

CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

“And what I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch”

Mark 13:37

NEWSLETTER

April 2012

April

CHRISTIAN WATCH

To all Christian Watch Members

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the Name of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Through the goodness and mercy of our God we are spared to communicate with you again and I trust we can say with the Apostle Paul, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." *Acts 26:22*. Our merciful Lord is able to supply our every need in providence and in grace and has promised to give, as needful, to those who take their burdens, cares and concerns to Him in prayer.

We need the graces of humility and faith to approach the Almighty God of Heaven rightly, knowing that the dear Lord Jesus Christ has promised, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." *Matt. 21:22*. We must also pray for submission to the Lord's will, which again will always prove ultimately to be for the benefit of those who put their trust in Him.

We much enjoyed reading the copy of a letter sent to us by one of our Members, and for your benefit and encouragement, we include it under its title, **A LETTER FROM A DYING MARTYR**. How wonderful to come face to face with persecution and death and be able write to a dear one in such a manner. We know not what we may have to endure in future times, if we are given grace to stand firm and graciously contend for our Christian beliefs. We are advised that Norwich Council has banned Norwich Reformed Church from having their usual stall in the town from which to distribute Christian literature, because of a complaint by a Muslim man about a leaflet given to him. This exhorted Muslims to turn from false religion and seek to know Christ as their Saviour. From the various reports that both we and other organisations receive, it is very evident that Christian persecution is increasing. An article was published in the Daily Mail which we include, entitled: **WILL WE SEE OUR VICARS JAILED FOR OBEYING CHRIST?** This gives a solemn warning to those who maintain a Scriptural position in their ministry and practice when it is contrary to Government legislation. Many of the Lord's ministering servants and other people in various countries are currently experiencing persecution for similar reasons and that which is presently being considered by the UK Government with regard to marriage, could easily lead to a similar situation in our country.

We include an update report on our **Campaign 'Who is on the Lord's Side?'** by our colleague Michael Hobbs who is presently fully occupied with this project. Whilst the attendance at some of the arranged meetings has been disappointing, we are thankful for the zealous support of some of our Members who have confirmed their willingness to be active witnesses for the Word of God in their locality. It is so important for the sake of our Christian heritage, and our religious freedom, as well as for our nation and churches, that we follow the exhortation given to contend earnestly for that which the Lord has, in mercy, preserved to us. It will be seen that we have taken a stand at the **Christian Resources Exhibition** to be held at Sandown Park, 8th – 11th May. We shall be very pleased to welcome to our stand any of our Members visiting the exhibition and any others who may be interested in our work.

An increasing number of people in the UK question the value of our membership of the European Union. The possible collapse of the Euro and the unknown consequences that would follow is a very serious consideration in the minds of many who are in positions of authority in EU Member countries. The fact that the UK maintained the sterling currency is certainly a blessing, but the impact upon our financial situation is already being felt. We include an article by Ashley Mote entitled, **Foreign Affairs Select Committee's call for evidence on Future EU:UK relationship** which clearly sets forth the folly of our membership of this organisation and the enormous costs it incurs for our Nation.

The persecution of Christians continues in Nigeria and we are thankful it appears to be mainly restricted to the northern area, because the Christian Watch Group and the school for the orphaned children are located in the south. However, we are very concerned about the report we include by the Barnabus Fund entitled, **Boko Haram declares “war” on Christians in Nigeria and threatens to eradicate them from parts of the country.** May the Lord preserve and bless all those who endeavour to promote and proclaim the Gospel message to poor sinners whose only hope for relief and final salvation is in the merits of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We include an interesting assessment of **Developments in the Middle East** by Suzanne Fernandes in which she relates to Biblical prophecy the events that are currently taking place, particularly in Syria and Turkey. We do well to prayerfully search the Scriptures and to assess how that which is taking place, particularly in the Middle East, relates to it.

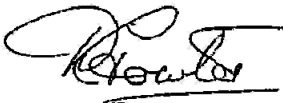
The devil is determined to do all within his permitted authority to undermine that which the Lord has created and established for His own honour and glory and for the benefit of mankind. A very important example of this is the institution of marriage, which occurred at the time of creation when God provided Adam with Eve, that they might live together as husband and wife and produce offspring. The present endeavours of the UK Government to change the existing law and thereby allow homosexuals and lesbians to have the same legal recognition and benefits as do one male and one female, who are joined together in holy matrimony, is to be deplored. We include a careful assessment of the situation under the title, **'I now pronounce you husband and husband or wife and wife!!!'** May the Lord answer the prayers of His people who sigh and cry before Him over the increasing abominations done in our land - a country which has been so highly favoured in times past.

We include a **PRAYER MEETING ADDRESS** by Pastor B. A. Ramsbottom based upon the well known Psalm 23. Prayerful consideration and meditation upon the points made in the address will, we trust, be of encouragement to all who feel their need of an Almighty Shepherd - One who is both willing and able to support, guide and supply both the spiritual and providential needs of all who put their trust in Him.

We are living in increasingly solemn times and need to be constantly on our watch with regard to the subtle endeavours of Satan to undermine the Lord's work. Our children and young people are living in a time when there are many, and an ever increasing number, of temptations placed before them by means and methods that we older ones never experienced. We need to pray the Lord to keep them from the many evils that abound by placing in their hearts and minds a holy fear of grieving the One who alone is able to keep them and do for them all they need for this present life and for that which is to come.

We wish you the Lord's Blessing.

Yours in His service,



David Crowter

Management Committee

Mr D Boyd; Mr M Brockes (Hon Treasurer/Co Secretary); Mr D Crowter (Chairman); Mr P Baker;
Mr I Henderson; Mr M Hobbis; Mr D Lawson; Mr M de Semlyen; Mrs J Cummins (Secretary).

A LETTER FROM A DYING MARTYR TO HIS WIFE, 1661

My Heart,

Being within a few hours to lay down my life for the testimony of Jesus Christ, I do send these few lines as the last obedience of unfeigned and spotless affection which I bear unto you, not only as one flesh, but as a member with me of that blessed mystical body of the Lord; for I trust you are, and that God who hath begun His good work in you, will also perfect it and bring it to an end, and give you life and salvation.....

Let not your wants and weaknesses discourage you. There is power, riches, and abundance with God, both as to the things of the body and things of the soul; and He will supply all your wants, and carry you through. It is like to be a most trying time; but cleave you to God and keep His way, without casting away your confidence. Fear not to be drowned in the depths of the troubles that may attend this land. God will hide you under His shadow, and keep you in the hollow of His hand. Be sober and of a meek spirit. Strive not with providence, but be subject to Him who is the Father of spirits. Decline not the cross, but embrace it as your own. Love all that love the Lord, and delight in their fellowship. Give yourselves unto prayer, and be diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures. Wait on the ordinances, and have them in great esteem as the appointed means for your salvation. Join the exercise of piety and repentance together, and manifest your faith in the fruits of a sincere obedience and of a Gospel conversation. Value your conscience above your skin. Be not solicitous although you know not wherewith to clothe you and your children or wherewith to dine. God's providences and promises are a true, rich, and never-failing portion. Jesus Christ be all your salvation and all your desire! You I recommend unto Him, and Him unto you. My heart, I recommend you to the eternal love of Jesus Christ. I am helped of God, and hope I shall be helped to the end. Pray for me while I am here, and praise with me hereafter. God be with you!

I am, yours,
James Guthrie

Will we see our vicars jailed for obeying Christ?

By Chris Nel, Ripon, N. Yorks
Daily Mail, 26th March 2012

It will be the saddest day in the history of Britain when the true Church is forced underground.

The turmoil over the Government's intention to re-define the meaning of marriage is only a symptom of a far bigger issue that is fast impinging upon the Christians of this land – having to choose to obey God rather than the wrong commandments of ungodly leaders, even if it will mean imprisonment.

By the 'true Church' I mean those Christians who meet regularly to grow in their understanding of God's message. There has always been an imitation Church, usually recognised by its twisting of the Bible's teaching to mean what people want it to mean. Soon the true Church will have to separate itself from the Government. This means, for

example, that it will have to stop taking the gift aid money charities are entitled to because, increasingly, qualification for gift aid will be linked to agreeing with Government requirements for inclusivity.

Churches who believe in the sanctity of all human life, the difference between the sexes and even such things as male leadership, will be breaking the law.

True churches will need to go about their work behind closed doors. Preachers will be put on trial and, because they won't compromise the truth, they will be heavily fined or imprisoned.

Sounds fanciful? It happened in Communist countries and still occurs in countries hostile to the Christian message. The amazing thing is that it will soon be happening in the UK, irrespective of which political party is in power.

'Who is on the Lord's Side?' Campaign

Report on Meetings in Devon and Salisbury:

The Devon campaign 'Who is on the Lord's Side?' had its first public meeting in Blackdog, Crediton, where the poor numbers who attended was saddening, but compensated for by an excellent word from our Committee Member, Duncan Boyd, who spoke on Romans 13. He not only dealt with our Scriptural responsibility to obey those whom God has set up as rulers in our midst - where their laws do not conflict with Divine laws - but also spoke of the sad decline in our Christian Heritage since the early 19th century.

A Member who attended was much in earnest about helping with the work in Devon, and it is to be hoped that he, and another equally zealous member in South Devon, can begin to build up a contact group in this area. In this life we are very impressed when there are large numbers of helpers, but I am sure that experience and Scripture teaches us that God's effectual instruments are counted in one's and two's and will continue to be so until the harvest is brought in. One only has to recall the Bible accounts of Gideon, Daniel and King David and the solitary prophets who stood virtually alone against a God-hating world. Whitfield, Wesley, Romaine and other worthies followed their example and the Apostle Paul was forsaken by all when he made his appearance before Nero. After all, the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, stood alone, despised and rejected, and can His followers not expect to have a small taste of the same?

The attendance at the Salisbury meeting was even lower, which puts to the test the pious thoughts above. But even here, some had travelled over a hundred miles to be with us. For whatever reason, however, those locally did not join us. There is an apathy which, I am sure, steals over us all in times of spiritual declension, when 'We see not our times' or understand them not, and there are very few among us 'that knoweth how long' Psalm 74.

The writer spoke to the meeting on the judgment of God upon this land at the present time which, considering the recent interest in the sinking of the God-defying Titanic,

was especially poignant. God's judgments are either denied or rejected today; or else regarded by those within and without the Church of Christ as being uncharitable. Spiritual judgments are also seen when believers cannot stir themselves to stand up for Christ their Redeemer in reasonable service.

Amos also speaks in chapter 4:7 of plentiful rain upon one city and drought in another. When we consider the same effects in our land today, only overt blindness can deny that Divine question: 'Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?' As Calvin reminds us, when God's providence sends us calamities they may be regarded as curses for sin. Conversely, blessings follow that nation which lives righteously and it is exalted. Whatever calamity the Lord sees fit to send upon our Nation, the alarm is sounded out today and, except we repent, we shall likewise perish!

The next area for action in the campaign is (DV) to be the CRE Exhibition at Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey from May 8th to the 11th, to be followed by a Public Meeting at Bourne Hall, Ewell, Epsom at 7pm on the last day, 11th May (see Page 13 for details).

The campaign in the South-West is to be concluded in Cornwall towards the end of May and we would appeal for volunteers to help with a Public Meeting there.

I have received enquiries from believers in Scotland, Liverpool, Nottingham etc. - as to when I shall bring the campaign there and I look forward to meeting with these eager souls soon.

Meanwhile, let each of us - this writer included - really examine ourselves as to who really is on the Lord's side in this generation. There is always a need for those Members who are able to devote a few hours weekly to helping with a contact group in their area. Please do contact me at any time on 07702 431 584.

Soon we shall have, in the will of our God, a new website easy to navigate and with up to date campaign news - watch this space!

Michael Hobbis

2012 CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION

STAND S92

Sandown Park, Portsmouth Road, Esher, KT10 9AJ

TUESDAY 8TH—FRIDAY 11TH MAY 2012

PLEASE VISIT US for an up-date on our campaign
'Who is on the Lord's Side?'

Foreign Affairs Select Committee's call for evidence on future EU:UK relationship

E-mailed response by Ashley Mote – 30 March 2012

Why are you asking for evidence for your committee's investigation into the UK's future relationship with the EU when you have already decided we remain members?

The facts – and decision needed – are obvious.

Europeans are our neighbours. They should be our friends. They cannot be our masters.

Consider these facts : the £8 billion a year club subscription we pay; the waste and corruption we can do nothing about; the massive indirect and ever-increasing compliance costs borne by industry and commerce; and the interfering damage inflicted on Britain, its people, its decision-making and its economy.

The UK has lost some £400 billion in trade with the EU since we joined, because we buy more from them than they do from us. The only year we have had a trade surplus was 1975, the year of the referendum (what a coincidence!).

When we leave – as we surely will – can you imagine the rest of the EU starting a trade war with us? Will the Germans refuse to sell us cars, the French wine, or the Spanish refuse our holiday bookings? It's an absurd idea.

The EU continues to survive because the UK's political elite like it that way. It offers them two real benefits, regardless of the effect on the rest of us.

1. It offers a bigger stage to strut upon. With no knowledge of leading a sovereign nation, status on the world stage matters to our young politicians.

2. It offers a crutch. Every problem can be blamed on the EU. We argued against but...

You'll never hear them admit these facts. But that does not make them any the less true.

I know – I've been there - five years in the Brussels lunatic asylum as the Independent MEP for SE England - 2004-09.

Your committee will doubtless choose to ignore these facts – but they won't go away, nor change the increasing probability that the EU is on its way to a catastrophe of its own making.

My forecast today is that it has already hit the self-destruct button.

Ashley Mote

Boko Haram declares “war” on Christians in Nigeria and threatens to eradicate them from parts of the country

www.barnabusfund.org

Militant Islamist group Boko Haram has declared “war” on Christians in Nigeria, saying that they are planning coordinated attacks to “eradicate Christians from certain parts of the country”.

A spokesman for the group, which has stepped up its violent campaign against Christians in the North since Christmas, said on Sunday (4 March):

We will create so much effort to end the Christian presence in our push to have a proper Islamic state that the Christians won't be able to stay.

Boko Haram's actions over recent months indicate that this is no idle threat.

Following a series of attacks on churches and other targets in five states over Christmas that left more than 40 people dead, the group on New Year's Day issued a three-day deadline for Christians to leave the North. Unrelenting attacks have ensued, including the bombing of a number of churches as well as attacks on individual Christians.

Most recently, on 26 February, a suicide bomber drove a car into the grounds of the Church of Christ headquarters in Jos. The vehicle exploded three metres from the church building; two women and an 18-month-old child were killed, and around 50 people were injured.

The violence is having the intended effect of driving Christians from the North. Nearly 95 per cent of the Christians have left Yobe State, where 20 churches have been torched and many lives have been lost.

Some are heading to the mainly Christian South, while others are crossing the border into Cameroon. The mass migration is precipitating a major humanitarian and spiritual crisis in Nigeria; Northern Christians who have been forced to leave behind their homes and jobs are in great need, while, as the Christian presence diminishes, the Church is being wiped off the map in the North.

Boko Haram has killed around 1,000 people since 2009 in its bloody campaign to establish an Islamic state in Northern Nigeria. As well as attacking Christians, the group targets police, security forces and politicians, and also Muslim leaders who oppose its agenda. Over 300 people have been killed so far this year.

The Government has been trying to curtail Boko Haram's activities, deploying military units across the country, and arresting and killing a number of members in recent weeks. But, issuing the latest threat, the group's spokesman said that the Government “cannot be prepared for what is to come”.

Please Pray:

- Thank God that the Nigerian authorities are trying to thwart Boko Haram's agenda; pray that they will have the resources they need and use them effectively.
- Pray that the Lord will protect His people in Northern Nigeria and give Church leaders wisdom as they seek to advise and care for their congregations.
- Pray for all those who have been forced to flee their homes, that they will receive the practical and spiritual support that they need at this traumatic time.

Developments in the Middle East

By Suzanne Fernandes

There has been a renewed interest, especially since 9/11, in an ancient prediction recorded by Isaiah the prophet concerning Damascus. The prophecy reads, "The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap" (Isa. 17:1). As is often pointed out, there has never been a time in previous history when Damascus has been completely destroyed and become a pile and a heap. The area has always been an oasis and was a noted spot for nomadic tribes travelling with roving bands with their flocks. During one invasion, the trees were cut down in the region; however the city of Damascus is noted as one of the oldest continually inhabited cities on the earth.

Why could this city of Damascus be destroyed in the near future? Firstly, there is a major uprising occurring within Syria as the common people in several cities are demanding the removal of their dictator-type leader, Assad. The removal of the Egyptian and Libyan leaders was swift; however, Assad refuses to budge and not only has a loyal army but has recently enjoyed the support of 15,000 high level Iranian soldiers. The defiant leader has also killed over 8,000 of his people and has an arsenal of biological and chemical weapons at his disposal. It is believed that the components and various types of chemical agents that belonged to Saddam Hussein, the former President of Iraq, are stored in two underground military facilities in Syria and Israel is certain that Assad has chemical-tipped warheads on certain missiles.

It was recently reported that Assad had over 21 missiles pointed towards Turkey and several towards Israel, and that six of these missiles were tipped with deadly chemical agents. Turkey has already warned Syria that if these missiles are sent into Turkey or near the border areas, that Turkey will initiate an all-out war with Assad and his regime. Israel has also warned Assad that any missile of any type sent into Israel will be met with swift retaliation. Assad's military commanders have also been informed that if any missile enters Israel tipped with deadly nerve agents or biological and chemical agents of death, Damascus will be destroyed!

It has been noted that in the prophecy of the war of Gog of Magog in Ezekiel 38 and 39, Syria is missing from the list of nations that form an (Islamic) coalition and move like a violent storm cloud over the mountains of Israel. It just may be that the destruction of Damascus – a city that houses an estimated 10,000 terrorists and is friends with the radical Government in Iran – will serve as the trigger for the predicted Islamic coalition to make its move upon Israel in the future, as retaliation for a war that occurred prior to the war of Ezekiel 38.

Your help is needed urgently to stop an unacceptable and undeserved memorial to Edward Heath being placed in Westminster Abbey

There is a proposal for a memorial to Edward Heath to be placed in Westminster Abbey, possibly in the form of a plaque set in the floor.

Edward Heath betrayed the people of the United Kingdom by his deceitful strategy in taking us into the "Common Market", now the European Union. Please write stating your objections

to:

**The Right Reverend Dr. John Hall,
Dean of Westminster,
The Chapter Office,
Westminster Abbey,
20 Dean's Yard,
London SW1P 3PA**

'I now pronounce you husband and husband or wife and wife' !!!

Marriage is ordained by God. He is the author and finisher of our faith. Marriage is Biblically defined in the UK and neither the State nor the Church has the right to re-define its meaning or practice.

Many are aware that the present Coalition Government has started a consultation process to bring in legislation, by 2015, that will re-define marriage and enable those in same-sex partnerships to marry.

Lynne Featherstone MP, the Lib. Dem. Equalities Minister, announced in a speech that “marriage is a rite of passage for couples who want to show they are in a committed relationship” and that the intended legislation is about “the underlying principles of family, society and personal freedoms”. The Prime Minister, David Cameron, has endorsed this and currently various campaign groups are petitioning the Government for change.

Lord Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, has responded to Ms. Featherstone’s announcement with a call for the public to support a “Coalition for Marriage” - C4M - which has been endorsed by various groups including Christian Concern and the Christian Institute. In addition, the Archbishops of Westminster and Southwark, Vincent Nichols and Peter Smith, are encouraging Catholics to also support C4M’s campaign. Rowan Williams, the current Archbishop of Canterbury, is also totally for it. Various inter-faith groups have signed the petition, including Muslims and Atheists, with one accord that the Government should not be allowed to re-define marriage. This has generated many signatories and churches joining together to support this campaign. The homosexual lobby has a similar ‘equal marriage’ campaign which has also gained media interest and signatures.

In Ireland and the Isle of Man civil partnerships have been legal since 2011, as well as in Jersey in 2012.

A similar marriage consultation has already been conducted in Scotland.

Under current legislation a marriage can only be between two people of the opposite sex - a man and a woman. A marriage can be conducted on either religious premises through a religious ceremony or on secular (non- religious) premises through a civil ceremony.

We are not unfamiliar with ‘gays’ getting married. In 2005 civil partnerships were introduced for same-sex couples.

Civil partnerships were designed to provide equivalent rights and responsibilities to marriage, but they do not really cover all aspects of a traditional marriage such as -

1. There is a clear distinction between a civil partnership and marriage which has separate legal outcomes and specific legislation. In summary - civil partners cannot call themselves married for legal purposes.

2. Civil marriages are solemnised by a set form of words whereas civil partnerships are formed simply by signing the register – there is no verbal declaration.

3. A civil partnership cannot be dissolved on the grounds of adultery.

Trans-gender people will be able to change their legal gender without having to legally end their existing marriage or civil partnership.

In 2010, the Government carried out research and campaigning from homosexual groups, such as Stonewall, has put more pressure on the Government for change.

The Quakers, Liberal Judaism, Unitarian and Free Christian Churches have all declared their interest in holding religious marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples in churches, synagogues and other places of worship. There appears to be much division and heresy within the various religious denominations.

The Government's desire to change the infrastructure of marriage and social policy was a massive surprise to us all. Nothing was mentioned in any Party manifesto prior to last year's May General Election. This seems to have been a deliberate ploy.

At the heart of this debate - whether civil or religious marriage - is the Word of God which has been disregarded and desecrated. We are not aware that the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ has been glorified in any petition or that there has been a request for us, as a Nation, to return back to God in repentance for even considering the re-definition of marriage. Essentially, it is children who will receive the backlash from the Government's desire to break down marriage so that it has no meaning or significance. Another generation has been failed due to a lack of praying parents, church and society.

Same-sex marriage is now accepted by the majority of our society as much as divorce, bigamy, ex-marital affairs and childhood contraception are all part of modern life. The definition of 'marriage' is now being challenged to enable same-sex couples to have a church wedding and blessings and to be recognised as a married couple.

Let us refer to the first marriage as documented in the Holy Bible:

Genesis 2:24-25 and Matthew 19:3-6

Marriage is defined as a union between one man and one woman. Once we start altering the definition of God's original plan we are disobeying God's Word and Commandments which will inevitably bring judgment upon our Nation.

Marriage Today

Today our children have no understanding of what marriage represents and key words such as faithfulness and monogamy mean nothing when gay celebrity couples in civil marriages can produce children through IVF or adopt. This is considered acceptable and anyone who merely mentions that this is wrong is condemned as a bigot and in future may face a prison sentence. The majority of people today see two lesbian mothers or homosexual men rearing children as a family as being acceptable. These social norms seem to have been constructed by fallen Governments that have allowed such laws over the years to be passed. The Church has no influence over the State and what we have witnessed recently confirms this, by our Prime Minister advising Bishops that they should concentrate on their own churches, rather than dabble with politics.

Christians and senior clergy seem to put more confidence in legal representation and man rather than ask their members to pray to our Almighty God to have mercy on us and change the hearts of our Government to not allow this to commence. People are putting more confidence in the European Courts and Human Rights laws have more weight than the Holy Bible and what the Word of God says.

Will there come a time shortly when we will see more churches celebrating two men/two women being married, with a clergyman overseeing this 'union' at the altar? If we reflect on Sodom and Gomorrah, we shall see that we are reverting back to that which will inevitably result in God's righteous anger upon us. This has already taken place in the Netherlands (2001), Belgium (2003), Canada & Spain (2005), South Africa (2006), Portugal and Argentina

(2010). We need to make people aware that the allowance of these evils will inevitably result in God's judgments coming upon them in time and to all eternity, unless they repent.

The re-definition of marriage is a clear indicator that Government proposals have more power than the church. Our vocabulary will change in time with no longer 'husband and wife' but husband and husband, wife and wife.

Re-defining marriage will have a huge impact on our children's education and the wider society. Marriage is given as an example of the Lord Jesus Christ returning for His bride.

The re-definition of marriage by society will result in the breakdown of society and a confusion that will change our national infrastructure, including job application forms, benefits, property and inheritance rights, surnames, maiden names, honeymoons, etc.

In 2010, Portugal and Iceland became the sixth and seventh European countries to adopt same-sex marriage legislation. As we have observed, the signs are clear that same-sex marriage will become legal in Denmark, Luxembourg, Finland and the United Kingdom, unless the Lord in mercy prevents.

A survey carried out in October 2008 by The Observer affirmed that the majority of Britons – 55% – support gay marriage. Other polls show that the majority of the Irish public support civil unions and gay adoption, 51% and 50%, respectively. France has support for same-sex marriage at 62%, and Russia at 14%. Italy has support for the 'Civil Partnership Law' between gays at 45% with 47% opposed. In 2009 58.9% of Italians supported civil unions, while 40.4 supported same-sex marriage. In 2010, 63.9% of Greeks supported same-sex partnerships, while 38.5% supported same-sex marriage. According to pollster Gallup Europe: women, younger generations, and the highly educated are more likely to support same-sex marriage and adoption rights for gay people.

What are Christian Watch doing ?

Christian Watch have submitted a formal response to the consultation. We plan to publicise the outcomes nearer the time. The Government Equalities Office (GEO) has asked for responses to its consultation from members of the public by the 14th June, 2012. Please see link:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/equal-civil-marriage/>

May we ask our Members to please earnestly pray and seek our Lord that He will have mercy upon us, bring us to national repentance, and overturn this proposed evil legislation. In addition, write to your local MP and publicly contend, whenever possible, for the Word of God. Why not arrange a Christian Watch representative to visit your school or church to discuss what marriage means today and the affects upon our Nation which inevitably will result when we start meddling with God's original plan?

O God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal Home.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame -
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

Under the shadow of Thy throne,
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thy arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Time like an ever rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

Isaac Watts (abbreviated)

****** PLEASE NOTE ******

**Christian Watch
LOCAL MEETING**

To be held, God willing, at

The Begonia Room, Bourne Hall,
Spring Street, **EPSOM**
Surrey, KT17 1UF

Friday 11th May 2012 at 7pm

For more information contact:
Michael Hobbis on mjhobbis@christianwatch.net
Or by mobile on 07702 431584

PRAYER MEETING ADDRESS

**By: MR. B. A. RAMSBOTTOM
Bethel Chapel, Luton, 29th June, 2009**

Reading: Psalm 23

If these blessings of Psalm 23 are fulfilled with us, then we shall be blessed indeed, in our homes, and in the church of God, in our solemn assemblies and personally in our hearts. So when we meet for prayer, these are some of the things to pray for. And then there will be that time of refreshing that shall come from the presence of the Lord.

If our religion is real, we want the Lord Jesus to be everything to us that a shepherd is to his sheep, and the reason is that the Spirit of God has taught us that we are like sheep. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." And left to ourselves, we still do. We still go astray; we still turn every one to our own way. You see the foolishness of the sheep, the weakness of the sheep, the readiness of the sheep to wander, to go astray. Now if our religion is real, we shall know, we shall feel all these things.

So we want the Lord Jesus to be to us everything that a shepherd is to his flock, especially this watching over us, guarding us, keeping us, supplying our needs. We need the Shepherd to do all these things for us. In one place, the Lord Jesus is called the good Shepherd, giving His life for the sheep; in another place, the chief Shepherd

who shall appear; in another place, the great Shepherd, "brought again from the dead ... through the blood of the everlasting covenant." So that is what we want (isn't it?) for the Lord Jesus to be our Shepherd. That is what we *want*, and then we can say, "I shall *not want*."

Now it is not possible for me to give you an exposition of the twenty-third Psalm this evening, but we have it twice: "He leadeth me." And that is real religion, that is vital godliness: He and me, Christ and a sinner. *He* in all His divine power, the riches of His grace; *me* in all my weakness, helplessness, sin and need. "He leadeth me." O but it is that blessed point we mention so much, the Shepherd going before, and He *has* gone before, and He still goes before. That beautiful word: "When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him." O to see the risen Saviour going before and to have grace to follow!

"He leadeth me." Then what about these green pastures? The good Shepherd knows where they are. The good Shepherd has provided them. "Green pastures." The sheep need them that they might live and not die. The sheep need them that they might be satisfied. These green pastures. I take them to be the green pastures of the Gospel, "the Glorious gospel of the grace of God." And the good Shepherd leads His sheep. He will never lead them into any pastures which are not green and He will never lead them into any pastures where there are poisonous weeds.

The green pastures of the Gospel are still green! These pastures were green when the first sinner saved by grace went to Heaven, because Abel walked in these green pastures when by faith he saw the Lamb of God. He walked in them, and not only did he lie down in them, but he lived in them and he died in them and he went to Heaven in them. They are still green; they have not withered. The truths of the Gospel have not grown old or stale and if you are a sheep in Christ's fold, there will be one thing that will mark it, and may you be able to hold it fast tonight: "My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, saith the Lord." I repeat that "My people" – the sheep of Christ's fold – "shall be satisfied with My goodness, saith the Lord." They are not disappointed in these green pastures. They do not want some different pastures. These green pastures will do for them to live in and to die in. The green pastures of the gospel, ever old, yet ever new.

But the sheep lie down here. Not only do they feed here. "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd." Not only do they feed here; they lie down here. They find a resting place here. Because as the sheep are led along by the shepherd in their pilgrimage, often they are weary and worn and footsore, and they lie down. They find rest in the green pastures. Surely these green pastures are beneath "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

"Tell me, Saviour, from above,
Dearest Object of my love,
Where Thy little flock abide,
Sheltered near Thy bleeding side."

"The shadow of a great rock in a weary land." They lie down there in the green pastures, which I take to mean this in all its simplicity: they find a resting place there.

It seems a strange expression to us: He *makes* them lie down. An old shepherd said, "Have you ever tried to make a sheep lie down? It is not easy; it is hard." He said that

only the shepherd can make the sheep lie down. They will not lie down for anybody else, and if they are unwell, they will not lie down, and if they are frightened, they will not lie down. They need a shepherd's tender care and loving compassion to make them lie down. Some of you have longed to lie down in the green pastures (haven't you?) and you have not been able to yet. May the Good Shepherd kindly *make you* lie down. O the resting place in the green pastures! "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." And the weary sheep says,

"O that I now the rest might know,
Believe and enter in!"

And the voice of the Shepherd still sounds down the ages: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." These are the things the sheep of Christ's fold want, and these are the things we pray for, in secret and in our prayer meetings, here and at home.

And then these still waters. I take these to be the still waters of His everlasting love, that love which took Him to the cross, that forgiving, pardoning, saving love. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." And He leads them there. In all its fullness I take this to be the Shepherd, the Saviour, working by the Holy Spirit, glorifying Christ and taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to the sinner. He is showing them where these waters of His eternal love are. You know where they begin: "Beneath the sacred throne of God." You know how they flow: by the way of the cross. You know what wonderful streams they are.

"I stood amazed, and wondered when,
Or why, this ocean rose,
That wafts salvation down to men,
His traitors and His foes."

These are the streams of that river which "make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." There are many things to make the sheep sad, but these streams make them glad.

"Still waters." The margin says, "the waters of quietness." Well, we would like to feel this. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." The good Shepherd leading to the paths of righteousness, the green pastures, the still waters, the waters of quietness. There is an attraction in them, isn't there? May we know them, seek them, find them, pray for them.

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