

PRAYER ALERT...

'If my people....will humble themselves and pray' ^{2 Chr 7:14}

Informing and equipping Christians - Online and to Inbox

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PRAISE REPORTS

■ Bake Off's Martha: Christianity is 'such good news'

A 17-year-old Great British Bake-Off contestant has said she is not ashamed of being a Christian as it is 'such good news'. In an interview for the Christian Today website, Martha Collison said it is 'the most amazing thing' to be able to rely on God in difficult times. Martha, who is the youngest contestant on this year's show, commented: 'I think that being a Christian is one of the main things that defines me as a person'. She grew up in a Christian home and her father is an elder at their church where she helps with the children's work. Responding to a question on whether she is especially conscious now of being open about her faith, she said: 'I think there's nothing to be ashamed of in having a faith, and especially being a Christian. It's such a big part of my life that I couldn't hide it and I wouldn't want to. I'd rather be open about it'.

Praise: [God for the testimony of Martha and pray that others will be blessed by the good news. \(Ro.10:15b\)](#)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/bake-offs-martha-christianity-is-such-good-news/>

■ God's healing power at an IHOP event

At a New Jersey summer camp children are encouraged to pray for the sick. A team member writes, 'During the service I called out a word of knowledge about cancer and a woman with ovarian cancer came forward. The children prayed over her for over an hour, contending for the cancer to be gone. The scene was glorious as I watched the children praying fervently for a miracle from the Lord. One young boy told Lois that he had had a vision of the tumour being struck with a hammer. The lady visited the doctor soon after receiving prayer. There is no cancer anywhere in her body! The doctor told her that the mass was broken off like it was struck with a hammer and that it had passed from her body with no trace left behind. Amazing! When God heals a body, the works of God are displayed (Jn. 9:3)

Praise: [and thank God for His Holy Spirit, let's continue to press in for the power of God to be released in greater measure on those in need of His touch.\(Mt.12:28\)](#)

More: <http://www.ihopkc.org/blog/latest-news/something-wonderful-happened-new-jersey-summer/>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Scotland: After the vote

The question YES or NO will have far-reaching consequences, alienated communities, divided families and even separated church congregations. In a recent TV debate the candidates for both sides agreed on the need of justice and fairness but

disagreed on how it could be achieved. In the coming months we can pray that there will no longer be us and them, only us in the communities that have recently become divided. The eyes of the world are on us, perhaps wondering how we deal with our differences. On Radio 4 Thought for the Day on Wednesday the Rev Lorna Hood suggested that we look at Jesus's disciples. Matthew the tax collector and Simon the Zealot were divided in their politics and opinions of how Jesus's mission could be accomplished. Yet with His guidance they took God's message of love and hope to the ends of the earth.

Pray: that Scotland finds unity and identity beyond the vote and comes together once again as a nation. (Lk.11:1-4)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p026tzbw>

□ **United Kingdom: After the vote**

Whatever the result, the Referendum will have a profound impact on the whole of the UK. It remains to be seen what effect the emotions and forces released by this campaign will have on the unity of the British state, as parts of England are now calling for strong regional assemblies with devolved powers similar to those enjoyed by the Scottish Parliament and, to a lesser extent, by the Assemblies that exist in Wales and Northern Ireland. Please pray for the spiritual life of our nations after the vote. Pray for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our nations, that Church leaders will rise again, empowered to be bold, fearless and to speak with wisdom and authority into every level of society. Pray that the chorus of recent intercession ascended to heaven will bring about a situation that whatever the result, the atmosphere over these nations will be changed for the better, and permanently.

Pray: that prayer will not cease on Thursday but continue until God sends revival to His Church and reformation to the nations. Pray also for integrity after the vote and that promises made will be honoured. (Lk.11:1-4)

More: <http://www.ucb.co.uk/scotland%E2%80%99s-day-destiny>

□ **The government wants to know how difficult it is to be a Christian at work – so let's tell them**

You can almost guarantee these days that every couple of months there'll be another 'Christian persecution' story making its way into the papers that tells of a Christian trying to get on and do their job, but because they choose to stay true to their beliefs they end up being accused up of being intolerant and awkward. Christians in Parliament and the Church of England have asked for an online questionnaire on this issue to be promoted amongst Christians. If you have something to share about faith at work, whether it is big or small, it will take about 30 minutes to fill the online form in.

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/about-us/our-work/key-projects/religion-or-belief-tell-us-about-your-experiences> If you know someone who has an experience that has affected them then please pass the link on. We have until October the 14th to tell the government what is really happening up and down the country in our places of employment.

Pray: that all Christian workers who have been persecuted for their faith will be bold and speak out. (2Cor.6:1)

More: <http://godandpoliticsuk.org/2014/09/11/the-government-wants-to-know-how-difficult-it-is-to-be-a-christian-at-work-so-lets-tell-them/>

□ **Britain becomes breeding ground for Islamic terrorism**

Britain is fast becoming a breeding ground for Islamic radicalism as British-born Muslims flock to the Middle East to join the growing jihad. An average of seven Britons a week are travelling to Syria and Iraq along a wide stretch on the Turkish border which has come to be known as the 'Gateway to Jihad.' In total, 2,000 British Muslims have travelled this route to fight in the jihad, Khalid Mahmood, MP for Perry Barr, has warned. Concern is increasing that when these British citizens return home they could unleash terror on UK streets. Once in the Middle East, these British citizens have been joining the brutal terrorist group IS (also known as ISIS and ISIL), a successor group to Al-Qaeda with strong roots in the Muslim Brotherhood. Al-Qaeda has recently distanced itself from IS because of its unimaginable brutality, which the BBC reported includes atrocities such as 'targeted killings, forced conversions, slavery, sexual abuse, and the besieging of entire communities.'

Pray: that those who are attracted to radical forms of Islam will be halted in their tracks and led by the Holy Spirit to hear the truth. (Ps.23:3)

More: <http://www.christianvoice.org.uk/index.php/islamic-terrorism-in-britain/>

□ **Ofsted wave of no-notice inspections**

There will be 40 unannounced school inspections across England this month, Ofsted has revealed. After the so-called Trojan Horse allegations in Birmingham, there were proposals for inspectors to visit schools without warning. There had been claims that schools given advance warning had time to conceal any unacceptable behaviour. Ofsted chief Sir Michael Wilshaw says parents expect inspectors to 'get to the heart of any problems'. Among the schools criticised in the Trojan Horse inquiries were some which Ofsted had previously graded as outstanding. Ofsted has revealed that inspectors have returned for monitoring checks on five of the Birmingham schools placed into special measures after the Trojan Horse investigations. Sir Michael accompanied inspectors at Park View School - with the results of these monitoring inspectors expected to be published in the near future. At present, schools are told they are to be inspected in the afternoon before Ofsted inspectors arrive.

Pray: for those responsible for educating our children and those who monitor their work and set standards. (Ps.17:6)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-29206088>

□ **Children of married parents are better behaved, research finds**

Children raised in marital homes are better behaved than those brought up by unmarried parents, according to major research funded by the Department for Education. The study of around 3,000 children aged three to sixteen found that those with married parents showed lower levels of anti-social behaviour and hyperactivity. They were also more confident, kind and responsible, according to the research from the University of Oxford and the University of London. The study, launched in 1997, tracked the long-term impact of factors such as financial income, social class and marital status on exam grades and behaviour. It covered a child's self-regulation, which includes traits such as showing leadership, confidence and taking responsibility, alongside pro-social behaviour, anti-social behaviour, and hyperactivity. The study said: 'The marital

status of parents in the early years, when children were first recruited to the study, was also a significant predictor of changes in self-regulation and pro-social behaviour during secondary education.'

Pray: that the results of this survey will again emphasise the importance of family life and marriage, (Pr.11:29)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/kids-of-married-parents-are-better-behaved-research-finds/>

▣ 'Grinding poverty' leaving hundreds too poor to wash

New research released has shown that some of the UK's poorest families can no longer afford to heat water to wash themselves. Debt charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP) has released statistics showing that of over 1,000 clients asked, eight per cent had struggled to pay for hot water due to debt. Furthermore, 50 per cent hadn't enough money to heat their home, 24 per cent couldn't always afford to cook hot meals and 16 per cent couldn't run a washing machine. 'Fuel poverty isn't just about keeping warm, vital as that is,' Matt Barlow, chief executive of CAP, said of the survey results. 'It's about the grinding poverty that calls people to make impossible choices like do I make a hot meal or bath the kids? Will I run out of electricity if I use the washing machine?' CAP client Jo was forced to survive on food parcels and feed her five children cold food because she couldn't afford to pay the bills.

Pray: for all those who are in need and pray that ways will be found to get them out of the debt trap. (Mt.6:12)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/grinding.poverty.leaving.hundreds.too.poor.to.wash/40650.htm>

EUROPE

▣ Ukraine crisis: Rebels defiant over new self-rule law

Ukraine's parliament has granted self-rule to parts of eastern regions held by pro-Russian rebels, as well as an amnesty for the fighters themselves. A senior Ukrainian rebel leader has told the BBC that a new law granting self-rule to parts of the east will not sway the demand for independence. Andrei Purgin said there were no plans to develop any political relationship, federal or otherwise, with Ukraine. But he said there were 'positives' in the move by MPs to grant self-rule and an amnesty to pro-Russian rebels. He said it could be used as the basis for dialogue but rebels would not give up on a desire for 'the Russian world'. The new law, which affects Donetsk and Luhansk regions and is in line with the 5 September ceasefire, was condemned by some Ukrainian MPs as 'capitulation'. The truce halted months of conflict between separatists and government forces. It has held despite sporadic fighting between the two sides over the past 12 days.

Pray: for the situation in Ukraine and ask the Lord to intervene, speaking into the minds of all protagonists seeking peace. (Ps.34:14)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-29232830>

▣ Malta: Traffickers accused of drowning 500 migrants in the Mediterranean

Traffickers are accused of ramming a boat carrying more than 500 migrants sailing from Egypt, causing it to sink in the Mediterranean off the coast of Malta, an inter-governmental agency reports. The account is based on reports from two survivors who were rescued and taken ashore in Sicily after spending a day and a half in the water clinging to flotation devices. The two Palestinian men, aged 27 and 33, were picked up by a Panamanian merchant ship. They told staff from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) that they had fled Gaza through Egypt and were requesting asylum. They said that the migrants were forced to change boats several times, but resisted moving to a boat that they did not think was safe or big enough to carry them. When they refused to cooperate, the traffickers, in a separate boat, reportedly rammed the boat the migrants were in, causing it to sink 300 miles southeast of Malta on September 10.

Pray: for the authorities to get together and find ways to solve this problem. (Ps.69:2)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/traffickers.accused.of.drowning.500.migrants.in.the.mediterranean/40678.htm>

WORLDWIDE

▣ Nigeria: IS gives advice to Boko Haram for an African Caliphate

When fighters last month took the town of Gwoza murdering inhabitants and raising its jihadist flags, a video was released declaring the area was 'now part of the Islamic Caliphate and Gwoza has nothing to do with Nigeria.' Intelligence agencies believe that what were once symbolic links between IS and Boko Haram have developed into a practical relationship with the Islamic State offering advice on strategy and tactics. Emboldened by the success of IS and now equipped with armoured vehicles and artillery Boko Haram is beginning to operate more like a conventional army in Borno Adamawa and Yobe states. Since 2009 terrorists have attacked government buildings, bombed churches and killed; but recently entire towns have been captured and bases to control the territory are being established, a move that parallels IS. Christian leaders report tens of thousands of Christians and Muslims fleeing northern Nigeria where towns are being captured, including Michika earlier this week. See: <http://www.independent.ie/world-news/africa/isis-gives-blessing-and-advice-to-boko-harams-dream-of-an-african-caliphate-30573042.html> and <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue24747.html>

Pray: that the ties between IS and Boko Haram will be broken by Nigeria's security networks. Pray also for God to provide peace and security for the displaced. (Pr.29:11)

More: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/isis-giving-nigerias-boko-haram-advice-on-establishing-african-caliphate-126164/>

▣ Syria: Vulnerability of Syrian women

Even though the Middle East seems to be more conservative in terms of moral values, dress code etc, it is no strange thing to see Gypsy women standing next to the highway in Lebanon (even in daylight) ready to be picked up by men. Also Gypsy women are pressured to bring in the money as Gypsy men quite often don't work and are not ashamed to send their daughters, or even wives off for prostitution, begging or to dance in nightclubs in other countries. This issue is not limited to Gypsies anymore. Also Syrian women are exposed to prostitution as they suddenly have no means of income. Child brides

are becoming more common as parents are forced to 'sacrifice' the one daughter in order for the rest of the family to survive.

Pray: that God will bless Syrians with creative, honourable ways to earn money and remove the lies that prostitution or child brides are the only options. Pray for the girls who are already victims. (Nu.6:24-26)

More: <http://www.cryoutnow.org/>

▣ **Australia: Prayer needed for the G20 agenda**

Australia's G20 presidency runs from 1st December 2013 to 30th November 2014. Hosting the G20 gives Australia a valuable opportunity to influence the global economic agenda and strengthen engagement with the world's major economies. During the presidency Australia is leading a series of preparatory meetings that will culminate in the November G20 Summit. Earlier this week in Melbourne a pivotal meeting of the world's Labour and Employment Ministers put the world's 168 million child labourers firmly on the G20's radar. They heard that one in ten of the world's children aged over five are labouring to the detriment of their health, education and their future. The scale of this issue and the complexity of global supply chains, many of which rely on exploitative labour, means a co-ordinated global effort is needed to reduce demand for products made off the back of children living in poverty.

Pray: for those preparing the November agenda to include protection for vulnerable children from economic exploitation. Pray for modern slavery and child labour in global industries to be eradicated. (Ps.127:1 & 3)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com.au/article/g20.to.address.child.labour/17946.htm>

▣ **UN evacuates all troops from Golan as Syria fighting worsens**

UN peacekeepers withdrew from all of their posts in the Syrian Golan Heights on Monday as regime forces and rebel factions battled for control of the areas adjacent to the Syrian-Israeli border. The UN has called it a 'deteriorating situation.' The withdrawal came as rebels gained control of almost the entire Syrian border with Israel a UN spokesperson said. Syrian armed groups posed a 'direct threat to safety and security.' Fighting from Syria spilled over into Israel on Monday morning again as a mortar shell struck near the Israeli side of the Quneitra crossing in the Golan Heights. Artillery fire from Syria has landed frequently on the Israeli side of the Golan Heights over the past few weeks. These evacuations mean that there is no longer a 1,200-strong UN force monitoring the buffer zone between Syria and Israel.

Pray: for an end to border-area battles between rebel groups. (Is.60:18)

More: <http://www.timesofisrael.com/un-troops-leave-syrian-golan-amid-heavy-fighting/>

▣ **Saudi Arabia: Christian prayer group arrested**

28 Christians holding a prayer meeting were arrested by Saudi Arabian police last week. They were abducted from the home of an Indian Christian in Khafji, near the Kuwaiti border. They have not been heard from since their arrest. According to Fox News a Saudi government minister claimed to have no knowledge of the arrests, which have been reported in several Saudi news outlets. Arabic-language news site Akhbar-24 said the religious police were tipped off about the house church meeting. There are contradictory reports about the group that has been captured. Some say that just adults were arrested while the Saudi Gazette reported men, women and children were taken. Several Bibles were also confiscated in the raid.

Pray: that Saudi Arabia will live up to its recent declaration of being a tolerant advocate of multi-religious dialogue and that the religious police will stop purging Christianity. (Job.5:11-12)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christian.prayer.group.arrested.in.saudi.arabia/40649.htm>

▣ **USA: Ready to take the lead in Ebola fight**

Ebola could become a major humanitarian crisis if it is not stopped soon enough. Political systems and infrastructures are fragile after years of civil wars. Hospitals and clinics in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are overwhelmed by what the World Health Organisation is calling the deadliest Ebola outbreak in history. New cases are increasing exponentially, the situation is a dire emergency with unprecedented dimensions of human suffering, men, women and children are just sitting, waiting to die. On Tuesday America promised to send troops, building materials for field hospitals, health care workers, community care kits and badly needed medical supplies. President Obama said, 'We know how to fight Ebola. We know how to prevent it from spreading. We know how to care for those who contract it. If we take the proper steps we can save lives. But we have to act fast.'

Pray: for immediate well-coordinated action that will avoid the predicted humanitarian disasters.(Ps.90:17)

More: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/16/health/obama-ebola/>

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE WORLD PRAYER CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, UK

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