

MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

Dear friends

Have you ever been walking some-where and a smell has suddenly transported you back in time? Or maybe you've heard a song and found yourself remembering a long past event. For me the smell of mixed spice always takes me back to making Christmas cakes and opening the biscuit tin that stored all the spices in mum's kitchen.

Memories are important. They make us who we are. They shape how we respond to people and events. We can find ourselves welcoming someone we've never met because they subconsciously remind us of someone who was kind to us many years ago. Equally we can be wary of a stranger because something about them echoes a time long past when we've been hurt or harmed.

I always think of the autumn as being a time of memories. As the days shorten and leaves change colour we seem to turn inwards more and contemplate the past. Our festivals and celebrations also focus on memories and on giving thanks for those who have gone before: All Souls, All Saints and Remembrance Sunday, all ask us to remember.

This year there are other moments of remembrance when we meet to give thanks for and to mourn those who have died in the last 2 years, when we were unable to hold full funerals or to gather together as churches, to mark their passing. In the Bible we read that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses who inspire us.

So, as we remember all those who have gone before, as we grieve the fact that they are no longer with us, may we also give thanks for all they have given us and live in the fullness of God's life

Every blessing

Rachel

CAST ALL YOUR ANXIETY ON HIM BECAUSE HE CARES FOR YOU. I PETER 5 V 7

YE HAVE HEARD OF THE PATIENCE OF JOB...

The patience of Job throws up many questions of how long he suffered? Some theologists estimate from between two months up to an incredible 50 years. One thing no one doubts is that he truly deserved the crown of life for all he endured.

Coming from a family of ten children I have an affinity to the Job's story. It is hard to imagine my parents losing all of us in one go. How do you grieve? What is normal anymore? Where is God in all this? Do you stop believing in the LOVE of Jesus Christ? Are the parents to blame? I, myself cannot begin to imagine losing one child much less ten, but for Job it didn't begin there.

Job's story begins in the heavenly places:

Job was righteous and blameless before God and man. Satan came before the Lord after roaming the earth. He challenged the Lord to take His protection from around Job and see if he would not curse God. God said he had permission to do what he wanted but he could not kill Job.

One day, while his ten children were feasting a messenger told Job, the Sabaeans killed his servants and made off with his 500 oxen and 500 donkeys. The messenger was the only one to escape.

While the first messenger was still speaking, a second messenger came and told Job, that lightning came from the heavens and burnt up his 7000 sheep and servants. The messenger was the only one to escape.

While the second messenger was still speaking, a third messenger came and told Job, that a Chaldean raiding party killed his servants and made off with his 3000 camels. The messenger was the only one to escape.

While the third messenger was speaking yet another messenger came and told Job, of a mighty wind had struck the four corners of his eldest son's house, where all his children were celebrating, and it collapsed killing them and their servants. The messenger was the only one to escape.

Everything is gone so what does Job do? As a sign of mourning, he tore his robe, shaved his head and then fell to the ground and worshipped - praising the name of the Lord. He never sinned or blamed God. Wow!

Now, I don't know about you but that is not the first thing I would have done after hearing of such catastrophic and cataclysmic losses in only one day.

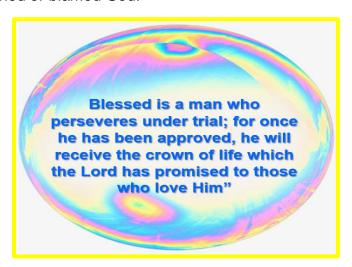
But Job never sinned or blamed God.

On another day, Satan came again before the Lord after roaming the earth. The Lord noted Job's integrity, but Satan challenged the Lord to take His protection from around Job and see if he would not curse God if his body was attacked. God said he had to permission to do what he wanted but he could not kill Job.

Satan afflicted Job with such painful sores from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet that Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat in a pile of ashes.

His wife, also grieving the loss of the fruits of her womb, told him to curse God and die. Job told her, "Stop the foolish talk. Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?"

But Job never sinned or blamed God.



When they heard of his troubles three of Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, came to see him – how long it took for them to hear the news; make contact with each other; plan to meet and travel together to see Job and comfort him. This probably would have taken many weeks because all three lived in different areas. When they saw him from a distance, they could barely recognise him, they wept; tore their robes; covered their heads with ash; sat on the ground with him for seven days and nights - because of Job's suffering they did not speak.

Then, day eight Job spoke and cursed the day he was born.

But Job never sinned or blamed God.

How long his friends stayed with him comforting him, conversing about his trials and tribulations we do not know. There came a time when they started giving Job several, long drawn-out speeches in which ultimately, they blamed him for the situation he was in. Job called them miserable comforters. They told him over and over again to admit he had done wrong before the Lord, repent of his sins so God will bless him. Repent and he will prosper. Repent because he deserved worse. Repent and all he lost will be restored... Job consistently tells them he is innocent and will be vindicated.

But Job never sinned or blamed God.

In Job 42 v 2, the Lord Himself tells Eliphaz that He is angry with him and his two friends because they had not spoken the truth about Him, unlike Job. The Lord commanded them to take before Job seven bulls and seven rams and sacrifice a

burnt offering for themselves. After that Job prayed for his friends then the Lord restored Job's fortune and gave him twice as much as he had before.

If we go back to the start of this narrative, it starts by saying, "There was a man named Job. He was blameless and upright; and he feared the Lord and shunned evil." – Job 1 v 1

We do not know why people suffer. We do not know what conversations happen in the heavenlies. This is why when people are suffering, we need to be there for them, pray and support them without casting the blame on them.

We do know that the New Testament reminds us that those who think a Christian life should be easy are very much mistaken for there is a strong correlation between perseverance and a prize:

- James 1 v 12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial; for once he
 has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has
 promised to those who love Him.
- James 1 v 2-4 ...We are strengthened by the Holy Spirit not only to persevere through suffering but to rejoice in it.
- 1 Peter 4 v 12-14 We are not to be surprised by trials and suffering.
- 2 Timothy 3 v 12 All who try to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted.
- Romans 8 v 28-30 All things God works for the good of them that love the Lord, who have been called according to His purpose... those He called, He also justified, those He justified, He also glorified.

Jesus Christ is the ideal illustration of perseverance having been tested and tried as a common criminal without retaliating all for our sake, to save us. One reason for tests and trials is to build our faith in God; another reason is for spiritual growth; yet another reason is as a testimony for others; the last reason is to glorify God. We need to pray that God gives us the strength to persevere when suffering tribulations; fight the good fight and finish the race.

Job was deep in his faith which is why he could say to his wife we must accept not just good things but trouble also.

Job never sinned or blamed God. What a wonderful legacy and great testimony he has left for us.





A Reflection on Life

I MET PHILIPPA over 25 years. I remember one day, being led by God, we needed to speak to each other about starting a weekly lunchtime group in 2001. I remember it was just us two for a few months. If we had lunchtime duties together, we would use this as an opportunity to pray while walking around the playground. At times I thought this idea for a prayer group was just for us, soon we had several members of staff regularly attending. Over the years we started inviting Christian students and their friends. We would pray, sing, read scriptures, quizzes (if you know me of course there were) and end of term parties – which many non-Christians came to. At our Christmas parties we had design a card competition and Carol singing.

We had several students from abroad coming and one student in particular whose family from Iran had to worship in secret. When her life was at risk, they sent her to with an agent to get her to Canada where her father's best friend lived but she was left at Heathrow. She came every week to the lunchtime sessions bringing her Hindu and Muslim friends with her. For her it was something that could never happen back home.

She was put into foster care and started attending a church down the road from her, St Hugh's in Northolt. At church she attended baptism classes and invited me to her baptism as a stand-in for her parents. We knew these prayer groups were important. Anyway, back to Philippa. People often said that she always had a positive attitude and a positive outlook in life. Even in situations that would have other teachers screaming and shouting in frustration Philippa remained calm. She always saw the best in others, things others could not see even with a magnifying glass.

She retired 10 years ago, how time flies, eventually moving to Southampton. We often meet 2-3 times a year, with another retiree, at Wisley Gardens or Kew in autumn and spring. Other times Philippa and I would meet at Harvesters or Beefeaters when we would pray for each other's children and grandchildren. When her 70th year was approaching, she starting looking back over her life and wrote the article below.

By Carol

Three score years and ten...a reflection on my 70 years

Born in South Africa to a reserved British businessman and wartime soldier and a warm-hearted South African paediatric nurse, children's broadcaster and antiapartheid demonstrator I was destined to become a shy but determined young lady with a deep sense of injustice and love of people especially children.

Somebody said recently that I have lived an unusual life. Indeed, I have. As a child I lived in 4 different countries and attended five different schools ranging from a South African government day school to a prestigious public boarding school in England. By the time I was 13 I had flown across the Atlantic 12 times (I was at school in England and we lived in the West Indies). I also travelled across the same ocean from New York to Cape Town on a cargo ship (it took passengers) with my mother and brothers. The route was so lonely that the captain set off flares to entertain us! My brother and I aged 10 and 8 would often go down to the galley and help the chef; I remember he taught us how to squirt jam into doughnuts (This would never be allowed nowadays!). I have also lived in 23 different homes and travelled to as many different countries including extensively in Greece where my parents lived for 4 years in later life.



I once fought a bull (during a bullfighting lesson in Spain), cycled 100 miles round Denmark, entertained the Archbishop of Canterbury (his niece was the headmistress) with my comedy part in a school play 1066 and All That; between countries missed a whole term of school; never gained any qualification whatsoever in Maths although strictly speaking you are not allowed to teach without such a qualification. I also gained a postgraduate qualification in Teaching Children With Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) without having any degree in the first place.

My two high flying brothers achieved the dizzy heights of commanding the British troops in Afghanistan and becoming CEO of HSBC in Manila in the Philippines. At one time, they had 6 bodyguards between them. Chris the younger of the two was awarded a CBE for completely revamping the British Army's Health and Safety procedures. Not having any lofty ambitions, I became a teacher.

Nursery/Infant trained at Froebel Institute College of Education my career which evolved rather than progressed took me through the entire age range of compulsory education. Starting off in a model nursery school in East London I finished my time in education in a state of the art all age academy in West London where I taught English and Information Technology in a support capacity. My teaching experience ranged from working with deaf children to children with a wide range of special needs (sometimes several at once) and physically disabled children.

My almost 40-year marriage to Malcolm a very talented interiors photographer tested 'for better for worse' 'in sickness and in health' 'for richer for poorer' to it's limits. A nephrectomy, leukaemia, three miscarriages, rheumatoid arthritis and bankruptcy were just a few life incidences we struggled with. On the joyful side two lovely daughters and five amazing grandchildren were born to us all of whom I am (and he was when he was alive) extremely proud. Although we once had to downsize to living in a flat, I now live in a 4 bedroom detached house and am well provided for.

The most important event of my life happened on 2nd July 1972, when I made the decision to commit the rest of my life to following Jesus. He took over the steering wheel of my life that day and I have never looked back. He is my peace in grief; my path through pain; my constant companion in isolation. He is my guide through confusion; the life blood of my deepest friendships. He is the answer to my prayers; the provider of everything I need. He is my reason for being. To quote T S Eliot, one of my favourite poets, He is 'the still point of my turning world'.

...and now for the next 30 years....

By Philippa Robertson

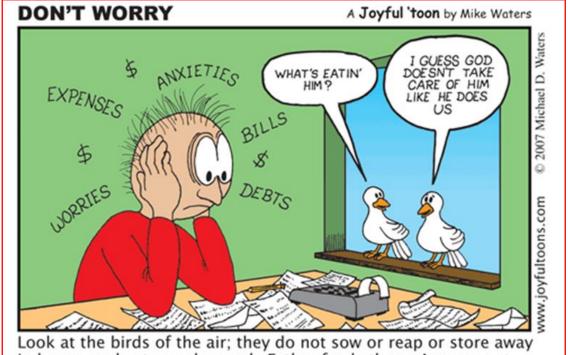


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in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? - MATTHEW 6:26-27 NIV



A True Christian Gentleman

Graham was a long-standing member at Greenford Methodist Church and a local preacher in Our Circuit. Graham was one of nature's gentleman. A true man of God.

Graham was often found at the front of Greenford Methodist Church, remarkably dressed, with a big smile on his face and a firm handshake, welcoming the parishioners. He was always interested in how you were doing. His love, race and humility made a tremendous impact. Graham was great because he cared for and served the needs of others.

Graham loved his Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart, mind and strength. He was viewed by many as a leading figurehead of the Christian faith. He was thoughtful, gentle and caring. Graham was always willing to go the extra mile. He was the prominent figure in the Sunday school and the Superintendent for several years. Lots of those he as children continue to have faith and follow the Lord our Saviour.

Graham's warm and loving personality, his graciousness, his generosity and his love for the church shone through the stained-glass window. He intentionally would bring people together and along. Because he was so good at relationship building, things got done. It would have been easy for him to slip into an authoritative power-mode but Graham's humility was the real power he had in the relationships he cultivated.

His humanity extended to his family, friends and anyone else who knew him. People liked him. Graham was easy to know, an open book. I was seen as 'The Tea Lady' in Graham's eyes. It was a real honour for me. Graham would often say...Joyce... nobody makes tea/coffee the way you do, you were going to heaven to make the tea! He would echo the same sentiment when he knew that I was scheduled to be with him at the Foodbank. I will really miss you Graham.

To God be the glory for Graham's life and all the years of service at Greenford Methodist Church. He was an inspiration to so many of us. Many people are mourning his death, but we are rejoicing that he is in Heaven with the Lord.

Joyce, Errol and family

Mr Graham Preedy – a reflection by Yvonne Hill

Mr Graham Preedy has left us a legacy in humanity and Christianity.

His stature and voice represented his faith and manner.

An emblem for Greenford Methodist Church and its long history.

A role model for all ages in his contributions and roles he played along with his dear wife Ann and their family. For example – Sunday School, Junior Church etc. All areas of church life.

Also, thanks to God for Graham's life:

The Prayer and Healing Services at Greenford were started through his testimony.

As a local preacher my Christian life's journey has been abundantly blessed and shared through his spiritual inspiration and faith.

"...Well done thou good and faithful servant..." – R.I.P.

By Yvonne Hill

My memory of Graham, apart from his preaching, is of him acting as the car parking attendant at Greenford. He was very definite about who could and who couldn't use their car park when they held events.

By Lyn Sallows

Graham Preedy Tribute

Extract from Festival of Preaching 2021

One day, after a morning service in my Mother Church, a Methodist Church in West London – a man came up to me and posed a question that changed the direction of my life...

"Jarel, have you ever thought about preaching?"

That question was asked of a young, timid 13-year-old boy. Who came to Church week by week, refused to go to Sunday School and sat through the services with his Windrush Generation grandmother who had settled in that Church many years prior.

The person who asked the question was himself a preacher – Mr Graham Preedy who, for years, preached in the Methodist Churches in the Ealing Trinity Circuit.

Graham, like the holiest of people, always lived with a word of encouragement on his lips, and a twinkle in his eye – radiating the joy of the Gospel, making no distinction between Saint or Sinner as he went about his life. God's Word, really was a lamp to his feet and a light to his path...

And we, who Sunday by Sunday, were privileged to hear him break open the Word could see that in him was the spirit of God – speaking to us.

There were days when Mr Preedy would take us from our West London suburb, and lead us up a great height. Such that he led us step by step, moment by moment up a steep yet steady mountain...and, reaching the top of our own personal Mount Tabor, or Ararat, or Sinai, Mr Preedy would simply point – and there ahead of us, blazing, was the most awesome, life-changing, inextinguishable fire...and we, from all our different backgrounds, with all our different burdens, and all our varied and diverse stories and scars – our hopes and dreams and fears – our weary souls and our defiant longings - we would gather around that fire – and learn its name...and like the Christians in Acts 28, receiving the intimate hospitality of the people of Malta, we would all catch something of its warmth.

And you know, the more we were lead to that place, that mountain peak, felt like home – it was the place where we knew ourselves to be those on the road to eternity - because Mr Preedy, in his preaching and his living – led us deeper into the mystery of God.

And very simply friends -

That, is the task and privilege of preaching.

That we, who are preachers, broken – unprepared – in need of our own conversion...

Are able to lead God's people, deeper into the mystery that loved them into being.

The task in which you and I share, or maybe the task in which you one day hope to share – is the most awesome privilege that there is.

To be a spokesperson for God. A conduit to God's purposes. An avenue through which, the truth that is ours – crucified, risen and ascended – lives, moves and has its being in our troubled and chaotic world...

...Do we believe that we do indeed have Good News to share, news that can comfort and convict, news that can change the world, news that can give us hope and transform the darkest depths of our age?

Well, it is true, I think – that people may forget what you say – but they never forget how you made them feel.

About a month ago, Mr Preedy who I spoke of at the beginning, was called to the bosom of Abraham. And so, as one mentored by him, I took the train down to Ealing and went back to my mother Church in Greenford. I was curious to see, if I might catch a glimpse of that inextinguishable blaze just once more...but Mr Preedy's fire

had been spent like those Wesleyan preachers who had come before him – like Sarah Crosby, and Mary Barritt-Taft, and Lord Soper and Dr Sangster – our ancestors in the faith who gave their service for the Lord.

The Church was full to the brim – full of people who knew and mourned him...not because he himself had touched our lives, though he had, but more crucially (in the truest sense of that word) because he had shown us the face of Almighty God.

His voice had fallen silent now, there were no more sermons to preach – but what we all knew and could none of us deny – was that Mr Preedy was a witness to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and he longed for and in fact had made us - witnesses of that same truth too.

That is the task and privilege of preaching – to say to the world, to those to whom we preach, in a way that they cannot deny – the words which all the apostles knew and lived – the heart of the Gospel, the faith of the Church, the fuel in all our fire:

'I, have seen, the Lord!'

By The Reverend J. A. Robinson-Brown

(If you would like to read the full article, please let me know?)



Graham at Bright Hour in Northolt 2009



Remembering Graham

I came to know Graham Preedy through his visits to Northolt Methodist Church as a local preacher. Graham found his Hope in God. He answered Jesus Christ's call and carried his cross and followed on. He trusted and obeyed. Christ was his life, his song, his strength, his faith.

Graham used his God-given gifts and talents to share the good news of God's kingdom. He always had a story to illustrate a point. The young people at Northolt

Methodist still remember how he used a pencil, a sheet of paper and an eraser to illustrate how God cleanses our errors and gives us second chances.

Graham Preedy was bold and uncompromising in his Christian life. He fought the good fight, he finished the race, he kept the faith. Dearly, dearly did he love, and we loved him too.

May the Eternal Father keep him in everlasting peace.

By John Arhin

HEALING SERVICES AT GREENFORD – HOW THEY BEGAN

Graham Preedy, a long-standing member of Greenford Methodist Church describes how an injury at work led to the start of Healing Services at Greenford.

I worked in our family glass business. Putty was used and one day I lifted a 1 cwt keg awkwardly and slipped a disc. The pain made me immobile, and I was lifted on to our van and taken to the nearest hospital. The only cure the doctor said was "to lie on a board in bed for 6 weeks". I was desperate after six hours on the board! What could I do? My wife spoke to George Frewin, one of our members, and he recommended a Christian Healer in Ruislip. I knew nothing about healing but was desperate to get rid of the pain.

The healer was Jim Akers. I was carried into his house and put on a chair. Jim knelt in front of me, held my hands and said a short prayer. Then he came behind m and laid his hands on my back for about seven minutes. I felt heat coming from his hands. He returned in front of me, held my hands, knelt down and said a prayer. Jim then said, "Walk over and pick up that chair across the room!" I replied that I could not do it, so he repeated the request and I again refused. Once again he asked me and I felt that I had to have a go! I got up, walked over and lifted the chair and could not believe it! I was healed, indeed CURED! I was really grateful and thanked him and he said, "Don't thank me, thank the Lord Jesus Christ."

Subsequently, I took others in need to see him and on one occasion Jim mentioned that he felt I could be involved in healing. I did not take much notice, but things began to happen.... I saw a couple of television programmes. Books and conversations seemed to come my way. We visited Holy Trinity Hounslow and attended their Healing Service and I knew I just had to do something!

Our minister at the time was Rev Gerald Gardiner, and in some trepidation, I went to him, and his reply was that something had to be done. After discussion in various meetings, it was decided to have a Healing Service on the first Sunday of each month at 6.30pm, with the first on the first Sunday of November 1984.



Graham and his wife Ann were central in the establishment of the Circuit's healing ministry. Between them they did much to develop the Circuit's mission and ministry and to encourage others.

Since then, we have never missed a month and I believe that it is heaven-sent that every minister who has followed Gerald has become enthusiastic and involved in the Healing Ministry. Long may our Healing Services continue at Greenford to help people in need!

From the Ealing Trinity Circuit website

Butterflies cannot see their own wings But the rest of the world can.

You...
You are beautiful and
while you may not
see it, WE CAN.



Respected Reverend

Chaplain Leslie Skinner, a Methodist minister who was the first Padre to land on D-Day. He carried 46 wounded men back to boats, even though he was injured himself, and how his Bible - tucked carefully away - took a bullet and saved his life.

BORN in 1911, the son of a York hairdresser, Leslie Skinner had his first job on leaving school in his father's business. He was a keen sportsman, swimming for York and playing football, rugby, and cricket.

He received his calling to ministry early and became a local preacher before being commissioned as a Methodist minister. He was 25 when he was given his first appointment, in Northern India, but it was cut short by the onset of deafness, which was to afflict him for the rest of his life.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, he joined the Royal Army Chaplains Department, serving in Persia, Iraq, and Egypt before an artillery bombardment in the Western Desert, in 1942, made his deafness worse, and he was sent home as unfit for overseas service.

He was passed fit again in March 1944 - just three months before D-Day - and was posted as senior chaplain to the 8th (Independent) Armoured Brigade. There he was attached to the Sherwood Rangers - the only Territorial Army unit in a force.

In the early morning of 6th June 1944, the Rev Leslie Skinner was so close to the action that his involvement in the D-Day landings almost ended before it began, when a mine detonated beneath his landing craft. Two soldiers beside him were wounded, and the blast threw him against an armoured vehicle, leaving him dazed, and badly bruised.

But he managed to gather himself, and pressed on up the beach, to begin a mission among the tank crews of the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry which continued through northern France, and into Germany for the final victory a year later.

A Methodist minister, who was given the rank of Captain, he meticulously documented his experiences in a personal diary that exposes in a brief, often matter-of-fact way the gruesome tragedy of warfare.

This is how he recalls that first day, as his unit stormed ashore on Sword Beach:

"Up 0500 hours; cold, wet, sea rough. This is it. Running for beach by 0700. Under fire by 0710. Beached 0725. Man either side of me wounded. One lost leg. I was blown backwards on to Bren carrier, but OK. Made it to beach, though I had hell of pain in left side.

"Bed on ground about 0130. Dead beat. Fell asleep beside half-track."

The diary reveals how he made it his duty to record precisely the burial site, and personal details, of each of the 153 men of the regiment who were killed in action during his time as their padre. It was a task he completed in all but six instances - and those only because he was away from the front line, recovering from wounds. Even then, his CO had to give him a direct order not to go forward, because it was too dangerous.

Extracts from his observations have now been made into "The Padre's Trail", part of the "Normandy Experience" exhibition that marks the 70th anniversary of D-Day at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford,

They show how he set himself the duty of assisting medical staff caring for the wounded. His entry for 8th June, two days into the invasion, reads:

"Late evening Lt Verner brought in, sniper wound to left chest - serious. Doctor dressed wound and I helped evacuate Verner to Advanced Dressing Station riding on rear door and bumper all way, holding bottle giving blood drip - nearly five miles of rough going."

The next day he wrote:

"Spent day touring all medical units back to beach area in search of regimental casualties."

The entry goes on to report the news that the noted war poet Captain Keith Douglas had been killed by enemy mortar fire near Bayeux.

"Forward on foot and found bodies of Keith Douglas and Lt Pepler. Buried separately near to where each lay. Occasional rifle fire while digging graves."



Capt. Skinner and a private wrap the body of a soldier. The cigarettes were supplied to cover the smell of decomposition



Writing the soldiers name on a cross before burying him

Captain Skinner's D-Day diary recounts the harrowing job of recovering the remains of dead soldiers from destroyed tanks. It tells how he refused to let other tank crews help, because he did not want them to see the way in which their comrades had died, in burned or smashed Sherman tanks - known among German troops by the macabre name "Tommy Cookers", due to the way they quickly caught fire when hit, incinerating the crew immediately.

After burying the bodies, Skinner then wrote personal letters to the families of the deceased, a correspondence which continued late into his life, long after the war. This must have brought great comfort to the families back home.

His entry for 4th August reads:

"On foot located brewed up tanks. Only ash and burnt metal in Birkett's tank. Searched ash and found remains pelvic bones.

"At other tanks three bodies still inside. . . Unable to remove bodies after long struggle - nasty business - sick."

On 17th August he wrote: "Place absolute shambles. Infantry dead and some Germans lying around. Horrible mess. Fearful job picking up bits and pieces and reassembling for identification and putting in blankets for burial.

"No infantry to help. Squadron Leader offered to lend me some men to help. Refused. Less men who live and fight in tanks have to do with this side of things the better. My job. This was more than normally sick making. Really ill - vomiting."

His work earned him the respect of the men he served with, and besides being mentioned in dispatches by his CO, he was awarded the French *Croix de Guerre* with palm, and the Belgian *Chevalier* of the Order of Leopold II with palm.

On 25th June he reported the realities of the front line:

"In burst of machine gun fire I dived into slit trench on top of young soldier . . . it was his first show and he was all alone. I assured him that the machine gun fire was way up in the air. . . he picked up a ration box lid and held it above ground. Burst [of fire] cut it in two. It shook me. When firing stopped I moved out. He, poor devil, had to stay.

"About 11:30. . . Shrapnel got me across forehead and knocked me out. Lots of blood but soon conscious."

He also recorded how the enemy showed their respect for the dead and wounded as he went about his gruesome task. On 2nd September, he wrote:

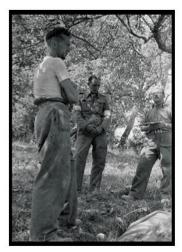
"Left driver and truck, entered village via ditch. . . Made way to village parsonage. Bodies of Sgt Cribben and Trooper Sharp beautifully laid out in white shrouds having been washed. I stitched the bodies up. Curé in robes led funeral cortège down street. The Germans had watched the funeral procession and seen the service from their tank without interference."

Captain Skinner remained in the Territorial Army after the war, rising to deputy assistant chaplain general for the London district in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, the highest a TA chaplain could hold in peacetime.

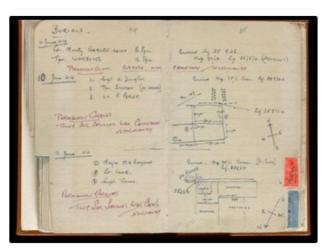
After the war, his ministry took him to Higher Broughton, Whitefield, and Altrincham in the north-west; Stockwell, in south London; Chessington, Surrey; and Corby, Northants. His final appointment was as superintendent minister on the Walton and Weybridge circuit in Surrey.

Retirement in 1977 freed him to publish his diary privately under the title *The Man Who Worked on Sundays*. He continued as a minister, serving in Epsom for a further 20 years.

Captain Skinner's daughter, Annette Conway, who was born in 1942, recalled how her father never talked about his wartime experiences. "The men didn't talk about it, and everyone was in the same boat. My father's wartime story came out when he published his diary."



Capt. Skinner, on the right, conducting a funeral for a service man



Skinner's personal detailed notebook with burial sites

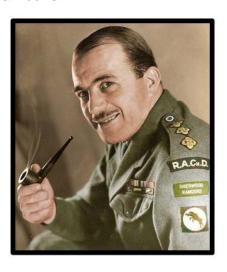
Her parents returned to France in the late 1940s to help the War Graves Commission identify some graves. "The War Graves Commission man said, 'Well, you said there were apple trees: there aren't any apple trees,' and my father said: 'There were when I buried them.'"

He died, aged 89, in October 2001.

His obituary in *The Guardian* was written by one of the tank commanders he accompanied ashore on D-Day, Captain John Semkin, who described his diary as "one of the most vivid and illuminating of all war memoirs".

He recalled that Captain Skinner had commanded the "respect and affection" of everyone in the regiment. "By popular demand, he wore, on his chaplain's uniform, the regimental shoulder flashes.

"He was supposed to be travelling with the medical officer, but he had obtained - unofficially - a lightweight motorcycle to pursue his self-appointed mission of ensuring, at whatever risk to himself, that no family should suffer the uncertainty of having a relative reported missing, if he could possibly be traced; and, if dead, given a Christian burial.



"His compassion was boundless, practical, and unsentimental. I remember him as a tower of strength, and a living testimony to the Christian faith."

1911 - 2001

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH – TESTIMONY

After the Bomb Came the Angels

Khalida Pakistan 2013

On a September morning, Khalida Marriam, eight months pregnant with a baby boy, went to All Saints Church in the old quarter of Peshawar, Pakistan. As is customary, she left her shoes at the door and went inside to join her fellow believers in worship. No one sitting with her could have anticipated or even imagined the violent acts that soon would change Khalia's life and the lives of many other Jesus followers.

As the crowd of worshippers exited the building, many found their shoes and headed toward the courtyard for a meal. There, two suicide bombers detonated enough explosives to leave more than a hundred people dead. Another 150 were injured. Several limbs and bloody clothing littered the scene.

It was the deadliest known attack on Pakistani Christians in history. That night many of the world's largest newspapers covered this tragedy, as did television stations, websites, and blogs. By the next day, journalists and bloggers had moved on to other news stories.

Khalida will never forget that day. A ball bearing - shrapnel from one of the bombs – ripped through her abdomen, instantly killing her unborn child. She also suffered a broken left arm and multiple fractures in both legs.

At the hospital, the doctor performed a C-section to deliver Khalida's son, who never drew his first breath. The doctors treated her arm and put rods in her legs to help them heal. The care was substandard, however. Two weeks after the bombing, the rods began rusting, endangering her life.

As Khalida cried tears of pain and frustration in the hospital, Christians stepped in and offered financial help to get her moved into a better medical facility. When she heard why they had come, she cried tears of joy.

"When God heals me and I leave the hospital," she said, "My first stop will be at the church to say thanks to God."

Accompanied by her husband and mother, Khalida then bowed in prayer with these supportive Christians. After she was transported to the other hospital, her mother said, "I heard angels are in heaven, but I see angels standing right before me. We never thought about going to this kind of expensive hospital."

When he learned that thousands of brothers and sisters in America were praying for her, Khalida said, "They are all saints. They are all angels."

Some people might argue that Khalida and the others who attended that church are the true saints, the true angels. After all, they courageously worship in a country where many people stridently oppose their faith in Jesus. They put their lives on the line sacrificially in order to worship the one true God.

Even after such terrible attacks, survivors such as Khalida still trust God wholeheartedly. They still place their hope in Him. They will praise Him. They still thank members of the body of Christ who help them.

"We pray every day to the Lord," Khalida said of her mother, husband, and daughters. "We read the Bible every evening and pray to the Lord for my healing and to bless the people who are helping me."

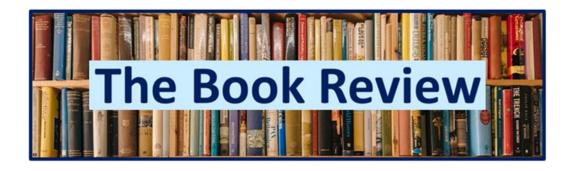
Jesus followers throughout the world are all indeed blessed to get to know people such as Khalida. To us, they are not "yesterday's news." They are in our minds, hearts, and prayers day and night because they are our brothers, fathers and others in the global family of Jesus.

Paul reminds us that as a body of believers, we are to take on one another's joys and sorrows: "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together" (1 Corinthians 12:26). This is true no matter where we live. No matter how different our life circumstances may be. No matter how great or small our needs may be.

If God's church is truly a worldwide family, then of course we suffer when another Jesus follower is suffering – whether that person lives in our home or many time zones away. Of course, we want to pray for this person as we do for the person across from us in our Bible study group. And, of course, we rejoice when we see the mighty power of God at work in that person's life.

Pray that God will continue to use the worldwide persecution of Christians to bind us together in a tapestry of Spirit-filled unity so we can truly experience what it means to be members of one body, joint heirs in the family of God.

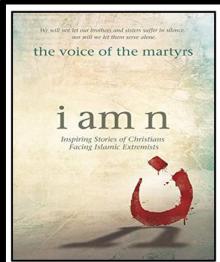
Excerpt from the book "I am n" by The Voice of the Martyrs



I am n By Voice of the Martyrs

I bought this book a week before the chaotic mass exodus from Afghanistan hit our screens, after the US and Britain pulled out their forces and officials in a very short space of time creating pandemonium and fear for those left behind. Especially for citizens (and their families) who worked with and for the western allies and women, leaving them at the mercy of an extreme terrorist organisation now in complete charge of the country.

Little did I know this book arrived at such a time as this. To remind me again about the persecuted church which will be defenceless against the incoming government. All this will be much worse for Christians in Afghanistan because those who convert from Islam are seen as anathema – an abomination that needs to be ripped out of society before they convert others.



Subtitled – 'We will not let our brothers and sisters suffer in silence, nor will we let them serve alone.'

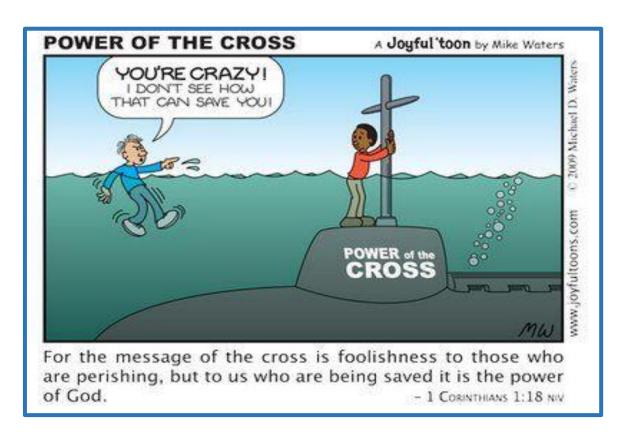
This a an inspiring and thought provoking read in holding onto your faith no matter what.
Written in 2016 by the Voice of the Martyrs

The reason I included this excerpt, 'After the Bomb Came the Angels', from the book "i am n", is because 8 years ago on 22nd September 2013, I remember watching the TV footages and reading the newspapers at the time it happened.

This book has many testimonies from around the world of Christians who will not give up Christ or leave their homeland because they have a deep desire to save their fellow citizens.

We are reminded to pray for those that suffer for Christ's sake. The book includes a list of countries to pray for. A timely read.

'n' stands for followers of the Nazarene! 5/5*



Doors

Some of us of a certain age, can remember the game, I spy with my little eye something beginning with...

It got me thinking about church. If I said, "Something beginning with d," it would not be long before someone replied, "Doors".

Following on "How many doors in church?" Then, "How many are closed?" with perhaps only one or two opened for a short period.

Can a parallel be drawn between these doors and those to our Faith, Soul, God, Heart and friends that are closed for whatever reason.

These past months have brought fear into people's lives, it acts like a chain around our legs, not being able to venture out, isolated, scared of contact with other people. When this chain brakes it is an opportunity to assess the way forward.

Many churches have grasped new technology to stream their services, opening the doors to faith 24/7, worldwide to people who would not normally go to church. Some of these people might be looking to attend their local church for the first time. So, it is important to make the doors to our church open and inclusive.

For those of us who have been attending church for a long time we forget how big a step it is for someone to enter a church for the first time. Each time they would have passed the church, the doors would be closed, and they have no idea what to expect.

Are the doors to our churches and Faith closed to newcomers? Are we happy with them closed, so we feel more comfortable and inclusive? Keeping the doors closed to new ideas??

Should we open the doors and reach out to the community?

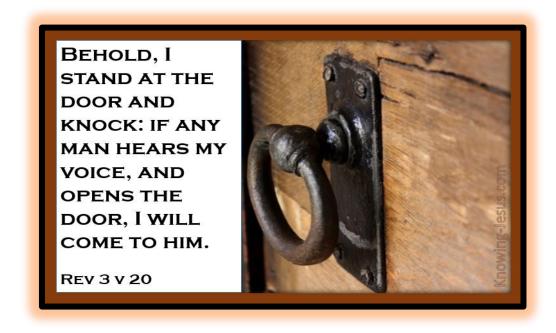
As for ourselves, it could be a time for reflection of how our "doors" are closed to friends and family members we have fallen out with, it might be that opening them could bring joy and happiness.

Most importantly, are the "doors" to our Heart and Soul closed to God and only open for a few minutes? Let's try and keep these doors open 24/7 so God can enter our lives. Lots of things for you to ponder over a cuppa

One final thought: -

It's not who we were, but who we are now.

By Richard Cotton



THANK YOU FOR EVERY NEW GOOD MORNING

Born in Konstanz, Martin Schneider (1930–2017) studied theology and church music in Heidelberg, and Basel. From 1958 he worked first as a vicar and from 1960 to 1970 as teacher of religion During these years he began to build a wide-ranging church music work. He temporarily was a part-time church musician at two churches, in the church district of Freiburg.

In 1958, he won a prize for organ improvisation at the International Improvisation Competition. In 1961, he founded the concert choir Heinrich-Schütz-Kantorei. In the same year he wrote Thank You for a competition run by the Evangelische Akademie Tutzing for new sacred songs in the jazz or pop genres. The song won first prize in the competition, and later spent six weeks in the German pop-charts. However, the more recent recordings of the song suggest that the German song, at least, is now mainly seen as a children's song.

In 1970, Schneider was appointed church music director. From 1970 to 1995, he held the position of church musician and from 1975 to 1995 the office of *Landeskantor* for Southern Baden. From 1963 to 1997, he lectured at the Musikhochschule and was appointed professor in 1980.

This simple song of thankfulness has been translated into more than 25 languages.

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by Martin G. Schneider

Thank You for waking me this morning;

Thank You for giving me today;

Thank You, for every new day dawning

I'll be thanking You.

Thank You for every tree and flower,

Thank You for every sky of blue.

Thank You, I should be every hour

Truly thanking You.

Thank You for every note of music

Thank You for every song I sing

Thank You for giving me sweet music

Thanks for everything.

Thank You for everything You give me

Thank You for everything we share

Thank You for simply being with me

Thanks for being here.

Thank You for cheering me with laughter

Thank You for every smile You bring

Thank You for now and ever after

Thanks for everything.

Thank You for waking me this morning:

Thank You for giving me today;

Thank You! For every new day dawning

I'll be thanking You.

For every new day dawning,

I'll be thanking You.

Every woman that walks with God has a story to tell:

Sarah would tell you; nothing is too hard for God.

Hagar will tell you, even in the wilderness God is there.

Rahab will tell you; God can use anything.

Hannah will tell you; My God answers prayer.

Ruth will tell you, it's not over until He says so.

Esther will tell you; God can turn a nobody into a somebody.

Elizabeth will tell you; you will give birth to greatness.

Mary will tell you; it shall be unto you according to God's word.

The woman with the issue of blood will tell you; when all fails God never fails.

Mary and Martha will tell you; dead things can live again.

Dorcas will tell you; God never forgets

ONE ACT OF KINDNESS – an Olympic story

During the summer Olympics a video was doing the rounds on social media called the 'Good Samaritan'. Here is the gist of what happened.

Jamaican athlete Hansle Parchment was on his way to the stadium for his 110 m hurdle race when he realised, he had boarded the wrong bus and ended up at the aquatic centre instead of the stadium. When Hansle had realised his mistake, he tried to get on one the official Olympic cars but because he had not booked one, he could not get a ride. His only other option was to return to the Olympic village to get on the correct bus to the stadium which meant he would not have enough time on the warm-up track which is vital for elite athletes.

At a loss as to what to do next he pleaded with one of the Olympic volunteers what to do, which wasn't much. But she did give him money to take a taxi which enabled him to get to the track and have time to warm-up and compete. Hansle got into the finals of the 110 metre hurdles and won.

Hansle said what she did was selfless – he did go back to find her to show her the gold medal he won, the one she was instrumental in him winning, he also gave her a Jamaican t-shirt and gave her back the money she had given him.

After viewing the video, the Jamaican Minister of Tourism has invited the woman, Trijana, to Jamaica. He felt compelled to gift her a holiday for she had gone beyond the call of duty.





Hansle with Trijana and receiving his gold medal

GREETINGS TO ALL OUR FRIENDS AT NORTHOLT

Birthday greetings and best wishes to the following at Greenford. Please let Angela Barnes know if there are any amendments to this list.

OCTOBER

12th Jane Edwards 17th Angela Barnes Sheila Thompson

Lee Scott

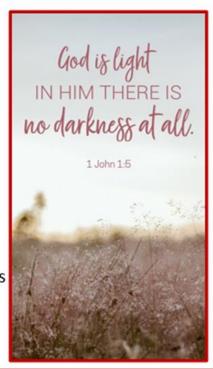
NOVEMBER

3rd

5th Joan Edwards
6th John Osei
16th Charmaine Dinham
Nathaniel Obiri-Darko
Betsy Malamah-Thomas
20th Sandra Newman

Christopher Burke

23rd George Oliver



GREETINGS TO ALL OUR FRIENDS AT GREENFORD

Birthday greetings and best wishes to the following at Northolt. Please let Carol Morrison know if there are any amendments to this list.

OCTOBER

18 th Ka	ren Whitehouse
---------------------	----------------

29th Anne Adams

31st Joseph Whitehouse

NOVEMBER

6 th	Isha Habib	
7 th	Mary Pilgrim	
13 th	Catherine Whitehouse	
17 th	Kip Bennett	
18 th	Frankie Deare	
23 rd	Nicole Budu-Manuel	

Molly Patterson

the hillsWhere does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
The Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 121:1-2

I lift my eyes to

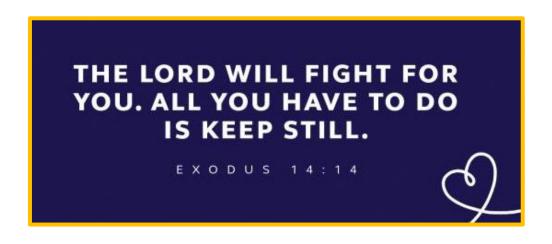
Reader's Comments

29th

The article (News & Views August – September 2021 edition) about the President of the Methodist Church, Reverend Sonia Hicks, was brilliant especially reading of her grand aunt's experience. Then the article on the Olympics was so inspiring, really encouraging in the way you break down the words - velodrome, the course set before us, Stephanos, the crown and various different things about enduring and not giving up the faith. Also, the Yad Vashem article was excellent and encouraging.

Thank you for the magazine.

L. Cowie - Scotland



Compassion is in The Eyes

It was a bitterly cold evening in Northern Virginia many years ago. The old man's beard was glazed by winter's frost while he waited for a ride across the river. The wait seemed endless. His body became numb and stiff from the frigid north wind.

He heard a faint steady rhythm of approaching hooves galloping along the frozen path. Anxiously, he watched as several horsemen rounded the bend. He let the first one pass by without an effort to get his attention. Then another passed by, and another. Finally, the last rider neared the spot where the old man sat like a snow statue. As this one draw near, the old man caught the rider's eye and said, "Sir, would you mind giving an old man a ride to the other side? There doesn't appear to be a passageway by foot".

Reining his horse, the rider replied, "Sure thing. Hop aboard." Seeing the old man was unable to lift his half-frozen body from the ground, the horseman dismounted and helped the old man onto the horse. The horseman took the old man not only across the river, but to his destination which was just a few miles away. As they neared the tiny but cosy cottage, the horseman's curiosity caused him to inquire, "Sir, I noticed that you let several other riders pass by without making an effort to secure a ride. Then I came up and you immediately asked me for a ride. I'm curious as to why on such a bitterly winter night, you would wait to ask the last rider. What if I had refused and left you there?"

The old man lowered himself slowly down from the horse, looked the rider straight in the eyes, and replied, "I have been around these here parts for some time. I reckon I people pretty good." The old timer continued, "I looked into the eyes of the other riders and immediately saw there were no concern for my situation. It would have been useless to even to ask them from a ride. But when I looked into your eyes, kindness and compassion were evident. I knew there and then that your gentle spirit would welcome the opportunity to give me assistance in my time of need."

Those heart-warming comments touched the horseman deeply. I am most grateful for what you have said, he told the old man.

"May I never get too busy in my own affairs that I fail to respond to the needs of others with kindness and compassion." With that, Thomas Jefferson turned his horse around and made his way back to the White House. - **Anonymous**



Let us as Christians be the book that others read.

Synonyms for PERSEVERANCE

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Dedication
Drive
Grit
Perseverance
Steadfastness
Willpower

Determination Endurance Longsuffering Persistence Strength

Diligence
Fortitude
Patience
Stamina
Stubbornness

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



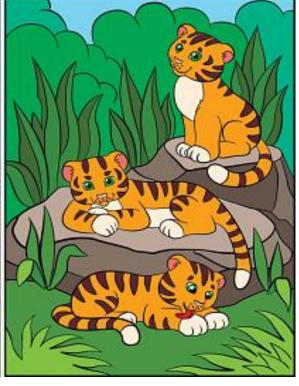






FIND THE 12 DIFFERENCES







Answers



