



Prez Release



An eNewsletter to AGTS Friends

February 2008

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Back in the News or Déjà Vu All Over Again?

The declaration of independence by Kosovo again centers the world on the region we used to call Yugoslavia. The tragedies that this region experienced in the late part of the 1990s have faded from the radar screen of most of the globe. Since then, the United Nations and NATO have been attempting to maintain stability in the region. With Kosovo's declaration and recognition of the new state by the USA and European Union members like the UK, France and Germany, the components are present for a slippery slope to past chaos. We, in North America, remember the plight of the ethnic Albanian separatists and their struggle with the Serbian security force. The average reaction to this current point of tension might be, "I thought we dealt with that 10 years ago!"

This European scenario mirrors the current foment in Kenya in the sense that it is hard for Westerners to fathom. Our lives are guided by factoids and quick fix solutions even if the problems are centuries old. Ethnic and tribal struggles seem to be so "foreign" to the developed world. When the mantra of change dominates the political scene in our nation, the complexities of Kosovo or Kenya are hard to categorize, other than labeling them as a nuisance. Ironically, it is our unwillingness to acknowledge the depth and historical breath of the dilemma in Kenya and Kosovo that speaks to our seeming surprise at events which tend to resurface on a regular basis in

Islam in America Conference

September 10-12, 2008

Calvary Church
Naperville, Illinois

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The Prez Release is a monthly commentary from the President of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary. If you want to be removed from this mailing list or would like to update your email address, please contact sstarkey@agts.edu.

more violent forms than we previously experienced.

The ethnic and tribal hostilities we're observing in these cases are hundreds of years in the making and have been socialized into the fabric of countless generations. These current tragedies in Kenya and Kosovo and scores of other examples not presently on the news media "favorites" list, are testimony to humanity's propensity to live life by self-constructed rules.

The complexities of these global realities are mind-boggling and probably beyond the scope of a uniform human solution. Christians who believe in an authoritative Bible, a Christ who redeems and in the possibility of significant transformation by the Holy Spirit may be viewed as shallow and predictable when we offer our analysis of these tragedies. The simple truth is, unless one believes in the radical power of the Gospel to transform people's hatred into compassion or experiences of injustice into hope, we are without much to offer our world. Those who would suggest that the power of the Gospel is somehow too frail for current realities also fail to acknowledge the injustice, hopelessness and animosity that framed the world of the New Testament. It is in a world of considerable chaos that the light of the Gospel found its target. Like the Apostle Paul, may we look at our world, consider its hostility and respond with the affirmation of the Apostle: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel—for it is the power of God—unto salvation."



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