

[jobs](#) [property](#) [motors](#) [business search](#)

NEWS.scotsman.com

Site Web

[Search](#)

Saturday, 19th December 2009



Peter Irvine breaks 11th commandment – thou shalt not mock the Bible to boost tourism

Published Date: 10 December 2009

By BRIAN FERGUSON

HE IS used to facing brickbats with his outspoken views on Scotland's tourism industry.

But Peter Irvine has now triggered an unholy row after unveiling a religious-themed advertising campaign for his new guidebook, urging shoppers to "get the Bible this Christmas".

Church leaders have accused the author of mocking the Bible with an advert which features a picture of the book in front of a stained-glass window.

Campaigners say Mr Irvine, below, trivialises the Bible and will offend many Christians with the campaign for the new edition of Scotland the Best.

Kirk officials have described the advert as "tasteless" and say it reflects a trend to take the name of the holy book in vain to promote commercial products.

The cover of the latest edition of Scotland the Best features a quote from a review of a previous edition describing it as "a gospel", while promotional material issued by publishers HarperCollins refers to "The Bible: 2010".

Mr Irvine admitted the advert was intended to be a tongue-in-cheek poke at religion, but insisted it was readers of the book, and businesses, that had begun calling it "the Bible".

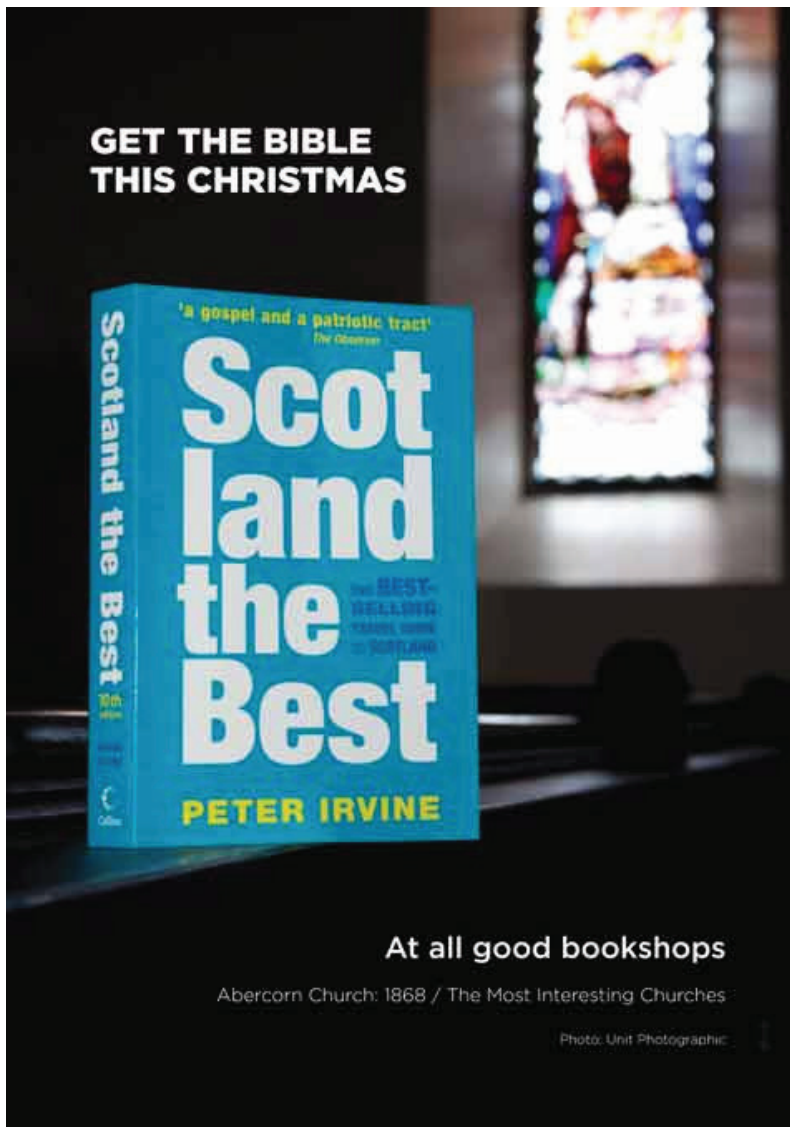
Scotland the Best – which covers everything from hotels, bars and restaurants to beaches, lochs and waterfalls – was first published by Mr Irvine in 1993. The new edition is the tenth.

While the new advert is limited to magazines at the moment, Mr Irvine said there was a chance it could be deployed in bookshops in the run-up to Christmas.

However, Steven Reid, a spokesman for Forward Together, an evangelical group attached to the Church of Scotland, said: "This advert is extremely regrettable, especially at a time of a traditional Christian festival when many people are thinking about what the Bible says about Christmas.

"It is seeking to trivialise the true nature of the Bible, and I think many people will be rightly offended. It's obviously a publicity stunt, but it's a stunt too far."

The Rev Ian Galloway, convener of the Kirk's Church and Society Council, added: "However authoritative this book may be, I doubt very much it'll be any comparison to the true Bible, the primary source book for many millions of Christians around the world.



"It's a bit tasteless. I don't think he's making any kind of religious claims, but we are seeing this kind of things more and more these days. The self-aggrandising claims of publishers is beyond belief."

Mr Irvine pointed out that an entire section of his book was devoted to Scotland's most interesting churches, including Abercorn Church, near South Queensferry, where the advert was shot.

He said: "Churches have been in the book since the very beginning and I also have sections on favourite graveyards, abbeys and spiritual retreats."

"The fact is that loads of people who have bought the book, or are featured in it, have told me they regard it as their Bible."

"It is not meant to be a completely innocent advert and it is a bit tongue-in-cheek, but I am only reflecting what people have written to me and told me."

Page 1 of 1

- **Last Updated:** 10 December 2009 11:37 AM
- **Source:** The Scotsman
- **Location:** Edinburgh

Crieff Hydro Hotel

Incl. childcare and 40+ activities at Scottish leading family resort

CrieffHydro.com/FamilyResort

Scottish Debt Advice

Write off up to 95% of you Debts Free Online Scottish Debt Advice

www.Trust-Deeds.co.uk

Fife Wedding Photographer

Contemporary reportage style Flexible packages from £500

www.EFRphotography.com

Golf Breaks in Scotland

1 night, 2 rounds for £89. Including Dinner + B&B. Book now!

www.yourgolftravel.com



This website and its associated newspaper adheres to the Press Complaints Commission's Code of Practice. If you have a complaint about editorial content which relates to inaccuracy or intrusion, then contact the Editor by clicking [here](#).

If you remain dissatisfied with the response provided then you can contact the PCC by clicking [here](#).

