachers will attend prayer and praise meetings held by the children and will be convicted and saved under the anointing that flows from the presence of the Holy Spirit. Many schools will experience the presence of the Holy Spirit at assembly times and to the amazement of everyone, children will be converted, healed and delivered from all kinds of things. The name of Jesus will be the most known name in the school, which will lead to controversy over the issue of religious freedom in the public schools. Christians will not have to fight for their rights to public prayer or worship as in the past, because it will be happening spontaneously as orchestrated by the Holy Spirit.

Many secular schools will be virtually transformed into “Christian” schools because of the work of the Holy Spirit. All the prayer that has been offered to God by faithful Christian parents and children will come to fruition in a quick and powerful way as the Holy Spirit sweeps through the public schools.”

Be encouraged! Our prayers do make a difference. Jesus declared, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Our heavenly Father is faithful and we will see the glory of God filling our schools.

Miracle Education is a prayer network praying for all aspects of education, in government and Christian institutions, from preschool through to tertiary. Miracle Education believes in miracles and expects children to be healed of all learning disabilities, emotional hurts and addictions.

Miracle Education is proactive in prayer walking around schools, confidently declaring, “the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

Please visit www.miracleeducation.com.au

Please note permission has been granted to quote from “The Worshipping You”, which can be ordered at Amazon Books.



Miracle Education
Impacting education with the name of Jesus



Making Word and Deed a reality in the heart of Sydney

By the Rev Keith Garner, AM - CEO/Superintendent, Wesley Mission - wesleymission.org.au

In a park in inner-Sydney we gathered to remember the homeless. The grey clouds and bleak weather did not discourage us.

A chill wind blew along the gritty streets picking up rubbish and jettisoning it along the footpath – a stark reminder of the fragile and challenging environment that homeless people defy each day. Sadly, however, some do not endure and are overwhelmed by not only cold and hunger but a lack of care and connectedness to others.

Too many take their lives. Many die far too young. We cannot and must never forget them.

The annual homeless memorial service at Shannon's Reserve drew together around 100 people from all walks of life – the homeless and those who care for them, service providers and school kids, politicians and parents. Nothing is more important in a city's life than to remember those who have little and those who are without.

Wesley Mission has been in the heart of the city of Sydney for more than 200 years caring for those on the margins and bringing the good news of the gospel to those who are too often ignored. It continues to call people to Christian faith and gathers in the lost sheep with the love and compassion of the Good Shepherd because it believes that every life matters and has God-given dignity.

It stands in stark contrast to the growing number of high rise buildings and record property prices that are transforming our city and setting the context of an increasing materialistic and secular culture that can numb us to the cries of others. It is imperative that we continue to speak prophetically into this context and advocate for those with little or no voice about issues like homelessness, mental health, suicide prevention and financial stress.

The Christian community in the city is called to be prophetic. When Jesus began his public ministry, he returned to Nazareth and, when he was invited to read from the scriptures, he chose Isaiah 61: 1-2. The account in Luke 4 shows that Jesus was rejected in his home town. The Isaiah passage is an extremely apt summation of the Lucan understanding of the ministry of Jesus.

We have to declare the words and works of Jesus and how they impact upon us today. That prophetic role reminds people of the unifying vision that Jesus gave us, which begins with the good news to the poor, concern for the freedom of prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind and release for the oppressed.

Prophetic advocacy is also important for our community

context: throughout our history it is Christians who have led the way in the provision of community, health and social services, and legislative reform when people have been ill-treated, neglected or marginalised. It is vital that in a nation that questions the legitimacy of the Christian faith that we remind all people about the faith of those who dug the well of justice from which all now freely drink.

While Wesley Mission reaches out to more than 200,000 people each year through a wide range of community and aged care services the challenge of providing service to people who are homeless is growing. The numbers of those sleeping rough in Sydney is at an all-time high and emergency accommodation centres and affordable housing stocks are full.

Around one in four of the city's homeless are under 18 and 15 per cent are aged between 19 and 24. The impact on children is enormous.

Research conducted by Wesley Mission shows that life on the streets can leave children and young people with lifelong mental and physical scars. However for a growing number it is a far safer option than staying at home.

Our research clearly shows that many homeless people do not believe their homes are safe and that the experience of homelessness can leave an enduring negative impact on their lives. Domestic violence and family breakdown too often sets families adrift in a strange and unfamiliar world of emergency shelters or life on the streets.

It is a sad fact that nationally, almost one third of homeless people who receive support are homeless families – and that number is expected to grow in the coming years.

More than 17 per cent of Australia's homeless are now under the age of 12, 27 per cent are under the age of 18, and another 15 per cent are aged 19 to 24 years. Families are the most likely group to be turned away from homeless services while two out of every three children who accompany a sole parent are turned away each day.

Almost all of the participants in the Wesley Mission study felt that experiencing homelessness at a young age had a considerable impact on their life as an adult and any subsequent episodes of homelessness.

Many participants in the study felt that exposure to the stress of homelessness as a child had resulted in difficulty forming meaningful relationships as an adult. Others spoke about a sense of deep distrust of others and their inability to interact socially. Several participants spoke of losing their innocence as a result of experiencing homelessness as children.

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Making Word and Deed a reality (...continued)

Many had witnessed violence, illegal drug taking and crime – things they should never have seen as children.

What is disturbing but not surprising is that home is often considered less safe than the alternatives – even sleeping rough.

While the causes of homelessness are often related to domestic and family violence, eviction, financial stress and loss of employment it is other factors including crime, substance abuse, domestic violence and mental illness that play their part.

The NSW Government is revising laws which will enable tenants who are victims of domestic violence to instantly end tenancy agreements - rather than wait two weeks – by providing a provisional, interim or final Apprehended Violence Order (AVO).

Another change has been proposed: often when a violent partner causes damage to property or fails to pay rent a domestic violence victim ends up liable for the costs. That will no longer be the case: the perpetrator will be responsible for any costs.

While Wesley Mission has agreed to the changes, it believes that greater emphasis should be placed on giving the victim the legally enforceable right to stay and the perpetrator moved on.

One of Wesley Mission's other great concerns for the city of Sydney can be seen in the work of Lifeline. In 1963 one of my predecessors the Rev Alan Walker began the telephone crisis counselling service.

Sir Alan was receiving numerous phone calls at his home in Roseville from desperate people threatening to take their lives.

There are many stories surrounding the beginning of Lifeline but some don't recognise the enormous amount of work that went into those early days of launching such a service. In fact, it took the best part of three years to set up the organisation: establishing standards, providing the necessary facilities and properly training teams to do the work.

Alan firstly called people from the Wesley Central Mission to join him in the exploration. Committed men

and women met at our Roseville Manse to pray this service into being.

When The Lord Mayor of Sydney opened the service on 16 March 1963, more than 2,500 attended. People were asked to leave the building in time for the phones to open at 5 pm.

Today Lifeline Sydney & Sutherland volunteer counsellors take more than 34,700 calls each year. Lifeline has spread across Australia and to many countries around the world. It began in the heart of Sydney.

Wesley Mission has developed its understanding of its ministry in holding together the twin concepts of Word and Deed. Jesus conveyed the Good News in terms

of repentance and faith while calling for wholeness of life. The former Professor of Ancient History at Macquarie University in Sydney, the late Edwin Judge has pointed out that the Early Church was radical in its treatment of the marginalised and dispossessed.

It was this very conviction that empowered the Christian community to stand 'on the edge' of the great social issues of each generation. The failure of some Christians to hold Word and Deed together has cost the Church dearly.

In the not too distant past, critics would label some Christians as being 'so heavenly-minded that they were of no earthly use', the inference being that they either talk or pray too much, while doing very little. There is a new set of

divisions amongst Christians. The old denominational feuds (Catholic versus Protestant, etc.) have largely disappeared and we are thankful to God for that. However, there is one fresh and continually emerging division between those who focus on religion as an experience and a social culture – and those who prefer some kind of political activism. These two aspects need to be readdressed.

An authentic Christian discipleship must hold together Word and Deed. It has been the hallmark of Wesley Mission – the church in the city which preaches the Word and cares for those on the margins.

Wesley Mission snapshot

- *Over 1,500 people gather in Wesley Mission worship services in the city of Sydney and across Wesley Mission centres each week.*
- *More than 233,000 people are assisted and supported by Wesley Mission each year.*
- *More than 73,700 nights of accommodation are provided to homeless people.*
- *Wesley Seniors Social Hubs attract over 530 older people each year.*
- *Some 636 individuals and families received almost 2,600 gambling counselling sessions.*
- *Wesley Life Force has trained more than 30,000 Australians in suicide prevention and has worked with communities across the nation to help establish 66 local suicide prevention networks.*
- *Wesley Masson is one of the largest providers of foster care in NSW placing more than 600 children in care and organizing more than 7250 visits by children in care with their birth families.*
- *Almost 7,200 people receive Wesley Help at Home Services.*
- *Almost 4000 volunteers support the work.*



Trouble

Posted on 13 July 2016 by Dr. John Yates - <http://cross-connect.net.au/trouble/>

Personal Matters

It is not possible to get through a week without being troubled by news about the Church's response to same-sex marriage, a pastoral leadership crisis or some such thing. The people of God seem to be fulfilling the prophetic judgement; "I set every man against his neighbour." (Zech 8:10). God is using the moral and political disorder of the times to trouble us. This is a good thing in an age when like the evil kings of Israel we are used to getting our own way; "When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" (1 Ki 18:17).

Trouble Maker

The Old Testament unapologetically treats *the LORD as a trouble maker*. Moses remarks; "Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all." (Ex 5:23). And later; "Moses heard the people of every family wailing at the entrance to their tents...and Moses asked the Lord, 'Why have you brought this trouble on your servant?...If this is how you are going to treat me, please go ahead and kill me right now' (Num 11:10-11, 15 cf.).

(1 Ki 11:14, 23). Jesus came to bring trouble; "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

Trouble is often a sign of judgement on idolatry

And a person's enemies will be those of his own household." (Matt 10:34-36). Jesus prophesies

trouble in the most intimate relationships of all, the family. Such conflict is simply expected where Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists turn to Christ, why is it not present with us (Matt 24:9)?

The answer is found in subtle false worship.

Familiar Idols

Instead of being taught by the Spirit of Jesus we are being instructed by the false witness of idols (Jer 10:8; Hab 2:18; Isa 44:20).

Aussies revel in the idol of indifference; "No worries. She'll be right mate." Inside and outside the church we bask in a view that God is indifferent to how we live. On a more sophisticated level, like the Green lobbyist outside my polling booth, we are convinced that we have outgrown creation, natural law and tradition and have the power to construct a moral and spiritual world in our own image: *It is humanity which defines the ultimate reality of "good and evil", properties once reserved for God or the gods.*

Contemporary Christianity is facing a cultural crisis like that in Roman times.

Contemporary Christianity is facing a cultural crisis like that in Roman times

In its apathy the Laodicean Church seems like most of us; "you are lukewarm...you say I need nothing" (Rev 3:16, 17). Jesus however is not indifferent to their indifference, "I will spew you out of my mouth" (3:16).

The spiritual situation of the time was catastrophic in the following way. Down the street from the Laodicean (house) church was a temple containing an image of "mortal man" immortalised (Rom 1:23). The age old Eden-born desire to never die had been realised in a speaking image of a beast whose "mortal wound was healed" and whose number 666 is "the number of a man" (Rev 13:3, 15, 18). This was a temple to the Caesars, and whoever would not worship this living idol could be put to death. The power of the Caesar cult was that its worshippers did not want to die. Apparently this was a value that the local Christians shared with the general populace.

A willingness to suffer for Christ is hardly the mood in our churches today. Of this apathetic blindness Jesus would deliver us.

Bearer of Trouble

Unlike the rest of humanity for whom death is the climactic trouble Jesus was born for the purpose of dying; "the Son of Man...came to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45). The troubles of rejection, temptation, attempted murder and so on left Jesus unperturbed.

What then are we to make of his struggle in

(continued next page)

Trouble (...continued)

Gethsemane, “if possible take this cup from me...” (Mark 14:36)? The cry of dereliction, “why have you forsaken me”, reveals that the most serious dimension of the cup of God’s wrath is handing sinners over to a conviction that he is apathetic to their “sins” (Mark 15:34). The *most troubling aspect of a parent-child relationship is not anger but disinterestedness*, indifference and being lukewarm; this is what Jesus bears in our place on the cross (2 Cor 5:21).

Truthfully however there is no apathy in the heart of God and Christ’s death is not evidence of an absent Father but the place where the false fatherhood of Satan is exposed and vanquished (John 8:44).

Deliverance from lukewarmness ... lies in joining with Jesus on the journey to the cross

Here, Jesus “having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Col 2:15). Here he made the whole demonic host “an open shame” by refusing Satan’s lie that mortality in itself is fearful and shaming (Heb 2:14-15; 12:2).

Deliverance from lukewarmness for the Church today lies in joining with Jesus on the journey to the cross as a public spectacle of dishonour. We are being recalled to the ancient practice of the public humiliation of society’s trouble makers.

Spectacle

Many churches today are designed like entertainment centres, theatres or stadiums, but these places in the ancient world held a very different significance for Christians. They were the places where Christians as defiers of Caesar were dragged forth for torture or mauling. This was to be a stage arranged spectacle designed to image the triumph of the Empire over all other powers. It turned out to be a spectacle of quite another sort.

Take the example of Origen. In 202 when his father was beheaded for his Christian beliefs, Origen wanted to die as a martyr, too. But his mother prevented him from even leaving the house—by hiding his clothes. Thousands of

others however made it to the stadiums and by their undying faith in Christ joined him in making a mockery of evil’s threat of death.

The message remains the same today; “if anyone *suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God...*” (1 Pet 4:16). It is nearing the time when Western Christians will eagerly embrace the prospect of being hauled before the arenas of our time, like the law courts, to be mocked and vilified by those who think that humanity can legislate into existence the truth about morality. As if the ancient demonic lie, “You will not die....you will be like God knowing good and evil.” had at last come true (Gen 3:5-6). Only those unashamed to accept the death of reputation and worldly success can open the eyes of the blind to another world created by Christ’s resurrection *from the dead*.

With Jesus we are one in redemptive suffering for others (Heb 2:10-11). No indifference here, but glorious trouble upon trouble.

Conclusion

“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.” 8 And the people and the city authorities were disturbed” (Acts 17:6-8).

When was the last time you were labelled, inside or outside of the Church, as a trouble-maker? For us *not* be stigmatised means we share with the Laodicean believers something which Jesus and the apostles lacked, conformity to worldliness. Tragically, this exposes us to the very thing for which Jesus died to deliver us – being spectacles who can experience the power of Satan’s shame and fear.

May the Lord trouble us so much that the idol of apathy might die in our midst so that we may enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom 8:21).

When was the last time you were labelled ... as a trouble-maker?

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow in my footsteps he must give up all right to himself, take up his cross and follow me. For the man who wants to save his life will lose it; but the man who loses his life for my sake will find it. For what good is it for a man to gain the whole world at the price of his own soul? What could a man offer to buy back his soul once he had lost it?”

Matthew 16:24-26 (J.B. Phillips)



An Open Letter to Australia

By Kirsten Jack (Melbourne, Australia) - www.freetobe.today

Dear Australia,
We are an incredible nation.

From the natural Uluru to the master built Opera House, we display outstanding beauty. From the original inhabitants to the British settlers to later immigrants, we epitomise diversity, and enjoy its benefits. We are passionate, yet easy going, hard-working, yet know how to celebrate. We despise facades and welcome gut level honesty. So I probably won't surprise you when I *also* say... we have some serious problems.

We see never ending domestic violence. The victims suffer in body and soul, robbed of their safety and precious human dignity, tortured by ongoing emotional turmoil. The perpetrators also suffer – their inner freedom is destroyed by their own hatred, their own lack of self-control, their awareness of their own despicable actions. We are also robbed of their exceptionality.

We have seen an explosion of hatred – an online mob mentality that is stimulated by public downfall or error, ready to pounce and pronounce judgment. We are seeing the erosion of our sense of respect, dignity and ability to see the best in others.

There is an increasing and pervading darkness. It is most obvious in the atmosphere of our movies – every decade is darker than the one prior. Compare a 1950's movie to one today. This increased darkness is also obvious in our faces, in our eyes. There is a loss of innocence which screams out.

Our nation is blistering with porn addiction – a huge percentage of particularly men and boys are addicted to lust, driven for a hit, minds altered, innocence lost, robbed of intellectual creativity and freedom because of the addiction that stalks them. And we as a

nation are robbed of their finery, of their purest contribution to family and society. Not to mention the many partners who suffer silent anguish.

We see a tsunami of depression. It's everywhere. Depression sucks the life out of people, robs them of their capacity, their ability to flourish and change, learn and grow. **THERE IS NO FREEDOM!** We are robbed of their best.

There is more to tell. Each one of us have our own story.

I have to ask... Why are we suffering? What is diminishing our capacity? Where is our inner freedom?

I would like to suggest that as a society we are reaping the fruit of walking our *own* way.

We sing the song, "I Did It My Way" and "It's My Life". We believe that no-one can tell us what to do. 'It's my life, my choice.' And this is true. But we are reaping the consequences. And the consequences are *too much!*

There must be another way.

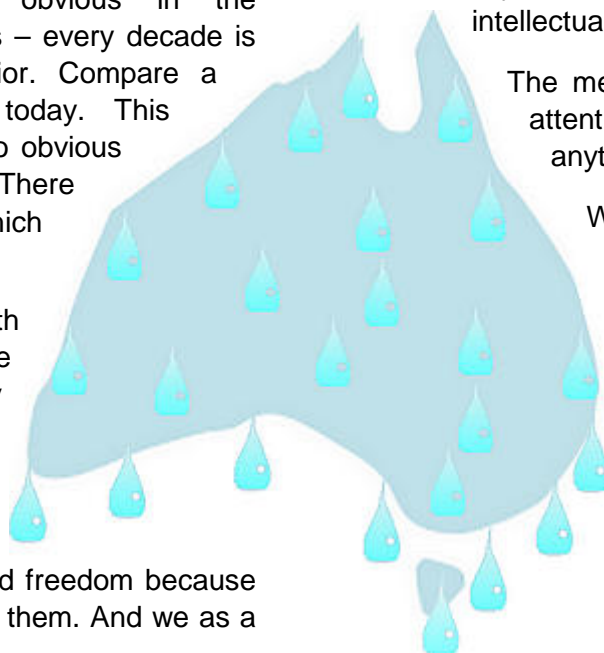
Our problems are too big for the government to solve.

They are too big for the universities to intellectualise.

The media can bring them to our attention, but they can't change anything?

We have millions of different opinions, but which voice do we listen to amidst the cacophony on the airwaves?

Nobody has a monopoly on national perspective. Not one of us qualifies for the job!



(continued next page)

An Open Letter to Australia (...continued)

I put it to you that there is only *One* we should heed for fixing our nation's problems...
And that *One* is God.

He's the only one that sees everything at once, every person, every problem, every pain and the interaction across the globe of all of these things, impact now and impact across the generations.

The God that was smart enough to create the intricacies and interrelatedness of life on the planet is smart enough to restore order, if we will listen.

When we want something done properly, we ask the experts. If God is the creator of our world, our brains, our emotions and our communities, then he is the ultimate expert, so why not find out what he says. Why belittle our potential by following our own myopic vision when we could follow the one who sees it *all*?

His way is very different to ours. The ancient Scriptures read,

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD.

"And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.

***"For just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so my ways are higher than your ways
and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."***

(Isaiah 55:8-9, NLT)

But what are his ways? And how do we walk in them?

This is an essential question that deserves an answer. I challenge you to find out.

What I will tell you is that God's way leads to inner peace, enduring hope and personal freedom. And on a larger level, to national peace and prosperity.



God is good and his ways are righteous. He personifies love in its purest form, whilst standing firm on justice and truth. He is both holy and revered, gentle and personal. He holds the keys to abundant life and gives us freedom to grab a hold of them... or freedom to choose our own way.

It is possible at this point in our history for us to grab the keys and change our direction. It is possible for us to humble ourselves and admit we are wrong.

I challenge my country, from the politicians, to the workers, from the business owners to those living on welfare, from the students to those serving our community – let's stop living life our own way and start living life God's way. It's a change of perspective. It's a change of priorities. And it's therefore a change of consequences.

I see a nation that *can* learn to seek God's truth and apply it in all areas of life, in every sphere of the community, for the building up of righteousness, with all the fruit that entails.

I see that every individual *can* be released into the uniqueness and brilliance of who they have been designed to be.

Why wouldn't we want this? Why wouldn't we sacrifice everything, including our own false freedom for the true freedom that is available.

In the words of Isaiah, the ancient prophet:

"Seek the LORD while you can find him.

Call on him now while he is near.

Let the wicked change their ways

and banish the very thought of doing wrong.

Let them turn to the LORD that he may have mercy on them.

Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously."

(Isaiah 55:6-7, NLT)

Please share this article on social media, by visiting www.freetobe.today





Marriage Week

AUSTRALIA

11 - 17 September 2016

From the website - www.marriageweek.org.au

What is Marriage Week?

Marriage Week is an annual celebration, initiated in Australia in 2007, to reinforce and promote the benefits/importance of marriage and increase awareness and value of pre-marriage and in-marriage education.

Marriage Week gives a husband and wife, together with those who are preparing to marry, the opportunity and encouragement to focus on their relationship.

Affirming that:

The value of marriage, which as a binding public commitment, becomes the foundation of healthy families, healthy children, and a healthy community.

Marriage is 'the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life'

The quality of our nation's marital relationships will be a determining factor in the destiny of Australia. The strength of Australian families depends on the qualities of the relationships between our nation's mothers and fathers. Therefore marriage should be encouraged, strengthened, valued and supported by society and individuals in every possible way as a social good.

4 Your Marriage

- 🕒 Join the Marriage Investment Bank to receive the occasional "tip" for your marriage and then the main return during Marriage Week.
- 🕒 Learn from the eagles! Download & read this message from Col & Jan Stringer on the website.
- 🕒 Send your spouse a message of appreciation - sms, an email or write a note.
- 🕒 Do you want to learn more on communication skills, conflict resolution etc in marriage? There are many books around and we have selected out a few that we like ~ download our booklist.
- 🕒 Download one of our special prints.
- 🕒 Check out your Love Language
- 🕒 Do you have that special married couple whom you have used as "role" models? Tell them of this, after checking with your spouse of course, and ask them to be 'mentors' to you.
- 🕒 Check out whether a Marriage Week event is being held near you.
- 🕒 Listen to Chuck Swindolls "prescription for Love & Marriage".
- 🕒 What is a recipe for a brilliant marriage? Download from the website.

4 Others' Marriages

- 🕒 Have there been family members or others whose marriage has been a model to you over the years, if so, write them a letter or card of appreciation.
- 🕒 Encourage others to join the Marriage Investment Bank
- 🕒 If you have a healthy marriage (no-one has a perfect marriage!) offer to mentor a younger married couple.
- 🕒 Arrange a celebratory lunch or dinner during marriage week for your married friends and or family and ask the longest married couples to share their secrets of marriage
- 🕒 Encourage your church to participate in Marriage Week



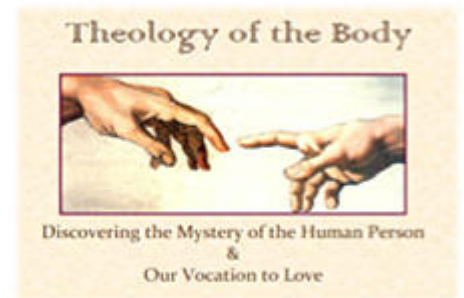
Theology of the Body

Head & Heart Immersion Course

In his work *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, Pope Saint John Paul II provides profound and spirit-filled insights into the hunger and yearning of the human heart for God and love.

The Theology of the Body *Head and Heart* Immersion Course will examine the main themes of the *Theology of the Body*.

Participants will focus on themselves and their relationships, with attention to physical bodies, viewed in light of creation. Other focus areas include: being created in the image and likeness of God, sin and redemption, Christian morality and ethics, personal freedom, gender and vocation. This work is based on Scripture and Tradition.



For more information, please visit www.tobaustralia.com.au

- Date:** 10 - 14 October 2016
- Time:** Arrival on Day 1 - 8.30am Departure on Day 5 - 3.30pm.
- Venue:** St Joseph's Centre for Living (64 MacKillop Drive Baulkham Hills).
- Cost:** \$600 per participant – includes meals, teaching resources and workshops.
- Registration:** To register for this five day course, please contact Josephine Beccaris by email: j.beccaris@syd.catholic.edu.au or phone: **(02) 9568 8136**
- Accommodation:** Accommodation is not included. There are limited rooms available at the Centre. Please contact Josephine Beccaris if you require accommodation
- Further Information:** Eva Tarchichi at eva.tarchichi@syd.catholic.edu.au or **0488 253 922**.

Further Details

The Theology of the Body Head and Heart immersion is internationally renowned for its personal formation and leadership training. Participants will experience thirty dynamic hours with Theology of the Body expert Bill Donaghy. The course will include: daily Mass, time for reflection, relaxation and socialisation. There are also optional opportunities for reconciliation, Liturgy of the Hours, rosary and adoration. The fellowship, spiritual renewal, and graduate level academic material offered through Theology of the Body is unprecedented – a life giving experience of the New Evangelisation.

Bill Donaghy

Bill completed the Theology of the Body Institute Speakers Training Program in 2005 and Head & Heart Immersion Course in January 2006. He became an instructor for the Theology of the Body Institute Certification Program, an international speaker, and curriculum specialist in 2013. He is also a Certified Speaker and National Trainer for Ascension Press. Bill's presentation of Introduction to Theology of the Body has been described as "riveting" and "life changing". He has given talks and retreats to laity and clergy throughout the United States, as well as Canada, Mexico, Chile, Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Prior to his work at the Theology of the Body Institute, Bill served in the fields of mission and evangelisation for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Through his work with the Pontifical Mission Societies, Bill gave numerous talks on the spirituality of mission to young people. He witnessed the love of Christ in the missions of Haiti, Mexico, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic, as well as within the realms of young adult and parish ministry in Philadelphia.

Bill holds an Associate's degree in Visual Arts, a Bachelor's in Philosophy and a Master's in Systematic Theology. He has taught Theology at Malvern Preparatory High School, and teaches at Immaculata University. Bill and his wife, Rebecca live in Philadelphia, with their four children.

**Note: This course can be credited towards Certification at the Theology of the Body Institute, Pennsylvania and is currently credited through Creighton University, Nebraska.*



Building Trust through Christian Schools – A case study in Uganda

By Davis Samuel Hiire – Lead Ambassador for Trust Uganda

Uganda is one small country where trust is lacking at all levels of society, in government, education, health, services, business and sadly, the church. The levels of broken trust are very high as evidenced in the behaviours of the nationals, ranging from corruption, human rights abuse, depression, and failure to keep promises.



Uganda has a population of close to 36 million people, has been ranked among the top most corrupt country. It is 139th out of 168 countries as ranked by Transparency International (<https://www.transparency.org/country/#UGA>). Broken trust has almost become part of our culture.

In 2012, I attended a conference in which Vanessa Hall, ‘the trust lady’, spoke about the Truth about Trust. This came at a moment when I feel the Lord was speaking clearly into my heart that I have to do something about this vice of broken trust. This encouraged me into inviting Vanessa to come to Uganda to run some training session in hope that there will be notable change. Thank God she responded positively and since then we have been running several training to create awareness and raise up Ambassadors for Trust.

Being salt and light through Trust in Christian Education

During my Ambassadors for Trust training, as I was working through my self-trust module, I discover one thing: it became plain in my heart that unless I do something to show how important it is to trust God and also trust in the abilities he Has given me, I would do very little to transform my country. Pondering on situations where I had previously failed to trust myself and how this has affected me and even the people around me, I chose to be intentional and deliberate in creating further awareness. This prompted me to resign from my position as principal of an International school and take on a role of developing a model Christian school.

This birthed to Oasis of Hope Christian School early last year. On February 02, 2015, the school opened its gates to the community. Starting with no resources, with only 49 students from the poorest families around the school, it was hard to know that it would grow into a dream model Christian school. But with the knowledge I had acquired from understanding the truth about trust from my Ambassadors for Trust training, time has proved the best judge. I applied the trust model in my young school, first working with my staff in building and nurturing trust with them, and then brought the parents on board. I did this for 6 months and the results started manifesting.



“where there is trust, there is no need to advertise.

This has worked at my school.”

The whole school community started applying the principles of trust in their day-to-day life. The parents began to trust the school by giving us more students. The staff started owning the school as their own baby. They both (parents and staff) began working together for the transformation of their children. This put us a better position to attract more parents without advertising. I would love to say, where there is trust, there is no need to advertise. This has worked at my school.

Today as I write this article, Oasis of Hope has 214 students with 18 staff. We have successfully retained all our staff which is almost an impossible things in most beginning schools here in Uganda. Our tuition

(continued next page)

Building Trust through Christian Schools (...continued)

collection has grown from just 4 million UGX to 34 million UGX within a period of less than 24 months.

Now, Oasis of Hope has started attracting other schools to come and see how we are making a leap in the shortest time possible. This year alone we have hosted 3 different schools that come to learn from our model of trust.

Christian Schools as salt and light in their Community through trust

As the regional leader of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), I believe the most effective way to change the situation in Africa is through teaching the young people the principles of trust while still tender.

After these many schools coming to learn from my young school and all of them asking me the same question, "What secret is behind your rapid growth?" And to all of them my answer being that we have worked hard to be a trusted school. I came to conclude that this project should be rolled out in as many schools as we can. Hence prompting the launching of the Building Trust through Schools project in Uganda and across other parts of Africa.

As a result of building and restoring trust in our school community, people in the community have started working together. The school, Oasis of Hope, has brought together a group of 30 single mothers who live hand to mouth. Most of them had lost hope and could barely trust anyone, but they are now running a savings group whereby they meet every Tuesday for both Bible study and saving money. The women have now come to a point of trust the school with their money. They started by saving 20,000 UGX (less than 10 USD) but now each sitting they save to a tune of 350,000 UGX (Approx. 100+ USD) per sitting. This is helping some of them access simple loans to enable them pay tuition for their children. Others have started running very small micro-businesses. Their hope has been renewed and trust has been restored in my community.



“Building of trust through Christian Schools is an effective project in that we reach the parents, teachers and students served in one centre, and yet these same people make the church.”

This is a strong encouragement that if we are to transform our country, then building trust through Christian schools is essential.

In Uganda, many schools have asked to be part of this pilot project where we will be actively measuring the impact of trust within the schools and more broadly through their communities, using kingdom measures. This has given us a lot of joy much as we are taking on 6 schools for the start due to limited resources. The Building of trust through Christian Schools is an effective project in that we reach the parents, teachers and students served in one centre, and yet these same people make the church.

Thus the dream of having a model school is becoming a reality. This is all because we have worked as a team to build trust.

Becoming a sister school in this Building trust through Christian Schools Project

The benefits of working hand in hand with a school in another culture are enormous, from the sharing of stories to encouraging one another and praying for one another.

If you know of a Christian School that may be interested in piloting the Building trust through Christian Schools project and becoming a sister school with an African school, please contact either myself, Davis Samuel Hiire at dhiire@gmail.com, or Vanessa Hall, Director, Entente, the International Movement of Trust, at info@entente.com.au. We praise God, the author of trust, for His goodness and grace.



MEDIA RELEASE

22 July 2016

Fairfield Refugee Relief Agency Loses Headquarters But Continues With In-Home support Since Concord House closed earlier this month, local not-for-profit Refugee Connect is still supporting almost 100 refugee families across South East Queensland.

Refugee Connect CEO Ken Myers said support for refugees and people seeking asylum will continue to be offered despite not having a permanent home.

"Now that Concord House is closed we don't have the space to provide food and clothing assistance that we used to offer for refugees in need," said Mr Myers, who has been providing fresh fruit and vegetables and other supermarket produce to some 20 refugee families in the south side of Brisbane.

"These families are resourceful and will survive without this assistance, but it just adds to their pressures that they face every day," he said.

"I feel for the families – as they negotiate a new culture, language and bureaucracies at all levels they now have to make sacrifices because of the food we aren't able to give them."

"We're still doing what we can."

"Many of the families we help rely upon our support for basic everyday needs."

"Without this support many of our families would feel a lack of community engagement."

Mr Myers said that Refugee Connect will continue to provide the following services, either at the Yeronga Community Centre, or by visiting individual refugee homes directly:

- **Adult English classes:** Coming from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Iran and other countries where English is not spoken, it's critical for these refugees to grasp at least a basic understanding of English.
- **Mum and bubs' conversational English:** Mums have the opportunity to also get English lessons, with children in tow, on another day.
- **Job search assistance:** Arriving in a new country, most previous qualifications are not recognised in Australia, so refugees need assistance writing resumes to get even a basic job to pay their way.
- **Homework support:** Refugee high school and tertiary students often require help as they struggle with the English and don't have support at home.
- **Assistance navigating Government communications:** Everything from rental agreement forms and bank information to immigration requirements and medical issues are foreign.

Mr Myers said he is happy he has the opportunity to continue offering these services to the community however hopes to, at some stage, find a new venue which can be donated for rent.

"What we do for the Brisbane refugee community is vital," he said.

"The participants of these programs are gaining confidence to communicate more freely in the wider community."

"And this has the potential to turn lives and generations of people around."

Refugee Connect volunteer Jasley Schwarten has been visiting a Sri Lankan family for the past four years and has noticed considerable improvement in their English and how they are settling into the general community.

"It has been such a delight to see the two older girls get part time work while completing school."

"With many refugees having left all of their family and support behind, as they fled for their lives, the volunteers at Refugee Connect become their surrogate families."

For more information visit www.refugeeconnect.org.au

About Ken Myers

With 11 years of experience working with refugees, founding director and CEO of Refugee Connect Mr Myers is one of Brisbane's leading experts on the care of refugees and people seeking asylum.

Ends

Interviews available on request

Media Contact Ken Myers
 Ph: 0421 076 306
 Email: ken@refugeeconnect.org.au



BUILD A KINGDOM BUSINESS - Foundational Training

By Ronald W Edwards, CEO Build a Kingdom Business - www.livingeternal.net

My mentor/coaching company: Build a Kingdom Business, www.buildakingdombusiness.com is changing its focus.

God's call for me to train up marketplace Kingdom warriors has not changed. However, God has recently narrowed my role and as part of God's call for John 17 unity, I believe he is calling me to work with other marketplace ministries so I am offering my services to those organisations/companies who can see the value in adding my foundational module to their training programme.

My role is to train young and older people to understand the absolute necessity of spending time in God's Word so empowered by the Holy Spirit, they can build a relationship with Jesus: "My Words are Spirit and they are life" John 6:63. How can they get to know Jesus, unless they spend time in His Word and prayer.

Also, they must be convinced God's Word is inerrant so I spend a great deal of time on why they can trust God's Word from Genesis to Revelation. An essential component here, is to demonstrate that the latest science supports creation/intelligent design and evolution is a failed theory in explaining the origin of life and the complexity and design so evident in God's universe. Also, fulfilled prophecy, the existence of Israel, Biblical archaeology, all confirm the supernatural truth of God's Word.

Once this foundation is laid I move on to the essential ingredients of how to listen to/ hear from God. "Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord." Deut 8:3 and its connection with prayer. "if you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, ask what you will and it will be done" John 15: .

Jesus likens the Word of God to spiritual food. It feeds the spiritual man (who is eternal) just as natural food feeds our bodies (which pass away). It is how we become partakers of the divine nature. Which is more important, spiritual or natural food? Where should we be spending our time? We need to engraft scripture into our lives so it becomes a living and active extension of who we are.

Scripture passages on peace, will enable us to experience peace even in the midst of chaos, words of faith will help us fight off despair, words of faith will enable you to believe God will change your circumstances, and He has a purpose for every situation we encounter.

His Word not only rearranges our thinking to align with ultimate reality, but it gives us access to Holy Spirit power as we say not my will but your will, Lord, be done. We are then interacting with the very mind of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The more we spend time in God's Word the more our renewed mind becomes open to "words of knowledge", words of wisdom, prophecy and all of the gifts of the spirit.

Life in the spirit is always supernatural but not necessarily spectacular. Whilst we like the spectacular, the continuous peace and joy that fills our soul as the Holy Spirit initiates divine appointments and ideas that prosper us in every aspect of life is so much more important.

A good starting point in getting to know Jesus is reading His Words (red letters) in Scripture and then Paul's teachings about Jesus. Lance Wallnau says, you should particularly note when Paul says "In Him", "In Christ" and "In Whom". Can I also suggest, you highlight the words/truths the Holy Spirit reveals as important to you ("jump off the page"). Write them in your Holy Spirit Journal. Start one, if you don't have one. If you have questions, write these down and mark them so you can easily come back to them. God will answer all of your sincere questions, and it is life changing when you experience how God answers your questions. The discipline involved in keeping your Holy Spirit Journal is a demonstration of how serious you are in developing your relationship with Jesus, bearing in mind this is being done by submitting to the indwelling Holy Spirit. As Jesus explained to His disciples, He had to leave them so the Father could send the Holy Spirit to indwell them. He would be their counsellor, comforter, teacher. he would guide and direct their activities as the Father directed. When the Holy Spirit came on the believers at Pentecost, 3,000 were converted on that first day of the church.

Jesus also warns us to not grieve the Holy Spirit or quench His work in our lives. He is the third person of the Trinity and needs to be treated as such. Understanding the importance of the Trinity is crucial in developing our relationship with God.

My business background managing the Australian affiliates of multi national healthcare companies and then thirty years operating a Kingdom business - Christian Press and Care & Share Products, provides many stories on what to do and what not to do in building a business, and even more important many God stories to demonstrate how God partnered with us in growing His business. As well as my business background, I have also authored two books (Build a Kingdom Business - Empowered by the Holy Spirit and Living Eternal Now - Empowered by the Holy Spirit) and I am currently on the Australian Board of the International Christian Chamber of Commerce.

If anyone is interested in working with me to train up marketplace Kingdom Warriors please contact me on ron@bakb.com.au or **0414412740**.



‘Prayer’

by Phil Pringle

Where are they?

Who is there?

Has felt the cry to breathe again,

Air from another world,

They breathe this wind with voice from there,

“He sounds like no other.”

They rush to hear the sound of the people of “If,”

Who heard “If,” and said “we will,”

Deep into the dark night,

Their prayers pierced through the noise,

Of an Earth mad with anger.

Broken HEARTED they cry for others,

As though it was themselves,

But their highest cry is for His face,

And seeking they find,

Emerging glowing,

Different, calm, unassailable,

The faces of lions, kings even!

This secret place discovered by the tribe of “If,”

Them who said “Yes,” and did.

Their land heals, their walk is strong.

They wear the face of Eternal’s realm.

This “If ” people.

The pivotal word defining our call is if. Nearly every response from Heaven hinges on this tiny conjunction. All the possibilities of all of our lives hang on “if.” This Scripture is saying that God will heal our nations entirely IF we will humble ourselves and pray.

It’s an astonishing insight that God’s own people are so disconnected from Him that they have to be commanded to pray. One would think that if we are His people, we would be communicating with Him on a regular basis. Yet, He calls us to pray, promising that “if ” we do, then there

will be answers. The most natural thing for believers is to pray. Yet, it is also too easily smothered. Revival is God’s people praying again.

Pride increases when prayer decreases. Prayer acknowledges that we are insufficient in ourselves. We need God and we need to pray.

“And seek My face...”

God’s face is discovered in prayer.

We have no relationship with God without prayer.

“And turn...”

The power to turn from evil is found in prayer. Without prayer we are powerless. Evil gains ground in the prayerless soul. In prayer we find desire and strength to destroy sin’s power over us. We can be told that sin’s power is broken over us, but this victory really only materializes in prayer. It’s the difference between knowing of the work of the cross and experiencing it.

If our spiritual life is strong, then we are empowered to do what God wants.

The ability to surrender, the capacity to do the will of God, requires the fuel of the Spirit, which fills us as we pray.

This is not the prayer of a single person.

It is the prayer of a people. “If ” we get ourselves together in prayer, united for the same purpose, then we unleash the greatest power of the Kingdom. Entire nations will be healed in these days through the power of humble, united prayer from the gathered church.

God has promised that our nations will be delivered, restored, favoured and healed if we, the people of God in all the nations of the world, will call upon Him.

All that’s required is IF!

About Phil & Chris Pringle

My wife, Chris and I, with the kids and some good friends came to Sydney in 1980 to start a church. We had 13 people at our first service but the congregation grew rapidly and we moved buildings, bought land and built a school. We began planting churches around Sydney, then Australia, then the world; we now have close to 450 congregations in our movement. Our 2020 Vision is to plant and grow 1000 churches and we’re on target to meet this.

*We’ve started C3 College for Ministry, Creative Arts and Counselling, as well as a television program and Oxford Falls Grammar School, all on around 25 acres at Oxford Falls. I’ve always been passionate about the arts playing a major role in church to make her contemporary and relevant to the current world. Our Creative Arts stream has developed and graduated thousands of musicians, worship leaders, song writers, graphic artists, dancers, actors and film makers. I myself paint and exhibit around the world. I also love to write, so I’ve mixed these two elements together in books like *Inspired to Pray*, *But God* and *24 hours that saved the world*.*

*My other books include *Peace, Faith, The Born Identity, Moving in the Spirit, Letters To Next Generation Leaders and Hope*, a book that we are currently doing a series on in our services – You can subscribe to our podcasts on itunes.apple.com. My great love is the local church. I believe she is the hope of our world today. When she functions in the power of the Holy Spirit and lives on the Word she will thrive.*

See you in Church!

You can find out more about C3 Church at myc3church.net & connect with Phil on Instagram [philpringle.com/instagram](https://www.instagram.com/philpringle.com/instagram) or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/psphilpringle/>