

21/12/18



**More than a story!** Historian Luke, was the earliest of historiographers and later with Eusebius in the fourth century provided the template and source of the evidenced and sourced historical method.(check prof. Edwin Judge's work ,Macquarie Uni). So the documentation of the birth of Jesus was 'checked with eye-

witnesses', 'arranged in order', 'carefully investigated in sequence' by Luke. Others too had attempted this task. Archaeology has confirmed details earlier disputed. Those who seek God will know the truth of it through the added inner testimony of Holy Spirit. This is the visited planet! The invasion of the forces of Righteousness is now well under way. And Jesus is the Saviour of humanity. Blessed are those who realise they need saving!

### *Brentwood church nativity at night*

**How important is the Bible?** Check a concordance under 'scripture' . Jesus lived in, of and by the Scriptures. He fulfilled them, 'ate' them (Matt 4.4), loved them, revered them, hoped in them and held them as his Fathers most precious gift communicated by the beloved Holy Spirit. What was Christ's confidence that He would be saved from death and resurrected? The prophetic promise of Scripture.(John 20.9) Little wonder that He chastises us if necessary to ensure we send the roots of our trust deep into the written promises of Scripture. Jesus is the Word. So intimate the fellowship between the written and the flesh that Scripture is the breath of God as Jesus is the Word of God.

**So this Sunday and Christmas services-** whether you are the most eloquent of preachers, or you may be simply down to read Scripture or be the preacher in a Lay Ministry Team coming up, remember: Scripture is able to create life and

sustain the very best life expressions this earth has seen, when read and preached in belief and purpose. If we have nothing else to do at these gatherings but read, hear and keep it (take it to heart in obedience. Rev 1.3) your church services will be the most creative life and hope injecting events in your respective communities.

**There are basic historic documents that define the high experiment of the UCA.** The Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians, the Savoy Declaration of the Congregationalists and Wesley's Sermons of the Methodists. On Scripture the Savoy Declaration followed the WC., which says about Scripture; "The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, depends not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is Truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God. The supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

Wesley declared that he was 'a man of One book' and allowed himself to be labelled a Bible bigot. His 44 Sermons are soaked in Scripture.

The Scriptures are not just texts of dogma. They are life giving (John 20.31). The Scriptures uniquely communicate spiritual understanding. Our minds are created so as to hear and understand the Scriptured Word (2Timothy 2.7 eg) When we think on a Bible text the Holy Spirit is moving in our minds and spirits and illuminating insight about things that bring hope and empowerment for kingdom life (Rom 15.4) . The Scriptures are Holy Spirit crafted in such a way that events described three millennia ago contain and release truths that are as relevant for the last day of earthly history as when written. Scripture is the very breath of the Lord Himself (2Tim 3.16). To add to it or take its plain teaching away is cursed, (Rev 22.18-19) but Scripture trusted is protection from the kingdom of Satan and hell. Stay with Scripture and no dystopian powers can harm you (Rev 1.3,22.19).

**Freedom to proclaim Scripture is now a global matter.** why isn't religious freedom the [defining issue](#) of our time? The current coyness of our politician's and Mr Shortens side-lining the matter while it bubbles away beneath the surface is an example at home. The rise of terrestrial demons as represented

in the massive increase in anti-Christian sentiment in India is another example. Get this, for a country considered an upcoming economic leader- of India's 29 states and seven territories, six have passed anti-conversion laws and laws to protect cows! In Rajasthan a "Cow Ministry" has been established and in Gujarat, the sentence for illegal slaughter of cows increased from seven years to life imprisonment. The liberating Word of God needs release into every culture on the planet indeed.

Hear a local [sermon from Golden Grove](#) on Rev 11 and the [reality of living by the Word](#) in a culture like ours. And another on ['eating'](#) the Word.

**Declare Holy Scripture. Reseed where receded.** Hopenet and others of like mind must be aware of the need to have Gospel witness and preaching in every area of our State throughout our 'scattered populations' (as the SA Methodist mission strategy put it) not only by geography but by culture, relationships, classes, or whatever barriers are left in place by past prejudices. Let there be places and occasions to learn the Way of Jesus in every street, in every locality. Church planting is not primary. Preaching and witness is. From that, true churches or groupings of those responding to Jesus' call form naturally. Hopenet is heeding and wants to be part of it. Reseed where receded! Farmers know this. If the storms blow the seed away or freak weather destroys it-reseed again while there is time. Some areas have given up and let the seed of life shrivel. Others have gone to sleep. The fierce storms have done their worst. Vicious secularism fake gospels and indulgence has distracted others to kingdom ineffectiveness. Reseed in this land of former rich heritage!

**The upcoming Presbytery:** Jan 5<sup>th</sup> 9.30 to 1pm, or shorter. Details are [here](#) and [here](#). Churches can have an extra member under 35 for every elected rep, see



[details](#). Our reps are gearing up in prayer and purpose. A mission leader recently commented that HopeNet folk seem sharper and clearer about what they believe. Well that is an upside of our challenges! Also country folk are able to receive travel help. Reimbursement for travel to presbytery [here](#). For love of this part of the church, the UCA gatherings of Christ's people, which the Lord has clearly blessed in many areas through faithful preaching and living and testimony, we take this action and hold fast to our Head, the Lord Jesus.

You may like to check Rev. Robert Griffiths(Lismore Regional Mission Qsld) article [‘Holding Fast’](#) testifying his commitment to the authority of Scripture.

Joy to all our beloved HopeNet folk and all who read this as you feast on the Gospel of the truth of Christmas!

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