

CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

“And what I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch”

Mark 13:37

NEWSLETTER
MAY 2010

May 2010

To all Christian Watch Members

Dear Friends,

Whilst the situation in our nation and in many other countries becomes increasingly serious, we are thankfully spared and enabled to continue in our endeavours to serve the Lord by providing information about current events - all of which, we must remember, are permitted by Him.

The Lord determined the result of our recent General Election and it will prove to be either in mercy or in judgment for us personally and nationally. When we consider the lack of godliness of the majority of those elected to our Parliament - from whom our Government is formed - what can we expect? We indeed wonder what the future holds for the British nation, as there is little confidence in the Coalition Government now in power, following the election result of a 'hung' Parliament. The financial institutions are nervous and will be continually monitoring the situation to assess the effectiveness of the new government's policy to tackle the enormous national debt. We are exhorted to pray for those in authority over us. May the Lord answer our prayers that they might receive wisdom from Him.

The recent decisions made by some of our senior Judges, clearly demonstrates the anti-Christian attitude that increasingly prevails towards Christians who are willing to stand firm for their God-given faith. We are nationally following the same pattern of events previously experienced in nations where religious persecution is now rife. We should be thankful and pray for those organisations that are able and willing to support Christians who are persecuted for standing firm in defence of their faith. A statement made by a senior British Judge, Lord Justice McKenzie Laws, demonstrates the increasingly serious situation. In his ruling against a Christian counsellor, who sued his employer after losing his job for refusing to offer sex therapy to same-sex couples, the Judge said, "**Christian beliefs have no standing in law, because they cannot be proven**". Such a statement is surely derogatory to HRH, Queen Elizabeth II, who confirmed on oath at her Coronation on 2nd June 1953, that to her utmost power she would maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel and maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion, established by law. We are thankful for the way the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey has given a clear warning regarding the possible consequences of downgrading the rights of Christians. Details of his statement were published in The Guardian which we include under the title, **Ex-archbishop attacks judges over gay counselling ruling**.

A related article has been published in the Daily Mail by Melanie Phillips, in which she deals with a number of issues recently before the British Courts. This article, **The Orwellian logic that's turning the faith Britain was built on into a crime**, accurately identifies the current pattern of events. The speed at which the Protestant Biblical faith has been undermined and progressively replaced in the United Kingdom by an atheistic philosophy, reflects very solemnly on the lack of zeal by the majority of professing Christians who have failed to defend their religious beliefs. When we consider what many of our forefathers endured in terms of persecution - including being burned to death at the stake - rather than deny their God-given faith, how do we compare in our willingness to contend for the same gospel? If the present rate of opposition to the Christian religion continues, we may well soon experience increasing levels of persecution.

The solemn decline and confusion in the Church of England continues with a number of leading Bishops recently travelling to Rome for secret discussions with the Pope's advisors concerning plans that would allow them to convert to Catholicism. The reason given for their decision to investigate such a possibility is the current plan to introduce women bishops. This is due to be debated at a C of E General Synod meeting in July. It is reported that in excess of 1,300 clergy have written to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, threatening to resign if woman are to be appointed bishops.

We have received a copy of an interesting and instructive letter, recently published in a Bahamas newspaper, **The Nassau Guardian** in which the writer, **Ann-Marie John**, contends for the need to stand firm for the true Christian faith. She gives various examples from scripture of what others were enabled to do in opposing wickedness in their time. We include this under the title, **Christians are not weaklings**.

Various events continue to occur which emphasise the tolerant attitude towards the Muslim community of those in authority. We include a copy of a report published in the Daily Mail newspaper under the title, **MUSLIM NURSES CAN COVER UP**. Details are given of how the Department of Health in the UK allows Muslim doctors and nurses to wear long sleeves, which is contrary to the hospital dress code. This code was established in an endeavour to reduce the risk of spreading the MRSA bacteria, which has caused the death of numerous patients in recent years.

Recent events in Nigeria, including the murder of many Christians, have caused us considerable concern, particularly as we were not initially aware of how the situation would affect our Christian Watch colleagues based in that country. Thankfully, our CW Group was not caught up in the atrocities, as they are located in the south of the country. However, we have received a report from the Maranatha Community detailing the terrible slaughter by Muslims of defenceless Christians in Jos. We include this report, which contains some horrific photographs of the poor victims, under the title, **MASSACRE OF 500 CHRISTIANS – The Horror of Jos, Nigeria**. This unprovoked attack

was initially reported as the massacre of Muslims by Christians; this was incorrect and was an attempt to cover up the truth, as detailed in the report.

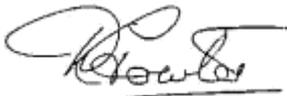
The devil continues, with evil determination to destroy all that is right and in accordance with the revealed will of God. The solemn fact is that the devil has an increasing number of agents in positions of responsibility and authority, who promote his cause. He also knows how vulnerable young people are to indoctrination of evil practices, particularly when exposed to explicit details, which the Word of God condemns. The correspondence we had with David Cameron, which was included in our April newsletter, reveals the new Prime Minister's attitude to homosexuality, including his acceptance of this lifestyle. We include a review by Family & Youth Concern (FYC) of a recent independent report on the '**Sexualisation of Young People**' published by Dr. Linda Papadopoulos for the Home Office. The report identifies the damage to the minds of the young, together with the need for parents to be continually conscious of the need to monitor what their children are being taught at school and being allowed to read or view on television.

Our Spiritual item this month has been selected because of our concern for a number of our Members who are experiencing trials, afflictions and bereavements. This includes our National Campaign Manager, Andy Clarke, who is presently unwell and therefore unable to contribute his Christian Watch Notice Board this month. The promised route to the heavenly Kingdom is through much tribulation, but as we experience it, how vital is the Lord's help and support. We know from sad experience how formal our prayers can become when all is going well for us and life is very comfortable. It is our mercy when the Lord sends some trial into our lives that only He can resolve and manage for us. This was clearly experienced by the late Samuel Rutherford, the author of the article we include, **CONSOLATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN TRIBULATION**. May the Lord bless it to each of you.

One of our Members, Pastor Roy Mohon has written and published a very excellent spiritual book entitled, **HEROES OF THE FAITH – Role Models for the Christian Warfare**. Further details are included together with information on price and availability.

Finally, we particularly thank all who have so generously contributed to our financial needs, including those Churches and Chapels who have had special collections for us.

Yours, in the Lord's service,



David Crowter

Management Committee

Mr D Boyd; Mr M Brockes (Hon Treasurer/ Co Secretary); Mr A Busk; Mr D Crowter (Chairman);
Mr I Henderson; Mr R Jupp; Mr D Lawson; Mr M de Semlyen; Mrs J Cummins (Secretary).

Ex-archbishop attacks judges over gay counselling ruling

Britain is moving towards a 'secular state', says Lord Carey, warning of civil unrest after Christian counsellor is sacked for refusing to see gay couples.

By James Meikle

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, today accused judges of moving towards a new "secular state" that would downgrade the rights of religious believers. Attacking a "deeply worrying" court ruling, Carey claimed the judiciary was now tipping the legal balance against believers in "a deeply unedifying collision of human rights".

Carey reacted angrily to a judge who sharply criticised him for previously appealing for a court of hand-picked judges to determine religious rights cases. Carey had also warned of civil unrest over decisions he claimed could lead to Christians being barred from jobs.

Lord Justice Laws, dismissing a marriage guidance counsellor's attempt to challenge his sacking for refusing to give sex therapy to homosexuals, said legislation to protect a position "held purely on religious grounds" could not be justified and would be "irrational, as preferring the subjective over the objective...divisive, capricious and arbitrary".

His judgment at an appeal hearing by Gary MacFarland, 48, from Bristol, will fuel resentment among Christian groups at what they see as unfair treatment. MacFarlane was seeking to appeal against an employment appeal tribunal ruling by Relate Avon in 2008. He alleged unfair dismissal on the grounds of religious discrimination.

Carey had sent a statement to the court calling for a special panel of judges with "proven sensitivity and understanding of religious issues" to hear the case, alleging recent court decisions had used "dangerous" reasoning and could lead to civil unrest.

But addressing Carey's concerns, Lord Justice Law's ruling said: "We do not live in a society where all the people share uniform religious beliefs. The precepts of any one religion – any belief system – cannot, by force of their religious origins, sound any louder in the general law than the precepts of any other. If they did, those out in the cold would be less than citizens and our constitution would be on the way to a theocracy, which is of necessity autocratic.

"The law of a theocracy is dictated without option to the people, not made by their judges and governments. The individual conscience is free to accept such dictated law, but the state, if its people are to be free, has the burdensome duty of thinking for itself".

The judge also said: "In a free constitution such as ours there is an important distinction to be drawn between the law's protection of the right to hold and express a belief and the law's protection of that belief's substance or content." While the Judaeo-Christian tradition had exerted a "profound influence" on the judgment of lawmakers, "the conferment of any legal protection of preference upon a particular substantive moral position on the ground only that it is espoused by the adherents of a particular faith, however long its tradition, however long its culture, is deeply unprincipled".

"This would mean laws being imposed not to advance the general good on objective grounds but on subjective opinion since faith, other than to the believer, was subjective."

"It may of course be true; but the ascertainment of such a truth lies beyond the means by which laws are made in a reasonable society. Therefore it lies only in the heart of the believer, who is alone bound by it. No one else is or can be so bound, unless his own free choice he accepts its claims."

As to Carey's plea for a special court, he said: "I am sorry that he finds it possible to suggest a procedure that would, in my judgment, be deeply inimical to the public interest."

McFarlane said the decision not to let him appeal against the ruling left him "disappointed and upset", adding that "because of my Christian beliefs and principles, there should be allowances taken into account whereby individuals like me can actually avoid having to contradict their very strongly held Christian principles."

Carey said the judgment “continues a trend on the part of the courts to downgrade the right of religious believers to manifest their faith in what has become a deeply unedifying collision of human rights.”

“It heralded a ‘secular’ state rather than a ‘neutral’ one. And while with one hand the ruling seeks to protect the right of religious believers to hold and express their faith, with the other it takes away those same rights. It says that the sacking of religious believers in recent cases was not a denial of their rights even though religious belief cannot be divided from its expression in every area of the believer’s life.”

“Oddly the judge doesn’t address the argument that rights have to be held in balance and he is apparently indifferent to the fact that religious believers are adversely affected by this judgment and others.”

Carey was supported by the Christian Legal Centre, which said: “It seems that a religious bar to office has been created, whereby a Christian who wishes to act on their Christian beliefs on marriage will no longer be able to work in a great number of environments.”

Derek Munn, of gay rights campaigners Stonewall, welcomed the decision. “You cannot refuse a service to a person based on their gender, race or disability, and you can’t on the basis of their sexual orientation either. People delivering public services mustn’t be able to pick and choose who they will serve on the basis of personal prejudice.”

Terry Sanderson, president of the National Secular Society, said: “The law must be clear that anti-discrimination laws exist to protect people, not beliefs.”

“The right to follow a religious belief was a qualified one and must not be used to legitimise discrimination against gay people who are legally entitled to protection against bigotry and persecution.” Sanderson further accused fundamentalists of “trying hard to undermine the laws that protect gay people from discrimination and seeking to create a hierarchy of rights that places Christian dogma over the rights of people to fair treatment.”

The Guardian 29th April 2010

The Orwellian logic that's turning the faith Britain was built on into a crime

By Melanie Phillips

Terrifying as this may seem, the attempt to stamp out Christianity in Britain appears to be gathering pace.

Dale McAlpine was preaching to shoppers in Workington, Cheshire, that homosexuality is a sin when he found himself carted off by the police, locked up in a cell for seven hours and charged with using abusive or insulting words or behaviour.

It appears that two police community support officers – at least one of whom was gay – claimed he had caused distress to themselves and members of the public.

Under our anti-discrimination laws, such distress is not to be permitted. And so we have the oppressive and sinister situation where a gentle, unaggressive Christian is arrested and charged simply for preaching Christian principles.

It would appear that Christianity, the normative faith of this country on which its morality, values and civilisation are based, is effectively being turned into a crime.

Surreally, this intolerant denial of freedom is being perpetrated under the rubric of *promoting* tolerance and equality – but only towards *approved* groups.

Never has George Orwell's famous satirical observation, that some people are more equal than others, appeared more true.

The Cumbrian arrest comes hard on the heels of last week's ruling by Lord Justice Laws in the case of Gary McFarlane, who was dismissed as a Relate counsellor because he refused to give advice to same-sex couples on sexual relationships.

Principles

The judge not only upheld Relate's case against McFarlane but went even further, saying in terms that the law could provide no legal protection for Christians who wish to live according to their religious principles.

And how did he arrive at this remarkable conclusion that deprives Christians of their rights? By cherry-picking human rights law. The judge said merely that this conferred upon believers the right to 'hold or express' religious views.

In fact, the European Convention on Human Rights goes much further, giving people the right to manifest 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion' through 'worship, teaching, practice and observance.'

Yet the judge chose not to mention this right to put religious beliefs into practice. Instead, he stated that giving legal protection to Christian beliefs was 'deeply unprincipled' and 'on the way to a theocracy'.

You really do have to scratch your head at this. The protection of religious conscience is a fundamental principle of a liberal and free society.

To equate this protection with theocracy – or the imposition of religious law upon a society – displays a remarkable intellectual and moral confusion, and has resulted in a ruling that is frighteningly illiberal and intolerant.

Of course, you could say that this is merely the result of human rights law for which Parliament rather than the judges is responsible. But the courts could interpret that same human rights law very differently.

The problem is that the judges are refusing to strike a proper balance. Instead of arbitrating fairly between competing rights by granting exemptions for religious believers from anti-religious laws, they are choosing to impose secular values and thus destroy the right to live and work Christian principles.

What seems to have particularly offended Lord Justice Laws was the idea of protecting certain beliefs specifically because they were religious. This was wrong, he said, because religious ideas were not applicable to the whole of society, since they existed only in the hearts of religious believers.

He thus appeared, totally, to miss the point – that freedom of conscience is supposedly a right for all, including minorities. It would seem that either a tin ear, or worse, an animosity towards religion drives all before it.

This was what caused the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, to protest in a statement to the court that judges were effectively damning Christianity itself as discriminatory and, therefore, bigoted.

Patronising

He was so alarmed by the apparent secular prejudice of the judiciary that he suggested the establishment of a special court to deal with cases of religious discrimination composed of judges with some understanding of religious issues.

As if to prove his point, Lord Justice Laws dismissed all his arguments out of hand with the patronising observation that Lord Carey had not understood the law.

On the contrary, it is surely Lord Justice Laws who does not understand that he and his fellow judges are mistaking secularism for neutrality – confusing the secular onslaught upon religion with the need to hold the ring between competing beliefs.

There is a long and growing list of British Christians who have been harassed by the police, sacked or otherwise fallen foul of authority, simply for upholding their religious beliefs.

Pensioners have found the police on their doorstep accusing them of 'hate crime' for objecting to their council about a gay pride march or merely asking if they could distribute Christian leaflets along side the gay rights literature.

A preacher, who went around with a placard denouncing homosexuality, was prosecuted even though he was the *victim* of an assault by onlookers who threw soil and water over him.

In the field of employment, Christians have been suspended or sacked for refusing to officiate at civil partnership ceremonies or place children for adoption with gay couples and for wearing a cross or praying with patients for their recovery. Many of these cases involve the issue of homosexuality since this is the principal area where orthodox Christian beliefs cannot co-exist with the law.

This is in contrast to other contentious issues such as abortion, where the law specifically provides exemptions for conscience.

This is because unlike the specific and limited issue of abortion, the militant gay rights agenda represents an attack on the entire value system of our society by destroying the very idea that any sexual behaviour is normal.

Anyone who says homosexuality is *not* normal is, therefore, thrown to the wolves as a bigot.

This is what recently happened to the then Conservative parliamentary candidate Philip Lardner. He said churches should not be forced to have homosexual clergy and Christians should not be penalised for politely saying that homosexuality is 'wrong'.

Conscience

He also said that he would always support the rights of homosexuals to be treated fairly and to live as they wanted in private, but he would not accept that their behaviour was 'normal' or encourage children to indulge in it.

For this expression of traditional Christian – and, indeed, liberal – values, he was not only deselected as a Tory candidate at the speed of light on the grounds that his remarks were 'deeply offensive and unacceptable', but suspended from his job as a primary school teacher.

As Lardner has angrily observed, it appears that Christian views are no longer acceptable within the Conservative party.

Far from their historic role in defending the bedrock values of this society, the Tories have thus put themselves on the side of the illiberal onslaught on freedom of conscience.

Of course, true prejudice and bigotry are wrong, whether towards homosexuals or anyone else. But the decent impulse to protect the rights of gay people is very different from trying to destroy the bedrock values of our society.

Yet, that is precisely what it has become. As a result, Britain is turning from a liberal Christian country – whose liberalism is rooted in its religious tradition – into an illiberal, oppressive secular state with no room for religious conscience.

Under the camouflage of human rights, this is the way freedom dies.

Daily Mail 3rd May 2010

**DUE TO ILLNESS ANDY CLARKE'S REGULAR NOTICE BOARD
IS MISSING FROM THIS EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER**

“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” *Psalms 103v 8-10.*

CHRISTIANS ARE NOT WEAKLINGS!

The Nassau Guardian, Bahamas. 26th March 2010

Dear Editor,

The Bible and history are laden with examples of the good and noble works of men and women who operated under the inspiration and conviction of the Holy Spirit, not fearing what man could do to them.

Daniel and the three Hebrew Boys come readily to mind. They stood up for godly principles in the face of persecution. The approval of God was more important to them than the favour of powerful earthly leaders. In fact, God's commendation was dearer to them than their own lives! The life examples of these standard bearers remain a great lesson for Christians living in these last days of earth's history.

It is somewhat sad though, that many professed Christians refuse to "*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression...*" (Isaiah 58:1). They claim that Christians should not be involved in political issues. Some say Christians must not criticise government.

Many even say that we must not criticise religious doctrines and practices. Maybe they need to read the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18 where he mocked the false prophets of Baal and their gods were put to shame by the workings of YAHWEH (*The Lord is unchangeable*)— God. Maybe they need to read where prophets and men of God were sent to rebuke Kings and political leaders. Read about David's experience with Nathan!

I have observed a situation in our country (and in the world over) where some pastors and church leaders seem to be more interested in filthy lucre (monetary gains) and the favour of men than standing on the side of truth for the salvation of their fellowmen. Something is definitely wrong! They rebuke good men/women and praise the wickedness of leaders.

It is very comforting to know that there remain faithful Christians in this land who live their profession, Christians who are not afraid of the faces and threats of wicked 'powerful' men.

Our guide is the written word of God revealed by the Holy Spirit. The Bible is not a storybook! In it, we read about the disciples of God fearlessly rebuking sinful behaviour in the church and in the world. We see Jesus Christ, our greatest Example, being 'no respecter of men's person.' If He had been, then He would have been afraid and would have failed in His duty to rebuke the inhumane Scribes and Pharisees calling them 'hypocrites'. He was not even afraid of chastening His own followers whenever they erred. All Christians must follow His Example. He was not a weakling and we must not be weaklings either!

Yours, etc.,

ANN-MARIE JOHN

BOOK REVIEW

HEROES OF THE FAITH

Role Models for the Christian Warfare

By Roy Mohon – Minister

This interesting book explains the Lord's dealings with some of His people, as recorded in the Old Testament, including such characters as Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Joshua and David. The first important point is that the author emphasises and explains how the Lord's various dealings with these characters was for their spiritual benefit and sanctification, as well as for His own honour and glory.

There is much instruction and comfort for the spiritually minded, who find the experiences which the Lord causes them to pass through, mysterious and at times perplexing, resulting in them having many doubts and fears. We have to prove – as have the Lord's people down through the ages of time – the truth of Isaiah 55:8, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.”*

The author, who has a knowledge of the original languages of the Bible, helpfully explains some of the more difficult scriptural passages relating to these characters and also highlights the prophetic references to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners. The AV text is used throughout.

The book, which has many references, is a paperback with 404 pages and can be obtained from:

The Lighthouse, 34, Yarm Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 3NG

Price £14.00 including p&p. Make cheques payable to *Truthzone Limited*

MUSLIM NURSES CAN COVER UP

Muslim doctors and nurses are to be allowed to wear long sleeves for religious reasons – despite the risk of spreading deadly superbugs.

The Department of Health will allow female Muslim staff to opt out of a strict NHS dress code to cover their arms and protect their modesty. But campaigners warn that the NHS is putting lives at risk because guidance that all staff should be 'bare below the elbow' was introduced after long sleeves were blamed for spreading MRSA.

The change has been brought in after some female Muslims objected to being forced to bare their arms on wards. The Department of Health has also relaxed its no jewellery rule to let Sikhs wear their Kara bangles as long as they can be pushed up to the elbow when dealing with patients.

The policy is in stark contrast to the treatment of nurse Shirley Chaplin who lost her discrimination battle against Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital Trust which claimed the cross she wore round her neck was a 'hazard' in case it scratched patients. She accused the NHS of 'double standards.' She added: 'What can you say? It seems that life is stacked up against Christians these days.'

Derek Butler, chairman of the MRSA Action UK, a group headed by respected microbiologist Hugh Pennington, said: 'Anything such as jewellery, long sleeves and ties can harbour bacteria and transfer superbugs to patients. This is why they should be banned for all staff regardless of their religion.'

'The new guidance says staff can wear uniforms with long sleeves as long as they roll them up securely above their elbows to wash and when they are on wards. Those wanting to stay covered up when dealing with patients can use special disposable 'over sleeves.'

A Department of Health spokesman said: 'The overall purpose of the guidance, to ensure patient safety by adherence to good hand hygiene, is not prejudiced by the additional dress options that have now been identified.'

Daily Mail 12th April 2010

Report by Maranatha Community
MASSACRE OF 500 CHRISTIANS

The Horror of Jos, Nigeria



7th March 2010



In the early hours of Sunday, 7th March gangs of Muslim militants armed with guns and machetes were bussed into four villages in Jos South. They burnt the houses and then systematically murdered 500 innocent and defenceless Christians, including many children. The attack was unprovoked and merciless. Many were decapitated.

Increasingly, in recent years Christians have faced extreme violence at the hands of Muslim mobs in Northern Nigeria. Systematically churches have been destroyed and Christian believers threatened and assaulted. There have been major incidents in November 2008 (Jos), February 2009 (Bauchi state), July 2009 (Borno state) and February 2010 (Jigawa state). They have been subject to extreme persecution and gross violation of human rights, simply because of their religious beliefs.

Efforts are now being made throughout the world to awaken the conscience of the nations about this and similar outrages. Something must be done **NOW** to prevent future atrocities. Appeals are currently being made to the Prime Minister of Nigeria, the United Nations and Human Rights bodies universally, leaders of political parties in the British Parliament and the European Parliament. **They are being asked to publicly condemn this outrage.**

The Maranatha Community believes that Christians in the United Kingdom have a responsibility to speak out for justice in this matter and to pray earnestly for their brothers and sisters in Nigeria.

HIDING THE TRUTH

In many countries this outrage against humanity has been hardly reported. It has not featured in many broadcast news items, but must not be hidden.

DISTORTING THE TRUTH

Some newspapers have incorrectly referred to the violence as 'inter communal' whereas in fact it is totally unprovoked violence against people because of their religious convictions. The Aljazeera news channel (in cooperation with the powerful Nigerian Muslim organisation, Jama'atu Nasril Islam) has produced a video report suggesting fictitiously that violence in January was a massacre of Muslims by Christians. **This is totally untrue. The truth is that murdered Christians were moved into mosques by the militant Islamists and labelled as Muslim.** This information was later posted on You Tube by various Muslim websites. The Governor of Plateau State, Jonah Jang, has himself strongly denied that the butchering of hundreds of Christians was in any way a 'retaliation' and has criticised Aljazeera's reports.



This is how you can help now

Dennis Wrigley, the leader of the Maranatha Community was in direct contact with Archbishop Benjamin in Jos immediately after this atrocity and they have prayed together on the telephone on a number of occasions. Do please pray for the Bishop.

Barnabas Fund, with whom Maranatha works closely, (Dennis is a member of their Council of Reference) has now set up a fund to raise money for those who have been bereaved and left homeless by this atrocity.

If you have access to the internet then you can make a gift via the donations section of the Barnabas website:

<https://barnabasfund.org/donations/?id=39-772> to make a donation to fund **39-772** (Victims in Nigeria), or telephone 0800 587 4006 quoting the same reference.

If you prefer to send a cheque by post, then sent it to Barnabas Fund, 9 Priory Row, Coventry, CV1 5EX. Please quote project reference **39-772** (Victims in Nigeria (Jos)).

Further Action

WRITE to His Excellency, Dr. Dalhatu Sarki Tafida, OFR, the High Commissioner,
Nigeria High Commission, 9 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5BX
**Urge him to ensure that immediate action is taken to protect Christians
in Northern Nigeria from further violence.**

The Maranatha UK Office, 102 Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester M41 6JT England. Tel: 0161 747 7379

Christian Watch - Nigeria are monitoring the situation and have sent representatives on a mission to Abuja in an attempt to mediate on behalf of Christians in that area who are suffering extensive persecution by Muslims.

Sexualisation of Young People Review

Re-produced from Family & Youth Concern (FYC) Family Bulletin No.139

A recent Independent review of the *Sexualisation of Young People* published by the Home Office contains a wealth of sobering facts and figures and serves as a wake-up call to parents and others concerned for the welfare of children and young people. Conducted by psychologist Dr Linda Papadopoulos, the review considered hundreds of articles from the fields of psychology, sociology, education, politics and the media, and received evidence from young people, parents, teachers, clinicians, academics, policymakers, lobbyists and practitioners working with abused children and abusers. The original purpose of the review was to investigate the impact of the sexualisation of young girls on violence against women, but the scope was subsequently widened 'to encompass the sexualisation of all young people and to look how hyper-sexualisation and objectification of girls on the one hand, and hyper-masculinisation of boys on the other, perpetuate and reinforce each other'.

Definition

The report defines sexualisation as 'the imposition of adult sexuality on to children and young people before they are capable of dealing with it, mentally, emotionally or physically'. It argues that the growing tendency to portray children in 'adultified' ways while 'infantilising' adult women is blurring the lines between sexual maturity and immaturity and legitimising the notion that children can be related to as sexual objects.

Dr Papadopoulos notes that 'the volume of sexualised images and the extent to which they impinge on everyday life are significantly greater than they were as recently as two decades ago', and they are becoming ever more explicit. There is, she writes, 'a blurring between the "mainstream" media, whether in the form of billboard posters, magazine covers, music videos, fashion shoots or film trailers, and the world of pornography'. She argues that the proliferation of sexual images leads to gradual desensitisation – the "drip drip" effect is an insidious but powerful mechanism by which the previously unthinkable becomes widely acceptable, often within a relatively short space of time'.

Mainstreaming

pornography

A chapter entitled 'Sexualised content and the mainstreaming of pornography', provides an overview of how sexualised images and messages are being promoted through magazines, air-brushing, advertising, children's clothing, television, the internet, children's websites, pornography, computer games, mobile devices, and music videos and lyrics. Dr Papadopoulos calls on parents to exercise control over the exposure of their children to sexual images and to avoid unwittingly contributing to their children's sexualisation by means of beauty pageants or encouraging them to undergo cosmetic surgery. However, she argues that there are limits to what parents can achieve alone and states: '*It is imperative that companies that promote the premature sexualisation of children for their own commercial interests act more responsibly, and that companies, advertisers and media outlets are aware of and take steps to minimise the negative impact that the images and messages they promote are having on children and young people.*'

Gender Confusion

While Dr Papadopoulos provides a valuable analysis of the growing sexualisation of young people and its adverse social consequences, we fear that her recommendation that Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE), along with digital literacy, be made a compulsory part of the national curriculum for all children from the age of five would run the risk of adding to the problem. Neither are we persuaded that viewing media literacy and gender studies as core to the curriculum would be a positive move. Whilst the report contains 17 references to 'gender stereotypes' and a further 21 references to 'gender equality' or 'gender inequality', it does not at any point recognise that there are gender differences. To introduce into the school curriculum an approach to gender studies that fails to recognise that men and women are both equal and different would sow the seeds of further confusion.

The answer to hyper-sexualised girls and hyper-masculinised boys does not lie in some kind of androgynous denial of gender distinctives. Rather, we need to recover an understanding of manhood and womanhood that sees them as equal in dignity and worth but different and complementary in the way that they relate to each other.

(Linda Papadopoulos, '*Sexualisation of Young People Review*', Home Office. Feb 2010)
(www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

CONSOLATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN TRIBULATION

By Samuel Rutherford

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”. *John 16:33.*

Our tender, loving, and gracious Lord well knew what feeble ones He had to deal with. He knew from painful experience what tribulation was, for He was a “Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief,” reproached and despised by the very rabble, set at nought by the rulers, and put to the most shameful and painful death that malice then knew. He, therefore, tells His disciples, in the most gentle manner, what they must expect. But He prefaces it with consolation – “In Me ye might have peace.”

Were we not of the earth earthy, we should not want anything besides the first declaration to keep the mind stayed and calm under the most severe trials; and, when trials are at a distance, we are ready to think this is alone sufficient. But our dear Captain well knew how much we should want to keep our head above water when the enemy comes in like a flood; therefore He kindly provides all necessary consolation.

Our kind and tender Redeemer held a long discourse with His poor, disconsolate disciples just before He was betrayed into the hands of sinners, the scope of which seems to be to establish their minds in the belief of His Godhead (or equality and oneness with the Father), as is explained by the context. He well knew the accursed death He was about to die would shake their confidence, and that, when His body was entombed, they would be ready to think all was over, as is plain some of them did, notwithstanding all His instructions. “But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel;” and, when they heard of His resurrection, instead of receiving the tidings with glad expectation, they could scarcely credit what they heard, but were astonished at the report the women gave of not finding His body, etc., as you may read in Luke 24:21, and the following verses. But, though they did not understand His doctrine until He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scripture, then the belief of this glorious mystery greatly strengthened them for future trials. In Him, as the incarnate God, they then had peace.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Jesus is emphatically styled “our peace” in Ephesians 2:14,15: “For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” Faith, appropriating faith, brings that peace into the conscience that all the tumults of the world cannot disturb when it is in lively exercise; but, if it is at a low ebb, and billow after billow rise, fear sometimes makes headway against the soul, and the child of God finds it hard work to hold up his head with any degree of cheerfulness. But we must remember that we are in an enemy’s country, and, therefore, must expect molestation.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation.” Our Captain met with as much tribulation from the world as any private soldier – yea, as much as all put together ever met with, for “in all their afflictions He was afflicted;” and the cruel treatment any of His members now meet with touches Him. This appears plain from Revelation 1:7, “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

I do not think this refers merely to those who nailed Him to the cross literally, and thrust the spear into His side, but to those who have pieced or wounded the members of His mystical body. There is not a scoff, a jeer, or a reproach, that is thrown at a member of His, but Jesus feels it as the Head. He looks with pity and tenderness upon His suffering family, and will cause every trial to work for good. If tribulation were not better, infinitely better, than ease, our gracious God would not suffer us to be exercised therewith.

When our first parents sinned, and exposed themselves and all their posterity to the everlasting wrath and fiery indignation of a holy God, though our most merciful and gracious God found a Ransom, that a certain number should be delivered from going down into the pit, yet He thus declares, “I will put enmity... between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This has ever been the case since the fall of Adam.

To multiply Scripture proofs would be endless and altogether needless, as no attentive reader of the Scriptures can be ignorant that this has ever been the case. This is a cross every renewed soul must carry. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Luke 9:23) Shall mortal man complain at this? "We are by nature children of wrath, even as others." We can give no reason why the Lord set His love upon us more than others; and if we suffer from the fall only in this life, shall we complain? Do not our daily offences call for the rod of affliction? And if our Father only deals with us as a wise and tender parent, shall we complain? Did we not once feel enmity in our hearts against God and the ways of God? And is this slain, and love put in its place? Oh, what reason have we to be thankful that we were not left in the ruins of the fall to be persecutors, instead of being persecuted! Seeing it is declared with a yea that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and in the text under consideration, that "in the world ye shall have tribulation," it is but striving against the immutable decrees of God to strive to avoid it.

We should indeed be careful that we give our adversaries no just occasion to speak reproachfully, for if we take this patiently, it is but reasonable, as we are then only buffeted for our faults, and can by no means repair the injury we do to the cause of truth. But if we be wrongfully reproached, we may rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, and the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us (1 Peter 4:14). We have not only the promise of peace in Christ to bear up our minds under the tribulations of the way, but we have also an assurance that our enemies are already conquered: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Though a troop may for a little season overcome us, yet we shall at last overcome through the Captain of our salvation – yea and be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Victory! Victory!

Old Sampford, April 13th, 1819

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Registered Charity No 1095108

Published by:

CHRISTIAN WATCH, PO Box 2113, Nuneaton, CV11 6ZY.

Email: info@christianwatch.net

Web: www.christianwatch.org.uk

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