

SCOTTISH PROTESTANT VIEW

FREE

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KIRK FAILS AGAIN TO RESOLVE ISSUE OF CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

On Tuesday 22nd May, 17 members of Zion Baptist Church picketed the Church of Scotland at its Assembly on the Mound, Edinburgh. The protest was two-fold, not only on the issue mentioned above, but also against the ongoing Romanising of the National Church. As well as displaying slogans on our placards and banners, we faithfully displayed the Word of God, the basis upon which we protested.

Last year the debate on the above topic left the Kirk split in its opinion and a definite decision was to be taken this year, one way or another. The Assembly last year passed a deliverance to allow ministers to bless gay marriages without risk of censure. However, the decision was then passed to the presbyteries for their approval and subsequently rejected.

On now to this year and a controversial report on human sexuality which took ten years to compile was due to be discussed and debated at this year's Assembly. It had already been criticised by the evangelicals, but welcomed by the liberals as a step forward creating a more open inclusive church. As it turns out the Assembly side-stepped an immediate decision on same-sex relationships when it voted to support a report advocating further study and discussion on the issue, and in actual fact ended somewhat in total confusion. One well-known liberal was quoted as saying, "Let's not rush to judgement when we don't know enough". God save us from those who pretend ignorance when the Word of God is so clear on the issue.

Mr Jack Bell



Members from Zion Baptist Church protest at the General Assembly

“Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

Proverbs 14:34

On the green grassy slopes of the Boyne...

The meeting on Friday 11th May between Dr Paisley and Bertie Ahern 'on the green grassy slopes of the Boyne' near Drogheda was the latest development in the seemingly new dispensation in North-South relationships.

Responding to an invitation from Mr Ahern, the leader of the DUP, the Orange Grand Master Robert Saulters, Orange Grand Secretary Drew Nelson, together with many other guests from the Unionist and Orange traditions attended a reception at Oldbridge House, the Georgian mansion which over-looks the famous battle site. The Republic's Government is spending 30 million euros developing the 317-year-old site as a tourist attraction. The Orange Grand Master saw the development as an important acknowledgement of Orange culture and said, "The Battle of the Boyne was a very significant event both in terms of Irish, British and European history".

In his speech Dr Paisley said, "For these Islands the Boyne settled the Constitution of the monarchy and our parliament for over 200 years". Indeed the Battle in which the Protestant King William defeated the Catholic King James was the climax of the Glorious Revolution, which in the words of one historian 'delivered the nation from tyranny and arbitrary power'. The Settlement of 1689 formulated by the Convention Parliament had

however remained insecure while Jacobite forces were still in the field and James still at large. The outcome of the Boyne changed that - James fled and the Settlement was secured, and with it civil and religious liberty.

Together the two leaders planted a walnut tree in the grounds of Oldbridge House, and Dr Paisley presented the Irish Prime Minister with a musket carried by a Jacobean soldier at the famous battle. The gun bearing the mark of King James was kindly loaned by Mr Hubert Brown Kerr, a Ballymena constituent of Dr Paisley. It will now go on display in the Boyne Heritage Centre.

Lord Laird of Artigarvan, a member of a Boyne consortium which owns 27 acres on the northern side of the battlefield, commended Dr Paisley for calling on the Irish Government to replace a huge commemorative obelisk which had stood on the spot where William of Orange directed his forces. This giant pillar, erected in 1726, was destroyed by IRA sympathisers in 1923. Lord Laird said it would be "a fitting gesture of goodwill and good relations" if the monument was rebuilt.

The meeting on the battlefield was described as a 'tremendous opportunity' by the new Stormont Culture Minister, Edwin Pools of the DUP, who revealed that he had an ancestor in the ranks of William's Dutch



Ian Paisley presented Bertie Ahern with a musket

Guards at the battle.

All however is not sweetness and light as Drew Nelson pointed out to the attendant media. He said Orange Halls in the Republic have been under sustained attack for many years and that the Protestant community in the South's border counties still suffer from 'discrimination, sectarianism and intimidation'. Two independent surveys currently being completed will highlight these issues. Mr Nelson added, 'We hope that the development

of the battlefield site and the meeting between Dr Paisley and Bertie Ahern will help to create the atmosphere which will enable the issues that are of concern to Protestants to be addressed'. (News Letter)

Time will tell if the Republic will at last fulfil its duty of care towards its own Orange citizens, and whether its handshakes, smiles and words of friendship really signal a change of attitude towards Ulster.

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee. Proverbs 3:27,28.

Correspondent from the British Church Newspaper

ZION BAPTISTS PROTEST AT THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(see front page)



Kirk puts off decision on homosexual relationships

CRAIG BROWN

THE Kirk side-stepped an immediate decision on same-sex relationships yesterday, when it voted to support a report advocating further study and discussion on the issue.

In a confused debate, the General Assembly refused to endorse a statement calling on the Kirk to recognise that gay people should not be prevented from holding positions of leadership in the Church, believing it could be seen as potentially affirming same-sex partnerships and practice, an issue which the Kirk has yet to tackle.

The report, brought by the human sexuality working group of the Mission and Discipleship Council, examined how the Kirk could come to terms theologically with homosexuality.

Despite an initial acceptance and support of the report, which acknowledged a “historical intolerance” of gay people by the Church, divisions developed when the Rev Sandra Black, presbytery of Glasgow, tried to move a deliverance which asked the Assembly to “affirm that whilst theological approaches to homosexuality differ, any approach which presents lesbian or gay people as less loved by God than any other people is unacceptable; further affirm that sexual orientation is not in itself a bar to baptism or communion or to serving God in the Church as a Church member or in any leadership capacity”.

This brought immediate opposition from self-proclaimed members of the conservative wing of the Church.

Many of those who spoke claimed the wording was too vague and could be seen more as support for homosexual partnerships and practice than the acceptance of gay people.

Dr Bruce Gardner, presbytery of Kincardine and Deeside, said it was trying to settle the debate before it could start: “I feel that this is a section too far. We have tried to

introduce this matter sensitively to the Church and we’re giving people an opportunity to reflect on these very issues. It’s not true to say that everybody present would be in total agreement with the second half of this addendum. That homosexual people are loved by God is something that none of us, I hope, would wish to question in any way, because we believe God’s love is for everyone.”

But Professor Ronald Fergusson, a supporter of the motion, brought confusion to the debate when he produced evidence showing the substance of the deliverance was already the “de facto position of the Church” since 1958, when it fought against the decriminalisation of homosexual acts.

“Even then, it was said by the Church quite clearly that being homosexual by orientation was no bar to holding office in the Church; that homosexual people exercised many valuable gifts and were to be affirmed as full members of our communion,” he said.

“It seems to me that the motion as we have it re-affirms the position as we have had it for quite a long time.”

The Rev Ian Aitken, presbytery of

Aberdeen, claimed the wording was too ambiguous and Evangelical members of the Church would be “sweating” over the possible meanings and implications.

He added if a vote was to be taken on the deliverance and was rejected, it would be perceived as the Church exhibiting homophobic tendencies.

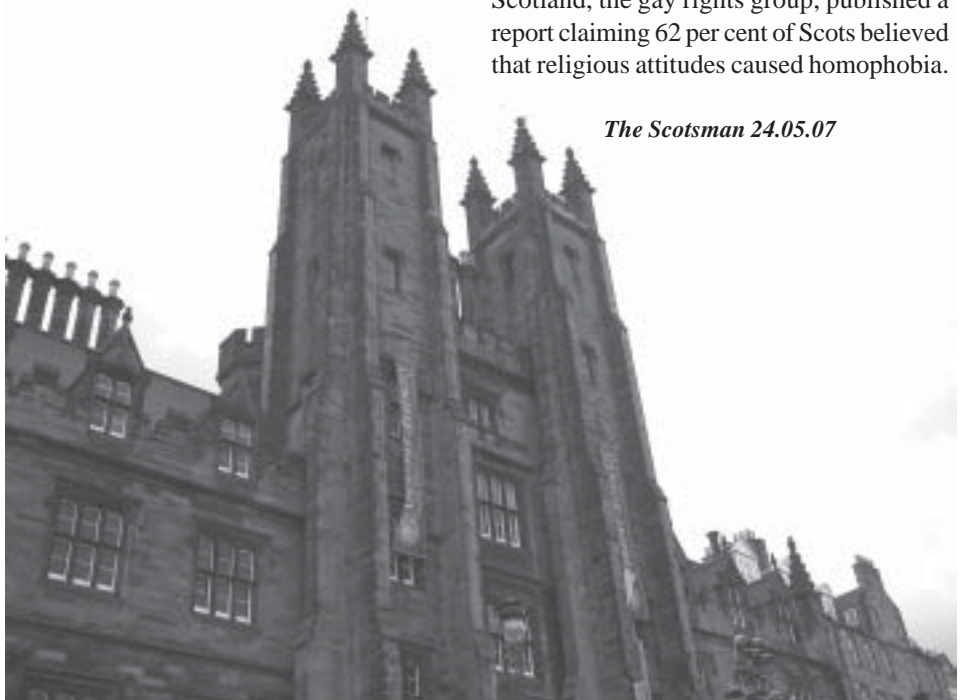
This was followed by repeated appeals to have the motion withdrawn so no vote was required.

After initial resistance, Mrs Black agreed, adding: “There’s no intention in the deliverance to cause upset or make people sweat, or be uncomfortable, and the deliverance falls exactly as was said.

“It was to give the Church the opportunity where we are divided to affirm what unites us... If the Assembly is minded that it is a difficult motion and would put the Church in distress to vote upon it, I will withdraw it, but I have difficulty myself in understanding just why it’s difficult to affirm what we already agreed in this particular place and on this issue.”

The debate came on the same day Stonewall Scotland, the gay rights group, published a report claiming 62 per cent of Scots believed that religious attitudes caused homophobia.

The Scotsman 24.05.07



CHURCH SINGS ALEX SALMOND'S PRAISES

IAN DUNN

CARDINAL Keith O'Brien has led a chorus of approval in light of First Minister Alex Salmond's comments in this week's SCO interview,

Scotland's new First Minister has praised Catholic education, reiterated his staunch opposition to Trident, and expressed interest for an independent commission to look at abortion rights. Salmond has also suggested that Scotland needs a charter of religious freedom while reaffirming his belief that the UK Act of Settlement must be abolished.

Cardinal O'Brien responded with warm words for Scotland's new leader. "I was happy to read the views of the First Minister. I would be more than happy for this draft charter for religious freedom to be discussed further by the people of Scotland, while measures should be taken now to remove the Act of Settlement from the statute book."

The cardinal also said he shared with Salmond a strong opposition to any new nuclear weapons system in Scotland, as did many other religious leaders.

"The removal of Trident from Scotland is a cause I have shared with my brother bishops in Scotland, with other Scottish Church leaders, and, indeed, with Church authorities in Rome."

The campaign to remove nuclear weapons from Scotland had the backing of the Vatican itself, stated the cardinal.

Approval

"I recently received a letter from Cardinal Renato Martino the president of the Pontifical Council for Justice & Peace, who stated that he would like to express his approval of the letter that leaders of various Churches sent to MPs at Westminster on the same day the renewal of Trident was voted.

"The endorsement of the letter by the Scottish bishops must be viewed as an expression of the Catholic Church's pastoral care, and a concrete example of implementation of the social doctrine of the Church on disarmament and peace."

The First Minister's views received equally warm praise from other Catholic organisations. The Society for Protection of the Unborn Child in Scotland welcomed Salmond's call for a fresh look at abortion. Its deputy director Donna Nicholson said: "It's encouraging to read the First Minister's statement. In his call for a commission that would look at ways of supporting women faced with a crisis pregnancy, he clearly recognises that women deserve better than abortion—that abortion is seldom the real answer."

The Church's parliamentary officer, John Deighan, stated: "The new First Minister says much that gives hope for future developments in crucially important areas. His tone in relation to the role of the Church in speaking out on religion and Catholic schools is most encouraging.

"Delivering on ideas is always difficult and will especially be so with a minority government; there are many in politics that would have people of religion and their views sidelined from public debate and politics. Alex Salmond, however, is certainly not of this mould. His views express a sensible and democratic approach to considering issues on their merit."

Michael McGrath's, director of the Catholic Education Service, said he was delighted to hear the First Minister's praise of Catholic schools.

He said: "This is what we've been asking Scottish politicians to recognise for some time—for them to celebrate the diversity and achievements of Catholic schools. The only other politician to come close to such a position was Jack McConnell when he was education secretary but since then there's only been a grudging acceptance," he claimed. "I look forward to discussing with the First Minister how we can achieve a wider acceptance and celebration of Catholic education."

Scottish Catholic Observer, 22.06.07

Salmond calls for repeal of Act of Settlement

Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond has demanded that Gordon Brown ensure that the Act of Settlement of 1701 is repealed as soon as possible after he becomes Prime Minister. The Act was introduced during the reign of William III, and forbids a Catholic, or anyone married to a Catholic, from inheriting the throne. Mr Salmond, who is determined to be seen to be standing against sectarianism in Scottish society, has promised to raise the matter when he meets Gordon Brown formally following his appointment as Prime Minister, which will take place on 27 June.

Mr Brown has already indicated that he is considering making changes to the constitution of the United Kingdom, and Alex Salmond argues that "if Gordon Brown is considering drawing up a bill of rights, then the Act of Settlement should be removed as part of that. If that doesn't happen it should still be repealed - it is a blot on our culture." Salmond's remarks come as a bizarre "seminar" is held at the Scottish Parliament to determine whether a new program should be introduced to tackle sectarianism in Scottish nurseries. As if this hysteria was not enough, under intense pressure, Ian Wilson, the Grand Master of the Scottish Orange Order, has announced that he has rewritten the founding document of the Order to remove any mention of opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. He has also removed the historic bar on members attending Roman Catholic funeral services, despite the fact that this service involves the idolatry of a requiem mass being offered for the dead.

It is painfully obvious that in the legitimate fight against sectarianism in Scottish society, politicians have lost sight of the importance of the Protestant faith in establishing our national freedoms and liberties. The removal of the 300-year-old Act of Settlement might be of little apparent significance, in that none of the Queen's direct family has converted to Catholicism, or is known to have any particular interest in doing so, but it would undoubtedly be a powerful statement that Britain is no longer a Protestant country, and that Roman Catholicism is now an equally acceptable and valid alternative to orthodox Christianity. It would be to reject truth for error.

British Church Newspaper

FLASHBACK - SCOTTISH PROTESTANT VIEW - MARCH/APRIL 2001

MORIBUND BIGOTRY

By PASTOR JACK GLASS

(The Roman Catholic Church spreads sectarianism by claiming to be the only true church)

Moribund bigotry is a favourite expression of the media today, but who in the eyes of the media are the moribund bigots? Are they the Pope and the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical leadership who in their recent papal declaration *Dominus Iesus*, and in a fit of Papal triumphalism, declared the Roman Catholic Church's pre-eminence over all other churches, treating those others as mere ecclesiastical sideshows not even worthy of the name of true churches. Certainly not, no, Roman Catholicism is allowed to be totally bigoted, after all the R.C. hierarchy might put a readership ban on any newspaper which would dare to accuse them of such bigotry.

The hypocrisy of the R.C. church is breathtaking. She has the audacity to attack what she calls the anti-Catholic bigotry of the Act of Settlement which excludes R.C.s from the throne, while in the same breath, she proclaims the totally bigoted and triumphalistic *Dominus Iesus* which excludes other churches from their true church.

So the question arises as to who are the 'bigots' the media so greatly detests. I will tell you. They are the born again evangelical Protestants who oppose romanising ecumenical apostasy and declining moral values, including media support for homosexuality, however, thank God for the sections of the media who opposed the repeal of Section 28.

The most hated ministers are men like myself because we are evangelical bible born again Protestants. No Pope or any RC leader ever got treated with so much contempt nor any Church of Scotland ecumenical minister either.

The media wears kid gloves in its treatment of Rome and ecumenical ministers and boxing gloves in its treatment of Protestants.

Behind her ecumenical mask Rome hides her bigoted face the Roman lion appears as a lamb and the Pope hides his mailed fist in a soft glove. The tongue of the Roman viper is disguised at present as a velvet tongue.

Generally all quotes on religion in the media come from romanists or ecumenists with scarcely one from an evangelical Protestant unless he is a Billy Graham type with a strip of bacon for a spine in other words a compromising evangelical with the emphasis on the jelly.

Rome moans hypocritically about discrimination towards her but the question arises again why is there an ingrained detestation and suspicion of the Roman system in the hearts of Protestants. The reason is not hard to find for Romanism down through the centuries to the present day is a totalitarian triumphalistic system which persecutes when it gets power. This is why acts like the Act of Settlement were framed it was to prevent our British nation becoming ensnared and enslaved by the darkness of fascist religion like popery and downtrodden under the jackboots of the Jesuits. So Rome then protests to much to cover her wicked past. Arise bible Protestants against the media conspiracy and the attempt to make our land a Roman stronghold once again. Put protest back in the word Protestant.

THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND ACT OF SETTLEMENT

lays it down that:—

“Whereas it has been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant Kingdom to be Governed by a popish Prince or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist...

Every person who is or shall be reconciled to, or shall have communion with, the See or Church of Rome, or shall marry a Papist, shall be excluded and be forever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the Crown or Government of this Realm and Ireland; and in every case the people of these Realms shall be and are hereby released of their allegiance.”

(Act. 1, William and Mary, cap 2 sec. i. 1689.)

In a State of Limbo

Andrene Bamford

A baby dying before it has had the chance to enter into the full possibilities of life must be one of the most heartbreaking things parents can face. As Christians, we believe that death brings two possibilities for the afterlife: heaven for those who are saved through Christ, and hell for those who are not. For Christian parents who lose an infant, their tragedy is potentially compounded by the worry that the little baby who has died may have gone to hell. This is a dilemma that has given the Roman Catholic Church much debate over the centuries, and the Scottish Catholic Observer (27th April 2007) highlighted this debate and reported a 41 page document that has recently been published on the subject.

By the 13th Century, the Roman Catholic Church had developed a tradition that there was a third alternative in the afterlife: “Limbo”. This is a place where un-baptised babies can live without pain, but without knowing God. At no point has this belief ever become dogma as they have “no explicit scripture” to back it up, so it has been able to be opened up to interpretation.

The long held tradition states that since salvation comes through baptism (this is a theological dogma), an individual who dies without baptism goes to hell, unless the individual is an infant who dies in the birthing process, dies in the womb, or is a victim of abortion. If an infant dies under these circumstances, then rather than go to hell, it will go to limbo. Limbo is eternity without God, but an escape from the punitive eternity that hell brings. The baby will not go to heaven as only baptised believers will go there. This is why Roman Catholic parents feel such a pressure to have their children baptised as quickly as possible, especially if they are ill.

The document, published on 20th April 2007 by the Vatican’s International Theological Commission, reflects that this concept reflects an “unduly restrictive view of salvation”; that “Grace has priority over sin, and the exclusion of innocent babies from heaven does not seem to reflect Christ’s love for them”, and that “many factors have been considered...[which] give serious theological and liturgical grounds for hope that un-baptised infants who die will be saved and enjoy the beatific vision.”

They add, that these are grounds for “prayerful hope” rather “sure knowledge”. After years of confusion, Catholic parents are now granted some kind of peace.

This is where the Roman Catholic Church seriously lets its followers down. Millions of Catholics follow a denomination where human opinion is held in as high esteem as God’s Word. In the fifth century, Augustine proclaimed that all who die without baptism, including infants, are consigned straight to hell. The concept of limbo was developed over the next thousand years to bring comfort to the parents of infants who die. Now, after a further 700 years, opinion has been changed again. If only the Roman Catholics had originally stuck solely to the Bible, there would never have been all this confusion.

As a Bible believing Christian, I feel very wary of launching out into an idea about God that is not totally founded in scripture. I think that personal opinion is perfectly valid for subjects like dress, diet, finances etc, but when it comes to God and our eternal salvation, I need to know the truth as it is outlined in the word of God. When we hold up the Catholic Church’s latest proclamation to the light of scripture, it reveals flaws that run much deeper than the debate over un-baptised babies.

The Roman Catholic Church states that salvation comes through baptism – the sprinkling of water on a baby’s head by the priest, but the Bible makes it quite clear that salvation is by faith alone. In Mark 16:16, Jesus quite clearly points out the way of salvation by telling his disciples that “he who believeth and is baptised shall be saved”. Notice, that Jesus clearly tells them to believe *first*, and then be baptised. Time and time again, in the New Testament, God’s people are baptised after they believe. Here is a list of scriptures – which is by no means exhaustive – which proves that this is the case:

Acts 8:12, Acts 18:8, Acts 9:18, Acts 8:36-38, Acts 16:14-15

The salvation comes through the believing, the baptism is an outward display of faith – a symbol of washing our old life away, testifying to being risen again in Christ. If salvation comes

through baptism, then how could the thief on the cross be with Christ in paradise? If salvation comes through baptism, then how come Jesus felt he should be baptised? Surely Jesus did not need to be saved? The Bible is very clear on how we can receive salvation: “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts 16:31). If salvation is for believers only, then the question of babies’ eternal destination has to be left entirely to God’s will. God saves those who believe in Him; God makes people willing to believe “in the day of his power” (Psalm 110:3).

The Bible is quiet on the subject of where babies go when they die, as if to show sensitivity for such a difficult issue, but a few scriptures are all that are required to let us know the mind of God. Romans 9:11-13 reveals the character of God. Before Jacob and Esau were even born, God had already decided what plan their lives were going to have – he had already decided that he would love Jacob and not love Esau. If either of the twins had died in the womb, would God change his mind about them? Jeremiah 1: 5 says, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee...and ordained thee a prophet for the nations.” Again, God had Jeremiah’s life mapped out before he was even born. This is what gives us hope. As adults, we must actively believe in order to be saved. For infants, we must believe that their eternal destination is in God’s hands, and that God has his elect among infants as well as adults.

This whole subject is wrought with complexity. As humans, we want to protect the young, and it is easy to allow emotion to cloud the truth. God is interested in souls, and he has predestined those who will be with him in glory. But we dare not leave the slightest thing regarding God to our own sinful human reasoning. We must look to the Word of God in all things to know the Word of God, and we must stand by it, however hard the truth may be to swallow. If we don’t, then we risk falling into the trap that the Roman Catholic Church has fallen into – that we have to retract doctrines that leave people feeling upset and confused. If we stick to the Word of God, there is no debate, and there is no confusion. The Romanists may yet move their position on a number of other issues – keeping their members in a constant state of limbo.

THE ALIGNMENT OF NEW EVANGELICALS WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Evangelicals throughout the centuries have maintained that through justification by faith and faith alone, sinful humanity has been made right before a Holy God. Justification itself is a judicial, declarative act on the part of God alone. That act is not made on the basis of anything within a man, but rather it is made solely and wholly upon the righteousness of Christ, who lived a perfect life and paid the penalty for all the sins of his people. All true evangelicals appeal to what the scripture has to say – Romans 4:5 “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness”. An Evangelical professes to be committed to the gospel as proclaimed in scripture and separates from all who preach another gospel. Galatians 1:8 “But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”. Without such separation the name Evangelical means absolutely nothing.

The 60s and the 70s was the period when certain professing Evangelicals, Anglicans and liberals met at different

conferences, those involved included John Stott and J I Packer. John Stott who chaired one of the conferences made it clear that Roman Catholics were also welcome. At the Nottingham conference, not only was the Charismatic movement endorsed but it is remembered for David Watson’s reference to the Reformation as “One of the greatest tragedies that ever happened to the Church”.

BY MR JACK BELL

In 1994 a group of leading New Evangelicals and Roman Catholics produced a document entitled, “Evangelicals and Catholics Together”. Among the signatories was Pat Robertson of the 700 Club. The ECT produced a document that states, “Evangelicals and Catholics are one in Christ on the basis of justification by grace through faith because of Christ and that living faith is active in love. The omitting of the word “alone” was the great compromise to accommodate Rome as her own Council of Trent in 1547, condemning with anathema all who claim that the sinner is justified by faith alone.

Present day dogma of the Roman Catholic Church upholds the teaching of Trent, but upholds that such Councils are infallible. Rome’s reason for such a curse is logical because of what she refuses to concede, believing on “conferred justification” being administered through what she claims are her seven sacraments. To quote Packer, “Domestic differences about salvation and the Church should not hinder us from joint action in seeking to re-christianise the North American environment”, amazing words from the author of Knowing God.

The disturbing effects of the New Evangelical compromise is to put a stop to the evangelising of Roman Catholics across the world which will be ruinous to the spiritual welfare of millions. The biblical doctrine of justification is what the Apostle Paul contended for against the Judases of his day, what Reformers contended for and the reason so many gave their lives at the stake. Let us continue to faithfully proclaim such truth. Ephesians 2:8 “By grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves”.



The Agenda Behind Blair’s Inter-faith Mission

by Matthew Vogan
 Tony Blair has announced that he wants to encourage inter-faith co-operation in his retirement. He “plans to act as an ambassador for multi-faith dialogue in Britain and abroad.” Blair recently declared: “The tragedy is that Christians, Jews and

Muslims are all Abrahamic religions. We regard ourselves as children of Abraham but we have fought for so long.” The plan is to set up a Blair Foundation having as one of its main aims to promote further communication between Christians, Muslims and Jews. Apparently Blair’s discussions with the present Pope in May 2006 centred around inter-faith conversation and co-operation between religious leaders in order to combat extremism and international conflicts. The Blair foundation is said to have won the support of Canon Guy Wilkinson, the Church of England’s adviser on inter-faith relations, and Sir Sigmund Sternberg of the Three Faiths Forum.

Blair has also been in conversation with ecumenical Swiss Roman Catholic theologian Hans Küng whom he has taken for his mentor. Hans Küng is founder and president of the Global Ethic Foundation in Tübingen, where Tony Blair has met him and spoken at his conferences. Küng champions what he calls a “global ethic” for people of different belief systems, both

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religious and non-religious. Küng's aim is to seek common religious ground in a global affirmation of human rights as defined by western liberal ideas.

He believes that this will lead toward universal peace. In 1992 he drafted a "Declaration of the Religions for a Global Ethic" for the "Council for a Parliament of the World Religions" This synthesised all the major religions of the world to create a consensus of their moral teachings. He is said to have gained the interested support of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and other world leaders.

Küng's latest book "Islam: past, present and future" pursues this goal further. Küng demands categorically that Christian theology and the Christian Churches should recognise "without reservation" that: "Through the Qur'an the Prophet gave countless people in his century and in the centuries that followed infinite inspiration, courage and power to make a new religious beginning: a move towards greater truth and deeper knowledge and a breakthrough towards enlivening and renewing traditional religion. Islam was the great help in life." Concerning dialogue among Christians, Jews and Muslims, Küng argues that historic Christology must be jettisoned in favour of a Christology that would be decidedly "Jewish-Christian in character" would make this possible. Küng believes that the Nicean Creed and Chalcedon have "altered the message of the New Testament" Although he was a key figure behind Vatican II, long ago Küng had his canonical license to operate as a Roman Catholic theologian removed. He had discussions with the current Pope in 2005, however, and he remains a priest.

British Church Newspaper



Young People from Zion Baptist Church display the Word of God at the Church of Scotland's General Assembly, 2007

Iran: the underground church growing as evangelists reach out

Despite the hard-line Islamist regime in Iran the underground Church is growing. Evangelists are planting new churches in towns and villages.

Release International (RI) is supporting leadership training seminars and encouraging women's fellowships. Newly-trained house church leaders then pass on their training to others and Christian women are growing more confident in their faith in this repressive society. Observers say women's rights are being rolled back by Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Many have been working successfully to share their faith in remote areas away from the watchful eye of the authorities. One young leader travelled out to a village to visit a family of six who had just become Christians and needed to be taught about the faith.

She found them living in a poor damp house with only a few old pieces of furniture. When they heard she was a Christian they gave her an excited welcome, and explained: 'We were asking God to send someone to bring a Bible and teach us.'

They continued: 'Jesus has revealed himself to us and we have realised the character of Jesus is different to the character of so many other prophets we know of. He is superior to all of them. He is exceptional. We believe that Jesus is alive today and we are so much in love with him,' they told her.

The young Christian leader was touched by their stories and has been visiting them once a week to set up a church in their home and teach them from the Word of God.

Release International's CEO, says: 'Despite the challenges the church in Iran is facing, the number of Christians is increasing and they are growing in their faith. RI arranged a seminar to help Christian women to understand their value and to learn how to be effective as Christians in Iran. Women came from across the country from a network of underground churches. They were open and enthusiastic to learn from the Bible and were active participants in the sessions.'

British Church Newspaper - May 2007

**ALL ARTICLES IN THIS MAGAZINE
ARE REPRODUCED AS EVIDENCE**

CONVERSIONS FOLLOW MARTYRDOMS IN TURKEY

“A letter to the Global Church from The Protestant Church of Smyrna” (Izmir)

“This past week has been filled with much sorrow,” says Darlene N. Bocek (24 April) of Izmir Protestant Church, in, “*A letter to the Global Church from The Protestant Church of Smyrna*”.

On 18 April, 46 year old German missionary and father of three, Tilmann Geske, together with 35 year old Pastor Necati Aydin and another man, Ugur Yuksel, attended a morning Bible Study and prayer meeting. Ten young men all under 20 years were preparing to murder them.

Five of these ten young men had been to a by-invitation-only evangelistic service and were believed to be “seekers”. They arrived, and, after Necati read a chapter from the Bible the assault began. They tied them to chairs, and brutally tortured them for almost three hours. [The details are too horrible to print.] Another believer, Gokhan, arrived at the office, found the door locked. He phoned and Ugur answered cryptically against a background of weeping and a strange snarling sound. Gukur called the police who found a grisly scene.

Tilmann and Necati were dead and Ugur was barely alive. The leader of the assassins had fallen trying to escape. He had massive head trauma and, strangely, was snarling.

RECENT PERSECUTION IN TURKEY

In April 2001, the National Security Council of Turkey (*Milli Guvenlik Kurulu*) decided that evangelical Christians were a threat to national security, on an equal footing with Al Quaida and PKK terrorism. Statements made in the press by political leaders and commentators have fuelled hatred against missionaries who they claim bribe young people to change their religion.

Then, attacks and threats on churches, pastors and Christians began. Bombings, physical attacks, verbal and written abuse are only some of the ways Christians are being targeted. Most significant is the use of media propaganda.

From December 2005, the wife of Former Prime Minister Ecevit, with others, began a campaign to bring the public’s attention to the looming threat of Christians who sought to “buy their children’s souls”. Hidden cameras in churches have taken church service footage and used it sensationally to promote fear and antagonism toward Christianity.

‘INTERIOR MINISTERS SMIRKED’

In an official televised response from Ankara, the Interior Minister of Turkey smirked as he spoke of the murders. Despite public outrage and protests against the event and in favour of freedom of religion and freedom of thought, media and official comments ring with the same message, “We hope you have learned your lesson. We do not want Christians here.”

Minors are being used to commit religious murders because public sympathy for youth is strong and they face lower penalties than an adult convicted of the same crime. Even the parents of these children are in favour of the acts. The mother of the 16 year old boy who killed the Roman Catholic priest Andrea Santoro looked at the cameras as her son was going to prison and said, “he will serve time for Allah.”

The young men involved in the killing are currently in custody. Assailant Emre Gunaydin is still in intensive care. They say the enquiry will fall apart if he does not recover.

Boldly the believers took their stand at Necati’s funeral, facing the risks of being seen publicly and becoming targets themselves. As expected, the anti-terror police attended and videotaped everyone attending the funeral.

Necati’s funeral was a beautiful event. Like a glimpse of heaven, about 800 Turkish

Christians and missionaries came to show their love for Christ, and their honour for this man chosen to die for Christ. Necati’s wife Shemsa told the world, “His death was full of meaning, because he died for Christ and he lived for Christ ... I feel crowned with honour. I want to be worthy of that honour.”

Ugur Yuksel’s fiancée watched from the shadows as he was given a Moslem burial at the insistence of the family.

In an act that hit front pages in the largest newspapers in Turkey, Susanne Geske in a television interview expressed her forgiveness. She did not want revenge, she told reporters. “Oh God, forgive them for they know not what they do,” she said, wholeheartedly.

In a country where blood-for-blood revenge is as normal as breathing, many many reports have come to the attention of the church of how this comment of Susanne Geske has changed lives. One columnist wrote of her comment, “She said in one sentence what 1,000 missionaries in 1,000 years could never do.”

When Smyrna Pastor Fikret Bocek went with a brother to give a statement to the Security Directorate on Monday they were ushered into the Anti-Terror Department. There was a huge chart covering the whole wall listing all the terrorist cells in Izmir, categorised. In one prominent column were listed all the evangelical churches in Izmir.

Please pray for the Church in Turkey. “Don’t pray against persecution, pray for perseverance,” urges Pastor Fikret Bocek.

Based on the letter by Darlene N. Bocek (24 April 2007), *Izmir Protestant Church*.

We are informed by the same source, “As a wonderful follow-up, we know for a fact that three people in the last week have committed their hearts to Christ in response to the sufferings our friends went through: John 12:24-25.”

British Church Newspaper



Pastor Aydin’s wife and children. The inscription reads, “To live is Christ, to die is gain”.

Six Days in June

They say that if you can remember the Sixties you weren't really there but there are some events which occurred in that decade that even those who were there will never forget. The assassinations of John F Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy, the Cuban missile crisis, the Vietnam war and Woodstock, the space race and the moon landings immediately spring to mind. Many of us who lived through that turbulent, swinging decade recall another event that took place exactly forty years ago this month. At the beginning of the Summer of Love - as young people in the West called on the world to make love not war - the state of Israel, which was itself a teenager having been born in 1948, became embroiled for six days in a war for its very existence.

In the weeks before the conflict President Nasser of Egypt announced that his country had been in a state of war with Israel "since 1948". On 30th May, after he and King Hussein of Jordan signed a defence pact, Nasser announced: "The armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon are poised on the borders of Israel... while standing behind us are the armies of Iraq, Algeria, Kuwait, Sudan and the whole Arab nation... the Arabs are arranged for battle, the critical hour has arrived."

Just five days later, on 4th June 1967, President Abdur Rahman Aref of Iraq joined the military alliance stating: "Our goal is clear - to wipe Israel off the map".

The following day, in the face of a clear and present danger, Israel launched a pre-emptive strike against the combined forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan. After three days the Jordanian forces surrendered, the next day the Egyptian army conceded defeat and the following day, 132 hours and 30 minutes after the war began, Syrian forces surrendered.

By any reckoning, Israel's victory against such overwhelming odds was an astonishing achievement and the Six Day War remains the most dramatic and significant of all Israel's conflicts with the Arab nations. By the end of the war Israeli forces had captured the Sinai, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including the Western Wall. Israel had conquered enough territory to more than triple the size of the area it controlled and the victory enabled Israel to unify Jerusalem.

Israel's victory also resulted in another celebratory holiday being added to the Jewish calendar, the second in less than twenty years. Since Judah the Maccabee delivered Judea from the Syrians and purified the temple during the inter-testamental period, no event in the life of the nation had been great enough to merit an addition to the annual cycle of festivals. Suddenly, more than 2,000 years after the first Hanukkah celebrations, two new holidays were added, both in the Jewish month of Iyar: on the fifth day of the month Yom Ha'atzmaut - Israel's Independence Day - and, on the 28th, Yom Yerushalayim - Jerusalem Day. The first commemorates the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948 and the second the reunification of Jerusalem during the Six Day War.

"These were epic events", says Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain. "No nation in history has ever survived a two thousand year exile to begin again in its ancestral homeland."

The significance of Rabbi Sacks' observation should not be minimised. It astonishes me that some otherwise erudite Christian scholars, who make much of the absolute sovereignty of God, view the modern state of Israel as though its creation was simply the end result of power politics. Providence is a difficult book to read but can we really believe that God was not behind the re-establishment of Israel, especially in view of the fact that time and

again she has triumphed over bigger and more powerful enemies who are committed to nothing less than her utter destruction?

The fact that Israel, in spite of all its short-comings, has survived as a nation should assure us that God has not finished with the Jewish people, that he is faithful to his covenants and promises and that he has more in store for that people than even the land. Israel's destiny in Messiah is to inherit nothing less than the kingdom of God.

Christian Witness to Israel

Pope's envoy changes mind about Holocaust memorial

The Pope's envoy to Israel, Antonio Franco, changed his mind at the last minute about attending the annual Yom HaShoah ceremony in Israel to mark the Holocaust.

Earlier, he had issued a statement saying he refused to attend because an exhibition at Yad Vashem, where the ceremony was held last month, displayed a picture of Pope Pius XII captioned: "Even when reports about the murder of Jews reached the Vatican, the Pope did not protest, refusing to sign a 1942 Allied condemnation of the massacre of Jews". Franco had complained: "I respect the memory of the martyrs of the Holocaust, but also the memory of Pope Pius XII."

The organisers of the exhibition refused to capitulate, saying the caption was historically accurate and would stand. It was the Pope's envoy who gave way, attending at the last minute under protest, saying: "My action was not intended as a move to disassociate myself from the commemoration but to call attention to the manner in which the Pope is presented. My aim has been achieved".

British Church Newspaper

My Substitute

BY SIR JAS. Y. SIMPSON, BART., M.D.

WHEN I was a boy at school I saw a sight that I never can forget—a man tied to a cart and dragged before the people's eyes through the streets of my native town, his back torn and bleeding from the lash.

It was a shameful punishment. For many offences? No, for one offence. Did any of the towns-folk offer to share the lashes with him? No, he who committed the offence bore the penalty alone. It was the penalty of a changing human law, for this was the last instance of its infliction.

When I was a student at the University I saw another sight that I can never forget—a man brought out to die. His arms were pinioned, his face was already pale as death, while thousands of eager eyes gazed on him as he came up from the gaol.

Did anyone ask to die in his place? Did any friend come and loose the rope and say: "Put it around my neck and let me die instead?"

No, he underwent the sentence of the law. For many offences? No, for one offence. He had stolen a parcel from a stage coach. He had broken the law at one point and must now die for it. It was the penalty of a changing human law in this case too; it was also the last instance of capital punishment being inflicted for that offence.

I saw another sight—it matters not when— myself a sinner, standing on the brink of ruin, deserving nought but hell. For one sin? No, for many sins committed against the unchanging laws of God.

continued on page 11

But again I looked and saw JESUS, my Substitute, scourged in my stead and dying on the Cross for me. I looked and cried and was forgiven. And it seems to be my duty to tell you of that Saviour, to see if you will not also look and live:

Bound upon th' accursed tree,
Faint and bleeding, who is He?
By the eyes so pale and dim,
Streaming blood and writhing limb.
By the flesh with scourges torn,
By the crown of twisted thorn.
By the side so deeply pierc'd.
By the baffled burning thirst.
By the drooping death-dew'd brow.

Son of man, 'tis Thou! 'tis Thou!
Bound upon the accursed tree,
Dread and awful, who is He?
By the sun at noon-day pale,
Shiv'ring rocks and rending veil.
By earth trembling at His doom,
By the saints who burst their tomb.
By Eden promis'd ere He died
To the felon at His side,
Lord, our suppliant knees we bow;
Son of God. tis Thou! 'tis Thou!

How simple it all becomes when the Holy Spirit opens the eyes! A friend from Paris told me of an English groom there, a careless old man who during a severe illness had been made to feel that he was a sinner. He dared not die as he was. The clergyman for whom he sent grew tired of visiting him, having often told him the way of salvation. One Sabbath afternoon however, the groom's daughter waited in the vestry after church, saying: "You must come once more, sir; I cannot see my father again without you." "I can tell him nothing new," said the clergyman, "But I may take the sermon I have been preaching and read it to him."

The dying man lay as before in anguish thinking of his sins and whither they must carry him. "My friend, I have come to read you the sermon that I have just preached. First, let me tell you the text—He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5). Now I will read . . ." "Stop!" said the dying man, "I have it! I have it! Read no more. He was wounded for MY transgressions. That is enough!" Soon afterwards he died rejoicing in JESUS.

When I heard the story I remembered Archimedes running through the streets of Syracuse straight from the bath where he had discovered in bathing the secret of testing whether King Hiero's crown had, or had not, been alloyed by the goldsmith in making it—and as he ran he cried: "Eureka! Eureka! (I have found it! I have found it!)"

Poor philosopher! You had merely found out a new principle in science. Happy groom! You had found in JESUS Christ a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Such is the testimony of the one who discovered the use of chloroform, but when asked what was his greatest discovery, replied without hesitation. "That I have a Saviour." Reader, is this your discovery?

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth... (Ecc 12:1)

RICHES IN HEAVEN

P	A	P	P	R	O	V	V	A	I	D	L	E	I	F	N	O
O	P	L	E	A	S	U	R	E	P	A	Y	C	A	S	O	H
N	C	O	I	N	S	P	O	U	N	D	S	A	R	E	O	R
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J	W	H	A	T	Y	O	U	S	O	W	Y	O	U	W	I	L
I	D	O	L	N	T	H	W	R	E	A	P	R	E	O	W	A
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Block out these squares to leave some advice from Jesus about money!

- 1A. 1B, 1C. 1E, 1F, 1H. 1J, 1L, 1N. 1O, 1P
- 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 2G. 2H, 2J, 2L, 2N, 2O
- 3A. 3B, 3D, 3E, 3G, 3H, 3I, 3J. 3K, 3L, 3M, 3N, 3O. 3P
- 4A, 4B. 4D, 4E, 4F, 4G. 4H, 4J, 4L. 4N, 4O
- 5A, 5B, 5C, 5E, 5F, 5H, 5J, 5N, 5O
- 6A, 6B, 6C, 6E. 6G, 6H, 6I, 6J, 6L, 6N, 6O. 6P
- 7A. 7B, 7C. 7D. 7E. 7F. 7H, 7J. 7L. 7M. 7N, 7O, 5K, 5L,
- 8A. 8B, 8C, 8E, 8G, 8H, 8I, 8J, 8L, 8N, 8O. 8P
- 9A, 9B, 3D, 9E. 9F, 9G. 9H, 9J. 9K/9L, 9N. 9O
- 10A, 10B, 10C, 10D. 10E. 10F. 10G.
- 10H, 10J. 10L. 10M, 10N. 10O
- 11A, 11B, 11C, 11E, 11F, 11H. 11I, 11J 11K. 11L. 11N, 11O. 11P
- 12A, 12B, 12C. 12E. 12F, 12H, 12J. 12L 12M. 12N. 12O
- 13A. 13B. 13D. 13E, 13G. 13H, 13I. 13J, 13L. 13N. 13O, 13P
- 14A. 14B. 14D. 14E, 14G, 14H. 14J. 14K. 14L. 14N. 14O
- 15A, 15C. 15D, 15E. 15F, 15G. 15I. 15J. 15L, 15M, 15N, 15P
- 16B, 16C, 16D, 16E. 16F, 16G. 16I. 16J,
- 16K. 16L, 16M, 16O. 16P

Luke 12:33

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WOMEN'S VIEW

"WILL THE OLD BOOK STAND?"

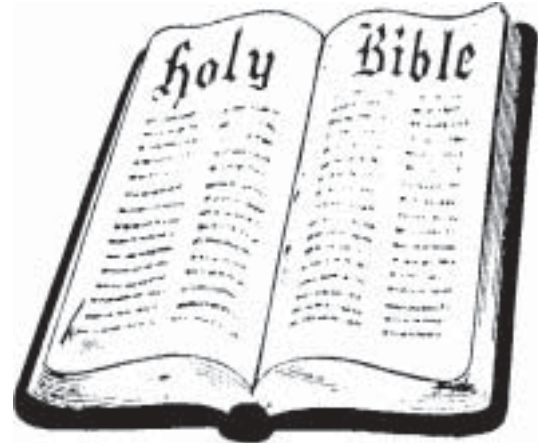
Will the Old Book stand, when the "higher critics" state
 That grave errors are discovered on its page?
 Will it save the sinful soul? Will it make the wounded whole?
 Will its glorious troth abide from age to age?

Will its message still abide, when the scientists decide
 That its record of Creation is untrue?
 Tell us the ascent of man is by evolution's plan;
 Will its principles the sinful heart renew?

When in language wondrous fair, "Christian Scientists" declare
 That there is no evil, only mortal mind.
 When mental treatment fails, and seeming death prevails.
 May we in the Bible consolation find?

When infidels parade the "mistakes" which Moses made,
 When the truth of Revelation they deny,
 Will the Ten Commandments still the demands of justice fill?
 Will its word support us when we come to die?

Yes, the Word of God shall stand, though assailed on every hand,
 Its foundations are eternally secure;
 It will bear the critic's test, and the idle scoffer's jest,
 Its saving truth forever shall endure.



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