

# Faith Digest: Study finds biblical illiteracy among Brits

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**Survey reveals biblical illiteracy among Brits.** Three out of 10 British children have next to no understanding of the Bible, and their parents aren't that knowledgeable either. A survey by the [Bible Society](#), founded in 1804 to spread knowledge about the Scriptures, said most boys and girls aged 8 to 15 years old did not know that Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark or Jesus' birth are rooted in the Bible. More than a third of the 800 children surveyed did not know David and Goliath and the story of the Good Samaritan are Bible tales. One child



in 10 mistakenly thought the stories about King Midas and Icarus are in the Bible. Nearly half the 1,100 parents surveyed failed to identify Noah's Ark as a story from the Bible. More than one-third thought a Harry Potter plotline was or might have come from the Bible.

**United Methodists postpone church trial.** The trial of a retired United Methodist pastor and former Yale Divinity School dean accused of breaking church law by performing a gay wedding has been delayed indefinitely. Clifton Ives, a retired Maine bishop overseeing the trial, and pastors representing the church and Thomas Ogletree, all agreed to pursue a "just resolution" before resorting to a trial, said William S. Shillady, secretary of the trial court. Ogletree, 80, faced a church trial March 10 and 11 in Stamford, Conn., for officiating at the 2012 wedding of his son to another man. The church defines marriage as between a man and a woman, and bans clergy from performing and churches from hosting same-sex

ceremonies. Ogletree's case follows the high-profile defrocking of Frank Schaefer, a former Pennsylvania pastor found guilty of officiating at his son's wedding to another man. Several other church trials on the issue are possible in the near future.

**Christians face increasing persecution, congressman insists.** The global persecution of Christians has gone from bad to worse, said U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., at a congressional hearing. Smith, along with other U.S. House subcommittee members and various speakers gave testimony about religious hostilities against Christians worldwide. Speakers noted religious persecution violates basic human rights, and Smith likened the persecution of Christians in Iraq to genocide. "Christians remain the most persecuted group in the world and thus deserve special attention," he said. Elliott Abrams, senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, said past administrations have not taken the issue of Christian persecution seriously enough. "The system isn't working properly," said Abrams, who serves on the [U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom](#). "It sends a message to other countries that we don't care."