

A PUBLICATION OF **HOPE FOR EUROPE**

Summer 2009

HOPE

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Calvin's Geneva 500 years on...

Also in this issue:

Life after DEBT

John Hayward

Welcoming the new Europeans

Darrell Jackson & Alessia Passarelli

Going Titanic

Wim Rietkerk

Regular Columns:

RETHINK (THEOLOGY) with THOMAS SCHIRRMACHER

RESEARCH (TRENDS) with ANDREAS WOLF

REVIEW (NEWS) with RUTH ROBINSON

REVIVE (CITIES) with GEA GORT

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HOPE Magazine is a publication of the **HOPE for Europe** movement, an umbrella of networks, partnerships and alliances aiming to promote the hope of Jesus Christ in European life and society (see www.hfe.org).

HOPE Magazine aims to share news from HFE-affiliated networks and to offer biblical perspectives on European issues.

HOPE Magazine appears in limited digital form on www.hopemagazine.eu, where readers can interact with the editors and other readers. Full archives are available for subscribers.

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HOPE Magazine is published by Initialmedia quarterly on behalf of the HOPE for Europe Movement.

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editorial A European Conversation

HOPE Magazine aims to foster a European conversation. That is, about Europe and among European Christians.

Few organs exist to do this. Many national conversations happen, but how many pan-European magazines or papers can you think of?

HOPE Magazine is a mouthpiece for a movement of networks connecting Europeans with similar ministries and visions across our borders.

It mines from the rich lodes of our forgotten Christian heritage in Europe.

It addresses contemporary challenges facing us in Europe today.

It focusses on a future shaped by God's unchanging character and plans, not today's ephemeral headlines.

Now with this spring edition comes a new smaller format with several new regular columns to help broaden and deepen our European conversation.

Another new feature is a page of commendations for books, films and helpful websites. I personally like those sort of tips about resources.

Inside the back cover of each edition,

we will invite a guest writer to share their opinion on some European issue.

In addition, from now on we plan to publish quarterly. So far, we produced four editions over two years to test the waters.

Now we invite you to subscribe to this European conversation via the internet, as per the details on the inside back cover.

We give special tribute to John Calvin this year, the 500th anniversary of his birth. That's me above, looking over his shoulder at the Reformation Museum in Geneva.

Personally I grew up with rather negative feelings about the man. But for answers to questions raised by my university studies, I found myself turning to writers from the Calvinist tradition—like Francis Schaeffer and Hans Rookmaker.

Later the neo-calvinist Abraham Kuyper introduced me to a vision of society extending the lordship of Christ over 'family, church, school and state'. In ywam, we began talking of life-spheres and mind-moulders, a sort of 'Calvinism for dummies' version of this vision.

Over the page, Tom Bloomer, provost of ywam's University of the Nations, explains how the civic model pioneered by Calvin in Geneva shaped parliamentary governments in Holland, Scotland and England, and (via the Pilgrim Fathers and Puritans) in North America, and beyond.

Tom tells how strategic Calvin was as a communicator. In fact, our lives have all been impacted by the European conversation he started.

Jeff Fountain



CALVIN'S GENEVA

by Tom Bloomer

Geneva was a wild town during the Middle Ages. With more inns per capita than any other city of its time, the city was full of petty criminals, political refugees, spies and sailors from Lake Geneva. Drunkenness was common, and the houses of prostitution did a good business. Geneva was called the smelliest city of Europe.

While people were disgusted by the corruption and hypocrisy of the Church all over Europe, in Geneva even the priests were running houses of prostitution. The people actually ran the Bishop of Geneva out of town in 1530, and most of the city's nobles left with him. Geneva was in crisis.

In 1536, William Farel, a red-headed, hot-tempered French evangelist, heard that 27-year-old Calvin was travelling through Geneva. Both men had been Augustinian monks and studied theology at the University of Paris when the Reformation had broken out there. They had read the New Testament and, concluding the Church was not biblical in its practices, had had to flee France for their lives. While in Basel, Calvin had set out to state clearly what Protestants believed in The Institutes of Religion.

When Farel found Calvin in an inn down by the lake, he pointed his long bony evangelist's finger and thundered, "May God curse you and your studies if you do not join me here in the work He has called you to!" This impressed Calvin to stay and commit his life to the work of God in Geneva!

But Geneva was a very difficult place to minister. The authorities wanted power over the Church; Calvin argued that the Church should run its own affairs. These differences came to direct conflict two years later, when the authorities insisted Calvin and Farel serve communion to all on Easter Sunday in 1538. They refused. Some citizens didn't even pretend to be Christians.

Instead, they preached that Sunday on sin and judgement, publicly excommunicated the entire population of Geneva and promptly left town—Farel to Neuchatel, and Calvin to Basel for further studies.

Geneva was called the smelliest city of Europe.

'Good riddance' thought the authorities; but three years later, they came in desperation to visit Calvin and his new wife, now in Strasbourg. Geneva was threatened with invasion, a return to Catholicism and the loss of everything they had worked for. Calvin alone had the personal influence and vision to rally the people to fight and withstand an invasion. They wanted him to return and help save the city.

Laboratory

As word went out that John Calvin had been named the head pastor of Geneva, Protestants all over Europe were electrified. They recognised his ministry in Geneva could be an historic opportunity.

Calvin approached the needs of the city as a lawyer and theologian, not just as a pastor. He understood the Biblical principles needed to build society, such as defining the structure of the government, and the role of the church. He taught across a wide range of practical issues.

The citizens needed to rebuild the walls, arm themselves and resist threats from outside, Calvin taught. While they must trust in God, they were also responsible to do everything they could to protect themselves.

He taught about individual responsibility, first of all caring for one's family. Many men of Geneva were

irresponsible, drunkards and dishonest. The disorder in their lives was one of the causes of the poverty and immorality of the city. Each head of household must work hard, pay his bills, tithe and save money.

Work was worship, Calvin taught the people. Every believer had a holy vocation. Work had to be done with integrity and excellence. The German economist Max Weber, explaining the sources of Western prosperity a hundred years ago, pointed to Calvin's Geneva.

Charities

Calvin's teaching on financial principles was another source of Geneva's prosperity. Bankers must not charge high interest rates—the sin of usury in the Bible. He fixed the interest rate at four per cent, which lasted four centuries in Switzerland, one of the long-term sources of Switzerland's prosperity.

As part of their decision to become





and wide. Two young Dutch visitors to Geneva were converted and took this new message back to William of Orange. He also converted to the new faith and led Holland to become Protestant.

Protestant refugees coming from

Protestant, the citizens of Geneva committed to educate their children, a first in modern history, that all the children of a nation had been taught to read, even the girls.

Calvin also taught about caring for the poor: widows, orphans and newly-arrived refugees. All who could work had to work; the poor were considered accountable too. All Protestant charities are said to have had their source in Calvin's organizations in Geneva, since they were copied elsewhere.

Geneva quickly became a city of refuge for Protestants, and its streets filled with Italians, Englishmen and Frenchmen. The population of the city—only 5,000 before the Reformation—quickly doubled. They called it 'the Protestant Rome', 'the city set on a hill'. Protestants all over Europe looked toward this small city-state as the laboratory, the pilot project, for the vision of a nation built on biblical principles.

The influence of this small city went far

Scotland increased dramatically when Mary Queen of Scots began her persecutions. John Knox pastored his refugee flock there, observed Calvin's work and took the model back to Scotland. The influence of Geneva then went to Puritan England and from there to North America.

Calvin was a master communicator, and effectively used the technology of the day. He preached weekly in the Cathedral, and taught daily about Biblical instructions for every area of life in the former chapel next to it. There was such Continent-wide interest in what he taught that a scribe would take notes, which would be typeset, printed and on their way around Europe within the week.

The chapel, renamed 'Calvin's Auditorium', was where future ministers were trained for two centuries, and was the birthplace of the University of Geneva.

Accountability was woven into government with a system we now call federalism, dividing power among

the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the government. The Swiss system of federalism provided the model for the Americans who designed their government in the late 18th century. Albert Gallatin, who actually wrote much of the American constitution while working for Thomas Jefferson, was originally from Geneva.

Through one man's ministry and in one generation, Geneva became a transformed city-state with enormous global impact.

God did it then. He can do it again.

RETHINK Hope, last days and judgment

"For there is hope for a tree, When it is cut down, that it will sprout again, And its shoots will not fail." Job 14:7 NASB.

Job refers here to a tree apparently cut down and dried out, an image also used in Old Testament prophecy.

The Church only proclaims judgment because of its hope. Judgment provides excellent opportunities for hope in prayer, proclamation and deed, providing us with opportunities to grow in faith and to test our faith.

As essential as the Law of God is to show what has gone wrong and to clarify God's will, we must remember:

'If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land' (1 Chron. 7:14).

Dr Thomas A. Bloomer is provost of the University of the Nations, and lives in Switzerland, near Geneva. He studied archeology at the University of Illinois, missiology at Wheaton College, and completed his PhD at Trinity International University. He has dual Swiss-American nationality.

Excerpted from His Kingdom Come, edited by Jim Stier, Richlyn Poor, Lisa Orvis, YWAM Publishing (Seattle, 2008) Used by permission.



The Church can then truly pray for society and for government. Let us hope that God must not conclude, as he did in Israel: *'And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.'* (Eze. 22:30).

When judgment is due, Christians need not spread Tribulation panic or resignation, for we can pray for our people, as Abraham did.

Many Christians have lost hope for our world because they see only negative developments, but hope means not being impelled by what we see, but by faith in God's sovereignty and his grace. The first Christians brought hope to the Roman Empire, when conditions were no better than they are now—on the contrary!

And Eastern Europe shows us that God can even judge anti-Christian powers in order to give the Gospel new opportunities.

*Thomas Schirmacher
Convenor HFE Theology
Network*



Welcoming the New Europeans: What can the churches do?

by Darrell Jackson & Alessia Passarelli

Migration is a structural factor present in every nation state today.

The role of religion has become particularly significant since September 11, 2001. Religion is now often perceived by the authorities and many in society to be a threat to security, rather than a contributory factor of integration and social cohesion. The role of religion within a state's legal system, and how the state functions, varies across Europe. There can be total separation between religion and state, while in other states religion is a dominant factor in the framing and enacting of legislation as well as state functions. In between, there is significant diversity in approaches.

Religion can be important for all parts of daily life. Legislators and public administrators will need to keep this issue in mind. The public health system may be affected. Employment legislation needs to consider the issue. Problems may arise within the state educational sector. Faith-based schools are of considerable importance for many faith communities and in Europe we can see a range of diverse approaches taken to religious education. Commerce and industry may be influenced by consumer behaviour based on religious rules; the same may be said for cultural and scientific work.

Migrants firstly therefore need to express and live their religious creed. This can be a resource for stability and overcoming marginalisation. A loss of religious identity may eventually lead to a loss of ethical values, with the consequence that these migrants will be even more disoriented and rootless in the host society.

Secondly, religious communities that are common to the host society and the migrant community should promote exchange and sharing.

They can also become a bridging tool for integration, avoiding marginalisation, and overcoming the frustrations felt by migrant faith communities which may lead to radicalisation of the religious community or individuals within it.

Thirdly, the religious communities of the host society can be enriched by the contributions of migrant religious communities.

Intercultural experiences can be encouraged and eventually transferred into other sectors of social life. So-called social capital, basic to social cohesion, is strengthened by the religious components present in migration movements if addressed appropriately. All the stakeholders—societal, ecclesial, and governmental—must work together to pursue this aim.

What role can churches play?

Churches should respect the following principles:

- Human dignity must be respected in each case and in any situation.
- Christians should love their neighbours; migrants may be our neighbours.
- Migrants must be welcomed and protected.
- All human beings are 'citizens in the household of God'. They are equal and share the rights and duties of citizens.
- Christians must respect the conviction of others, even if these do not correspond to their own. While Christians are convinced that absolute Truth exists, only God possesses it fully. Human beings have only a partial grasp of this truth.
- The Christian faith has at the same time both a universalising approach, believing in the Universal Church, and an individual spirituality that is part of a personal faith. Both aspects are part of our Christian identity.

Churches have a religious mandate for action in two main areas.

Defending migrants' and refugees' rights

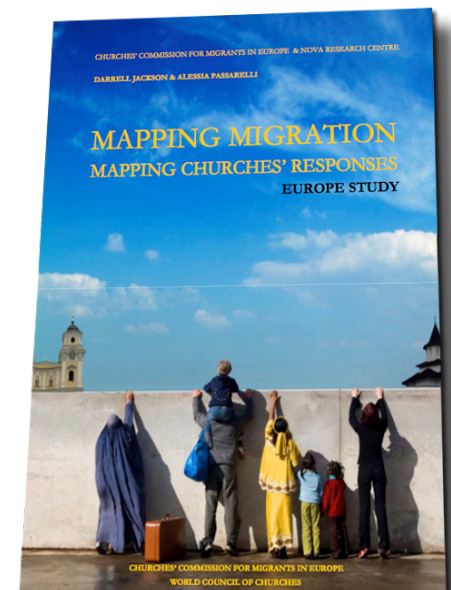
Churches must play responsible roles in the organisation of civil society. They cannot live in a spiritual ghetto. They should strive to be involved in advocating for the respect of Human Rights and the dignity of all human beings. Working for issues of social and economic justice means that they will not distinguish between migrants

of their own faith and those belonging to other creeds.

This work should include:

- Advocacy work on migration and asylum policy and legislation, which respects human rights, solidarity, responsibility, sharing, and non-discrimination.
- Speaking for religious liberty, not only for their own communities but also for other creeds and faith communities. There must be full respect for religious minorities, even if these are not Christian.


The extent to which faith communities can push their right to promote certain religious rules not compatible with cherished values of the host community, requires special attention. A balance must be found between the religious freedom of religious communities and the basic values and freedom of all the residents and communities which the state must protect.



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WEEKS ONE & TWO
JUNE 27-JULY 10
**EUROPE
YESTERDAY**
RECOVERING THE PAST

FROM REMBRANDT'S AMSTERDAM TO CALVIN'S GENEVA, WE EXPLORE SOME OF THE HISTORIC PLACES THAT HAVE HELPED SHAPE EUROPE, INCLUDING LUTHER'S WITTENBERG AND HUS' PRAGUE. THIS YEAR WE ARRIVE IN GENEVA ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF CALVIN'S BIRTHDAY.

WEEK THREE
JULY 13-18
**EUROPE
TODAY**
UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT
(Weeks can be taken separately)


WEEK THREE SEEKS APPROPRIATE BIBLICAL RESPONSES TO THREE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING EUROPE TODAY, WHILE ALSO DISCERNING THE SIGNS OF GOD AT WORK ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

These last two study weeks in the inspirational setting of the Bernese Alps and Lake Thun, combine lectures, discussions, videos, films and afternoon study time, along with prayer, intercession and worship.

WEEK FOUR
JULY 20-25
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SHAPING THE FUTURE

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apply online: www.yvam.eu/sses



Join us this summer!
Jeff & Rowleje Fountain

In Europe, churches run programmes including those on housing, education, access to the labour market, counselling for migrants and refugees, legal assistance and empowerment by leadership training and support to migrant associations. They promote language schools, courses for vocational training, and support refugees who wish to study at university. They run homes for unaccompanied minors and for refugees, for mothers with small children, and for other vulnerable groups. They protect women who became victims of trafficking and violence.

'Uniting in Diversity-Being Church Together'

European Churches respond to migrant churches in very different ways:

- In some countries, local Churches have opted for separate development. Migrant churches have grown rapidly and are sometimes larger than traditional churches.
- In other countries, relationships with migrant churches were seen as little more than a question of assistance. Local churches often supported migrant churches financially without trying to build up any mutual understanding or exchange.
- Where indigenous churches exist in a minority situation, such as the Protestant Churches in Southern European countries, migrants often play a significant role. They currently represent at least half of



the Protestant population in Italy, for example, and worship in all the Protestant Churches. In many communities migrants are the majority, often over 60% of the worshipping community.

Various models of cohabitation, sharing and learning from each other are currently being explored in Italy.

- Many migrant Christians prefer to build their own churches in which to live their faith as they did at home, with their mother tongue and religious traditions.
- Mixed congregations, where local people and migrants worship, is another approach, lead to quite different results.
- Some local churches promote a process of assimilation and insist that migrants learn to live their faith exactly in the same way as the local Christians do.
- A final model is where all parts of the congregation try to grow together, learning from each other. This would correspond to the Christian belief in the Universal Church where all are equal, with equal rights and responsibilities. To be successful in achieving a faith community together, where every member has equal rights and potential, fulfils the requirements of the Christian faith.

This approach is also important for the integration process of migrants into society. If positive religious integration takes place, this could become a resource for the wider integration of migrants. Churches or other faith communities of the receiving countries could become important bridge-builders where a positive exchange of values can take place.



In summary, churches in a receiving country have a role to play in the migration process. But if they shun this responsibility, if they are exclusive or dominant, if they do not share

values, power, and goods, they may exacerbate negative experiences of alienation, frustration, and marginalisation on the part of migrants.

Churches or other faith communities of the receiving countries could become important bridge-builders.

from: *Mapping Migration: Mapping Churches' Responses* by Darrell Jackson & Alessia Passarelli

A report produced by the Nova Research Centre of Redcliffe College, England, and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe.

The report is available for download at: www.novaresearch.eu/index.php/resources

VI. CRESCENDO
SUMMER INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

JULY 27 - AUGUST 10, 2009 SÁROSPATAK, HUNGARY

VOICE, OPERA
 J. HAYDN: LE PESCATRICI

COACHING

SOLO INSTRUMENT
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 TRUMPET, PIANO, ORGAN, AND CLASSICAL GUITAR

CHAMBER MUSIC

ORCHESTRA
 J. HAYDN: SYMPHONY IN D MAJOR "MIRACLE"

CHORAL CONDUCTING

VISUAL ARTS

Organiser: A Song for the Nations Cultural Foundation
 Director: Beat Rink Artistic director: Timothy Bentsch
 Application deadline: May 31, 2009
Online applications: www.hungary.crescendo.org

REVIEW

Discussing "sensitive issues"

With 'eurosceptic' Vaclav Klaus at the helm, and waves of riots hitting several of Eastern Europe's capitals, the European Union is in a weak position to handle the root crises of discontent and economic shock. Immigration laws are tightening and integration issues are still a challenge. The freedom of speech vs the 'defamation of religion' dialogue threatens to silence peaceful religious speech. In Russia and the former Soviet states—the Stans—religious freedom and the right to dissent is disappearing.

Against this backdrop, Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders in Europe met with EU leadership to discuss 'sensitive issues' including the 'reconciliation between peoples'. European Commission President Barroso highlighted these groups' 'moral authority, outreach, and structure' which make them particularly 'well-placed to make a valuable contribution, mobilizing our societies for a sustainable future'. What a challenge!

If these three groups were to join forces to create public spaces for dialogue, communication and reconciliation, think how we could impact Europeans' ability to live well together in today's jumbled jigsaw of culture and language. Could we discover common ground in the sanctity of marriage, modest clothing for women, laws protecting children from online access to pornography, controls on sex and violence on TV, and tighter enforcement of prostitution law?

These three groups must make an effort to share a common and strong voice of protest before the very liberal, secular governments and societies of Europe.

from *The Ambassador's Briefing In Context*, 24.1.09
www.ambrief.wordpress.com
Ruth Robinson is a freelance journalist based in Dublin connected with Greater Europe Mission.





In several European countries, Christian charities and organisations are responding to the turbulent financial times with the message that there is life after debt.

Seminars and workshops are being held to offer advice and to put people in touch with professional assistance.

In Holland, the Salvation Army estimates that 350,000 households are in risky debt and expect the numbers to rise.

In England, the Evangelical Alliance has launched a Life Beyond Debt initiative at a national conference for leading Christian poverty-fighting and money education charities. (see www.eauk.org/lifebeyonddebt).

In a closing declaration, participants agreed that, since the Bible was outspoken on issues of poverty and injustice, participants agreed, churches should be equally vocal. They recognised that at national and local levels, the church was uniquely positioned to help people who are in debt, jobless or struggling with finance.

Life Beyond Debt will offer ongoing biblical teaching about money over the coming year, and Christian perspectives on our present economic system.

Opening the conference, John Hayward, director of Jubilee Centre in Cambridge, attacked interest-bearing loans as counter to three-quarters of the church's history, during which taking interest was considered theft and condemned as greed. The Church, he said, had sought to replace interest-bearing loans with either profit-share financial partnerships, rental charges for the use of physical property, or charitable, interest-free loans.

He was not surprised therefore that massive state intervention was regularly required to prevent interest-based financial systems from periodically destroying themselves. Exponentially growing debt claims were unsustainable over long periods.

John observed that the Bible prohibited all interest on loans within the domestic economy, and not just excessive interest or 'usury' (a 'use-charge' that initially referred to any charge made for the use of property, be it money, land or possessions).

As long as interest was charged, injustice and inefficiency would remain, he warned, even if governments re-regulated financial markets to protect them from their own self-destructive urges.

John challenged the gathered

delegates to take seriously the Bible's teaching that debt was a last resort: Romans 13:8, 'Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.'

Called to be 'salt and light' to show a better way forward, churches might teach and model an alternative kind of financing to believers and their communities, he suggested.

This could include:

- interest-free (or inflation-based interest) grant-making
- grants in kind, e.g. a community larder; paying heating bills (cf. Deuteronomy 23:19);
- forgiveness of debts (cf. Matthew 6:12)
- not borrowing to buy; e.g. for church building projects
- no debt without relationship
- counselling against getting in debt
- counselling how to get out of debt.

Tearfund and A Rocha are two organisations partnering to encourage more believers to 'break the consumer

mould' and live more thankful and generous lives. In an event called 'Breathe', the organisers are offering workshops on generosity, stewardship, connecting with the poor, working in business with Kingdom values, investing in our communities, sustainable living and the power of thankfulness.

(www.ibreathe.org.uk).

The Jubilee Centre is also holding an Open Day in Cambridge, with international economist Dr Paul Mills addressing the subject, 'The Economy in Crisis: A Biblical Diagnosis and Foundation for Recovery' (4 May).

Dr Mills has worked at the UK Treasury and the UK Debt Management Office. He currently works for the IMF, where his interests include global financial stability, the US financial system, innovative risk transfer, climate change and financial markets, and Islamic finance. He has authored a number of past Cambridge Papers, including The ban on interest (1993), Investing as a Christian (1996), and Globalization and the world economy (2003).

www.jubilee-centre.org



FOCUS

Hope Awards for Holistic Healing

Three evangelical hospitals were joint recipients of the 2008 HOPE awards:

- the SGM Langenthal Klinik in Switzerland,
- St Luke's Hospital in Thessaloniki, Greece
- the Barcelona Evangelical Hospital, Spain.

Dr Chris Steyn, convener of the HFE healthcare network, and international director of Healthcare Christian Fellowship, was joined by Jeff Fountain in separate presentations to each hospital in Switzerland (November), Greece (March) and Spain (April).

In Langenthal, Dr Steyn told the gathered staff at a special reception, that the hospitals had been selected 'as bold initiatives bringing hope to many healthcare patients.' They were examples that deserved to be more widely known across the continent as models for other healthcare initiatives.

The awards acknowledged the pioneering work being done to develop alternative healthcare models in a field dominated by government



institutions, said Dr Steyn. Historically healthcare had been initiated by Christians and churches motivated by the love of Jesus. Today it was widely seen as simply a professional task, and often lacked the heart of compassion.

In 1987, the SGM (Stiftung für Ganzheitliche Medizin, or Foundation for Holistic Medicine) opened their faith-based hospital in Langenthal, halfway between Basel

and Bern, after a seven-year process of negotiations with the Bernese authorities. Freud and Jung, the pioneers of psychiatry, often cast 'religion' in a negative light (toxic faith) as producing neuroses. In response, the Klinik SGM aims to integrate a positive therapies, and thus offer a scientific evaluation of the effectiveness of holistic healthcare.

In Thessaloniki, the award was presented at St Luke's in a formal ceremony with performances by choir, piano and violin. Founder Dr Demosthenes Katsarkas was told by many friends that a hospital run on pro-life principles, staffed by believers, with the highest professional standards, was a great but impractical idea. Hospitals were a task for the

government. Not even the Orthodox Church ran hospitals.

Nearly thirty-five years later, St Lukes Hospital in Thessaloniki is second only to the main hospital in Athens in numbers of open heart surgeries. Fifty



to eighty operations are performed daily in 20 operating theatres, as much as many large state hospitals do in a week.

The Hospital Evangèlic in Barcelona, about to celebrate its 130th anniversary, is among the oldest in the city and one of the few non-for-profit hospitals in the community offering holistic care (physical, spiritual and psychological) to the community.



RESEARCH

Next Generation Prayer Walking

Churches in Strasbourg and the Alsace gained a new perspective on the challenges they face in their location, assisted by Hope for Europe research network (emRG).

As part of the HopeNow! project, we, along with some local volunteers, prayer-walked some of Strasbourg's most notorious immigrant areas looking for places of hope and places of need.

Utilizing state-of-the-art GPS technology, we produced a virtual prayer walk. It has revealing pictures that can be viewed and further developed with Google Earth: www.haenze.neostrada.pl/ajc.html

The result can be used in future prayer meetings and is a good entry point for devising new missions strategies for these disadvantaged areas. Because of its simplicity and captivating results, this GPS-based approach of down-to-

earth neighbourhood exploration can be easily used.

Any mission-minded person can use it even without special pre-knowledge.

Because of all the positive feedback we received, we are currently developing the methodology bringing it to the next level. We are combining it with a local area wiki. Here you can add observations and other information relevant for missional strategies.

Together we can share in developing something relevant for God's Kingdom. Together with interested locals we are planning to run this kind of "open your eye" projects in Lisbon, Amsterdam, Cologne and Magdeburg. If you are interested, drop us a note and we will be happy to help you do the same thing in your area.

Andreas Wolf
www.emrgnet.eu
 Hope for Europe
 research network





European Arts Summit

Schloss Mittersill, Austria
Forty leading thinkers, leaders of Christian art ministries and arts practitioners gathered to engage in a conversation on the role of the arts in cultural and spiritual renewal in Europe (May 10-14). This event, held in a 12th century castle, was a collaboration between five key organisations involved in the arts in Europe and globally: StoneWorks, Creative Arts Europe, Arts+, Crescendo and Schloss Mittersill.

Keynote speaker, Dr Colin Harbinson of StoneWorks, has been engaged in the world of the arts, missions and academia for over 40 years. Addressing the need for the Church to be open to the role of the arts and artists to help catalyse a new renaissance in society, Colin also stressed the need for artists to grow in character, relationship and discipleship.

The summit engaged participants in much

group interaction, to design practical outcomes and training opportunities.

While this summit was by invitation, Schloss Mittersill runs an annual summer Arts Conference for artists from all over Europe and beyond. See www.schlossmittersill.org

Mind, Body, Spirit 24-26 April 09 Sheffield, England

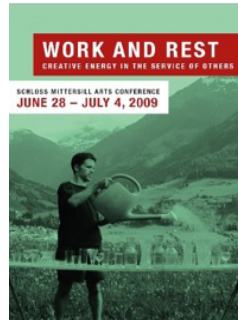
Today's spiritual travellers need to be reached through the building of communication bridges, just as with any other missiological situation. So the 70 participants were told at the first UK conference for Christians ministering within the New Spiritualities.

Experienced practioners, including Steve Hollinghurst (Sheffield), John and Olive Drane (Scotland) and Lutheran priest Ole Skjerbaek Madsen (Copenhagen) led plenaries and workshops exploring ministry opportunities through MindBodySpirit fairs, health and fitness centres and life coaching, Jesus card reading, spiritual art, meditation, creation liturgy,

healing prayer and more.
Info:[www.
encountersontheedge.org.uk](http://www.encountersontheedge.org.uk)

Women in Leadership

With a special track for younger women, this year's HFE Women in Leadership event encouraged women



intergenerationally in their leadership roles, both in church and society.

Since 1988, these conferences have linked women together from Eastern and Western Europe. The last conference was held in Croatia in 2007.

Sessions at this event, held in Modra, Slovokia, addressed responding to Islam and human traffic-king. Shirinai (Moscow), from a Muslim Tartar background, told of the openness she experiences in sharing the gospel with Muslim women.

Elke Werner (Germany) spoke on engagement in society, while morning Bible studies were led by Lilo Keller from Switzerland.

Each participant was actively involved in ministry to other women.

On Saturday afternoon an excursion into Bratislava, 30 kms from Modra, gave opportunity to pray for the city.

European Leadership Forum 23-28 May 2009 Eger, Hungary

Bible studies by Dr John Lennox, the Oxford mathematician who debated Richard Dawkins last year, provided a highlight of the 2009 European Leadership Forum in Eger (above). The Forum was the catalyst for 200



HOPE-II, May 2011

At the Hope for Europe Round Table in Basel last November, plans were begun for a pan-European congress to be held in May, 2011. This follows the HOPE•21 congress held in Budapest in 2002, with 1000 participants from all over Europe.

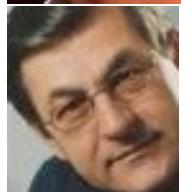
seminars, leadership training events and special public lectures throughout Europe in the past year.

"The European Leadership Forum is not only an excellent resource event but has the potential to stir the intellectual momentum of European evangelicals and to inspire a new generation of leaders both from Eastern and Western Europe," says Jiri Unger, president of the European Evangelical Alliance.
info & more:www.euroleadership.org

EuroChurch.net Rome, 5-7 May 2009

Speaking to the theme of INCARNATE, Gerard Kelly, pastor of Crossroads Amsterdam, and Johannes Reimer, of LOGOS, Cologne, challenged the 70 participants to be 'bi-textual' as they

develop missional churches in the new Europe; i.e. to read the Word and the world.
For info: [www.
eurochurch.net](http://www.eurochurch.net)



EURONEWS (cont.)

European Disability Network 'All Included'

One in every seven Europeans has a disability of some sort. One family in four is directly affected by disability.



The European Disability Network conference, held in Kyiv late April, examined what churches needed to do to be truly inclusive, and the blessings that result.

Held in the Zhooravooshka Sanatorium-recreation hotel, the event brought those ministering to Europe's disabled, including numbers of disabled themselves, together for encouragement, support, Bible teaching and seminars on overcoming learning barriers, explained the conference organiser, Therese Swinters. therese.swinters@telenet.be



Calvin's 500th Anniversary 10.6.1509 • 2009

The calvin09 year, marking the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, is being celebrated in several countries, especially in Switzerland, Scotland and Holland. At a ceremony in front of the Reformers' Wall in Geneva, Calvin was called the visionary Reformer who 'sparked off a movement which has

spread to the four corners of the earth: more than 80 million Christians living in 107 countries today acknowledge his legacy." The Swiss postalservice issued a commemorative stamp. National debates with leading academics were held in March in four Dutch cities on Calvin's legacy. www.calvin09.org

The Invitation

An ambitious project for a large memorial sculpture, to be placed in the park opposite the Reformers' Wall, has been the joint initiative of Romanian sculptor, Liviu Mocan, and Jonathan Tame of the Geneva Institute for Faith and Society.

The ten bronze pillars, resembling a giant pair of hands emerging from the ground, stand for the Ten Commandments. The pillars form a circle, defining the boundary beyond which attitudes or actions become destructive. Inside the circle there is freedom. The fingers are warm, open and inviting: The Decalogue is an invitation to live in a space of liberty, in all areas of life, as Calvin taught. A fibreglass prototype will be in place before July 10, Calvin's birthday. See www.invitationsculpture.com

National Marriage Week

National Marriage Week began in England eleven years ago, and spread quickly up and down the country. In recent years, the concept has spread across the Channel. Held from February 7-14, the week leading up to Valentine's day, Marriage Week this year was also held in Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Sweden,



Germany and Ireland. (see www.marriage-weekinternational.com)

Call2All Eurasia Kyiv, Ukraine 15-19.09.09

A three day Congress will bring leaders together from across Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and all life spheres, to partner for the Great Commission. www.call2all.org



call2all



Heaven in a Night-Club

A sold-out concert Sunday 25th January at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, with Bill Edgar (piano), Ruth Naomi Floyd (vocalist) and Adaryll Jordan (saxophone), combined great music and Bill's lucid commentary to shed light on the spiritual roots of jazz. At the end of the encore, the audience of enthusiasts and newcomers to jazz left wanting still more. Cambridge hopes they come back again! Listen to the album 'Heaven in a Night Club' www.monergism.com - Christian Heritage Cambridge

YWAM Europe leaders reflect at the Wall

In February, 75 YWAM leaders from across Europe met in Berlin on board a houseboat on the River Spree to consider their commitment to Europe's cities. Moored alongside a section of the Berlin Wall reflected on the shakings of the past 20 years, in order to anticipate the next two decades.



Going Titanic First Class

Wim Rietkerk talks about common misconceptions about the future of our planet



HOPE magazine: Wim, how does our view of the future of the world shape the way we live here and now?

Wim Rietkerk: I once read a poll on young people's expectations of the future published under the title, Going Titanic, First Class. They saw the earth like that ship headed for disaster. Its beauty, camouflaging its fragility, entices us to try to build lasting mansions here for ourselves and our children, in spite of the doom looming on the horizon.

There's a deep sense of apathy, reflecting the postmodern mind set they have inherited. J.F. Lyotard wrote, "the time of the great meta-narrative is over." Most people today feel there is no universal purpose or destiny for mankind 'above' daily events.

HM: *So, life is just dancing through the night waiting for planetary disaster?! But don't many Christians also expect the world to end someday in catastrophe?*

WR: Yes, many orthodox Christians believe that the earth will end in fire and that eventually all Christians will go to heaven. Is it biblical to expect the destruction of this world? Is heaven really our future? The question of whether or not heaven is our future is inextricably bound to our view of the future of this world.

'Doomsday thinking', in both secular and pious forms, is not the biblical view of the future of the earth. The Protestant Reformers believed in Christ the Re-Creator. They believed

in a restored world. And that implies responsibility for the preservation of this world and to resist all that endangers it. Francis Schaeffer said of our responsibility, "we are called to build a pilot plant".

HM: *How should we challenge this secular doomsday thinking?*

WR: The post-modern atmosphere Lyotard described is certainly one we recognize. Perhaps it is time to challenge it, however.

Is there really no universal goal? Is there really no destiny for mankind and no plan for the cohabitation of the peoples of the earth? Are we left behind as orphans? What is the essential nature of our planet? Is the earth a product of chance? Is there a God involved in its creation? If so, is it a goddess, Mother Earth? Or is the world something like a watch, simply set aside to run by itself after it was made? Or could it be the creation of a personal God who is still actively working in it?

We need to be clear: the foundation of our hope for the future of the earth lies in the biblical doctrine of Creation. Our calling is to serve, cultivate and guard the world we live in.

HM: *But isn't it true that nature, creation, the world, is cursed?*

WR: Yes, natural disasters, cruel animals and poisonous plants indicate to us the biblical truth that nature is also cursed. Since the fall, nature is no longer running as God originally intended it to be.

But God is not unfaithful. He has

decided to save His creation, human beings and the world. Meanwhile He upholds His creation. Although there is a shadow over God's presence in the world, He Himself has overcome this shadow and will eventually conquer it completely.

The biblical view of the earth as God's creation is a very high one. The Bible teaches us true respect for Creation. The true value, dignity and majesty of the earth as a permanent object of God's creative power must be rediscovered, even by many Christians.

HM: *By Christians?*

WR: Yes, many Christians are influenced by Platonic teaching that this world is ultimately just a shadow of the real world, that this world is only a temporary dwelling place and the real thing is going to heaven after an earthly life.

But is this really the biblical view? In the Bible we read that God wanted this world to be here, and human beings to be His governors on it. He has promised to remain faithful to His Creation. Of course, the Bible also teaches us that after creation, humans rebelled, and because of this, the earth was cursed. God never meant that He would destroy this cursed earth

Is it biblical to expect the destruction of this world? Is heaven really our future?

completely; rather, He said He would deliver it from the curse.

Although God almost obliterated all life at the Flood, afterward He promised, “never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth” (Genesis 9:11). He set His rainbow in the clouds, as the sign of His covenant—not only with humanity, but also with the animals, trees and birds, with the whole of nature, that He would never again destroy the earth.

HM: And in the New Testament?

WR: Yes, in the New Testament as well, Paul builds his apostolic teaching on this concept of Creation. He speaks in 1 Tim 4 of teachers in the early church who had a low view of God’s creation and institutions. They believed marriage and good food were to be rejected because these belonged to the lower materialistic world created not by the God of love but by lower gods. In this scheme, called Gnosticism, humans must free themselves from this world by abstinence and spiritual concentration.

Paul says emphatically, “everything that God created is good” (1 Tim 4:4), referring to God’s own words in Genesis 1. Paul means it is to be enjoyed. No part is to be rejected.

This high view of God’s creation is enhanced by many other biblical promises concerning the restoration of the world. In the Christian world there has been too little understanding of these promises.

HM: But some biblical passages predict the destruction of the world, don’t they?

WR: Many Christians, if asked about the future of the world, will immediately refer to 2 Peter 3:10. *“The day of the Lord will come like a thief and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise and the elements will be dissolved with fire. And the earth and the work upon it will be burned up”.*

Earlier Peter compares the future of the world with a kind of fire to be passed through. In the same way, the world in Noah’s time went through the flood: *“By the same word the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men”* (2 Peter 3:7).

The conclusion from a quick reading of these verses seems to be that the earth will undoubtedly perish. When we move to the original Greek text, we discover the actual meaning is as follows: *“The day of the Lord will come like a thief... but the earth and the works upon it will be found.”* Peter’s argument is as follows: *“What all the Stoics believe, namely that in this way nature and culture will disappear, we, as Judeo-Christian believers in the wake of God’s covenant with Noah, do not believe. We can rest assured that the earth and all its works will be found!”*

HM: We don’t have space and time here to explore all the sources that led you to this interpretation, as you do in

This world will not just perish: it will be transformed.

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your book; but is this consistent with other verses in this chapter which talk about the heaven being destroyed, and a new heaven and a new earth coming?

WR: Yes, we have read these verses with the wrong spectacles on. First, we read about the heavens and the elements (stoicheia) being burned away (v.10). In Gal. 4:3,9, this word is translated as ‘idle, weak and pitiful ruling spirits’ or ‘principles’ which keep us captive. Isaiah 34:4 tells us ‘the HOST of heavens shall be dissolved’.

Peter’s teaching is based on the Old Testament book of Malachi, chapter 3, depicting the refiner’s fire as purging, purifying, destroying that which is worthless. The flood of Noah’s time did not destroy the world, but ungodly men. Water and fire are symbols of cleansing.

HM: But Jesus talks about the end of the world, doesn’t he? Doesn’t that imply destruction?

WR: When Jesus talks about the end of the world, for example in Matthew 13:39, he uses neither kosmos (see John 3:16) or gè (see 2 Peter 3:10), the usual words for ‘world’. He uses the word ‘aion’, from which comes the English word, ‘aeon’, meaning ‘age’. Jesus was speaking about the end of the history of fallen man. At the end of this age He will come, reap the harvest and begin the ‘new age’.

In 2 Peter 3:13, we read “we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness”. The Greek has two words for ‘new’: neos (brand-new) and kainos (renewed). Here the word used is kainos, meaning a renewed creation. This world will not just perish; it will be transformed. Let us not speak of the destruction of this world, but of its transformation as a result of God’s judgment.

Now other passages that speak of a hopeful future suddenly fall into place. For example, Romans 8, where

Paul speaks with striking optimism about the future of this creation: “For the creation waits with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed.” This world as we know it is a fallen world—subjected to frustration—but not in order to be destroyed. “Yet there is hope that the creation itself will one day be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.” (vs.18-21).

HM: You asked earlier, ‘is heaven really our future?’ That could unsettle many Christians!

WR: Heaven is sometimes referred to as the place where the Lord is hidden (Is. 64:1; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16). The heavens are the veil behind which the Lord in his greatness withdraws from a sinful world (Job 22:12; Col. 3:3) until he comes back (Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 1:10) and then heaven and earth will be one (2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 21:2). This veil will be rent as the veil in the temple was at the time of Christ’s death.

Our citizenship in heaven will therefore be only temporary, that is, as long as Jesus is hidden there; but this limited time will end when Jesus returns to earth (Phil. 3:20) because this created world is our final destination. The earth will not go to heaven but just the opposite: the heavens will fill the earth.

HM: So then, back to our opening question: how does this view of the future of the world shape the way we live here and now?

WR: Our future hope is a foundation underneath all our actions. Preaching the gospel is our first calling,

The earth will not go up to heaven but just the opposite: the heavens will fill the earth

because the children of Adam must be brought back into a new relationship with God.

This includes, secondly, a calling to have dominion over the earth and to be stewards over all that the Lord has given us.

Thirdly, in the midst of social injustice Christians must stand up and speak out. The future of this world as God’s creation will not be without consequences for our behavior.

It does make a difference whether we believe in a new dispensation that will lead us away from the earth in a future heavenly life, or in the unity of God’s saving plan that His creation would finally be restored, and glorified.

Wim Rietkerk is chairman of L’Abri International, and with his wife Greta leads the L’Abri centre in Utrecht where he serves on the city council. He is also a pastor in the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerk.



IN OTHER WORDS

On the tomb of William of Orange, who founded the Dutch state, the following words are written, *expectat resurrectionem*. That means, “he awaits the resurrection;” not “he has gone to heaven.” This has been accepted biblical doctrine from

apostolic times.

This is our hope for the future: forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and eternal life. The resurrection of the flesh, the physical body, is what we are waiting for; and this new body will dwell in a renewed world... “world without end,” as the church’s creed puts it.

REVIVE MIGRANT CHURCHES

“Migrant churches contribute as much to the social cohesion as (established) churches.” The voice of the professor resounded through the elegant City Hall of Rotterdam as he presented the City Council the results of research on the social role of the city churches. The substantial contribution of migrant churches to the city’s social welfare was a pleasant surprise to local politicians who had requested the research.

Another surprise was the total amount of €110 million contributed yearly to the city by the 272 indigenous Dutch and migrant churches and organizations through their social activities.

This was the first time in the Netherlands that the social contribution was investigated among such a broad variety of Christian groups. The report encouraged Christians, received national media coverage and further developed cooperation with government officials.

In Paris another migrant has been noticed by government officials. This time a black American, Lesly Joseph, who pastors a fast growing church. He was approached by the office

President Nicolas Sarkozy, and asked to unite pastors through the ‘Conseil Francais du Culte Chretien’ (CFCC).

“I know I’m used by the government,” says Lesly Joseph. “They don’t know what to do with religion and the 10 million Muslims in their country. They need us as a buffer.” Lesly paints a word picture: “France has viewed Christianity like a spare tire. You never bother or take care of it, until you get a flat tire. Then it’s the best tire in the world.

France has in a religious sense a flat tire.” So Christians are slowly but surely being invited to the table. While some are suspicious, people like Lesly don’t shrink back: “We’ve been absent, but we can have a voice.” Let’s be bold in the spirit of the apostle Paul and be prepared to penetrate all areas of society.

Like many of my fellow Christians on this continent, that’s what I aim at.

Gea Gort is a freelance journalist based in Rotterdam connected with different European networks and is a D.Min. candidate with Bakke Graduate University.





EDITOR'S CHOICE

Personally recommended books, films, DVDs & websites

Books:

Christ of the Celts
Echo of the Soul
Listening to the heartbeat of God
One foot in Eden

Sounds of the Eternal, Philip Newell, former warden of Iona, Scotland, gives us delightfully fresh insights on God and man, nature and life, drawn from a Celtic spirituality which developed outside the city and church buildings.

Surprised by Hope, Tom Wright asks: What are we waiting for? and what are we going to do about it? A watershed book about future hope and the difference it makes for life now.

The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham, Myra & Shelley. I bought 20 copies of this book for a leadership retreat. We read chapters privately before sharing some rich and practical lessons from this remarkable man's life.

The Wilberforce Connection, Clifford Hill—learning from Wilberforce about transforming society today.

Films:

The Lives of Others (Das Lebens Des Anderen) Twenty years after the Wall fell, we should watch films like this to revive our fading memories of that era of fear and repression.

Lust for Life A classic treatment of Vincent van Gogh, played by Kirk Douglas, now on DVD.

The Agony and the Ecstasy How Michelangelo's (Charlton Heston) stormy relationship with Pope Julius (Rex Harrison) produced the wonder of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. (1956)

Mission Resources

Why Europe? Why Now?

The best video introduction to the spiritual state of Europe I know of! Linda Harding has produced a great tool that challenges our stereotypes about the 'Christian Europe' (available from www.kairoscourse.org.uk)

Kairos Course.

I am promoting this course throughout YWAM Europe as it deals with the big picture of missions in the Bible and history in nine practical sessions. www.kairoscourse.org.uk

New Faces of Europe

—Immigrants and Refugees Unreached People Prayer Guide 'European' and 'Caucasian' simply don't mean the same thing anymore. This booklet addresses this new reality and will inspire prayer for the many unreached people groups represented in Europe today. 32 pp www.calebresources.org

Websites & links:

www.TED.com

TED (technology, entertainment and design) is Silicon Valley-inspired short talks on many topics, including a Billy Graham address, and one on 'my year of living biblically'. Warning: slightly addictive.

www.euroleadership.org

World-class talks from the annual European Leadership Forum on mainly apologetic topics

www.LICC.org.uk

The London Institute on Contemporary Christianity offers excellent talks on many topics; check out Prabhu Gupta's recent series.

www.jubilee-centre.org

Talks from past Cambridge Winter Schools from Michael Schluter and others on Relationism, sustainability etc.



guest opinion

Faith in Europe

Sidelined or Simmering?



Commenting on the current financial crisis, Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France, said: "Capitalism cannot survive without an ethic, without respect for a number of spiritual values ..."
(Time, 02.02.09)

This remark is by a man who runs one of the few states which constitutionally declares that it is Secular.

He commented on the changes wrought by the upheavals of 1968, saying that "intellectual and moral relativism" had been imposed on France. It had spawned "those who had said that anything goes; that authority, good manners and respect were out of fashion; that nothing was sacred, nothing admirable; that there were no rules and no standards; and that nothing was forbidden".

This type of comment is being heard more frequently from European leaders and suggests a growing realisation that society without any reference to faith, may not be able to function effectively.

Paradoxically, whilst the advances of secularism, under the guise of political correctness, get prominent headlines, there are prominent examples of European leaders who are guided by their Christian faith, as recent press comment from a variety of sources highlights:

Angela Merkel, German Chancellor: "is a professing 'Christian' who explicitly supports Europe's Christian roots, a thing that no other German top-politician has publicly done before". "She believes that Europe's 'Christian values' should be enshrined in a new version of the EU constitution."

The German family affairs minister Ursula von der Leyen, made no secret of her faith when she announced a "covenant for the upbringing of children" based on traditional Christian values, an event unimaginable in the United States even under the presidency of George W. Bush.

Gordon Brown, British Prime Minister: "Even more so than with Blair, Christianity is at the centre of the PM's world-view" (The Independent paper)

Tony Blair, Envoy to the Middle East, addressing the Washington Prayer Breakfast: "From without, religious faith is assailed by an increasingly aggressive secularism, which derides faith as contrary to reason and defines faith by conflict....I believe restoring religious faith to its rightful place, as the guide to our world and its future, is itself of the essence. The 21st Century will be poorer in spirit, meaner in ambition, less disciplined in conscience, if it is not under the guardianship of faith in God... I only say that there are limits to humanism and beyond those limits God and only God can work. We can perform acts of mercy, but only God can lend them dignity. We can forgive, but only God forgives completely in the full knowledge of our sin. And only through God comes grace; and it is God's grace that is unique".

John Baker
Director of Operations and Finance
Schloss Mittersill, Austria

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Our chief consolation is that this is the cause of God and that he will take it in hand to bring it to a happy end.

Even though all earth's rulers were to unite to promote the Gospel, still we must not make that the foundation of our **hope**.

Whatever resistance we see today offered by almost all the world to the progress of the truth, we must not doubt that our Lord will come at last to break through all the undertakings of men and make a passage for his Word.

Let us **hope** boldly, then, more than we can understand. We will surpass our opinion and our **hope**.

John Calvin

