

THE AUSSIE OUTPOST

WIDER CHURCH PRAYER LETTER

November 15, 2003

Welcome to the latest issue of the Wider Church Prayer Letter. In this issue we focus on persecution by way of several articles and magazines. Persecution is perhaps the most important external aspect of living the Christian life that faces the church today. It is widespread and may soon be a major characteristic of every country in the world in their response to the claims of Christ. Yes, even in the west, where such recurring themes such as gay rights and religious toleration are beginning to impact on the lives of those who truly profess Christ. For example, in Canada new laws could be used to prevent the printing of the Bible as it could be labelled 'hate literature' for its views of homosexuality. This is therefore something that every Christian must now prepare for in earnest, for we may well be returning to widespread persecution.

ARTICLES TO READ:

- **Preparations for Sufferings: John Flavel**

This work is now fully hosted on the Aussie Outpost site and may be read at the following URL:

http://reformerkev.esmartweb.com/works_flavel_preparations.html

- **Free Grace Broadcaster - Persecution Issue**

The Free Grace Broadcaster is an excellent magazine from Mount Zion Online. This particular issue deals with the issue of persecution, with several articles from such men as Charles Spurgeon and David Martyn-Lloyd Jones. It is available in both pdf and html formats at the URLs below:

<http://www.mountzion.org/fgb/Fall03/FgbF-03.pdf>

<http://www.mountzion.org/fgb/Fall03/FgbF-03.html>

MEXICO

Terrible persecution has affected the life and ministry of Pastor Severiano Flores who works among the Triqui people in Mexico. These people are considered the most dangerous and violent of the Mexican tribes. A number of churches have been planted in

this region by Pastor Flores. In doing so the Flores' family has suffered great persecution. Recently Pastor Flores' wife was killed in a particularly violent attack, having had her throat cut. She died in front of her children. There are six children in the family. Please pray for Pastor Flores and his children as they come to terms with the loss of their wife and mother.

Also in Mexico, in Hidalgo State, believers have been prevented from meeting in the town of Cuatecometl. Believers have been forbidden to worship in Cuatecometl or to go to neighbouring churches by the local authorities, acting under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Some men have been jailed for short periods and believers have been threatened with the seizure of their homes and land.

In the region of Chamula some 30 000 believers have been forced out of the area by Roman Catholic adherents. Over 100 believers have been killed in the violence in and around the area of Chamula, including a pastor in late October.

More Information: <http://www.wrfnet.org/news/news.asp?id=873>

There is a Reformed Baptist church in Mexico City.

LATVIA

The former Soviet republic of Latvia is seeing a small but strong growth in Reformed ministry. Five Reformed congregations now meet in the capital of Riga, after decades of communist rule. Services are even broadcast on radio. The churches continue on, even without what we consider to be basic needs, such as songbooks.

A Reformed Theological Seminary also operates in Riga, having done so since it was founded in 1998.

There is also a small congregation in the neighbouring Baltic country of Lithuania.

GHANA - SHALOM INDIGENOUS FOUNDATION

The Ghanaian mission headed by Pastor Noah Quarshie still requires some \$9000 US to complete concrete work on the school building project that has been underway for some time now. There is also a need for sponsorship of a number of students (\$210 US a year). Donations for this (sponsorship) should be sent to:

Grace Baptist Mission - Ghana
4317 Spring Avenue
Halethorpe, MD. 21227

The mission is now beginning work in the mainly Islamic northern part (Pajai-Salaga) of

Ghana. A medical clinic is to be established also. Funding is required to help establish the clinic in the area (\$1500 US). A chief of one of the tribes has provided a building for use of the clinic.

More Information: <http://www.gracebaptistmissionghana.org>

This work in Ghana is supported by Outpost BookAid. For more information on Outpost BookAid - Ghana, visit:

<http://reformerkev.esmartweb.com/ghana.html>

TONGA

The small nation of Tonga is made up of 169 islands in the south Pacific Ocean. Some 100 000 people call Tonga home. The country enjoys freedom of religion and is considered a Christian country. However the country is dominated by Mormonism, Roman Catholicism and Islam. Some 20% are said to be Evangelical Christians.

TUNISIA

There are some 10 million, most Islamic, people living in the north African country of Tunisia. There is a measure of religious freedom in Tunisia, but evangelism is prohibited. Pray for the spread of the gospel in this land - especially as students come into contact with it in other lands.

ISRAEL - VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS - ANTONY SIMON

The work in Israel is continuing and growing, with more people coming to meetings in Kiriath Gat and meetings soon to begin in Tel Aviv, Lord-willing. Meetings have also begun in a hospital in Beer Sheva, where people are being warned by locals not to attend. Please pray for all these works.

FIJI - SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Vijay Chandra and the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church minister to both Fijians and Indians in Ba, Fiji. The church is slow growing and the church longs for further missionary workers to assist in the ministry. Please pray for this work.

SPAIN - GANDIA - IGLESIA BAUTISTA EMANUEL

Christian materials have now been given to over 5 000 people in the Gandia area, with more unbelievers coming to the church. Soon the church will be working through the book of Ephesians.

PAKISTAN

Christians continue to find living in Pakistan difficult, with Christians often being attacked. The country is largely Islamic, with many being militant muslims, some even have links to terrorists.

KAZAKHSTAN

Believers in Kazakhstan face an uncertain future with the government continuing to move toward an increasingly anti-Christian stance.

SRI LANKA

Typical of persecution in the sub-continent area, Christians in Sri Lanka continue to face anti-Christian forces. Christians are increasingly coming under physical attack. Some have suffered beatings and death threats.

ARGENTINA - CARLOS PAZ - DON AND GAIL DONELL

Recently a series of outreach meetings were held in and around Carlos Paz, with assistance from visiting Reformed Baptist pastor Omar Ramos from Chile (Santiago). The church in Carlos Paz was blessed with several apparent conversions as a result of the Lord's grace and the instrumentality of these meetings. The church continues to grow. Please pray for these new believers including Felix and Pablo. Pray also for Romina who has been interested in hearing more of the Gospel.

INDONESIA

Militant Islamic forces are continuing to terrorise Christians in Indonesia, though much of the more obvious forms of attack have died down. However, in recent weeks there have been several attacks upon Christians and churches in Sulawesi, with 10 or more

Christians being killed. Christians are concerned that Sharia Law will eventually be enacted in Indonesia.

In other news from Indonesia, the Indonesian New Testament is now ready for printing, with some 50 000 to be printed over the next year. Please pray that these will be used of the Lord.

PHILIPPINES - CUBAO REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

Please remember the Cubao Reformed Baptist Church which has recently gone through a church discipline situation which appears to be moving in a positive direction. Pray for all concerned.

From this month on Thursdays, the church is opening it's doors for the area's street people in order to provide a meal, as well as to provide opportunities for outreach. It is currently for a trial period only. This may well involve over a 100 street people. On Wednesday nights the church goes out to the streets to minister to the people by giving out tracts.

The church is also involved in eight church plants within Manilla and surrounding areas. Please pray as Cubao seeks to assist these works in every way possible.

PHILIPPINES - NAGA CITY

Naga City is a city of some 100 000 mainly Roman Catholic people in the Philippines. There are now two Reformed Baptist works in the city, one under the oversight of the Moonwalk Reformed Baptist Church and the other under the oversight of Cubao Reformed Baptist Church. The latter is currently led by Agnel Collao, a former Pentecostal minister and a student of the Grace Ministerial Academy. The current meeting place is a small building with a palm leaf roof. There are about 20, mostly very poor people who attend the church planting work. There are a number of outreach meetings in surrounding centres, with a lot of interest being shown in the gospel.

VIETNAM

Christians continue to suffer persecution throughout Vietnam. Christian leaders are being killed and are going missing, leaving families without a father and churches without a pastor. Montagnard Christians have been raped and suffered various other forms of persecution including shock treatment for being Christians.

More Information: <http://mnn.gospelcom.net/article/5143>

TANZANIA

Some 36 million people live in the East African country of Tanzania. Among this number are over 150 different language groups. It is thought that about 20% of the population are Evangelicals of one form or another and another 20% Roman Catholic. There is freedom of religion in Tanzania.

Prayer points include a need for Biblically trained pastors, as well as places to actually train men for the ministry. There is also a need for Bible translation work and continuing missionary activity.

Militant Islamic groups are growing in influence throughout Tanzania, with Islam making up some 30% of the population. There are also a large percentage of people following primitive native religions.

TURKEY

Most of the 68 million people in Turkey have no exposure to Christianity. There is freedom of religion, but missionaries are not allowed into the country. Christians also suffer some persecution in Turkey.

LAOS

Christianity has been spreading among the Bru people, a small minority tribe of Laos in Asia. As a result authorities have been coming down on believers in their area. The Laotian government is determined to destroy Christianity in Laos. Chemical weapons have even been used against the Hmong Christians. Believers have been arrested and some forced to other areas in an attempt to isolate them from other believers. The Lord in His providence actually used this forced removal to bring people to salvation in the new area.

ERITREA

Believers are continuing to suffer persecution in Eritrea, with believers being arrested for taking part in Christian meetings. There are currently over 200 Evangelicals being held in Eritrea for not renouncing their Christian faith.

In other news from Eritrea a large group of teenage Christians at a military training camp have been detained in shipping containers for having Bibles. Several have been released after signing documents denying their Christian faith. The rest of the group is refusing to sign the documents.

SOUTH AFRICA - EINFELDTS'

Rene and Sonia Einfeldt are now back in the United States considering their future role in South Africa (if indeed there) with their sending church. A meeting will be held in early November with the church. Various items are currently being stored in South Africa as they pray and think over their future. Please continue to pray about their situation.

TOGO

The West African country of Togo now enjoys religious freedom. However, Christian missionaries and workers are few and far between, and Bible translation work continues to be needed. There are some 5 million people among 75 different people groups (with forty different languages) represented in Togo. Some 10% of the people claim to be Evangelical Christians. 25% are Muslims and another 25% belong to local religious beliefs.

INDIA - KARNATAKA - BIBLICAL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Biblical Baptist Church was planted in 1958 and is currently pastored by Billa Nelson Babu. In the year 2000 the Baptist Bible Institute was opened to assist in the work of evangelism and teaching. Evangelism is a daily activity in and around Karnataka, with the believers sharing a common goal of reaching the lost for Christ and of planting new churches.

There are now four village house churches, five Sunday Schools, four women's fellowships and two youth clubs in the area. Prayer and Bible study is held on Wednesday nights, with times of prayer and fasting on Friday nights. The church also seeks to assist the disadvantaged in the community through providing food whenever possible.

India is basically a very poor country, with the believers struggling to make ends meet for their own families, let alone supporting the ministers and ministries of the church. Please pray about this situation and if possible assist the work where possible. Financial aid is needed to complete the church building project (currently held up because of a lack of funds) and the usual ministries of the church.

Funds have been given to the church allowing it to give Bibles to new converts.

NIGERIA

Christians in the African country of Nigeria continue to face harassment from Islamic

extremists. Recently a number of Christian villages were attacked with a number of Christians being killed. The Christians in Gombe State were attacked for resisting the Islamic Sharia law that has been imposed in most of Islamic northern Nigeria.

Also in Nigeria believers have been killed in clashes with Muslim students at a school. Clearly there is a need to pray for believers in Nigeria, especially that they react appropriately to persecution.

TAJKISTAN

In the Islamic dominated former Soviet republic of Tajikistan there is freedom of religion, however pressure is continuing to build from surrounding Islamic states such as Iran for further Islamic influence.

There is a very small, yet growing number of Evangelical Christians in Tajikistan. Evangelism is allowed in the country, but no missionaries.

Other prayer points include the printing and distribution of the Bible and other Christian books in the Tajik language.

CHINA

Persecution continues in communist China with 170 Christians recently arrested in Nanyang, in Henan province. Most of these believers, having been warned, were released. However, those identified as leaders in the house church movement remain under arrest. Another believer has been arrested in Zhejiang province, with various goods confiscated from his home including his computer and address book.

SYRIA

Some 17.6 million people live in the Islamic country of Syria. Though largely Islamic (90%), there is a measure of religious freedom. Only 0.1% of the population is considered to be Evangelical and these are closely watched by the government. Please pray that more missionaries will be allowed into the country and that for longer periods of time. Pray also for our brethren who face enormous pressure from their Islamic countrymen.

VISIT US ONLINE

Please visit The Aussie Reformed Baptist Outpost online at:
<http://reformerkev.esmartweb.com>

The Outpost Wider Church Awareness Site can be found at:
<http://reformerkev.esmartweb.com/widerindex.html>

The Outpost BookAid ministry can be found at:
<http://reformerkev.esmartweb.com/bookaid.html>

For email contact and further information regarding aid to the various ministries mentioned in the prayer letter, Kevin can be contacted at:
nrbcpastorkev@yahoo.com.au

If you are of Reformed Baptist persuasion and would like to add news of your church or work, or add requests for prayer to this prayer letter, please contact Kevin on the above Email address.

For ' snail mail,' write to ' The Aussie Reformed Baptist Outpost 27 Middle Street, Cardiff South, NSW, Australia, 2285.

We thank all sources of information that have made this prayer letter possible and ask the church at large to commit to praying for one another. Brethren, please pray for us.