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A Faithful Ministry

By Rev. Terry Flanagan, MERF Committee of Management and MERF Australia Board

At theological college in the 1980’s, I came across a MERF newsletter. Since then, it has been an overseas mission in which I took prayerful interest. In 2006 I became a member of the MERF Australia board. I consider MERF to be worthy of prayerful support because it is:

Shaped By The Word Of God

Ephesians 2:19-22 tells us that God is building a spiritual temple. It is made up of people, “*built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,*” That is, God’s work is carried out upon the foundation of His inspired Word, which focuses on Christ.

The heart of MERF’s ministry with churches in Muslim lands is *Biblical Training*. The local church’s understanding of the Bible will shape -- the gospel it proclaims, its appointing of leaders, the discipling of its members and its priorities in distributing diaconal aid. To safeguard MERF’s com-



Biblical Training in Ethiopia

mitment to biblical truth, all members of its governing body must subscribe to the confessions of the historic reformed faith, as summarised by a statement of faith (See www.merf.org). This summary includes an unequivocal affirmation of the creation of all things in the space of literal six day-and-night days.

Proclaims Christ Without Distraction

In 1 Corinthians 2 Paul reminds the church commenced by him as a missionary, that “*...I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*” MERF does not try to win Muslims

to Christ by getting into debates about Mohammad or the Koran for at least two reasons:

First, attacking Muslims’ beliefs causes defensive combat before actually hearing the message of Christ. Rather than hearing the gospel, their focus is on arguing the case for Islam.

Second, why spend time defending the superiority of the Bible over the Koran, when the Gospel itself is its own most powerful defence? In Romans 1 Paul declares that the Gospel is “*... the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...*” C.H. Spurgeon compared too much focus on defending the Bible to defend

a lion in a cage. He said we, “*... should kindly stand back, and open the door, and let the lion out! I believe that would be the best way of defending him, for he would take care of himself; and the best ‘apology’ for the gospel is to let the gospel out.*” Time after time, we have heard the testimony of Muslim converts, describing how they were touched and transformed when reading the words and life of Jesus. It was their encounter with Jesus that caused them to see the contrast between Him and Mohammed.

Indigenous Field Workers Serve

Assisting men to learn a foreign language and engage with a foreign cul-



Rev. and Mrs. Terry Flanagan



Arabic Media ministry recording studio

ture to be sent out to a mission field costs a great deal of time and money. Western workers require Western wages. This is so much more costly than the average income in the non-western countries to which they are sent. It further requires mostly unobtainable legal work for resident permits that are NOT needed by local people who know the local languages and understand local cultures.

give thanks to the Lord for the generosity of His people in Western countries. However, dependence upon financial support can lead to Western dominance amongst the church-



Makassar, Indonesia children's program

So, MERF has always equipped, resourced and funded indigenous workers to serve amongst indigenous churches. We

es receiving support. To counter this danger, MERF ensures that a good proportion of the Committee of Management is made up of members from the

field nations, and encourages indigenous churches to become increasingly financially self-sufficient.

Calls For Prayer

I have always been greatly encouraged by the positive tone of the monthly MERF newsletters. They are full of thanks and praise to God for His powerful works of salvation across the Muslim world. The desire for God's ongoing blessing is expressed by lists of prayer requests as well as items for thanksgiv-

for moving His people to excitedly give financially so that MERF is enabled to serve Him. Almighty God does not need MERF – but we praise Him for blessing the work of His servants supported by MERF. To Him be the glory, so that we may share in the joy of the Triune God!

Tribute to a Faithful Servant

Cairo, Egypt, July 19, 2023 Dr. Victor Bedrous passed to glory.



A senior university professor, he faithfully volunteered much of his time and energies for service with MERF for over 20 years, translating and reviewing translations, including the Sunday School curriculum. He also supervised their printing and distribution and provided administrative and spiritual oversight for the Arabic Media Team. We praise God for his exemplary Christian life and fruitful service and pray for the Lord's comfort to his grieving loved ones.

ing, rather than requests for donations.

Money cannot obtain the blessing of God, but God is glorified when He blesses the prayerful dependence of His people. Having said this, we praise God

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International Evangelical Church

Sundays 10:30 am & 6:00 pm – John Calvin Centre
57 Stylianou Lena St., Larnaca, Cyprus



The late Dr. Victor Bedrous translated to Arabic the Bible Building Blocks of Faith Sunday school curriculum