



# The G.E.M.

Edition 9

The Grace Electronic Magazine

September 2007

## FOCUS ON THE WORLD

September is missions month at Grace Media. In this edition of *The G.E.M.* we introduce a new feature called the Missions Spotlight. Here we will focus on different countries of the world, looking at the basic demographics of the county, and give some details of the missiological needs and organisations that are active within that country.

With this theme in mind we have a first guest writer who recently went on a short visit to Cuba and later to Brazil. Check it out!

We also continue with the Top 25 Must Reads, and this month we look at a long-standing apologetics title that can assist anyone in giving the right answer when faced with tough questions of faith that one is often asked on the mission field.

With only one week to go of our One Year Birthday promotion, be sure to visit the store for mystery discounts and also stand in line to win a product hamper up to the value of R350.

Until next time,  
God bless. †



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## SPREADING THE TRUTH

*“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.””*  
(John 14:6)

Jesus spoke often about truth. He wants us to love the truth and said it would even “set us free” (cf. John 8:32). To spread the Gospel is to spread the truth: the truth about salvation through Christ, the truth of man's sinfulness and our need for salvation.

The truth is not always comfortable for us to hear. Sometimes we would rather run away from it because it challenges us to change our thoughts, words and behaviour. Today there are so many false teachers, false prophets, false visionaries, etc. in the world and in the church that, more than ever, we need to be grounded in the truth of God's word and not depart from it, even for a moment. We must daily study God's Word if we are to resist the snares of the enemy planted all around us.

Jesus called Satan the “father of lies” (cf. John 8:44), and he is a mastermind at deceiving people who are not watching and praying. We must defend the truth, and even lay down our lives for it. This is what the martyrs of the early church did and, indeed, many others throughout the centuries.

*““What is truth?” Pilate asked”*  
(John 18:38)

The world does not understand the truth that comes from God, because the world does not have the Spirit of God. We can only come to know, love and live in the truth of God by the gracious gift of God's revelation through the Holy Spirit. Faith comes through hearing the Word of God (cf. Romans 10:17). This then is our task: to hear, love and live the Word of God and to share it with as many people as possible while we live on this earth. Why? Because the message of the Gospel brings eternal life to those who repent and believe the Good News and walk in the love of Christ.

One practical way we can grow in living in the truth of God is to daily examine our lives: where did we stray from God's word? In thought? In word? In action? What we have failed to do? The mirror of truth is the Word of God and Jesus himself is the Truth whom we are called to fully accept and follow, for he leads us to the Father of truth. Liars and those who walk in darkness will not enter Heaven, but will suffer an eternity with the father of lies (cf. Revelation 21:8). The Spirit of Truth will lead us into all truth if we are humble and obedient to the commands of Jesus, especially the commandment of love: for God, others and ourselves. †

## DIARY OF EVENTS

BE SURE TO DIARISE THE FOLLOWING EXCITING EVENTS

### PlanetShakers South African tour

21-29 September 2007

Full details are available on our web site, or go to [www.itickets.co.za](http://www.itickets.co.za)

### Global Leadership Summit 2007

Starting from 5 October at various venues in South Africa

For more information visit: [www.willowcreeksa.co.za](http://www.willowcreeksa.co.za)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Christian Business Expo

19-20 October 2007 at Mosaiek Convention Centre

For more information visit: [www.cbexpo.co.za](http://www.cbexpo.co.za)

### Michael W. Smith tour to South Africa

19-22 October 2007 at various venues around the country.

Book with Computicket.



## MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT

### Republic of Cuba (República de Cuba)

**Capital:**  
Havana



**Official Language:**  
Spanish

**Population:**  
11,382,820 (2006 census)



**Motto:**  
*Patria y Libertad*  
"Homeland and freedom"

**Currency:**  
Peso

**Government:**  
Socialist Republic



Cuba is an archipelago of islands located in the Caribbean Sea. Cuba is the principal island, which is surrounded by four main groups of islands. These are the Colorados, the Camagüey, the Jardines de la Reina and the Canarreos. The main island of Cuba constitutes most of the nation's land area or 105,006 km<sup>2</sup> and is the seventeenth-largest island in the world by land area.

The main island consists mostly of flat to rolling plains. At the southeastern end is the Sierra Maestra, a range of steep mountains whose highest point is the Pico Real del Turquino at 2,005 metres. The local climate is tropical, though moderated by trade winds. In general, there is a drier season from November to April, and a rainier season from May to October. The average temperature is 21°C in January and 27°C in July. Cuba lies in the path of hurricanes, and these destructive storms are most common in September and October.

#### SA Mission in Cuba:

##### Open Doors

Tel: 011 888 9341  
E-Mail: southafrica@od.org

See the main article on page 3 for more info on Cuba.

## MISSIONARY ORGANISATIONS

Should you be interested in becoming involved in missionary work, here are a few organisations within South Africa to help you start.

### 3D-Outreach

**Postal:** PO Box 3031  
Wilropark  
1731  
**E-Mail:** info@3d-outreach.com  
**Website:** www.3d-outreach.com

### Mercy Ships SA

**Tel:** 021-715-4944  
**Postal:** PO Box 290  
Plumstead  
7800  
**E-mail:** mssa@mercyships.org  
**Website:** www.mercyships.org.za

### SIM Southern Africa

**Phone:** 021 -715-3200  
**Fax:** 021 -715-3220  
**Postal:** P.O. Box 30027  
Tokai  
Cape Town  
7966  
**E-mail:** simsa@sim.org.za  
**Website:** www.sim.org.za

### Living Ministries International

**Tel:** 011-450-2350  
**Fax:** 011-450-1314  
**Postal:** P.O. Box 146  
Bedfordview  
2008  
**Website:** www.livmin.org

### Mission Aviation Fellowship

**Tel:** 011-659-2880/1/2/3  
**Fax:** 011-659-2885  
**Postal:** PO Box 1288  
Lanseria  
1748  
**E-Mail:** maf@maf.co.za  
**Website:** www.mafsa.co.za

## SHEKEL TRIVIA

- Shekel (Hebrew: שקל), also rendered *sheqel*, refers to one of many ancient units of weight and currency.
- The first known usage is from Mesopotamia around 3000BC.
- The word is thought to have originally applied to a specific volume of barley (*She* = Akkadian for barley).
- The Shekel was originally derived from the weight of 180 grains (one grain weighs about 0.047 grams, so roughly 8.5 grams per shekel).
- The earliest Shekels were money, but were used for trading before coins.
- The plural can be Shekels, Sheqels or Sheqalim (the latter being the plural in Hebrew: שקלים)

This and other Shekel Trivia can be found at  
[www.Answers.com](http://www.Answers.com).

## SHEKEL LOYALTY PROGRAMME

Join the Shekel Loyalty Programme Today and start making a real difference in people's lives.

Visit our website or enquire in-store for more information.

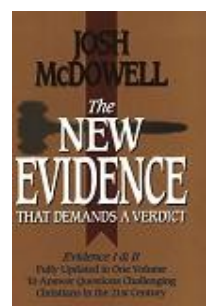


## Top 25 Must Reads

## THE NEW EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT by Josh McDowell

*Evidence that Demands a Verdict* may have started out as an attempt to prove Christianity intellectually false, but it has become something completely different. McDowell uncovered in his research the incredible resiliency of the Christian faith, and the strength of its intellectual claims. When he came to setting out his findings, he ended up creating one of the best Christian apologetic references available. And now he has made that reference work even better, revising it and updating it for the 21st century.

**R220.00**



## CUBA

by Tracey Doyle



Walking through customs at Le Habana Cuba Airport made me realise that years of preparing for this trip had now been completed, but walking through the swivel doors after customs could not have prepared me for the culture shock I would see and experience whilst being in Cuba. Many have asked me, "Why Cuba," and I need to emphasise that this was the Lord's decision and not mine. The first time I heard the Lord speak to me about Cuba was whilst watching the Denzel Washington movie, "Man on Fire", which depicts the extent of kidnapping in Mexico. The clear call to go to Cuba was heard.

As Cuba is still run as a socialist state, going to Cuba is not as easy as one may think, however with the growing tourist trade in the country I planned a historical tour to understand the needs and opportunities that may exist in the land.

Cuba is a paradoxical land in that the socialist regime has allowed all Cubans to enjoy free education until tertiary level, free medical support, and food rations ensuring that no Cuban will starve. However, the highly controlled environment, enhanced by the abolition of Communism in the 90's has resulted in most Cubans barely living

above the breadline. The need is so great. The reality hits you when people on the street beg for soap!

Living in a country like South Africa, where human rights are of the highest regard, you are left somewhat surprised at the level of control within Cuba. Examples such as needing to notify the state if you are travelling from one city to the other, having to request permission from the state to change jobs, death penalty by firing squad, etc, leave you questioning why Cubans have not revolted. However in understanding the history it is clear that whilst Cubans may not have much now, the historical need of Cubans prior to the revolution was even greater.

Historical significance is great for Cubans and every discussion will have three components, namely before the revolution, after the revolution, and now after communism. Each town you enter sports posters, monuments, billboards and emblems of the revolution, depicting mainly Che' Guevara. Children at school declare each morning that they wish to be like Che', prior to school opening!

Home of the Salsa aptly describes the dance culture within the country with live Salsa bands being heard at every restaurant, or Salsa house. Everybody in Cuba Salsas... from little children to the aged... and Cuban men are delighted to show you how.

Coupled with fantastic Caribbean weather, the country holds a special cultural flair.

### **“MOST CUBANS BARELY LIVE ABOVE THE BREADLINE.”**

No cars older than 1974 are driven by Cubans, so for those that love classic cars, Cuba will make your senses go crazy.

The use of cellular phones is minimal as most people cannot afford this luxury and the use of the internet for Cubans is prohibited. It feels like you are in a whole other time dimension.

Religion within Cuba is not prohibited, however as a result of the communist regime since the 1960's people have no or very little knowledge of Christianity. The historical Spanish decent of Cubans brought in a strong catholic stance and architecture depicting Christian values, the crucifixion, etc. are still to

be seen, however the meaning behind the symbols are not known. When slaves were brought to Cuba for the Spaniards, the natives were forced to "convert" to Catholicism, however mostly continued worshipping their ancestral spirits, which they then merged with

the Catholic Saints. The practice of this religion, known as Santeria is very common amongst Cubans. Santeria temples are common, usually run from the "priest's" homes. The scary reality of this religion however is the blatant use of evil spirits to execute the "desires" of the priests.

It was saddening to hear how most churches have been converted into museums, and the Christo de Cuba (Christ of Cuba), a smaller version of Brazil's Corcovado, has until recently been used as a disco. The emerging of Christian house churches is on the increase, however talk of indirect persecution of those becoming born again believers is still rampant.

As the Cubans have no affinity towards America, which is depicted as a Christian country, huge damage to the gospel has historically been done in this area. Cubans are by nature very guarded when talking to outsiders, due to their conduct being monitored, and results in limited evangelical interaction. Therefore the ability to financially sponsor a Cuban believer to become a full time missionary in their own land is a very effective way of spreading the gospel within Cuba.

Due to most countries not supporting Fidel Castro's regime, most Western Countries do not send missionaries into the land, however there is an increase in missionaries visiting the land from within South America.

A huge part of me has been left in Cuba with a growing desire to understand and be an instrument in the spreading of the gospel within Cuba. My prayer is that the land will no longer be known as Fidel's Cuba, but rather as Christ's Cuba. If you would like to know how you can join in the quest to win Cuba for Christ, please contact me, via Grace Media, for more information.✝

Tracy's follow-up article about her trip to Brazil will feature in the October issue of *The G.E.M.*

### Rich & Rewarding Book

#### *The Great Omission*

by Steve Saint

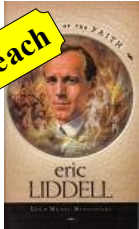
Learn how current missions strategies have unwittingly kept millions of believers from fulfilling their roles in God's Kingdom.



**R90.00**

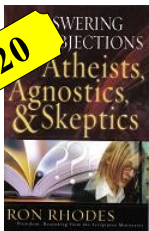
# FIRST BIRTHDAY SPECIALS – ONLY 1 WEEK TO GO! MYSTERY DISCOUNTS AND PRIZES UP FOR GRABS.

## BOOKS



**R20 each**

*Heroes of the Faith Series*



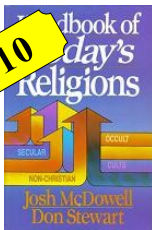
**R120**

*Answering the Objections of Atheists, Agnostics & Skeptics* by Ron Rhodes



**R120**

*How to Win Souls and Influence People* by Ray Comfort



**R210**

*Handbook of Today's Religions* by Josh McDowell & Don Stewart



**R270**

*The Evidence Bible*  
Also Available as New Testament, Psalms & Proverbs **R70**

## GAMES & MULTIMEDIA



**R190**

*Missionary Conquest Board Game*



**R75**

*Go Tell it on the Mountain! Card Game*



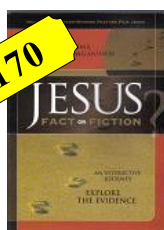
**R400**

*Family Bible Game Collection*  
[Contains 5 PC games]



**R70 each**

*Music Machine Children's CD Series*  
[3 titles in series]



**R170**

*Jesus: Fact or Fiction DVD*  
Includes the *Jesus* Film and other features

## NEW ARRIVALS



**R100**

*Saviour King CD* by Hillsong



**R100**

*My Bible Activity Book*  
Includes 300 Stickers



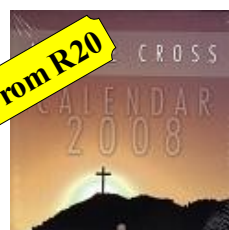
**R70 each**

*The Drive-Time Message CD Devotionals Volume 2* for men and women



**R80**

2008 Diaries



**From R20**

2008 Calendars

## COMING SOON



*Roadmaps and Revelations* by Parachute Band  
[Expected October]



*One Night With the King DVD*  
[Expected December]

Order before the release dates and receive a **10% discount**.

### TRADING HOURS:

**Monday – Friday:**

9am – 5pm

**Saturday:**

9am – 2pm

*Closed Sundays and some Public Holidays*

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Essexwold, Johannesburg  
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Fax: 086-654-2996  
www.gracemedia.co.za  
shop@gracemedia.co.za

From the N3, take the Linksfield Rd off ramp. Turn right up hill. Stay in left lane. Turn left into Civin Dr. At 4th set of lights, turn left under bridge. At t-junction turn left. Through the boom. We are ± 200m on the right hand side. Entrance is in Penhurst Ave.

