

# CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

“And what I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch”

Mark 13:37

**NEWSLETTER**

January 2013

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## To all Christian Watch Members

Dear Friends,

Thankfully, we are able to communicate with you again, having been mercifully spared to the first month of another year.

For the Lord's honour and glory alone, I desire to detail the goodness of our God in recently preserving my own personal life. Having been on the hospital waiting list for many months to have hip replacement surgery, I was thankful to receive notification that the operation was to take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> November last year. Detailed instructions were provided and I was told to report to the Hospital Surgical Ward early on the morning of the appointed day. This I did, having mentally and prayerfully committed my all to the Lord and requesting His help and support. Upon arrival at the Surgical Ward, I was met by a doctor who advised me that they could not proceed with the operation, owing to a problem they had identified with my blood. Consequently I had to return home, feeling disappointed and perplexed. After a few days I received notification to visit hospital for blood and bone marrow samples to be taken and following this to attend an appointment with a haematologist. It was at this appointment that the wonderful mercy of our God was revealed. The Specialist advised me that had they proceeded with the operation, as was originally planned, it was very unlikely that I would have come through it, owing to the condition of my blood. Furthermore, unless the foregoing events and circumstances had taken place, the blood problem would not have been revealed, with the distinct probability of a stroke occurring in the relatively near future. I am now having treatment to rectify the blood problem, and I am advised that the deferred operation should take place within the next three months. These events in our lives appear very mysterious at the time, but in looking back they wonderfully reveal the goodness and mercy of our God, who has never dealt with us according to that which our sins deserve. What fools we are not to trust the Lord to manage every detail of our lives, knowing that an ever-faithful God has promised, "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; ....These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" Isaiah 42:16.

The solemn state of the United Kingdom, and the majority of other countries in the world, demands much godly activity by those who profess to be followers of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We believe there is much superficial religion in our day, even amongst professing Protestants and it is very sad to witness that many who are followers of false religions are far more zealous in promoting and defending their beliefs. It is also sad that some who are vicars, pastors and preachers in the churches and chapels fail in proclaiming the whole council of God. We include an article by Greg Gordon of The Wake up Herald, entitled, **Today's Synthetic Gospel – A Timely Call to the Employment of True Gospel Preaching**. May the Lord bless His Holy Word, wherever it is faithfully proclaimed, and give all who hear it a receptive mind and heart that they may spiritually profit.

Further to the foregoing paragraph, we include an article by our National Co-ordinator, Michael Hobbs, entitled, **What should be the attitude of the Christian in a declining Church?** The solemn responsibility that the Lord has placed upon His people is emphasised and we must ever remember our accountability in that solemn time when we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of our doings (*2 Corinthians 5:10*). We believe the willingness of the Lord's people to do all they can to promote His cause and actively oppose wickedness illustrates their love for Him.

The God-dishonouring recent developments by the Bishops in the Church of England clearly illustrates their determination to ignore the Word of God and follow the dictates of the devil who is doing all he can to promote his evil and wicked practices. It is extremely sad for England and the associated nations that the spiritual decline is so evident, but we are thankful that there are Archbishops and Bishops in other lands who clearly express their disagreement with that which is taking place. We include under the heading, **OPPOSITION TO CHURCH**

**OF ENGLAND'S RULING CONCERNING BISHOPS AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS** a number of communications we have received from senior authorities in some overseas countries. May the Lord bless and honour them for contending for His Holy Word.

The wickedness of homosexuality in both acceptance and practice is rapidly increasing and, sad to say, this gross evil is seldom condemned by those who profess to be followers of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Scriptures are very clear in regard to the Lord's condemnation of this practice and most solemn judgements will be meted out upon all who indulge in it, unless repentance is given before they enter eternity. A debate was recently held by The Oxford Union, entitled, "This house would be glad to have gay parents". Although a number of speakers from Christian establishments were invited to participate, the final vote taken was 345 for and 21 against. We include a notice entitled **Homosexuals and the Christian Fellowship**, the content of which is a statement by the Conservative Congregational Conference in the USA.

Our National Co-ordinator – Michael Hobbis - continues to work hard in endeavouring to promote the Word of God and to encourage people to participate in this God-honouring task. He is at times disappointed at the lack of support he receives in some locations, but also he is encouraged by the willingness of others. How important it is for those who love the Lord and are able to contend for His Holy Word not to remain silent or apparently indifferent to that which is taking place. The Lord promises to honour those who honour Him, which we can do with His help and support, if we actively pray for it. We include the latest information about our **"Who is on the Lord's side?"** project and we pray that those of our Members who are able will give Michael Hobbis all the support they can.

The importance of prayer can never be over-emphasised, however young or old we may be. How foolish we are if we neglect it. How often we have to confess to the Lord our many failings in this regard. It is when we are in situations beyond our control that we really feel the urgency and necessity of prayer. We include a sermon by the late Pastor of Galeed Strict Baptist Chapel, Brighton, Mr. J. K. Popham, entitled **PRAYING AND FASTING** which we felt to be a very gracious exhortation and we hope you will find it encouraging, instructive and profitable.

Because of our concern about our solemn national situation, we have prayed that the Lord will enable us to be more effective in our witness for Him, particularly in our nation. There have been in recent weeks some encouraging developments, necessitating meetings in London, a further one being scheduled for the end of January. In our February Newsletter, we hope to be able to provide you with further information with regard to this development, but in the meantime, we request you to continue to remember us in your prayers.

We thank all our Members who have renewed their Membership for another year and we also acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation the many kind and generous donations which have been received. We take this opportunity to remind Members who have not returned their renewal forms to please do so if they wish to continue to receive our Newsletters.

Finally, and on behalf of Committee Members, I wish you the Lord's blessing and all needed help in the fulfilment of your various responsibilities, and particularly those in the Lord's service.

I remain through the Lord's mercy and goodness,  
Yours, in His service.



**David Crowter**

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**Management Committee**

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

# **Today's Synthetic Gospel**

## **A Timely Call to the Employment of True Gospel Preaching**

**By Greg Gordon 'The Wake-up Herald'**

***We are living in an age of synthetic gospel preaching, hence the Church has little power in modern day evangelism attempts. Satan has been successfully employing men in preaching a dethroned Christ and a powerless Gospel.***

### **A Dethroned Christ**

Where is the power of a Jonathan Edwards or a George Whitfield or a Charles Spurgeon? To put it another way, where is the message that these men preached with divine authority? The Gospel message that they preached was full of God, throbbing with God, God was the Gospel. They preached the character of God, the law of God, repentance towards God, acceptance with God, and dependence on God. Everything in their preaching was Christ-exalting and God-honouring. Spurgeon said: "The sermon which does not lead to Christ, or of which Jesus Christ is not the top and the bottom, is a sort of sermon that will make the devils in Hell laugh, but might make the angels of God weep." If a Gospel message does not begin with the lifting up of the sovereign Jehovah God, it then is the lowering of Heaven to earth and making what is Holy mundane.

George Whitfield said: "The Christian world is in a deep sleep; nothing but a loud shout can awaken them out of it!" We are preaching a man-centred Gospel that denies a Holy God. The Gospel begins with God and ends with God; if we miss this we miss the Gospel. We are living in an age of synthetic Gospel preaching; hence the Church has little power in modern day evangelism. Satan has been successfully employing men in preaching a dethroned Christ and a powerless Gospel.

Walter Chantry said: "On the shallow ground of men's logic, large numbers have been led to assume they have a right to everlasting life and have been given an assurance which does not belong to them." Again he states, "To please God you must labour as Christ laboured. To reach them you must say what our Lord said." Surely in this day we need true Gospel preaching that is the same as the employ of our Lord and the Apostles. William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, prophesied of a false Gospel that would be preached in the twentieth century. He warned of a generation that would accept a Gospel that preached a faith without repentance, religion without the Holy Spirit, a salvation without Lordship and a Christianity without Christ. Are you preaching a synthetic Gospel? Are you believing a synthetic Gospel? Paul the apostle speaks plainly of "another Gospel". May we shudder under the gravity of the thought that a synthetic Gospel is so widely preached and believed.

### **Offending a Holy God**

Reverence, respect and solemnity for the character of God must begin and accompany true Gospel preaching. The glorifying of God in preaching extols His character, holiness, attributes and draws a large conception of God. The problem with this modern day synthetic Gospel is that we preach man's need and not God's character. True Gospel preaching tells men that they have offended a Holy God who will by no means wink at sin.

Walter Chantry said: "Christ's Gospel sends men to beg pardon of the Holy One!" We have to realise that the Holiness of God is what we have offended and sinned against and we are in active rebellion to this infinitely pure God. A modern day fallacy is to say that all people know of God and His true character; nothing is further from the truth. People are ready to talk about God in a religious sense but are utterly ignorant of God and His Holiness. We are making an awful mistake in taking for granted that sinners know who God is! We lack severely in these two areas: preaching the Holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. Both of these truths need to be addressed to the hearers conscience directly; not argued, but proclaimed.

J. C. Ryle gives a forceful picture of our sin against a Holy God: “Nevertheless settle it firmly in our minds that sin is ‘the abominable thing that God hates;’ that God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon that which is evil;’ that the least transgression of God’s law makes us ‘guilty of all;’ that ‘the soul that sinneth shall surely die;’ that ‘the wages of sin is death;’ that God shall ‘judge the secrets of men;’ that there is a worm that never dies, and a fire that is not quenched; that ‘the wicked shall be turned into Hell’ and ‘shall go away into everlasting punishment’ and that ‘nothing that defiles shall in any wise enter Heaven.’ These are indeed tremendous words when we consider that they are written in the Book of a most merciful God!”

### **Monsters of Iniquity!**

Walter Chantry said: “The truth is that God is Holy. Thus, He is angry with the sinner at this moment. His sword of wrath already hangs over the head of the guilty and will forever torment him unless he repents and trusts Christ.” We are sinners in the sight of such a Holy God and not only sinners but guilty sinners. We are criminals before God. Holy Scripture tells us that we are “by nature children of wrath,” and that “the carnal mind is enmity against God.” In the light of this, we need a repentant heart before God. Spurgeon said: “He that never mourned over sin has never rejoiced in the Lord. If I can look back on my past life and say, ‘I have no grief over it,’ then I would do the same again if I had the opportunity. And this shows that my heart is as perverse as ever it was, and I am still unregenerate.” Again, Spurgeon states: “If you can look on sin without sorrow, then you have never looked on Christ. Try yourself by this test.” Walter Chantry said: **“Where are the pulpits clearly showing that God’s pure law makes strict demands upon the soul? The twentieth century church has tried to see how little it can say and still get converts.” Unless true God-exalted preaching ensues, there can be no true, genuine repentance from sin towards God.**

Paris Reidhead in his famous sermon ‘ten shekels and a shirt’ talks about the crimes of humanity against the law of God and the character of God: “What about you? Why did you repent? I’d like to see some people repent on Biblical terms again. George Whitfield knew it. He stood on Boston Commons speaking to twenty thousand people and he said, ‘Listen sinners, you’re monsters, monsters of iniquity! You deserve Hell! And the worst of your crimes is that criminals though you’ve been, you haven’t had the good grace to see it!’ He said, ‘If you will not weep for your sins and your crimes against a Holy God, George Whitfield will weep for you!’” That man would put his head back and would sob like a baby. Why? Because they were in danger of Hell? No! But because they were monsters of iniquity, that didn’t even see their sin or care about their crimes. You see the difference? You see the difference? The difference is, here’s somebody trembling because he is going to be hurt in Hell, but he has no sense of the enormity of his guilt; and no sense of the enormity of his crime; and no sense of his insult against deity!

### **Recovery of the Gospel**

The most urgent task facing the evangelical Church in our day is the recovering of the Gospel. J. I. Packer, speaking of the synthetic Gospel compared to the old true Gospel said: “It fails to make men God-centred in their thoughts and God-fearing in their hearts because this is not primarily what it is trying to do. One way of stating the difference between it and the old Gospel is to say that it is too exclusively concerned with being ‘helpful’ to man – to bring peace, comfort, happiness, satisfaction – and too little concerned to glorify God.” This new Gospel comes at a bargain price, only costing the sinner an hour a week to be secured forever in Heaven; while the old Gospel requires the life of the sinner and this life to be transformed into a life that worships and glorifies God. The Bible is against us when we preach in such a manner. Let us aim at nothing less than to preach the full counsel of God.

**We are in dire need in our day of preaching that speaks of God as He is, Holy, and men as they are, unholy!** Let us not grow weary in exalting the great Holy God in our preaching or else we find ourselves distributing a false, spurious, synthetic Gospel that is of no power. Hear the admonition of Richard Baxter: “Screw the truth into men’s minds.” Let us at all cost hold on to and proclaim this true Gospel and leave alone any substitute. **Without a clear proclamation**

**of the majesty of God, and the Law of God there cannot be a true receiving of the Gospel of grace.**

I leave you, dear reader, with some quotes from the mighty Whitfield: "Various are the pleas and arguments which men of corrupt minds frequently urge against yielding obedience to the just and Holy commands of God." And another quote: "Although believers by nature are far from God, and children of wrath, even as others, yet it is amazing to think how nigh they are brought to Him again by the blood of Jesus Christ."

As Leonard Ravenhill pleaded, so we agree: "God of Whitfield, give us today men like Whitfield who can stand as giants in the pulpit; men with burdened hearts, burning lips, and brimming eyes; and Lord, please do it soon!"

*Abbreviated*

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## **What should be the attitude of the Christian in a declining Church?**

### ***2 Timothy 3 – 4: 5***

Since this is a message for Christians, we may now pass briefly over some preliminaries, as it is assumed that certain truths are self-evident.

1. That we live in an age of unparalleled wickedness in its extent and blatant ungodliness – I say unparalleled - since the speed of modern day communications means that sin in all its horrid forms, is now global and highly contagious.
2. That the professing Church is in a state of decline – no honest man, Christian or non- Christian, can deny. In truth, in a secular newspaper, a columnist recently wrote to the effect, somewhat facetiously, that with the inception of a new Anglican Archbishop, it was a relief that we now had one who actually believed in God.

The false religion of New Evangelicalism has pervaded most, if not all, of local churches in one form or another. Even some reformed believers now have a very relaxed view of the Christian Lord's Day (the N.T. Sabbath) and the moral law of God, as expressed in the Ten Commandments. They speak of liberty and doing whatever they wish on this day of holy rest, while they themselves prove by disobedience that they are the servants of corruption.

In my attendance at the Christian Resources Exhibition, while representing Christian Watch, to walk among the stands is akin to a walk in Pilgrim's Vanity Fair, such is the worldliness and abounding impiety of the corrupt forms of Christianity displayed, with no sense of irony, or any fear of God before the eyes of most.

Horrific accounts of sinful acts in the world and in the professing Church are now so common, as to have almost lost their ability to shock.

### **What are we to do?**

We live in dangerous times, troubling times, yet in times in which all true believers are required by God to be faithful, and even excel (Dan. 11:32). But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overcome you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness (1 Thess. 5:4/5). However, to walk in the light, we must have a right attitude in response towards these times in which Divine providence has placed us.

We may find what this attitude is to be, always and only, in the Holy Oracles of God.

Firstly, we may say fundamentally, it is to recognise with sadness and self-loathing our own part in these things. We each bear our own responsibility in Adam as our representative, and the sad Biblical history of the human race declares that in rebellion against God and in our departing from Him, we have not only brought upon ourselves misery and judgement, but have sinned against infinite Goodness. If we are true Christians, we also have the aggravated sense of sorrow in that we crucified the Lord of Glory by our sin, and were complicit in His death.

Many today are like the proverbial *disgusted lady of Tunbridge Wells*, declaring loudly against homosexuality, abortion and the sexualisation of children. So too, many often quote that Scripture from Ezekiel 9:4 that the Lord has an especial regard for those who sigh and cry for the abomination of the times. However, this is surely not to be a crying and sighing at the abominations in our midst, but rather as the Scripture says: *for these things*. They have been done in our day, and if we are the sons of Adam, we share in the responsibility for them.

Consequently, we are to be much in prayer, for prayer and true repentance go together. We repent unto God, and not like Judas, unto ourselves. As Hezekiah, we should spread these things before the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus told us to watch and pray, particularly in these end times (Mark 13:33). To watch without praying is presumption; to pray without watching is laziness. Therefore, the second attitude to cultivate is watchfulness. Repentance joins with prayer, and prayer to watching. Indeed the exhortation to Timothy in our text (2 Timothy 4:5) is to watch. This exhortation follows the many warnings given in the preceding chapter concerning the last days: of perilous times; a false form of godliness; of evil men and seducers becoming worse and worse in each succeeding generation; a turning away from sound doctrine. Such times are dangerous times and we are to be watchful.

### **The contagion of sin**

As John Owen remarked in his treatise on perilous times – sin is infectious. You and I may be infected, yet oblivious to our danger. We know that some diseases like Creutzfeldt – Jakob disease (similar to BSE) have long and hidden incubation periods. Consider how the plague of sin in the world may have infected you, yet you know it not. Jesus told us that the last days would be declining days in the Church, because iniquity would abound in the world (Matt. 24:12). Therefore, in declining times particularly, it is better to be far removed from the fashions of this world as is consistent with true godliness.

The New Evangelicals, who would have all the pleasures of this life, together with the security of forgiveness and Heaven, consider not that the weight of their worldliness alone will sink them beneath the waves as they try to cross Jordan to the Celestial City.

The next advice to Timothy in 4:5 is to endure. The children of Issachar were blessed with the strength to endure the burden of the day (Gen. 49:14); and true Christians, to whom all the promises belong in Christ Jesus, shall receive from Him strength to endure equal to the day.

They are also called here to be active and make full proof of their calling in Christ. Some may have more opportunities than others, but the parable of the talents applies not just to Timothy, but to all the Lord's people. How tender that precious saying of Jesus – She hath done what she could (Mark 14:8).

To stand firm in times of the declining Church is a miracle of God's grace, and our prayer with the Psalmist should be: O let me not wander from thy commandments (Ps. 119:10).

It is the words of the Saviour that we are told to hold fast unto; so that our house may rest upon solid foundations and withstand the flood-tide of sin and iniquity that is increasingly coming upon the face of the earth. What else are we to hold fast to? That which is good (1 Thess. 5:21) – to a form of sound words (2 Tim 1:13) – our profession (Heb. 10:23) – and whatever light and attainments we have been given (Rev. 2:25 and Rev. 3:11).

## **The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable**

Finally, brethren; whatsoever things are true – honest – just – pure – lovely – of good report – virtuous – praiseworthy – think on these things (see Phil.4:8).

Why do I mention this last? Because we are to be pure and holy in thought. There are those believers and organisations today who are very concerned for the moral degradation, which is found in homosexuality, child sexualisation and other abuses. Consequently, they feel it incumbent upon themselves to display graphic images and descriptions on websites and in emails of homosexual acts, and other sexual perversions; even videos of actual copulation – all in the cause of righteousness!

When Paul the Apostle declared in his day by the Holy Ghost that it was a shame even to speak of such practices (Eph. 5:12); he meant exactly that. Do not speak of them.

Christians should have a God-given sense of propriety and they know what is acceptable, and what is not (Prov. 10:32). So let us always cultivate that attitude which hates sin and loves holiness, and be like those who wait with one eye upon the horizon for His coming, and so purify themselves, even as He is pure, by this fervent hope. For we shall be like Him when we see Him as He is (1 John 3:2 /3).

**Michael Hobbs**

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# **OPPOSITION TO CHURCH OF ENGLAND'S RULING CONCERNING BISHOPS AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

## **STATEMENT BY ARCHBISHOP OF KENYA**

**Posted by: Anglican Mainstream - January 6th, 2013**

### **A STATEMENT BY ARCHBISHOP ELIUD WABUKALA**

As we enter the season of Epiphany we rejoice in the splendour of the light that has dawned upon us in the appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Yet it is a great sadness that, before the New Year has hardly begun, the life of the Anglican Communion has yet again been clouded by compromise with the secular pre-occupations of the West.

The decision by the Church of England's House of Bishops, just announced, that clergy in Civil Partnerships can be eligible to serve as bishops will create further confusion about Anglican moral teaching and make restoring unity to the Communion an even greater challenge.

The provisions of the UK's Civil Partnership legislation mimic marriage for same-sex couples and are clearly designed on the assumption that such couples are sexually active. While it is true that the House of Bishops require bishops with Civil Partners to be celibate, this proviso is clearly unworkable. It is common knowledge that active homosexuality on the part of Church of England clergy is invariably overlooked and in such circumstances it is very difficult to imagine anyone being brought to book.

However, the heart of the matter is not enforceability, but that bishops have a particular responsibility to be examples of Godly living. It cannot be right that they are able to enter into legally recognised relationships which institutionalise and condone behaviour that is completely contrary to the clear and historic teaching of Scripture, as re-affirmed for Anglicans by the 1998 Lambeth Conference in its Resolution 1.10.



The weight of this moral teaching cannot be supported by a flimsy proviso. In his teaching about marriage, Jesus re-affirms that marriage is the coming together of a man and a woman in accordance with the pattern of creation itself when He says 'from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female' (Mark 10:6). For the health and well-being of both church and society we must promote this great God-given gift of marriage without compromise and ambiguity.

**The Most Rev'd Dr Eliud Wabukala**

Archbishop, Anglican Church of Kenya and Chairman, GAFCON Primates Council.

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## **HAS THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS REALLY REMOVED THE BAR TO GAY BISHOPS?**

**PRESS RELEASE from the Chairman of the Church of England Evangelical Council**

At the very least, the House of Bishops' "Statement Regarding Clergy in a Civil Partnership as Candidates for the Episcopate" will spread confusion and, at worst, will be taken as an effort to conform to the spirit of the age. By its timing, the bishops appear stung by the national reaction of outrage to the rejection of General Synod of legislation to legalise the consecration of women as bishops. If, by this statement, they are trying to mend fences with the general populace, showing they are truly in touch with the mind of the nation, they are profoundly out of touch with the reality of civil partnerships, most of which are seen as a focus for sexual activity, not simply an arrangement for tax purposes.

Some bishops are known to be lax about questioning civil-partnership clergy about their sex lives. Yet the Bishop of Norwich has reported that the House of Bishops believes it would be unjust to exclude from consideration of the episcopate anyone seeking to live fully in conformity with the Church's teaching on sexual ethics or other areas of personal life and discipline. As an argument, it has some merit. But the fact is this is not a justice issue; it is an issue of example-setting to the nation. It is no surprise the BBC reported the statement as "Church removes bar to gay bishops". That's all most people will hear, even though under the media breath there is reference to the requirement of celibacy and traditional teaching.

The Church has a poor record already on that kind of discipline. And while some bishops are known to duck the question, the watching world may well conclude that same-sex relationships are simply OK for followers of Jesus Christ. What will happen if same sex-marriage is finally approved? Will the House of Bishops have another meeting to approve the next step: Bishops married into same-sex partnerships? Will anybody then believe there can be gay marriage without gay sex? Christians are supposed to be different and follow the teaching of Christ. The House of Bishops knows that, but on the face of the present statement they appear more concerned to avoid criticism from the watching world than to be faithful to Scripture, and wise in the timing and content of its public pronouncements.

**Venerable Michael Lawson** – Chairman, the Church of England Evangelical Council.

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**STATEMENT BY ANGLICAN MAINSTREAM** in response to the House of Bishops' Statement

As made clear in the Ordinal, Bishops of the Church of England promise both to fashion their own life and that of their household according to the way of Christ and to be guardians of the Church's doctrine. Given the ambiguous nature of civil partnerships, it would not be credible for a person in such a partnership to make such promises. Most people assume that civil partnerships are sexual relationships. It is casuistical to claim that they are not. This is presumably why many clergy in such partnerships refuse to "give assurances" to their bishops that theirs is a "non-sexual relationship". Since a decision to move from the current position

would be a grave departure from the Church's doctrine and discipline, it should be made by Bishops in Synod not by Bishops alone. Otherwise it looks too much like salami-slicing away at the Church's teaching. A bishop known to be in a civil partnership could hardly be a focus of unity nor be a Bishop for the whole Church. Such an appointment would be a very divisive move both within the Church of England and in the wider Anglican Communion.

**Dr. Philip Giddings** (Convenor)

**Canon Dr. Chris Sugden** (Secretary)

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## **THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA'S RESPONSE**

1. The Bishops of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) meeting for their annual retreat held from Jan 7/11, 2013, at the Ibru Centre, Agbarha Otor, Delta State, Nigeria, heard with dismay the news of the recent action of the Church of England House of Bishops. The decision to permit homosexual clergy in civil partnerships to now be considered for the episcopacy is one step removed from the moral precipice that we have already witnessed in The Episcopal Church (USA) and the Anglican Church of Canada.
2. When the Church of England failed to exercise its legal and moral right to opt out of the civil partnerships legislation in 2005, warnings were given in England and around the Anglican Communion that this was a first step towards the recognition and institutionalisation of behaviour contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture and re-affirmed for all Anglicans by the 1998 Lambeth Conference in its Resolution 1.10. Sadly those warnings were ignored and we now face the next step in a process that could very well shatter whatever hopes we had for healing and reconciliation within our beloved Communion.
3. We are also grieved by the timing of this decision coming only days before the retirement of Archbishop Rowan Williams and before Bishop Justin Welby becomes the new Archbishop of Canterbury. We urge the House of Bishops to reconsider their decision so as to allow for a full, prayerful and sober reflection on the call on all clergy, especially bishops, to live holy lives and not encourage what are, at best, morally ambiguous partnerships that make it impossible for a bishop to be a wholesome example to the flock. Especially since the supposed assurances of celibacy, while perhaps well-intentioned, are both unworkable and unenforceable.
4. As a House of Bishops, while we acknowledge that we all fall short of God's call to holiness, we dare not compromise the clear teaching of our Lord on faithfulness with Holy Matrimony and chastity outside of it. Sadly, we must also declare that if the Church of England continues in this contrary direction, we must further separate ourselves from it and we are prepared to take the same actions as those promoted by the decisions of The Episcopal Church (USA) and the Anglican Church of Canada ten years ago.
5. In all of this we continue to give thanks for the mercy of God newly revealed to us in this season of The Epiphany and we are filled with gratitude for the millions of faithful Anglicans within the GAFCON/FCA community who have not 'bowed the knee' to the contemporary idols of secularism and moral expediency.
6. Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

In Christ's service,

**The Most Revd Nicholas D. Okoh,**  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate

# Homosexuals and the Christian Fellowship

## Statement by: Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, USA

Our aim in the following statement is to combine theological thinking and Biblical commitment with contemporary understanding and compassionate pastoral concern.

1. God in his Holy Word plainly condemns the practice of homosexuality as an abomination in His sight (Leviticus 18:22), as a degrading and unnatural passion (Romans 1:26-27), as one that brings grave consequences in this life, and as a sin that, if persisted in, will exclude one from the Kingdom of God (I Corinthians 6:9-10).

Therefore, neither individual Christians, nor Ministers of the Word of God, nor congregations of the Lord Jesus Christ, may take away from or lessen God's prohibition of and warnings against the practice of homosexuality.

Neither may they individually or collectively as responsible citizens in a free society urge or concede that the State should give special protection or approval to this practice, or promote it as a matter of personal taste, free choice, or 'sexual orientation'. Homosexuals are not entitled to special treatment under the law. That would be tantamount to rewarding evil.

2. The Apostle Paul testifies that those once involved in homosexuality were among those who were washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 6:11).

Therefore, individual Christians, Ministers and congregations, understanding that all human beings are sinners, and that as Christians we have received God's mercy while helpless, ungodly and hostile to God (Romans 3:23; 5:6, 10), must warn against homosexual practices as from the mouth of the Lord (Ezekiel 3:17), and, at the same time proclaim forgiveness, cleansing, restoration, and power for Godly living for all who repent and believe the Gospel (John 1:12; 3:16; Romans 1:16; I Corinthians 6:11; Philippians 2:13).

We specifically renounce any unbiblical prejudice against persons who are homosexual simply because of their orientation, which is just one particular form of the same sinful orientation we all have. But we do believe that every expression of that orientation is sinful, just as every expression of adulterous desire is sinful, and we believe that all practicing adulterers and homosexuals should be called to repentance.

3. God's purpose in salvation is that all the election of grace will repent and come to a saving knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4).

Therefore, individual Christians and the Lord's servants will compassionately and in love proclaim the Good News of the Gospel of forgiveness, together with the admonition to go and sin no more (John 8:11), to those once involved in homosexual practices, admitting such into fellowship after they evidence real repentance and a confession of faith in the Lord's acceptance of the one offering made by Jesus Christ to atone for the sins of His people.

(Edited)

### **'The Church Under Judgement'**

**John A. Day**

This new booklet identifies that the Church in our day is under solemn judgement because of its departure from the Word of God. The author emphasises the urgent need for the true Church to prayerfully examine itself and seek the Lord for repentance and restoration to Biblical standards.

**Price: £1.75** (Including P&P)

(Obtainable from Christian Watch Resources – see back cover for details)

# **‘Who is on the Lord’s side?’**

## **Campaign report for January 2013**

In writing campaign reports one always wishes to encourage the brethren with reports of activity and success. So often you may read in the Christian media of small issues, which read like major conquests. While it is natural to wish to hear of good news from a far country, it is always best surely to give a true report, in order that prayerful concern may be taken to God intelligently and honestly.

So, sadly, I do report that while meetings have been booked for 2013 and various arrangements made, the campaign work has been quite uneventful for December and early January. This is partly due to the Christmas period but also in a measure to a certain calm and inactivity too, although I have had a considerable number of preaching engagements during this period.

An open air Christian Watch meeting held in Horsham on 15<sup>th</sup> December was quite lively in terms of attention and opposition. The local jeweller was particularly opposed to us and called the police. Two separate groups of the law enforcers attended, male and female, but were particularly good-natured, and merely asked us to preach a little quieter. Some attended the book table, although the rain was a problem.

Our next meetings in Sussex, in the will of God, are an open-air witness in Worthing and a public meeting – also in Worthing - where the Rev. Patrick Baker from Walthamstow Free Presbyterian Church will preach. Details are given on our website and in this Newsletter (Page 14).

It was hoped to bring news of contact groups being established in two areas, but sadly, due to various circumstances, the two members concerned were unable to help.

However, 2013 does seem to offer great times of opportunity with many deputation meetings booked and willing helpers ready to begin work in the campaign in various areas, both in England and N. Ireland.

There is a great deal of apathy and even indifference now among the churches, and one feels that this is God’s chastisement to bring us to repentance. Isaiah 29 speaks of such a time when the spirit of deep sleep is poured out on the people, with the spiritual eyes of many closed and the seers no longer able to see.

While many would persuade us that charismatic groups are achieving wonderful things, it is to be feared that it is mainly froth and bubble.

However, we should recall that such times call for repentance, greater zeal, prayer, and seeking of God. We may consider Wesley, Whitfield and Carey who even comparatively recently laboured in barren fields, yet in the Holy Ghost and the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ brought forth fruit unto God. May the Lord do so for us, and more also, in the campaign and in the land generally.

Meanwhile, I do ask for prayer that God would stir me up and keep me faithful in any work undertaken for Jesus’ sake. Moreover, do contact me if you feel led to play any part in this work of establishing local contact groups of active believers in such needy times as this.

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# “PRAYING AND FASTING”

**A Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. K. Popham**  
20<sup>th</sup> July 1928

**Reading: Matthew 17, verses 14 – 21: “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.”**

This 21<sup>st</sup> verse has many times explained to me my leanness, distance from God, inability to hold on steadfastly. “This kind” – the casting out of evil, of devils, the fretting in troubles, the leanness of the soul, the want of entrance into liberty - goeth not out but by *prayer* and *fasting*,” and on these two I would address you.

The purpose of God must stand and be accomplished; the blood of Christ must always be effectual. He purchased the church – that blessed God – with His own blood; and He will never forego that great purchase. The promises of the Gospel are Yea and Amen in Him and can never be forfeited. The covenant of grace is “ordered in all things and sure,” containing every provision necessary for eternal life, for a safe passage through the Red Sea of corruption and affliction and troubles, for the weakness of faith, for the temptations of the devil. This covenant is “ordered in all things and sure.” Why then this great stress upon prayer? The reason is, *it is God’s ordination*. What He will give, He will teach His people to feel their need of, and pray that they may receive supplies. Our good hymn-writer Hart says,

“Prayer was appointed to convey  
The blessings God designs to give;”

and that explains the energy which sometimes is given to a child of God in prayer, so that he feels he must, as it were, pull the blessing down, cannot do without it. And he will say sometimes things in earnest prayer to God for which afterwards he may almost feel ashamed; as if he must go back to the Lord, and ask Him to forgive the freedom that he used, and the strong expressions. But if any of you have felt like that, you may have got what I once got when I went back to ask the Lord to forgive me for being so free and bold: a spirit came in me to make me more and more free. Sometimes you may say that the Lord has done nothing for you; and if you go before Him and try to say that, you may find yourself rebuked, and gently dealt with, but a spirit of prayer and the grace of supplication may be poured out upon you.

Now take this as a divine principle, an ordination of a gracious and wise God. Expressing the covenant in Ezekiel, He says, “I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.” Do you complain of a lean soul? Ask the reason. Do you complain of the prevalence of iniquity? Ask the reason. Do you say you cannot submit to the will of God? Are you ready to say sometimes the burden is too heavy for you to bear? And do you sometimes feel disposed, sadly, powerfully disposed, to question the wisdom and the goodness of God? Now if you are enabled sincerely to ask of God and of the Scriptures the reason of such and such complaints and matters, I believe you will find the substance is in this word; “This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” Do you feel as if you have never come to a point, and as if perhaps you will never come to a point, about your interest? Now look, as God may help you, into this direction.

There are two words I would here say. The first is that there is “*a new and living way*” to God, into the holiest of all, by the blood of Jesus, by the rent veil of His sacred humanity, and by His presence in Heaven as a great and faithful and merciful High Priest. There is a way. This is what is said, that God hath “Opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles;” that is, the blessed doctrine of faith in the Person and the atonement of the Lord Jesus. Have you seen that? It is here in the Scriptures; but you cannot see it until it be manifested to you. Have you seen that new, living way? To the flesh it is very strait, difficult; in the God of all grace very open, with no bar, no toll, no tax levied, no goodness asked, no price to be brought. It is a free, open, wonderful, glorious, God-glorifying way. If you see it by faith, it will have this effect, to glorify

God. And this is the second word: - that sight will have *the effect of drawing you*. It will be the Father's drawing you to the Son; it will be the Spirit's grace in your heart. It will be saying, "Bring no money, no price, no good deeds, no pleasing frames, bring nothing." "Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Then you say, "I do not get it." James says, "Ye have not, because ye ask not." In another case, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." "This kind," the bondage, the captivity, "goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Ephraim was "an unwise son," because he had no strength to break forth; and the bondage that some feel, the lack that abides, the weakness that is felt, the guilt on the conscience never removed by the blood of Christ, may say to you, "Well, is there a good God in Heaven? Is there a purpose of grace? Is there a sufficiency?" Now says the Lord Jesus, "This sickness, this vexing of the devil, this trouble you complain of, this that you would have removed, 'goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.'" It is God's order, my friends. Now one may say, "My affliction works rebellion in me, and I am ready to charge God with foolishness, with unkindness. I cannot submit; I wish I could, but I cannot." Now how do you go about the business? A gracious spirit says you ought, and your conscience says you ought to submit. Conscience tells you it is wrong to rebel, to fret, and to charge God in your heart, even without consciously realising it. How is this dreadful spirit to be cast out? How is that rebellion, which is as the sin of witchcraft, to be cast out? "By prayer and fasting." This is God's sovereign order; and he who walks at any time in this does what the Lord Jesus bids: "Abide in Me." To abide in Christ is to be pleading His atonement, seeking His mercy, asking forgiveness and the presence and the power and the unction of the Holy Ghost; it is to fight your way to Him. Opposition is always met with, whenever there is a real abiding in Christ.

I have been sorry sometimes for you when my leanness and barrenness in the ministry has been before me; and this has come, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." I am sorry for you when I see you, as I do see at least some, who are held fast in bondage, and "walk as men" carnally here and there. For I know there is only one remedy, and that remedy is in God; and the way He will have that remedy fetched into a sinner's conscience is in this word: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Is the atonement attractive to you? Is the holy, just, and good will of God before you? Are His claims with respect to you in His dealings, His providence, and His way with your soul, before you? Do you feel, "Well, here is a poor case. I wish the Lord would look at me." Now examine the wish. Is it a desire that resembles that of the sluggard: "The sluggard desireth, and hath nothing"? O the sword that has been to me sometimes, "The sluggard desireth, and hath nothing." Then you look at your garden, and you say, "Overrun with weeds and briars." Then you go to the promise: "He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord;" and you say, "He does not do it." And why? "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

"Prayer and fasting" mean the constant exercise by precious faith of that waiting on God. Fasting literally is an abstention from food: so fasting in the spirit is abstaining from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. How I fail! How you fail! Do your failures make you afraid that God will depart from you, that they will provoke Him to leave you? Do you ever fear He will leave us as a people? Do you ever fear that because you so constantly grieve and vex the Holy Spirit, He will be moved to leave you in your state of barrenness? Perhaps you would think I exaggerated if I told you how these things exercise my mind. Then also this comes again and again to me, as it did this afternoon, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." It is a solemn explanation of leanness, barrenness, distance, fretting, darkness and confusion. This is not law, it is Gospel; it is in the covenant: "I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Law never says, "This kind only goes out in such and such a way;" for there is no going out from the law, no deliverance by the law. It is only the Gospel that speaks thus. This blessed Lord Jesus said to His disciples in reply to them: "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you can move a mountain; and this poor child whose case you could not touch, could have been touched and dealt with by faith; but you had no faith." Now what have you to trouble you? Is it something in your soul, guilt on your conscience, leanness in your spirit, distance from God? Is it something in providence? Something crooked that you cannot straighten? A burden you do not know how to carry, which you cannot cast away? Now may the Lord help you, help you believingly to regard this word. Is it something in the church? Do

you see how distant she is? Do you perceive that there are signs of the absence of God or the withholding of His power and His grace? The remedy is before you. Hart speaks of it:

“The remedy’s before thee – pray.”

“I cannot,” says one. Now if you are born again, you will be asking for prayer. If you are blessed with grace, you will be saying, “Lord give me in Thy rich mercy the Spirit of grace and of supplications.” And then O how the Gospel will shine in your eyes! O how you will plead the blood of the Lord Jesus! How you will be saying, “Here is my hope, here would I fix, here would I live, here would I pray. Bless me in that blood, by that blood, save me by it; clothe me in Christ’s righteousness; animate me by His life, move me by His Spirit, teach me.” O, the Gospel does open a man’s mouth sometimes, and it enables him to obey the word, “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.” My brethren, we are straitened in ourselves, not in the Lord; there is plenty in Him, we are straitened in ourselves. What shame belongs to us. May the Lord give us to feel ashamed, and with the shame, give us grace to go on pleading, pleading, pleading, and to say to the mountains, “Remove, remove, go yonder;” and says God, “It shall be, it shall be.”

Now if you feel this in your hearts, may the Lord give you prayer. We have one thing before us. That is to say, I have one thing before me at this moment, and that is, the coming Lord’s Day. Now may you be enabled to seek God for it. You want some good, you want some teaching. He can answer you. He has all wisdom, and all goodness. If between now and the coming services of the Lord’s Day, you should find in your hearts “praying and fasting,” “continuing instant in prayer, watching unto the same,” perhaps you will go home with songs in your heart and in your mouth. May it be so. Turn not away from this divine instruction, my friends. O turn not away, and do not run into your own sense of helplessness, and say, “We are poor, helpless things,” and thus soothe yourselves with some poisonous notion. Look, as God helps you, at this holy instruction. May He give us power to do it.

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## **WORTHING LOCAL CONTACT GROUP**

**OPEN-AIR STREET WITNESS AND PUBLIC MEETING**

**Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Open-Air Witness - 2pm *Worthing Town Centre, Montague Street***

**PUBLIC MEETING - 7 pm**

***Heene Community Centre, 122 Heene Road, Worthing, BN11 4PL***

**Speaker: Rev. Patrick Baker**

**Address: ‘WHAT TIME IS IT?’**

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