



Serving Christ and His Suffering Church



FOCUS ON CENTRAL ASIA

Wise words for living today

Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, Chair of the Board of Trustees, TBF Trust

Earlier this year I had the immense privilege of spending time with one of the greatest Christian leaders of our age. He heads a Church which has withstood many centuries of persecution and is still being persecuted today. He himself, personally, is being targeted. His relatives also are being targeted – even imprisoned – as a way of putting pressure on him.

This wise and gentle leader told me his three guiding principles.

1. Always tell the truth, without fear.
2. Focus on what you are doing right now, this moment. You may have lived for 70 or 100 years already, but those years are not as important as this very second in which you are presently living.
3. Never say, “I can’t.” Don’t give up. Remember the words of the Apostle Paul: “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13 ESV) So have confidence.

If I may respectfully draw out a fourth principle, which was implicit in the first three: don’t be afraid. Fear leads to all kinds of sins, he said, and gave lying as an example. Very often the reason that people tell lies is that they are afraid. Being afraid may drive us to commit many other sins.

We do not lose heart (2 Corinthians 4:1,16)

We must not fear, and neither must we lose heart. Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians always moves me greatly because of what he shares with the

Corinthian Christians about his own afflictions, which were so great and so heavy that sometimes he thought he would die (2 Corinthians 1:8-9). Yet he found that the afflictions did not crush him, the perplexities did not drive him to despair, that in the persecution he was not forsaken, and though struck down he was not destroyed (4:8-9). Despite all his suffering, he did not lose heart (4:1,16).

If we feel alone, if we feel there is no way out from our troubles, if we are tempted to give up, then let us cling to Paul’s wise words: **we do not lose heart**. No matter how many times we are knocked down, we get up again. In an age of fear, there is much that might tempt us to lose heart: fear of the unknown, of the darkness and difficulties that may lie ahead. These fears can become a snare that traps us. Let us remember, like Paul, that we can avail ourselves of the surpassing power of God (4:7), the power that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead (4:14). Let us view our afflictions from the perspective of eternity (4:17-18) and then we will not lose heart.

Paul connects a determination not to lose heart, not to give up and say “I can’t”, with integrity:

*“...we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth...”
(2 Corinthians 4:1-2 ESV).*

What TBF Trust is doing by God's grace and with your gifts

Practical aid gives incomes for persecuted converts in Central Asia

Diamond drills in Tajikistan

"Thank you for your help because it enables me to be involved in church ministry and have a regular small income for my family." Pastor M is a convert from Islam in Tajikistan, one of the poorest countries of the former Soviet Union. Many people have to migrate in search of work, hoping somehow to find



◀ *Specialist diamond drilling equipment helps Pastor M support his family and also gives income for some of the converts in his church*

a way to feed their families. Christians in Tajikistan are faced with the same challenge. It is even harder for converts from Islam, as no one wants to employ them. Many believers – most of them men – travel abroad to get work, leaving behind their families and whatever area of ministry they had in their local church.

But what about church pastors? How can they support themselves and yet continue to teach, preach and care for their congregations? Pastor M has a congregation of about 300 people, most of them converts, from several different ethnic groups. Because they have left Islam, they face pressure and persecution, as does Pastor M himself.

He had a small business repairing electrical appliances. It was great for

ministry, as local converts could drop in to the repair workshop, but it did not give him enough income to support his wife and children. Aware that construction work in Tajikistan was developing fast, Pastor M. saw an opportunity. He has started another business, drilling concrete walls, for which there is much demand. The new business gives earning opportunities to some of his church members as well as for Pastor M himself. A grant from TBF Trust paid for the specialist diamond drilling machinery.

Bending sheet metal in Kazakhstan

"Peace to you, dear brothers and sisters! Thanks be to God and a huge thank you to you, dear ones, for your help. The machine was safely purchased and delivered, the settings were made, and work began. We believe that this machine will provide work for the young brothers in our church, and they will remain in the church and grow in faith and service. Thank you again and may God bless you."

This message came from Pastor T, who earns a living in summer by fitting slopes to plastic windows. But there is little or no windows work in the cold winter



◀ *This machine bends sheet metal. It helps support Pastor T (in the photo) and also enables young men at his church to earn some money*

months. The new machine bends sheet metal. It will help with the windows work and also be used to manufacture other products to generate income year round not only for Pastor T but also for many of the young men at his church.

Elite sheep in Kyrgyzstan

The Arashan breed of sheep have a fine reddish-brown fleece and are very large, producing up to five times as much meat as ordinary sheep. They are in great demand in Kyrgyzstan. TBF Trust has given grants to buy sheep for two persecuted convert families so that they can breed them, sell the lambs and make an income to support themselves.

“It is difficult to find work in our village, and for believers it is almost impossible,” said **Mrs D**. Neighbours refuse to speak to the family because they are Christians. Mrs D left Islam to follow Christ in 1998, and currently serves as

administrator and accountant at her church. Last year her husband and her three eldest sons all went to Russia to get work but for four months this year they did not get a salary.

Now that they have the sheep, her husband and sons can work at home and in their spare time help with the ministry to new converts from Islam.

Mrs N is another convert who received Arashan sheep from TBF Trust. She has suffered much for her decision to follow Christ. Local Muslims threatened to burn down her house and said that she and other Christians in the family must either deny Christ or leave the family clan. Undaunted despite 13 years of such persecution, she was involved in planting a church in her village, and hosts their gatherings in her home. This resulted in more pressure and threats from some of the local Muslims, who even broke a window in her house.



▲ Mrs N and her children with the Arashan sheep funded by TBFT

For your prayers: pressure growing in Kyrgyzstan

“If the order to eliminate violations is not fulfilled within 90 days, the above-mentioned religious organizations and religious educational institutions will be liquidated under the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Freedom of Religion and Religious Associations.”

This warning appeared on the website of Kyrgyzstan’s National Agency for Religious Affairs and Interethnic Relations. Nine religious organisations - four evangelical churches and five Muslim organisations - have had their activities suspended and stand at risk of being completely liquidated.

The new religion law, passed in January 2025, came into effect on 1 August. According to the new law, congregations must be registered and their buildings must be registered as religious buildings. Fire and safety regulations have made this more complicated and several churches did not have time to complete the process of transferring and registering their buildings by 1 August. Therefore any worship or prayer meetings now held in those church buildings (still officially recorded as residential properties) are illegal.

In the first month after the law came into effect, the authorities focused on scrutinising the churches that were already registered. Unknown people kept appearing at their worship and prayer meetings, apparently to check on their activities. Christians anticipate that the unregistered churches and groups will be checked as the next stage, and they expect massive fines to be imposed.

According to the new law, a family can pray together in their own home but



apart from that it is illegal for more than two people to gather in a private home for prayer and worship. Any gatherings with any religious aspect are also caught by this law. For example, a birthday party with any Christian literature involved would be illegal.

It is now forbidden to distribute religious literature and materials in public places, in state and municipal institutions, or by going from door to door of private homes. Religious literature and materials can only be distributed in religious places. In February 2026 a new regulation will come into force, requiring anyone preaching in a church to have academic qualifications in religious education.

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Here is my gift to provide practical help for persecuted Christians.

Title Name

Address

Postcode

Phone Email

TBF Trust will not give your name or contact details to anyone else.

I enclose a cheque/voucher payable to "TBF Trust" for £

I have made an online bank transfer of £ on (date)

Account **TBF Trust** / Account no. **57052960** / Sort code **30-92-63**

I would like to make a donation by card.

Amount £ credit/debit card CAF card

Card number

Expiry date / CVV Signature

Please send me a Direct Debit form for regular giving.

I do not require an acknowledgement of this gift.

GIFT AID DECLARATION

(APPLICABLE TO UK TAXPAYERS ONLY)

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Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer: please fill this in below if different from the details above.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must mark the box below:

I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past to: TBF Trust. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income Tax and/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Title Name

Address

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Please notify TBF Trust if your circumstances change.

If you pay income tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your gift donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Please return this form to

**TBF Trust, Unit 4, Fordbrook Business Centre,
Marlborough Road, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5NU**



▲ *Kyrgyzstan's parliament has passed legislation that is creating new difficulties for Christians*

In this fast-changing situation, our brothers and sisters in Kyrgyzstan need our prayers

- Pray for speedy progress in converting buildings into non-residential properties, adding the necessary fire and safety features, and registering them as religious buildings.
- Ask the Lord to give wisdom from above to pastors in Kyrgyzstan whose church members cannot, at the moment, meet legally, either in church buildings or in homes. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the pastors how to care for their flocks in this new situation.
- Pray for our brothers and sisters that the Lord will give them courage and wisdom in this difficult time. Pray that they will not be fined.

God at work in Kyrgyzstan

■ A Christian camp for children with cerebral palsy and their parents is held every summer in Kyrgyzstan. The lives of disabled people tend to be bleak in this country, but the camp brings great joy to the children.

In 2023 and 2024 the camp faced difficulties because of some hostile local Muslims who tried to prevent it taking place. The organisers feared it might not be possible to hold the camp in 2025. Many prayers were offered, God answered, and the camp took place.

There is no church in the area, but a group of women and children, who have put their trust in Jesus since the annual camps started, now meet monthly, with visiting Christians to lead their meetings.

■ Plans for another annual Christian summer camp in a certain valley had to be cancelled in 2025 because the authorities had confiscated part of the campsite and destroyed the fence and some of the buildings. Instead, the valley churches organised a family camp in the nearby mountains.

The valley campsite had been well equipped with electricity, cosy rooms, a kitchen, dining-room, sports ground and more. But the mountains had none of these facilities. The campers had to set up yurts, tents and generators, fetch water from the river and cook over a fire.

They loved it and the camp was a blessed time, bringing children and parents very close. "It was an edification for believers and a good witness for unbelievers," said one leader.

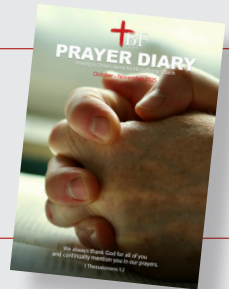


Change of address

TBF Trust has moved to a new address. We are **now at Unit 4**, Fordbrook Business Centre, **no longer at Unit 2**. Please turn to page 7 for the full address. Our phone number and email are unchanged.

Have you got your TBF Trust prayer diary for October-November?

Please contact the TBFT office (see page 7) to request your copy or for extra copies to give your Christian friends.



Could you leave a legacy to TBF Trust?

May we invite you prayerfully to consider including a legacy to TBF Trust when you write your will? If the Lord leads you to care for persecuted Christians in this way, you could use the following wording: *“I give to TBF Trust (registered charity number 271602) at Unit 4, Fordbrook Business Centre, Marlborough Road, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 5NU the sum of £..... (free of all taxes) for its general purposes and I declare that the receipt of the Treasurer or other authorised officer will be a sufficient discharge to my executor(s).”* Alternatively, your legacy could be expressed as a percentage of your estate.

Front cover image: Mrs D's children with the sheep that will provide an income for the family. Turn to page 4 to read more.



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www.tbfftrust.org

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