

# Church Without Walls

Issue 62 July 4th 2021

## The hardest place in the world for Christians.

North Korea is listed by Open Doors as the country where Christians face the most extreme persecution.

It's hard to know exactly how many Christians there are in North Korea, because they must keep their faith so well hidden, but it's estimated at 400,000 – some 1.5 per cent of the population. About 50-70,000 of these Christians are in prisons and labour camps.



Hee-Yol (name changed) escaped North Korea during the Great Famine of the 1990s. While in China, she became a Christian – but one day she was forced back to North Korea.

*“One day, the Chinese police broke into my workplace. They demanded to see my ID card, and when I couldn't show them one, I was sent to North Korea.”*

Back in North Korea, she was imprisoned in horrendous conditions:

*“The small prison cell had nine prisoners. We could not lie comfortably. We had to lay down on our side. If the cameras caught us talking to prisoners next to us, the punishment was called pompu, where we put our hands behind us and had to crouch and then stand up a thousand times.*

*“It was so hard to endure. One whole winter, I had to spend at the detention centre. The room was underground without any sunlight. It was a harsh winter. I needed to endure the temperature well below minus 20 to 30 degrees Celsius, the hunger, and the cold.”*

Thankfully, she was released. Most Christians are not.

2021 is the 20th year in a row that North Korea has been the country where Christians face the most extreme persecution. And yet Covid-19 has made it even worse. Though the North Korean authorities claim that the pandemic has had little impact in the country, North Koreans call it the 'ghost disease' because people are so malnourished already that they die very quickly from Covid-19. The pandemic has led to tighter security at the Chinese border, and a stranglehold on the black market, which many used to survive.

**Please keep praying for your brothers and sisters in North Korea. Your prayers make an enormous difference to those following Jesus no matter the cost.**

[Read more about countries where Christians face the most persecution here](#)



## Rooted.

Our online youth group for 14-21 year olds is having a change.

Still meeting on zoom, they're now shifting over to Tuesdays.

If you want to know more contact Mark Ellery or the church office.



## Infection rates are still high. Don't forget...



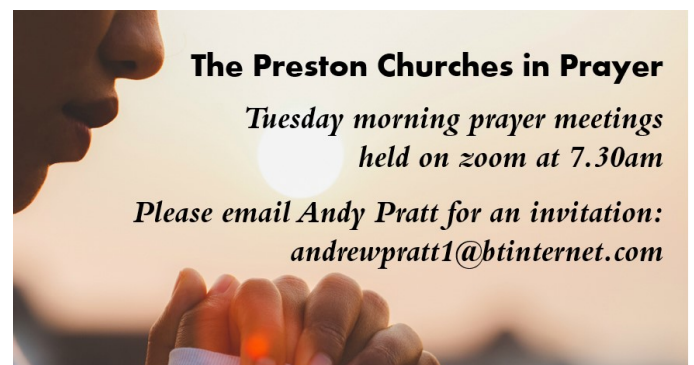
HANDS



FACE



SPACE



 **St Stephen's**  
LEARNING TO LOVE AS JESUS DOES

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## Confronting Christianity - by Rebecca McLaughlin

Contrary to popular belief, Christianity is not declining in the modern world. It has long been the world's most popular belief system, and looks set to remain so. Rather than dismissing Christianity, therefore, we must wrestle with its claims.

This book explores 12 hard questions that seem to undermine the Christian faith: the existence of suffering, the Bible's teaching on gender and sexuality, the reality of judgment, the authority of Scripture, the success of science, and more.

Drawing on state-of-the-art academic research, personal stories, and deep scriptural excavation, this book argues that - when looked at more closely - what first seemed like roadblocks to faith actually become signposts.

Chapters include:

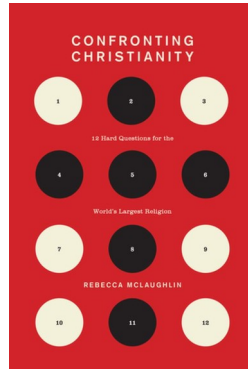
- Aren't We Better Off without Religion?
- How Can You Say There's Only One True Faith?
- Doesn't Religion Cause Violence?
- How Can You Take the Bible Literally?
- Hasn't Science Disproved Christianity?
- Doesn't Christianity Denigrate Women?
- Isn't Christianity Homophobic?
- Doesn't the Bible Condone Slavery?
- How Could a Loving God Allow So Much Suffering?
- How Could a Loving God Send People to Hell?

*"This is a really clear, compelling, understanding, and engaging response to the biggest objections people have to Christianity today. Read it, wrestle with it, and see what your friends make of it."*

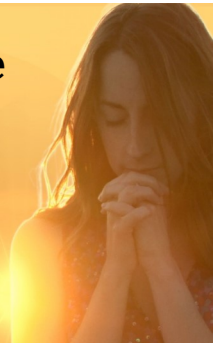
- Sam Allberry Pastor & Author

You can buy this book here:

[Confronting Christianity \(Hardback\) - Rebecca McLaughlin](#)



**This week please  
pray for the  
people living in  
River Parade**



## Ladies' BBQ

Ladies! Have you booked your ticket for the barbeque? It's on 9th July in the Vicarage Garden & you can book through this link:

[Ladies BBQ Tickets, Fri 9 Jul 2021 at 19:00](#)



We're looking forward to getting to know our new curate, Barbara, and welcoming her into our church family. It's free, but you'll need to book early to make sure you get a place.

## THE WISDOM OF CHILDREN

You can't fool the kids in Sunday school, they are way too smart...

'If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale, and gave all my money to the church, would I get into heaven?' I asked the children in my Sunday school class. 'NO!' all the children answered.

'If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would I get into heaven?' Again the answer was, 'NO!'

'Well, I continued, 'then how can I get to heaven?'

A five-year-old boy shouted, 'You gotta be dead!'



## An opportunity has arisen at Bishop's House for a Bishop's Administrator (25 hrs per week)



Help us to live out our recently refreshed Vision 2026 and its core aims of Making Disciples, Growing Leaders, Being Witnesses and Inspiring Children and Young People for Jesus Christ as we go for growth as a Diocese. It's a great time to join the adventure!

[Click here for more details or to apply](#)

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