

Good News Messenger

formerly Church News

Issue 55

Spring 2016

God
confused
their
language
and
scattered
them over
the earth.

Inside this issue:

I became a Law Breaker 2

My Sin, It's Consequence 2

Are You Born Again? 3
Our Pastor Speaks

God must've made a mistake 4

The Migrant Crisis; *a Christian Response*

Over one million refugees entered Europe in 2015. The UN forecasts one million more in 2016. The picture we see is dark; people fleeing war, persecution or poverty. Christians are called to be light in a dark world; what should our response be?

Some say "borders are man-made, we should get rid of them". Are borders biblical? Where do they come from? In Genesis 11 God saw all people spoke one tongue and were working together to build a city, forgetting God.

'The Lord said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go

down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth'

God confused their language and scattered them over the earth within His defined borders. Gen 10v32. This confusion of language meant that people speaking the same language developed into specific nations as God intended, each with their different cultures. This was God's judgement on a disobedient people, an impediment towards global cooperation which could only result in further rebellion against God. There are vast



differences between some nations and cultures and merging these together will result in strife and disagreement. Iron and clay do not mix.

Now man is undoing God's judgement and coming together to form the EU, UN and other entities. The EU has dismantled Europe's internal borders, anyone entering through Greece has free roam into Western and Northern Europe.

The majority of refugees are Muslim. Many would say "we worship the same God, we should

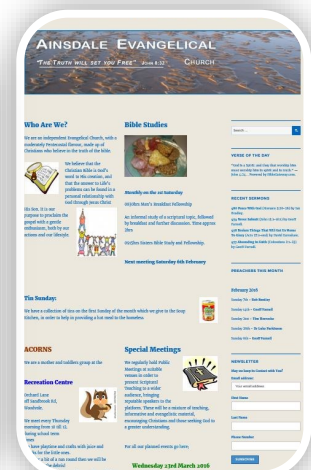
(Continued on page 4)

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'how could I have committed this crime?'

. I can't lie to God and say I don't sin or haven't sinned.



'....the Highway Code shows me how to be a better driver and understand the rules.'

I became a Law Breaker

A while ago I became a law breaker. I broke the law of the road and got 'done' for speeding. Just over 30 mph in a 30 mph zone*. People I knew, who heard about this thought it funny because I never speed*. In fact everyone knows how I dislike speeding motorists*. I annoy the nerves of motorists following me because I stick to the speed limits*. Anyway, my offence happened in Kidderminster, a 'foreign' place in a far off land called the Midlands. When I am in a 'strange' place I use my satellite navigation system (satnav) so I know the speed limits and to warn me when I am approaching speed cameras. So how could I have committed this crime!!!*. Readers please note an asterisk denotes the times I make an excuse for my actions and try and make out

it wasn't really that bad. In fact, I'm not as bad as all the other speeders on the road whose speeding is much worse than mine* whoops I have done it again!!

Anyway the outcome was that I ended up on a Speed Awareness Course on a lovely sunny Sunday afternoon with a lot of other people who were obviously far worse speeders than me* OK no more excuses!!!

On the course we were made aware that whatever the speed we had been caught doing we were guilty of speeding, no excuses and since we had been found guilty there was obviously a penalty to pay. In my case, either a fine with penalty points or attend a Speed Awareness Course. Interestingly, we were asked how many of us

had read the Highway Code, (the Guidebook to knowing the rules of the road) since we passed our driving test. Needless to say, not many hands went up.

We were told that if we had read the Highway Code we should know the rules of the road better, why those rules were in place and, just maybe, we wouldn't be sat where we were on this sunny Sunday afternoon. The Highway Code tells you what you should do and should not do on the road which will lead you to becoming a better, safer, driver.

The course was good in that it reminded me of things I had forgotten and made me realise that unless I read and understood the rules of the road I wouldn't be the driver that I thought I was.....

My Sin—It's Consequences

As I was driving home I felt God speaking to me. He showed me these things. My speeding was like my sin and the sins I commit have consequences. I can't lie to God and say I don't sin or haven't sinned. There is no excuse that I can give Him. I shouldn't say everyone else's sin is greater than mine to make mine seem less.

I have speed signs and my 'satnav' to warn me of the road ahead. However, more importantly, I have the Holy Spirit to guide me, to warn me and to help me through this life.

As the Highway Code shows me how to be a better driver and understand the rules and

regulations of the road, the Bible gives me everything I need to understand God better.

My Bible tells me all I need to know about:

- my sin;
- its consequences;
- how to avoid it;
- how God looks upon it;
- how to live as God wants me; and
- to avoid doing the things he knows will harm me.

My Bible, My Fellowship at church and my walk with God is my Sin Awareness Course.

Going on the course meant that even though I was guilty, I didn't have to pay a fine, so no

one could point a finger at me and my licence remained 'clean' because the crime was erased as though it had never happened. In the same way when I stand before God, guilty though I am, unworthy though I am, because I have accepted Jesus as my Lord, Saviour and friend, He will stand for me and say "I have paid the price for your sin and it is 'paid in full. There is no fine to pay, God will not point His finger at me and accuse me. He has wiped my sins away as if they had never happened. My old life has gone, my new life is with Christ who paid the price for my sin when He died upon the Cross. Jesus took the guilt of my sin upon Himself and I went free.

MB

ARE YOU BORN AGAIN?

What does this question mean in biblical terms? Some use this expression to describe any sort of new experience, insight or understanding. Amongst Christians the words are often used in the USA and this has attracted criticism as some have said they are being used too casually. Some cynically say it's an expression used at election time when election candidates are looking for votes.

What does the bible say about it? The Apostle John reports Jesus conversation to a leader in Israel, saying to him "You **must** be born again". If Jesus was so insistent, it must be important. In Jewish culture "born again" was used to denote important milestones in young people's development, terminating in the coming of age ceremony known as the "Bar Mitzah". However the Apostle John is reporting the expression in regard of mature adults. Hence confusion in the mind of this leader talking to Jesus as recorded by John.

Jesus distinguished between being born of the flesh and born of the Spirit. He indicated that there was something of a mystery about being born of the Spirit, but also indicated that senior rulers in Israel should not be puzzled by it. The Spirit here is the Holy Spirit. Jesus equates being "born again" with entering the Kingdom of God and receiving the gift of Eternal Life. This means that the process of being "born again" gives a person Eternal Security with God.

However the same Apostle is

the author of later books in the New Testament where he reiterates truths from his gospel and says that Jesus's words are given to us so that all who claim to be believers should **know** that they have eternal life. The bible states this many times and it is the main message of the bible.

Hence if we are to **know** whether we have been born again or not it's clearly not enough just to "hope so" or trust to chance or merely think we have because of some sort of experience, or word. We have to **know** which involves a deep personal assurance.

Why write about this subject now you may think, at least if

Our Pastor Writes

you have read this far. This is because I have spoken to a number of folk recently who said they were Christians and attended church and some who were heavily involved in doing "good works" but who either did not know what "born again" meant or who thought they may be born again but were not wholly sure. Since this is the key topic regarding our current life and our eternal future we need to be certain of it.

I heard an illustration to the effect that as our lives will at some stage end, we can liken this to living on a sinking ship. In order to be saved we have firstly to accept the importance of the ship sinking and don a life jacket so we can be rescued. We have to tie on the life jacket. However the rough sea may loosen the life jacket which may fall off. Security of the lifebelt may be ensured if it's doubly tied and

or checked by someone else.

All illustrations are in some way flawed but the intention of this one is to say the following. We may have taken the right decision to seek eternal life but has God accepted us? Has He secured our life jacket? Receiving the gift of eternal life, being "born again", is a Divine issue. It's not just a human or psychological matter. If God accepts us then He will let us know with an inner assurance, the evidence of the Spirit within us and a desire to please Him through obeying biblical requirements.

Why would God not accept us you ask? We can only

answer this question generally, we don't have all answers. However the two key steps necessary for acceptance are repentance (changing how we live to obey Jesus) and faith (trusting the future running of our life to Jesus). We may think we have met these requirements but we cannot always be sure. We may have to seek God further. We have to remind ourselves that God knows everything and He cannot be thwarted and is 100% honest.

It's a tough call and may be the most difficult decision we have ever taken. It is personally deep and everlastingly crucial. God loves us all and is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. He seeks us more than we seek Him and longs that we seek forgiveness for our sins which Jesus paid for on Calvary's Cross.



Has He secured our life jacket?

"the process of being 'born again' gives a person Eternal Security with God."



'He Seeks us more than we seek Him'

"In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me." — Psalm 120:1.

Come and join us for

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The migrant crisis; a Christian response

(Continued from page 1)

let these people in". But do we worship the same God? Our God has a Son called Jesus Christ. Allah famously, has no son. The bible tells us that God is "longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" 2 Pet 3:9. Whereas Qur'an 7:179 says that many men are made for hell "Many are Jinns and men we have made for Hell". The bible tells us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16. The Qur'an tells us "Say: Obey Allah and the Apostle; but if they turn back, then surely Allah does not love the unbelievers." Qur'an 3:32.

Here we have two very different views of God, one who has a Son and gave His life that through His shed blood so that we can have forgiveness of sins, peace with God, a new heart and a new spirit. This God loves all people, desires them to know Him, repent and be saved, and another who has no son, who made some people destined for hell and does not love unbelievers. I must conclude that this is not the same God. If you are a Muslim and believe that God loves all people and desires them to be saved, then please consider Jesus, because it is apparent from the Qur'an that Allah does not feel this way.

So what is our response to the millions of people coming to Europe? It must be within God's will in



**Joseph, Mary and
Jesus flee to Egypt**

some way. "if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it lest you even be found to fight against God" Acts 5:39

We must pray for our politicians and leaders, for the wisdom to deal prudently with any threat to our security and freedom to share the Gospel. But most of all we must be ready to share Christ and the love of God with people coming here: GH

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear 1 Pet 3:15

God must've made a mistake

I was shocked, confused, bewildered
As I entered Heaven's door,
Not by the beauty of it all,
Nor the lights or its decor.
But it was the folks in Heaven
Who made me sputter and gasp--
The thieves, the liars, the sinners,
The alcoholics and the trash.
There stood the kid from seventh grade
Who swiped my lunch money twice.
Next to him was my old neighbor
Who never said anything nice.
Bob, who I always thought
Was rotting away in hell,
Was sitting pretty on cloud nine,
Looking incredibly well.
I nudged Jesus, 'What's the deal?

I would love to hear Your take.
How'd all these sinners get up here?
God must've made a mistake.
'And why is everyone so quiet,
So somber - give me a clue.'
'Hush, child,' He said,
'they're all in shock.'
No one thought they'd be seeing you.'

JUDGE NOT!!
Remember...Just going to church
doesn't make you a
Christian any more than standing in your
garage makes you a car.
Every saint has a PAST...
Every sinner has a FUTURE! WR



'ACORNS' Mother and Toddler Group at
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off Sandbrook Rd, Woodvale.

every Thursday morning from 10 till 12. during school term times.
Contact: Esme at 01704 533489, or Pat 01704 513726