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Editorial

Our November 2023 issue draws on a number of contributors who share thoughts on the surrounding culture which is ever-pressing against our faith, our families, and our fellowship. There is a particular focus on the task of Christian parenting in a secular world.

To help compile this issue, one of our regular writers, Brett Christensen, agreed to be a guest editor. For his *Feature* article, Brett interviews a host of Christian parents around Australia and summarises various challenges facing parents who wish to raise their children in the way of the Lord. Our *International Letter* is from Don Hooton, who lived in Sydney in the 1990s but now resides in Texas. Don reflects on the struggles Christian parents encounter in American culture – and suggests ways to help overcome those situations. Our *Book Review* shares Jessica Young's assessment of *Mama Bear Apologetics*, a volume aimed at helping parents equip their children to counter what the authors call contemporary cultural lies.

Our *Interview* is with Theo & Maame Gyau, a Ghanaian couple living in Melbourne. Their observations about the role of religion and churches in African and Australian cultures make interesting reading. Our *News* section contains updates about Camp Revive in Victoria, the annual Men's Challenge in Rotorua, New Zealand, and the KlesisEquip online courses which ran in 2023.

May these articles encourage you and strengthen your hand in God.

Brett Christensen and the InterSections team.

Feature *Minimising the Theft of Innocence* Brett Christensen

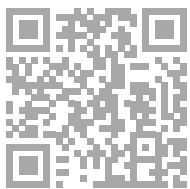
Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.

— Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:6)

Although it's not widely publicised, many Christian parents are aware that young children and youth face a broad effort by some in society to shape their thinking into accepting an alternative reality. In their recent book, *Stolen Youth*, Bethany Mandel and Karol Markowicz spotlight 'the effort to sow gender and racial confusion among little kids, and to impose on [them]... theories and ways of looking at the world that are totally unnatural and at odds with' reality (p. 31).

As Christians, we recognise that there is no alternative to reality. Truth is true. And that means raising children according to it makes for better-balanced individuals. We share a concern that today's children are being mass-fed a darkness diet that can produce adverse physical and mental health outcomes.

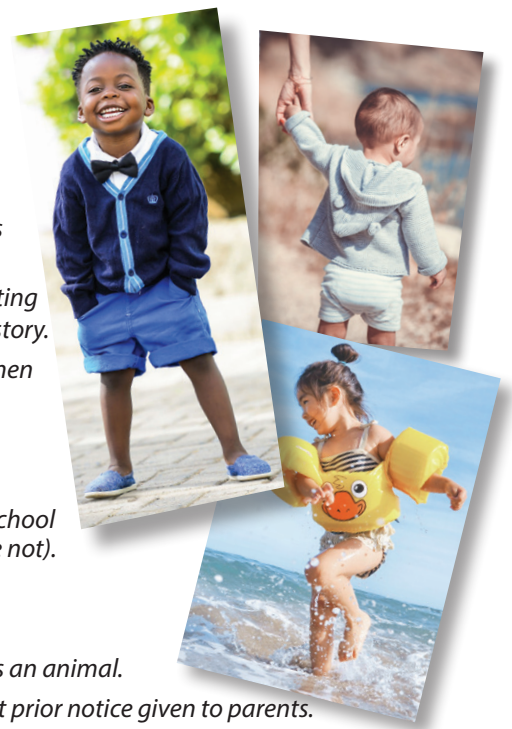
So, what are godly parents doing to protect those young souls allotted to their care? I asked this of Christian parents based in five states and one territory in Australia. This article is based on their feedback. (Input from parents is in italics.) Their experiences vary from state to state, school to school, and even classroom to classroom. One parent said, *'I feel blessed to have... had my kids at two public schools that had fairly conservative and faith-influenced principals.'* Implicit in this statement is that not everyone is so blessed.



What's happening?

Parents (including some who are schoolteachers) reported these experiences:

- *Students being told that sex is assigned at birth and gender is chosen later.*
- *Other examples of contriving a shift in word meanings for ideological purposes.*
- *Transgender and homosexual characters becoming increasingly common in movies and youth fiction.*
- *Children finding books in the public library positively (sometimes graphically) depicting same-sex relationships, transsexual transitioning, often within an innocuous cover story.*
- *Children encountering active promotion of immorality on the internet, especially when schoolwork requires internet access (and their own laptop).*
- *Popular TV shows promoting occult concepts.*
- *A secondary school library displaying a banner, 'God loves gays most'.*
- *Students not only identifying as being of the opposite sex, but as animals (and the school expecting other students to be supportive of this, even disciplining students who are not).*
- *Children declaring that parents have no right to tell them what to do or not do.*
- *Cross-dressing school uniforms being part of the uniform policy.*
- *Schools relaxing uniform and behavioural rules for those identifying as LGBTIQ or as an animal.*
- *Sixth-grade school students watching a movie promoting homosexual acts, without prior notice given to parents.*
- *Students targeted by teachers (including schoolwork being marked down) because they don't join a celebration of LGBTIQ practices.*
- *Open promotion of the LGBTIQ agenda at secondary schools and children's sports.*
- *'Pride flag' raising ceremonies at primary and secondary schools.*



How are parents responding?

While some parents I spoke to have complained to schools, libraries, etc. about such things, others take the view that one should expect to encounter such things in a world which is in rebellion against God. *'We focus not on controlling the culture but on guiding our children through it with a focus on God's shining truth and light.'*

All parents recognised the need to provide preventative and corrective guidance to their children, as 'it is inevitable that stumbling blocks will come' (Luke 17:1).

A common experience, reported to varying degrees, is that the culture in state schools has moved from being an anti-God undercurrent to what is an openly anti-Christian culture. Instead of accepting one another's differences of views and lifestyles, students today are often pitted against each other in culture wars which are characterised by 'promoting alienation and grievance' (to quote Markowicz, p. 32).

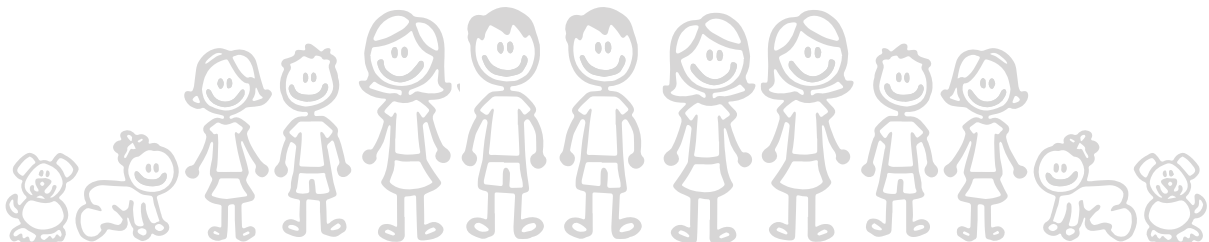
Some parents don't consider it realistic or reasonable to expect children in primary years to be able to cope with what is increasingly a caustic environment in state schools. Some have therefore opted to send their children to religious schools where exposure to those stumbling blocks is less likely – *'but it is going to be SUPER EXPENSIVE.'* At these schools, *'while these false ideologies certainly still creep in amongst certain youth, it is not celebrated, lauded, or promoted and I think that helps,'* said one.

Others have opted for home schooling, at least at the primary school level. This option is easier than it used to be, not only because of the internet, but the increasing number in the wider community doing this (often for reasons of cost, safety, and academic results – rather than to avoid conflicting worldviews).

Children inevitably see what seems to be odd or aberrant behaviour in strangers when out in public places, some examples of which parents mentioned to me. Parents say they do explain to their children the plight of those who don't know God or don't understand how he has designed us to live.

Parents view a child's more confronting challenge as having to deal with school friends or teammates who have adopted a *'distorted reality'*. Adults committed to truth find it tricky enough themselves when dealing with this; how much more our children, vulnerable and impressionable as they are. And yet they are pressured to endorse what they can see is untrue.

A lot of Christian parents seem at somewhat of a loss as to how to guide their children through this cauldron where their child is pressured to endorse what they know to be untrue. It's one thing to teach children to 'buy the truth and sell it not' (Proverbs 23:23). But what if children are face to face daily with a school friend who, for example, wants to be called a girl when he appears as a boy? Couldn't this create sustained stress for a young mind?



Without on-the-spot support, and among a crowd against them (teachers included, because staff are often required to side with the gender-transitioning child) it's understandable when a child becomes confused. But the inner turmoil can do lasting damage.

Parents recognise that some who are pushing this situation on children may be seeking to normalise or blur the boundaries relating to certain behaviours which God says is wrong. So how do parents train their children to resist this, while being peacemakers, loving, and good, as well as showing compassion to those who are like sheep without a shepherd? Here's some of what these parents suggested.

- *Reinforce biblical teaching from an early age at an age-appropriate level (the idea of a godly family unit and gender distinction should be promoted from toddlerhood) and compare and contrast God's way to the world's way.*
- *Be aware of what's going on in the world. Some people might be shocked at what's really going on. Whilst it can be a little confronting, looking a little into these things before your kids do can be beneficial, as you can see these atrocities from a mature viewpoint and discern how to deal with them. (Media commentators acknowledge that subliminal messaging is a large feature in children's entertainment, so the parents' task in this regard demands keen perception and discernment.)*
- *We made the decision early on to make TV almost non-existent in our home.*
- *Teach and practise: 'Pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you.' They are lost sheep without a shepherd, so they need God's love and grace and compassion—and ours. Underneath the...distortion of gender and sexuality is a lot of brokenness, absent and failing parents, a lack of guidance, love, and support. It's understandable in this cultural confusion for many children to be led astray.*
- *Take opportunities to bring 'distorted reality' to the light; open it up for healthy discussion.*
- *Focus on God's shining truth and light. Guide them to feel confident in who God made them to be.*
- *Surrounding our kids in a healthy church and family culture (locally and more widely) is really important, while also not trying to keep them too much in a bubble so they can incrementally understand what the world is like while having us to help them interpret through a godly lens.*
- *Be vigilant, monitoring and screening digital content and reading material, as well as what is going on at school. Keep them off social media and smartphones as long as practically possible.*
- *Get to know your children's school friends and their families, and model Christ's love towards them.*
- *Be prepared to explain to one's children the standard by which we live, and be consistent in sticking to it. Ground them in biblical teaching so that they make good choices as they grow more independent.*

I also asked parents what others in the local church can do to help guide children through those perilous waters.

- *Be present in our children's lives so that we can catch the teaching opportunities to influence them with God's truth. Don't busy ourselves or our children with so many worldly activities. Spend time on God's word at home and put church attendance as a priority. These, done with a sincere persevering heart, send a strong message to our children as to how important and how true this faith truly is to the ones who are preaching to them.*
- *Sharing articles on this sort of topic is helpful. A Messenger group I'm in shares useful information from time to time.*
- *Pray for our family.*
- *Encourage strong connections and friendships for our children and youth.*
- *Solid teaching – don't shy away from teaching our kids, teens, and young adults about these issues.*
- *Take an interest in my kids – encourage them, correct them, show them what it means to be part of God's family.*
- *I wonder if the time will come when the church might need to consider financial or other support for families to help guide children through schooling? Either support for homeschooling or private schooling. (Perhaps that time has come. See Galatians 6:2; 1 John 3:16b.)*

In the Lord's church, we often stress that we are a movement seeking to return to the faith and practice of the church revealed in the New Testament. What we can easily forget is that the average person in the Greco-Roman world (as Romans 1:18f and the excavations at Pompeii show) lived in a society even more debased than we see today. That is where our culture – rapidly turning away from God – is currently heading. Hence, following the carefully chosen suggestions submitted by faithful parents should be seriously considered.

However, this article can't contain all that these parents said about the topic. But it's clear these parents aren't asleep at the wheel. They know what's at stake, and that there are some who are intent on causing our 'little ones to stumble'. Whilst being vigilant, one parent said, *'We try not to come from a position of fear, trying to neither overreact or underreact, but instead parent with confidence in the truth and God's ability to shine his light in every season and culture.'*

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Stand, Don't Run



Culture is a collection of beliefs, values, norms, and practices permeating a society or institution. Every nation has its own culture. However, when Christianity first spread to every nation, the salve of its message healed generation after generation through a message that not only saved but also presented a counter-culture of what life should look like. Just as it did to the first century's 'godlessness' and 'unrighteousness', which was marked by 'disgraceful' and 'unnatural passions' (Romans 1:18, 26), people who turned to God since that time have been a leavening influence on their culture.

But, in America, after generations who sought to follow God's moral code – when Christianity was considered the better path – today's surging and visible downfall into the morass of immorality and sin has shocked many. As in Isaiah's time, people are the same today, calling evil 'good' (Isaiah 5:20).

In America, we've had decades of this rising culture war, as many call it. But, for me, two recent events highlighted it:

- On 23 June 2023, on Twitter (now X), a video clip was posted showing New York City Drag March attendees chanting, 'We're here, we're queer, we're coming for your children'. Others chanted, 'We're here, we're queer, we're not going shopping.'
- In 2021, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus published a video with a song containing the lyrics, 'We'll convert your children... We're coming for them.'

Perhaps these calls come from a radical minority. In the Drag March event, not everyone was chanting that (although some certainly were). And, in response to the SFGC song, the SFGC leadership later responded that the song was tongue-in-cheek humour for the purpose of making a plea for fairness.

Yet, I ask: *Aren't these lyrics referring to paedophilia? If yes, how could that be humour?* And just today a Christian who has taught in public schools for several decades told me that he was forced into retirement because his use of gender pronouns did not meet current expectations.

Others may ask: what's the world coming to? Actually, nothing new. Radical movements throughout history have sought to pursue change by converting children. This is a perennial problem. The world will 'grow worse and worse', Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:13.

We may ask: how *could* it get worse? It can hardly be denied that American society, and others in the Western world, are spiralling downward on many fronts. Satan has been 'prowling around seeking someone to devour' (1 Peter 5:8) since time began. Today, it seems to many that he's on a gorge-fest, and often his victims are young people. Vividly, we see it in social media video shares. Passionately, people share examples to raise the alert. Effectively, however, this misses its own goals by engendering alarm and extreme reactions. Not all our fellow citizens are evil.

Today, if we believe that teaching children will profoundly influence their futures, we parents bear particular responsibility for proactively protecting them. Below are some ways we can help our children.

Parent them. Parenting is not merely providing food and housing; it's starting children on their way (Proverbs 22:6). For Christians, it's bringing them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:2). This means *parents should know personally what's happening in their life*. We need to be involved and instruct them in the ways that are right. We can't rely on our government or church to teach them what they need from God. We can't turn a blind eye because our failure to parent them will encourage them to 'depart from the way'.

Protect them. Talk about the dangers. In my childhood, the warning was 'Stranger Danger'. But today there are dangers in the pews as well as in schools. There are dangers on the internet and in the video gaming world. Allowing young minds frequent exposure to unhealthy images, ideologies, and irreverence can lead to despair. If we want children to think about things that are true, honest, and just (Philippians 4:8), they need to live in environs that dwell on that: speaking the truth in love so that we may all grow up in Christ (Ephesians 4:15).

Be courageous for them. 'For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. Who then will harm you if you are devoted to what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear them or be intimidated.' (1 Peter 3:12-14)

Stand with them. If two are better than one (Ecclesiastes 4:10), then three are better than two. And so on. Our children need Mum and Dad to stand together with them. Stand with them because Peter says, 'Resist [the devil], firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.' (1 Peter 5:9) We're not alone. The battle has always been there – and our children are counting on us to stand with them.

So stand, and don't run. ◇

Don Hooton is a grandfather living in Texas. Since 2001 he has preached for the Woodlands Church of Christ, near Houston. He and his wife Tracey worked with the Port Hacking congregation in Sydney from 1993-1995. hooton.don@gmail.com

Mama Bear Apologetics: Empowering Your Kids to Challenge Cultural Lies

Hillary Morgan Ferrer (gen. ed.) (Harvest House Publishers, 2019)

As mothers, God has given us the important and kingdom-building role of raising our children for him. We want our children to grow into confident and steadfast Christ-followers, but when we look at our current cultural landscape it can seem almost impossible to protect our children from all the lies and false ideologies that are forever waiting to take them captive. How can we equip our kids to engage but not conform? How can we teach our children discernment? How can we protect our children from the world's lies?

Mama Bear Apologetics, edited by Hilary Ferrer, aims to address that dilemma by using a mix of cultural observations as well as informative and practical suggestions to empower parents to train their children in discernment and critical thinking for when they inevitably encounter the world's lies.

Part One lays out some of the reasons why young people leave the faith, the importance of discernment, and how we can approach differences in language that have changed over time. The discussion is informative, well researched and easy to follow. I appreciated the deliberate approach of encouraging Christians to not simply disparage every belief that is different to ours, but rather to train our children in discernment.

It is obvious that the authors understand the current challenges of raising kids, and they use research and personal anecdotes to lay out plainly the dilemmas and pitfalls of parenting. They also offer encouragement and hope that even those of us who aren't naturally drawn to apologetics can navigate the lies alongside our children.

The 'mama bear' imagery – protective of her 'cubs' – is used strongly throughout the beginning of the book. Although I felt it was laid on a little thick at times, I can appreciate that the authors' aim was to encourage mothers to take on this responsibility of teaching and training their own children for themselves – something with which I wholeheartedly agree!

Having said that, some acknowledgement of the role of fathers in training up our children and leadership of the household could have added a lot more depth to the conversation. It would also give a more well-rounded view of how God designed families to raise children.

The book provides a simple acronym for us and our children to use when encountering different beliefs:

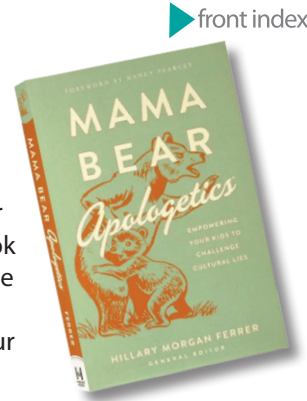
- R** - Recognise the message
- O** - Offer discernment (affirm the good and reject the bad)
- A** - Argue for a healthier approach
- R** - Reinforce through discussion, discipleship, and prayer

Part Two covers a range of what the book calls 'lies of our culture'. This section requires the reader to practise critical thinking and to reflect on the culture around them.

Best consumed in small chunks, each chapter in this section begins with a brief introduction and then breaks down the lie into the ROAR acronym, allowing us to practise a 'chew and spit' method of assessing that belief.

The chapters cover self-helpism, naturalism, scepticism, postmodernism, moral relativism, emotionalism, pluralism, new spirituality, Marxism, feminism, and progressive Christianity. These chapters stand alone and do not need to be read in order, allowing the reader to start with the chapter of most interest or pertaining to their children's immediate need.

The book places responsibility for addressing and answering our kids' questions squarely – and, I might add, biblically – on the shoulders of parents. Realistic in their approach, the authors aren't naïve about the type of world our children are growing up in or will launch into as adults. They argue that while parents must protect and shelter their children, protection will only work for a time and is not a long-term solution. The best way to prepare our children for the future is to train them not only how to engage with the culture in a graceful and loving way, but also why the cultural lies are indeed lies. We want our kids not to grow up in fear of the world, but in discernment; to consider its claims, spit out what is false, bringing every thought captive to Christ. ◇



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News *Camp Revive 2023 (VIC)*

No matter what time of the year, camps are always a great way to delve into God's Word with our family in Christ. Camp Revive 2023 was no different! It was such a great experience to spend time with youth in the church from so many different congregations around Australia, getting to share our faith, experiences and trials, and uplift and encourage one another.

Throughout the weekend we heard lessons about faith—reading various examples from the Bible, hearing people share about their journeys towards God and how they stayed faithful through trials, and hearing a married couple tell about how they worked on growing their faith both individually and together.

Times of fellowship were special, and activities and games together strengthened our bonds, bringing us closer together. We played card games and team activities, played intense soccer matches, played crazy rounds



of glow-in-the-dark volleyball, as well as sitting around the campfire when it got cold, singing and praising God together. All in all, it was a great way to be uplifted and have a weekend away, focusing entirely on God and bettering our relationship with our heavenly Father. ◇

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KlesisEquip Courses



First piloted in 2021, two KlesisEquip online Bible courses were rolled out in 2022. In 2023, we were a little more ambitious and advertised four courses. As it turned out, we successfully ran three of them (one course didn't attract enough registrations to proceed). KlesisEquip courses are conducted online via live Zoom classes. They involve 4, 6, or 8 classes of 2-hours each, typically on a weeknight or a Saturday.


In 2023, the three courses and their instructors were: (1) *The Bible & Sexual Ethics: Christians Living in a Hyper-Sexualised World* (Steve Wilson); (2) *From Jeremiah to Jesus: Connecting the Old and New Testaments* (Peter Horne); and (3) *Is Christ Divided? The Dilemma of Denominationalism* (Benny Tabalujan).

On average, each course in 2023 attracted seven registered participants. This allowed for healthy online discussion of biblical material and other course content. Plus, there was uplifting class banter among Christians who developed camaraderie with fellow believers from other congregations.

A huge thanks to everyone involved in making these online courses happen. Helen Hughes from Queensland managed the course administration. Hannah Smith, also from Queensland, helped with publicity. Instructors in Brisbane, New York state, and Melbourne created course materials and delivered thoughtful and engaging classes. Participants from around Australia and a couple from overseas generated wonderful discussions. Thank you one and all!

For 2024, plans are in place to offer another four online courses. Like other KlesisEquip courses, they'll focus on textual and topical content and be biblically grounded, theologically informed, and practice oriented. If you'd like to be on the mailing list for these online courses, please send your email details to Klesis (info@klesis.com.au). ◇


Benny Tabalujan, Klesis Institute, VIC. b.tabalujan@gmail.com



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News *Men's Challenge (NZ)*

A number of Australians travelled to Rotorua, New Zealand, from 24–27 August 2023 for the annual NZ Men's Challenge which has been held every August for many years.

Stuart Penhall from the Gosford Church of Christ in NSW and a number of New Zealand brothers led the lessons over the four days. The initial two days were on leadership topics with teachings from Elijah on how to look after the mental health of yourself and your congregation. Peter Searson from The Point Church in Queensland also shared his experience as a counsellor working in the community.

The wider Men's Challenge over the weekend featured studies on the topic of The Unseen Church, covering topics such as A Glorious History, A Glorious Husband, A Glorious Bride, and A Glorious Family. It was a very engaging time with great spiritual insight as well as a few laughs. The happy newlywed, Andrew Hastings from the Gosford Church of Christ, shared the husband lesson, and Marcelo Toro, a missionary from Chile, shared his tragic yet funny story as an orphan in his lesson discussing family.

But mostly it was a four-day getaway of brothers who love the Lord, sharing plenty of food, and embracing the ups and downs of church and life. Having participated now for five years, it has become a time of great encouragement for me and I'm sure for all the men who attended as well. Hearing men lifting their voices to God in praise is just inspiring.

Special thanks to Geoff Fairest from the Rotorua Church of Christ and Stuart Penhall who have organised the camp for 10 years and who have always thrown the invitation open to any man, young or old, to come and share four days of fellowship and feasting in sunny, but cold (for Queenslanders anyway) Rotorua. ◇

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Minimising the Theft of Innocence

Childhood innocence is something to protect and preserve but, like childhood clothes, it doesn't last. Innocence gives way to experience. The ideal is to allow children to grow out of innocence naturally, like their clothes, as they grow in wisdom and stature to handle it – rather than have innocence stolen from them by those 'darkened in understanding' (Ephesians 4:18).

As Jesus said of children in Matthew 18:10, 'In heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father who's in heaven.' On earth, their knights of light must be vigilant guardians, knowing as always, 'the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it' (John 1:5). ◇

Brett Christensen and his wife, Lesley, are members of the Southeast congregation in Melbourne. He labours full-time in teaching the Word there and elsewhere. victoria@peopleofGod.info

Theophilus and Maame Gyau

Where did you grow up, and how did you come to know Christ?

We both grew up in Ghana, where Christianity is deeply ingrained in our culture. We were introduced to Christ through our families, specifically our mothers. Our faith in God grew as we attended Sunday school and participated in various church activities. For us, Christianity was not just a religion but a way of life as it is part of the school curriculum and instilled in our language. For instance, asking someone how they are faring almost always receives the answer "Nyame Adom Eyɛ" which means, 'fine by God's grace'.

Can you tell us a bit about the congregation you were a part of in Ghana?

We were members of the Takoradi Central Church of Christ, a congregation with more than 1,500 members in a city of a little over a million people. The congregation is known for its lively worship services, strong sense of community, and a deep commitment to evangelism and missions. Members often participate in community service projects (drilling boreholes, providing food, medical supplies, clothes, etc.) and evangelistic efforts on radio, TV, Facebook, YouTube, and public preaching in various communities to spread the Gospel.

'Righteousness exalts a nation' (Proverbs 14:34). How 'exalted' do you think Australia is?

Its 'exaltation', as we see it, lies in its commitment to democratic values, human rights, and social welfare. However, it also faces the challenge of balancing these values with the diverse beliefs and worldviews present in the nation. In contrast, Ghana's strength lies in its strong Christian identity, which unifies many aspects of society. But Ghana faces challenges related to social justice, and corruption. We believe both countries can learn valuable lessons from each other.

What differences have you experienced being members of Australian congregations?

Upon relocating to Melbourne, we have experienced culture shock and come across some differences that have contributed to our Christian journey. We have experienced Australia's strong emphasis on social justice, human rights, and equality. The country's commitment to providing quality education, healthcare, and social services is evident and aligns with principles of caring for the less fortunate, which are deeply rooted in our Christian faith. Another noteworthy aspect is Australia's dedication to secularism and pluralism, which occasionally results in Christians finding it challenging to express their religious beliefs openly without fear of being perceived as offensive.

Comparing this to Ghana, where Christianity is a predominant and unifying force, we see a stark contrast. In Ghana, the church plays a central role in the lives of many, and the values of faith, community, and fellowship are readily embraced. Nonetheless, while there are legal structures and social support systems in Ghana, challenges related to corruption, income inequality and access to justice are relatively higher.



Which of those differences are the most challenging?

Joining Australian congregations has been a learning experience for us. We have noticed several differences, including a more diverse congregation in terms of nationalities and worship styles. Australian churches also tend to have a strong emphasis on individual spirituality and personal growth in faith. Some of the initial challenges we experienced were in adapting to the different worship style and the more reserved nature of some Australian congregations. For instance, we had to get used to a shorter duration of worship service with a short but precise sermon, and fewer songs and prayers.

We also observed that church attendance in Australia is less frequent compared to what we were accustomed to in Ghana. This difference, we believe, can be attributed to the fact that, in Ghana, many people rely on God for their daily needs due to significant economic challenges. In contrast, the average Australian enjoys a more stable economic livelihood.

What strengths or opportunities do you see in the Lord's church in Australia which Aussies may not realise?

Though being a Christian in Australia today can sometimes feel like Elijah, standing alone after refusing to bow to Baal, we are not alone. In fact, there are opportunities within the church in Australia that many have not realised. Now more than ever, we could have a bountiful harvest in this land. Our Lord Jesus Christ expects that we light up this world and work as labourers in his field by reaching out to the people around us and engaging in spirit-awakening dialogues. We sow seeds of Christ in people, trusting that as we plant these seeds God will do the rest by the power of his grace and through our fervent prayers.

Another strength is the diverse and multicultural nature of Australian congregations. This diversity presents a unique opportunity for believers to learn from, allowing us to broaden our understanding of Christianity through global lenses.

Indeed, we've both been given a unique platform in Australia to demonstrate and strengthen our faith in God. While it may have been relatively easy to be a Christian in Ghana, our faith has faced challenges here in Australia. We have emerged even stronger in our faith in God. ◇

Theophilus and Maame currently live in Melbourne and have been members at the Heidelberg West and Belmore Road congregations. Maame is pursuing doctoral studies in mathematics and Theo is studying for a graduate degree in Christian ministry. They were interviewed by Brett Christensen. victoria@peopleofGod.info