

SCOTTISH PROTESTANT VIEW

FREE

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SNP Renews Campaign to Repeal The Act of Settlement

The SNP has stepped up its campaign to abolish the historical Act of Settlement. This would in turn lead to the removing of the only safeguard that protects the British throne from the influence of the Pope and Roman Catholicism.

Alex Salmond, Leader of the SNP is pressing the government to repeal the Act and is calling on the Prime Minister to at least begin discussions with commonwealth countries to put pressure on their own governments to support

such a move. If the question is asked as to why the issue has arisen in Scotland, but not in England at this time, the answer is easy. There is no fight for the Catholic vote in England in the same way as in Scotland. In other words, political expediency is the real reason why the issue has been brought up in the first place. The Prime Minister has refused to give Mr Salmond any assurance that he will take up the issue.

By Mr Jack Bell

See Page 2 for Alex Salmond's views

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)

Scrap anti-Catholic Act, says cardinal

By Jonathan Brocklebank

A SENIOR Scottish churchman has accused the Blair government of promoting sectarian discrimination by failing to repeal a 300-year-old law which bans Catholics from the throne.

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, the leader of Scotland's Roman Catholics, said that in allowing the 1701 Act of Settlement to stand, Britain was guilty of 'state sponsored sectarian discrimination'.

In an outspoken attack, the cardinal said the battle against religious bigotry would not be won until the Act which makes it illegal for Roman Catholics, or those who

marry them, to ascend to the throne was wiped from the constitution.

The cardinal said much of Scotland remains blighted by a 'shadowy sectarian culture' and criticised ministers for allowing this to remain enshrined in law.

He said: 'Our constitution contains legislation which describes my faith as "the popish religion". That this arcanelly offensive language enjoys legal sanction is outrageous.

'Anyone who believes that introducing legislation aimed at eradicating sectarian attacks, which are often verbal, while elements of the very lexicon of hate they

seek to abolish remain on our statute books is indulging in wilful ignorance.'

Earlier this year, SNP leader Alex Salmond pressed Tony Blair to amend the Act, but the Prime Minister refused.

Any change in the law would have to be ratified by 15 Commonwealth parliaments and would impact on several other acts, including the 300-year-old Act of Union.

A Church of Scotland spokesman backed the cardinal's views, saying: 'As far as the Act is concerned, we would not be particularly sorry to see it go.'

Daily Mail July 2006

What about the basic rights of Christians

By Ann Widdecombe

IT IS supposed to be a crime to stir up religious hatred but the Gay Police Association either doesn't know this or does not care. It has recently run an advertising campaign for which it is difficult to find any description other than Christophobia.

There is a picture of the Bible and headline is: In The Name of The Father. It then goes on to claim that in the past 12 months, the Gay Police Association has recorded a 74 per cent increase in homophobic incidents, where the sole or primary motivating factor was the religious belief of the perpetrator.

It would be interesting to know the nature of the homophobic incidents. Christianity specifically forbids hatred, not just acts of hatred or expressions of hatred but the feeling itself. No Christian can abuse or assault a homosexual "in the name of the Father". Yet, by choosing that very famous line of Christian worship the advertisement suggests that Christianity almost uniquely is responsible for hate crime.

Can anyone imagine the Koran rather than the Bible being featured? Yet the teaching of both faiths (and, indeed, others) is against homosexual acts. Why pick on Christianity?

Perhaps this increase in "homophobic incidents" includes the response of Sir Iqbal Sacranie, the head of the Muslim Council of Britain, to an interviewer's question about the Muslim view of the issue. Or the opinions of Lynette Burrows, the respected children's author, who said she did not believe the adoption of children by gay couples to be normally advisable. Or the action of a Christian couple from Lancashire who asked their local council if they could display Christian literature in register offices carrying out civil partnership ceremonies.

The reason I cite these three cases is that we know the police became involved in all of them but none of them would fulfil a reasonable person's view of the definition of abuse or assault.

What we are now faced with is not equality but a hierarchy of equalities. When any human right comes up against homosexual rights the latter must always win.

The human right to express a religious or conscientious view or to hear religious teaching must give way to a homosexual's right never to feel offended. There is a set of proposed regulations, coming before Parliament in the autumn, which takes this to extremes. It will almost certainly be railroaded through.

Under its provisions someone who supplies bed and breakfast in his own home will be able to refuse a double room to an unmarried heterosexual couple but not to a homosexual couple.

A church will not be able to refuse to hire out its own hall for civil partnership celebrations. You can bet your last penny that it will be Christians rather than other faiths who will be picked on for test cases.

What, other than Christophobia, determines that Christmas must be renamed? That Christmas lights must be called festival lights? That nativity displays must be forbidden? That hot cross buns are banned from some schools? That it is acceptable to mock Christ in shows such as Jerry Springer The Opera in a way that would cause riots if done to the Prophet Mohammed? That inspired this Government, which made such a parade of Christian socialism before 1997, to try to eliminate prayers from the millennium celebrations?

It is an offshoot of exactly the same political correctness which allows an artist to be seen eating a foetus on television but imprisons an 'octogenarian for circulating pictures of aborted foetuses. And the same PC madness which forbids teachers to dispense aspirins or Elastoplast but encourages them to refer under-age girls for abortions unbeknown to their parents.

Hitherto, Christians have fought with argument and protest and the powers that be, including government, the BBC and police, have brushed us off.

The time has come to use the very weapons which have been so successfully used against us.

We should complain formally of hate crimes and the stirring up of religious hatred and demand our human rights to religious freedom and to freedom of conscience.

The Gay Police Association advert might be a very good place to start.

Daily Express 12.7.06

The Act of Settlement Why The Interest By Scottish Politicians?

By Eddie Barnes

Yet amid all this, nowhere in the media has analysis been provided to explain the reasons behind this flurry of Scottish political energy - all devoted to an Act of Parliament which has lain unnoticed for more than 300 years.

Why is it Scottish parliamentarians are suddenly gripped by a desire to change this obscure Act while in England, mention of such matters endures nothing more than a stifled yawn?

Dr Peter Lynch from the Department of Politics at Stirling University explains:

"The reason why this issue has arisen in Scotland is because there is no fight for the Catholic vote in England in the same way as there is in Scotland.

"Essentially, this is a great wedge issue for the SNP and the Conservatives in Scotland. Either they lever the Scottish Catholic vote away from Labour or they can push a wedge between Labour in England and Scotland."

In other words, political expediency is the reason why Catholics are suddenly Scotland's favourite oppressed minority.

For the last five or six years, the SNP has been courting the Catholic vote in Scotland and it was they who first brought up the Act of Settlement issue five years ago. In many ways, their thunder was stolen this time round by the Conservatives who are equally keen on raising the matter, and with whom the SNP have formed a strange alliance.

Oddly, the SNP and the Conservatives see eye to eye on many issues in Scotland. They understand each other, standing for a patriotic cause - one being Scotland, the other the UK. And they also have a common enemy; an enemy which has prospered by providing a natural leftist home for many Catholic voters who see Labour as their natural home.

Now the SNP feels it is gaining ground Peter Lynch adds: "The SNP has made a lot of inroads into the Catholic Labour vote in Scotland. Now Labour are terrified of this issue."

Extract Scottish Catholic Observer 3.12.99

EDITORIAL COMMENT

One can never be sure who is using who at this time, but it is interesting to look back at an article featured by the Scottish Catholic Observer back in 1999. It is apparent from this article that sections of the Catholic Church in Scotland had their suspicions that more than one political party might be trying to cash in on the Catholic vote.

REMOVE THIS ACT

ALEX SALMOND MP LEADER OF THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

IT IS difficult for a First Minister to tell people you shouldn't discriminate against people on the grounds of their religion when we have an Act of Parliament that does exactly that." Cardinal Keith O'Brien (February 2005).

It isn't too often politicians from all parties agree and yet, in one of its first (and best) debates, the Scottish Parliament voted unanimously for the repeal of the Act of Settlement, the grubby piece of legislation that denies Catholics the right to become or marry the head of state.

In most countries, that would be that. 300 years of state discrimination would have gone, consigned to the dustbin of history.

But for Scotland, it is not quite that easy. Our parliament, for the time being, isn't allowed to get rid of this law. The decision still rests with Westminster and the Labour government in London.

Let's be clear what the Act says, and remember this offensive anachronism is still the law of the land.

It reads: "all and every person and persons that then were, or afterwards should be reconciled to, or shall hold communion with the See or Church of Rome, or should profess the popish religion, or marry a papist, should be excluded, and are by that Act made forever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the Crown and government of this realm."

It is little wonder Cardinal O'Brien has described this 300-year-old law as "the country's shame."

Last month I met with the cardinal and we discussed, among other issues, sectarianism in Scotland.

While there remain serious problems, including in particular sectarian assaults, times have changed and on a positive note, hidden barriers facing Catholics in most areas of life have now much diminished.

Times have changed

I remember back to the 1980s when I worked for the Royal Bank of Scotland and in the banking sector at that time there were still some lingering, unspoken but real barriers

for Catholics.

There are bigots in all walks of life but today, within Scotland's highly successful financial community, discrimination on the grounds of religion would be stamped on vigorously.

There is no question that a Catholic could rise to head any one of Scotland's top companies.

In politics in recent years we have seen the first Catholic Speaker of the House of Commons, the first Catholic Scottish Secretary, and again there are Catholics in prominent positions in all the major parties.

It would be inconceivable for example for a Catholic to be denied a frontline position in any major party.

Discrimination does still fester in some individuals and I'm sure exists in some form in a small number of boardrooms and among a handful of decision makers, but we are light years on from where Scotland was half, even a quarter of a century ago.

And I hope that soon another first can be achieved in the area of law with the choice of a Catholic to head Scotland's judiciary.

In the law, as elsewhere, there should be no stained glass ceiling for Scotland's Catholic or any other faith community.

I can see no reason why the head of state should somehow be exempt from this progress, and so when I raised this issue last month in the House of Commons during Prime Minister's questions, I expected a much more positive indication of support from Tony Blair. I should have known better.

I asked "Will the Prime Minister set out a clear timetable for the removal from the statute book of the Act of Settlement, which introduces clear discrimination against millions of our fellow citizens? Would a Government set on a course of repeal not be demonstrating leadership, authority and direction?"

And was disappointed by the Prime Minister's rather abrupt reply: "No, I am afraid that I cannot give the honourable gentleman that assurance" (Hansard 28 June 2006 col 259).

Hypocrisy

The existence of this state sectarianism makes it much more difficult for any leader-Prime Minister or First Minister--to credibly move forward with a realistic and effective anti-sectarianism strategy.

Repeal of the Act of Settlement is not the be all and end all in the campaign to end

discrimination, however it is an important step in a process of change.

It will not stop the street level vicious assaults or the drunken abuse.

Those must be dealt with in other ways, but it will send a clear signal that we are all equals before the law.

Repeal is part of a package that should include education and dialogue, but also increased punishment if there is a religious hate element to a crime.

Last week I wrote to the Prime Minister asking him to begin the necessary consultations with the 15 other commonwealth nations who have the queen as head of state.

I will keep SCO readers fully up-to-date with his response.

However I do not foresee any of these countries - nations like Canada, Jamaica and Australia - wanting to keep such an outdated Act.

Promise

Next week, I will table a motion in the House of Commons and seek to build cross party support to persuade the government to introduce the short bill that would be needed to remove the discrimination.

I would ask SCO readers for help with this and encourage everyone to write to their own MP asking them to back this call.

And next year, if I am chosen by the people to be First Minister of Scotland, I will use the full powers of office to persuade and insist until the momentum for change cannot be resisted.

And if the UK government will still not make the change, I can give this guarantee.

An independent Scottish government I lead will remove once and for all the institutionalised discrimination at the heart of the Act of Settlement no ifs, no buts or maybes, but decisive action.

Scottish Catholic Observer July 2006

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

SAINTS ALIVE

VATICAN CONSIDERS J H NEWMAN FOR SAINTHOOD

The Vatican is currently engaged in the process of making a decision whether to canonize Cardinal John Henry Newman and make him an official “saint”. On Canonization, the present Catechism of the (Roman) Catholic Church states:

“by canonizing some of the faithful, i.e. by solemnly proclaiming that they practised heroic virtue and lived in fidelity to God’s grace, the Church recognizes the power of the Spirit of holiness within her and sustains the hope of the believers by proposing the saints to them as models and intercessors. The saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church’s history. Indeed, ‘holiness is the hidden source and infallible measure of her apostolic activity and missionary zeal. ‘But while in the most Blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle, the faithful still strive to conquer sin and increase in holiness. And so they turn their eyes to Mary’: in her, the Church is already the ‘all-holy’ (para.828-829).

Apart from the blasphemy of making Mary the source of holiness, rather than God the Holy Spirit, there is a contradiction here with paragraph 823 of the Catechism which takes a “protestant position” in declaring, “the Church, then, is the holy people of God and her members are called ‘saints’...”

Is it true that there are super saints? Does the New Testament make such a differentiation? Are there unique saints, like Mary, big saints like Peter and Paul, and common saints like you and me? Can sainthood be so departmentalized? What does the Word of God teach us with regard to this significant designation of a Christian?

The expression “saints” (hagioi) is used by the Apostles, not of a particular class, but of all the baptized and converted

Christians without distinction. To be a true Christian is to be separated from the world, consecrated to the service of Almighty God, and washed from the guilt of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The New Testament also recognises that saints are far from perfect and are still in the process of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Roman view sets forth a believer who has reached the state of perfection in eternity. The Protestant, or New Testament view, sees sainthood as something very much still being worked out in the present sinful world.

The Apostles address their Epistles to “the saints” at Rome, or Corinth, or Ephesus, and so on. It is also most important to grasp that the word “saint” is never applied simply to the elite. While the word “saint” is used sixty times in the New Testament, it is never used specifically to apply to Church leaders, outstanding Christians, or office bearers. Indeed, as a personal title, the word “holy” the same word used for “saint” is reserved for the three Persons of the Holy Trinity; as we can see in John 17:11; Acts 4:27 30; Matthew 1:18 and Revelation 4:8. Despite common use today, the practice of speaking of Apostles and Evangelists as Saint Mark or Saint Paul, is unknown to the writers of the first three centuries.

Sadly, corruption increased with the passage of time. It was probably with the arrival of the fourth century that the name “saint” took on a dangerous role of defining martyrs. This was soon to be linked to the celebration of the Eucharist in which the commemoration of particular martyrs increased. The habit devel-



John Henry Newman

oped into the festivals of Saints’ Days. Canonization and actual worship of saints also followed, until they were enshrined in the Creed of Pope Pius IV... ‘the saints reigning with Christ are to be honoured and invoked, that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be venerated’. Nothing could be further from the truth of God’s Word. Few things could be more pagan in practice. Such designation shows little regard for almighty God Himself, as Bishop Hugh Latimer expressed it, ‘it is a judging of men before the Lord’s judgment’.

The late Pope John Paul made more “saints” than many of his predecessors. And in the present clamour for Rome to create more, it is important for biblically committed Christians to express true sainthood. We need to repeatedly affirm that all Christians are saints. Alas, some of us are very imperfect saints but this does not deny us the New Testament title. It is impossible to be a Christian and not to be a saint. A study of Ephesians 1:18, 2:22 will make it quite clear that true saints are God’s property (1:18) are God’s workmanship (2:10) and supremely are God’s habitation (2:22). This means that all Christians must take care of God’s property, must encourage His handiwork within us, and must seek to keep His temple clean and pure. As the New Testament scholar, Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott, once expressed it... *“the mark of a saint is not perfection, but consecration. A saint is not a person without a fault, but a person who is given to God without reserve.”*

Frances Ridley Havergall was a truly consecrated Christian and one of the Lord’s precious



Frances Ridley Havergall

saints. She was born in Astley, Worcestershire. She was given her middle name in remembrance of the martyred Reformer, Nicholas Ridley, by devoted Christian parents. Her father was a minister of the Church of England and she was privileged with a good Christian education, learning to read at the early age of three. When she was eleven, her mother died, a significant milestone in Frances' own spiritual pilgrimage. At eighteen, she developed an illness which lasted for nine years. Although a keen writer of poems, she was able to achieve little more than reading, studying the scriptures, and praying, throughout this difficult time in her life. After the illness and despite poor health, Frances made several trips to Switzerland. She was greatly stimulated and refreshed by the crystal clean environment, and was inspired to write her much loved hymns. In 1874, just four years before her death, she was used by God, one particular day, to bring several friends to personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. She was so happy that night she could not sleep. As she prayed, the hymn... *'Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord to Thee...'* was written. Few hymns better convey the life and consecration of the consecration of the Christian saint. And few words can more appropriately express Christian sainthood, than the words on her tombstone... *'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth me from all sin'* (1 John 1:7).

Frances Ridley Havergal was only forty two when she died. Yet, it was a life lived fully for her Lord and Master. Are we as consecrated? For saints are not dead, they are very much alive!

Take my life and let it be
 Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
 Take my moments and my days,
 Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
 At Thy feet its treasure store:
 Take myself, and I will be
 Ever, only, all for Thee!

Rt Revd Dr J Barry Shucksmith
 Royal Navy (Rtd)
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English Churchman April-May 2006

Muslim produces BBC series questioning Christ's miracles

The BBC is to produce a new series examining the authenticity of the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is described as questioning their validity, stating that 'new evidence' has shed a fresh light on the claims made in the Bible for them.

The series will be produced by one of the BBC's Muslim correspondents, Rageh Omaar, who has written a book on his experiences as a British Muslim.

For the series, which consists of three programmes, Omaar travelled to the Sea of Galilee looking at the historical and archaeological evidence for events such as the feeding of the 5,000, Christ walking on water and the Resurrection itself.

The BBC acknowledged that the series will ask if the banquet of loaves and fishes could have been an act of mass hysteria and delusion and if the crucified body of Christ could have been 'thrown to dogs in a rubbish dump'.

On a BBC TV programme in May this year, Omaar said: "For example, how am I as a Muslim supposed to get up and argue that the Islamic world and the West continue to have a shared interest in the 'War on Terror' when our invasion of Iraq simply plays into the conspiracy theories that say the West is out to get Muslims, in Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond? And as a Brit, I have to ask: how have our national interests been served? Our voice and our reputation in the Islamic world has never been worse, and our ability to influence in the United Nations and in the wider world has been undermined".

In a statement, the BBC said that the series was 'not designed to provoke a Christian backlash'. Adam Kemp, the BBC's head of religious commissioning, said: "It is Rageh's journey to find out what the miracle stories reveal about Jesus and who people at the time believed Jesus really was."

British Church Newspaper July 2006

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP SPEAKS AT METHODIST CONFERENCE

For the first time in its 220 year history the Irish Methodist Church was addressed by a Roman Catholic Bishop. Dr. Edward Daly spoke to the Methodists of his hopes for ecumenism.

He said "... true ecumenism does not seek conquest." During his speech the bishop quoted the words of Methodism's founder, John Wesley. He said that Wesley's words could be a blueprint for Church relations today. He also claimed that the sermons of John Wesley and the hymns of Charles Wesley are "treasures of the Christian tradition".



That such double talk is swallowed by Methodists is a sad indicator of how ignorant they have become of the Bible and the views and teaching of

their founder on the matter of Romanism.

Here is what John Wesley said of the system that Dr. Edward Daly represents. "The man of sin, the son of perdition in many respects, the Pope has an indisputable claim to these titles. He is, in an emphatical sense, the man of sin, as he increases all manner of sin above measure. And he is, too, properly styled, the son of perdition, as he has caused the death of numberless multitudes, both of his opposers and followers, destroyed innumerable souls, and will himself perish everlastingly."

(Comments in Wesley's Notes on the New Testament on II Thessalonians chapter 2)

JOHN WESLEY REMOVED

Methodists had to dispense with John Wesley before they could sit and listen to Bishop Daly.

That is what ecumenism within Methodism has been surreptitiously doing over the last half century.

"The Burning Bush" June/July 2006

THE Ideal MINISTER

A public address given by the Rev. William Macleod at the commencement of the new academic year of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) Seminary in September 2005. What should Christians look for when they call a man to be their minister? What should they pray for God to do in their own minister? What should ministers and divinity students strive to be?

A Holy Man

The first essential is of course that a minister be born again. Not all ministers are. Some such as Alexander Henderson and Thomas Chalmers began their ministries unconverted and at a later date were saved and their ministries were transformed. Many today by their failure to preach the Gospel demonstrate that it has never touched their own hearts.

Regeneration is the first step to holiness. The Spirit enters the individual's life working faith and repentance and beginning the process of sanctification. What is holiness? In simplest terms it is obedience to God's revealed will in its totality. This means loving God with all your heart and putting Him first in your life, denying yourself and setting your affections on things above. It involves the fear of God, getting to know God more and more, walking with God and delighting in God above all else. The holy minister strives after purity, honesty, contentment, with his lot and moderation in all things. McCheyne is reputed to have said that a holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God.

A Humble Man

God is a jealous God. Salvation is His work. Without Him we can do nothing. He is grieved and angered by ministers who try to siphon off some glory to themselves, for the success of their ministries. We like to talk of what is happening in our church, what we have achieved - the growth, the conversions. We talk as if this were at least partly due to us - our hard work, our great preaching, our communication skills, our pastoring ability, our evangelism or even our holiness and prayers. This is, I believe, the main reason why we are seeing so little fruit in our churches today.

A Faithful Man

Thinking of the difficulty of the ministry I once asked, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' (2Cor.2:16) On every side we meet with hostility or what is worse, apathy. People are just not interested in our message. They feel no need for Christ. They are content with their possessions and pleasures and they have no fear of God. We preach to dead bones. We have no power ourselves to raise the dead. We are opposed by a powerful enemy, Satan who at times is like a fearful dragon or roaring lion and at other times appears as an angel of light. The ideal minister must look up, see the throne and put his faith in the One who said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth' (Mt.28:18). He must believe that God is able and willing.

A Loving Man

The ideal minister needs a big heart. He must love his congregation, the flock of God committed to his care, but also the poor sinners all around who are lost. Jesus wept over Jerusalem when He thought of their privileges and the judgment which was about to descend upon them. Paul said, 'I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh' (Rom.9:3). Beware of professionalism. Become emotionally involved with your people, weeping with them as they weep and rejoicing with them as they rejoice. Offend them if necessary, but with tears. Further, our hearts should break as we see our neighbours and fellow countrymen running madly, down the road to hell.

A Praying Man

Jeremiah, an Old Testament minister, is a great man of prayer, constantly talking to God, telling Him of his sorrows, his griefs, his burdens and his joys. Paul assures the various churches that he is praying for them without ceasing. Christ encourages us, 'Ask, and it shall be given you' (Mt 7:7). You give good gifts to your children; how much more will God give the Holy Spirit to them who ask (Lk.11:13). The presence of the Spirit makes us powerful and effective but His absence leaves us weak. There are many details for which it is right to pray, but

we must especially wrestle for revival. Remember John Welsh of Ayr who could spend eight hours a day, praying, 'God give me Scotland'. The ideal minister is a man of prayer.

A Studious Man

Paul said to Timothy, 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth' (2Tim.2:15). Earlier he had said, 'Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine' (ITim.4:13). Feed your own soul and then you will be in a position to feed others. Be much in the best books. There is a great deal of chaff around today. Study the classics - Calvin, the Puritans, Edwards, Spurgeon, the Princeton men, the old Free Church men and others like them. Be constantly reading and meditating on the Scriptures. The minister who neglects study will not keep fresh in his preaching.

A Zealous Man

The ideal minister is passionate and hot blooded. Because he loves the truth he will fight earnestly for it. He must distinguish between primary and secondary truths, but he will die for the fundamentals of the faith. Having carefully prepared his sermons he will make sure that they are packed with important points. If the sermon is worth preaching it is worth preaching with all your heart. You mean it. You overcome your natural shyness and look the congregation in the eye and plead with them to respond. Of Christ it was said, 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up' (Jn.2:17). The ideal minister preaches his heart out. Similarly in pastoral work there is no trifling.

An Evangelistic Man

Faith cometh by hearing, but 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher. And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!' (Rom.10:14 15). A large part of a minister's work is bringing glad tidings of good things. People will not be converted unless they hear the Gospel. That places an awesome

responsibility upon the minister. There may be few unconverted people in our churches yet we must preach evangelistically. But we must not confine our evangelism to the church building. 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature' (Mk. 16:15). The ideal minister goes out to all mankind in God's name as God's ambassador, calling for repentance and freely offering Christ to sinners.

A Persistent Man

The work of the ministry is hard. No work more demanding. It is a life - twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and fifty two weeks a year. In a sense there are no holidays and there is no retirement. People will break your heart but you must not give up. The world says resign, the devil says resign and the flesh says resign but the minister dare not. Others may resign and walk away but not him. God has called and appointed him. He must stand in his post till God tells him to move on. It is a great work. No work on earth is of more significance. Something is being built which will last forever. Though at times weeping and heart broken the ideal minister rises from his knees, bandages his wounds, wipes his tears, encourages himself in the Lord and keeps on going.

An Anointed Man

Above all the ideal minister is an anointed man. Without the Spirit all is in vain. The ideal minister must walk in the Spirit, pray in the Spirit, pastor, evangelise and preach in Spirit. He must be optimistic looking for the Spirit to do what he cannot do. He must yearn for revival when a nation is born in a day. The darkest situation can be transformed indeed it is often darkest before the dawn. We live in a day of great spiritual need. Christians are worldly and sinners are hardened. But the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Oh for men anointed by God's Holy Spirit!

Reprinted with kind permission from the Rev William Macleod who is the minister of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) congregation at Portree, Skye.

The Incomparable Christ

MORE THAN nineteen hundred years ago there was a Man born contrary to the laws of life. This Man lived in poverty and was reared in obscurity. He did not travel extensively, only once did He cross the boundary of the country in which He lived; that was during His exile in childhood.

He possessed neither wealth nor influence. His relatives were inconspicuous, and had neither training nor formal education.

In infancy He startled a king; in childhood He puzzled doctors; in manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon the billows as if pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep.

He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His service.

He never wrote a book, and yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books that have been written about Him.

He never wrote a song, and yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all the songwriters combined.

He never founded a college, but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as many students.

He never marshalled an army, nor drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun; and yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have, under His orders, made more rebels stack arms and surrender without a shot fired.

He never practised psychiatry, and yet He has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near.

Once each week the wheels of commerce cease their turning and multitudes wend their way to worshipping assemblies to pay homage and respect to Him.

The names of the past proud statesmen of

Greece and Rome have come and gone. The names of the past scientists, philosophers and theologians have come and gone; but the name of this Man abounds more and more. Though time has spread nineteen hundred years between the people of this generation and the scene of His crucifixion, yet He still lives. Herod could not destroy Him, and the grave could not hold Him.

He stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed of God, acknowledged by angels, adored by saints, and feared by devils, as the living, personal Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

We are either going to be forever with Him, or forever without Him. It was the Incomparable Christ who said:

"I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" John 14:6.

"if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" John 8:24.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" John 3:3.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" John 3:36.

What will you do with Jesus who is called Christ? This concerns you, you are personally involved. Your response determines your eternal destiny.

God could not pass the sinner by,
His sins demand that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see,
How God can save us righteously.

Gospel Tract Publications

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PROTESTANTS – ARE YOU WORSHIPPING IDOLS?

“Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters ... shall inherit the kingdom of God”

1 Corinthians 6:9 10.

This verse tells us that idolaters will not go to Heaven unless they are born again and become real Christians, like the Corinthians being addressed, who were now idol-worshippers no more.

Perhaps you think this has nothing to do with you. After all, as a ‘Protestant’, you don’t worship the Virgin Mary or pray to saints. It may be that you have been taught that there “is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). You do not kneel before statues and images and therefore, you conclude, there is no danger of your being an idolater. The Bible, however, also speaks of forms of idolatry that are rather less obvious.

Possessions

We read in Colossians chapter 3 verse 5 of “covetousness, which is idolatry”. If the chief motivation in your life is the love of money and not love to God, you are an idolater. You put money in the place of God.

Is your great concern to have a large house and car or just a big bank balance? Maybe you go to church, but what do you think about when you are there? What do you think or talk about the rest of the Lord’s Day - your business or the price of sheep or cattle? Possibly, your upbringing keeps you back from doing certain things on the Sabbath day, but your heart goes after them.

The first commandment is “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). The words before me “mean before my face”. Your love of money, rather than

God, is idolatry.

Pleasure

The Bible speaks of unconverted men being lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (2 Timothy 3:4). By contrast, the true motive of all of life is given in Scripture, “...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). Is there anything of this in you?

Ambition

When the devil tempted Adam and Eve to rebel against God by eating of the forbidden fruit, he said to Eve, “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5). He tells them not to take God’s word for anything, but to assert their supposed independence and so make themselves equal to God.

It is this desire to take God’s place that lies behind all sin. This desire to take over the rights of God is being worked out to an alarming degree in our present generation by the advocating of such things as abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality or the abolition of Sabbath trading laws etc. - denying God’s rights over life, gender and how we are to use our time. But your rejection of God’s authority over your day-to-day living springs from the same root.

False Ideas of God

Here we come to the heart of the matter. The Bible is God’s word to men. Here we learn what God is really like. He is holy and just and he punishes sin in Hell, as Christ himself taught when he spoke repeatedly of the “fire that never shall be quenched” (Mark 9:43).

The true God tells you that you are a sinner and deserve his everlasting wrath. “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:10). God’s love is shown in his sending his Son to be the Saviour

of sinners by bearing the wrath of God in their place when he suffered and died on the cross of Calvary.

The Scriptures tell us most plainly that, far from being independent of God, we must depend utterly on Christ for acceptance before God. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31). In fact, you need the Holy Spirit to change your heart even to be willing to depend on Christ for salvation, which is why the Saviour said, “Ye must be born again” (John 3:7).

Idolater or True Christian?

Do you love the God of the Bible of whom we have spoken above? Is it not rather the case that you don’t like to think of God as he really is? You like to think of God as a God of love and nothing else. And if he punishes sin at all, it is only in people whom you regard as much worse than yourself, such as terrorists and other criminals.

Perhaps you like to have these ideas confirmed by liberal clergymen who preach of such a god. The problem is that such a god is a false god who does not exist and you must turn away from this idol. The living and true God holds you to be a Hell deserving sinner and all your professed Protestantism, membership of Protestant organisations and church going cannot take away your guilt before God. You must face up to God as he really is and seek deliverance as he says, through Jesus Christ who said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Written by Rev David Silversides of Loughbrickland Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanter), County Down, Northern Ireland and distributed as a tract at 12th July ‘Protestant’ parades

NUT wants 3-year-olds taught about homosexual relationships

British Church Newspaper correspondent

The leading teachers' union, the National Union of Teachers (NUT), has advocated teaching the understanding of homosexual relationships to children as young as three.

The call was prompted by purported concerns that 'homophobia' in schools can only be eradicated by inculcating tolerance and understanding of the homosexual lifestyle in nursery schools.

Nursery staff, says the new NUT report, should educate children about life in homosexual families and explain that it is normal and acceptable. It goes on to claim that education about homosexual relationships at the age of five is 'too late to challenge prejudice' because some new primary school pupils 'already use homophobic language'.

The proposal was made a fortnight ago (20 July) when the NUT published its response to the Department for Education and Skills' 'Early Years Foundation Stage' consultation document. The NUT also

wants teachers 'to be given the skills and tools to challenge racism, sexism and abusive language'.

The report notes: In the case of homophobia, the use of the word 'gay' is prevalent in primary schools and young boys who are perceived to not conform to masculine stereotypes are at risk of bullying, isolation and social exclusion". Teachers should 'challenge gender stereotypes and challenge language that is negative or prejudiced'.

It continues: "It is particularly important to begin to make three to five year olds aware of the range of families that exist in the UK today: families with one Mum, one Mum and Dad, two Mums, two Dads, grand-parents, adoptive parents, guardians etc. There will be parents who are gay or lesbian who will want to be reassured that their children will be safe in the nursery schools. Many gay parents do not 'come out' to their nursery schools because they fear their children will be bullied as a result of the sexual

orientation of their parents. Now that civil partnerships are legal, nursery settings need to use the curriculum to educate children about all types of families and promote respect and understanding".

Nick Seaton of the Campaign for Real Education, commented: "I very much doubt that three year olds will be able to grasp the implications of these things anyway ... Even if they do, it seems completely wrong for the state education system to try and brainwash youngsters in this way. It's a sad reflection on the direction state education is taking, with the emphasis on teaching politically correct values, rather than worthwhile subjects".

One *Daily Mail* reader, Peter Parsons of Slough, commenting on the story on the Mail's website, asked: "Is there anyone out there who can deliver us out of this tyranny?"

British Church Newspaper July 2006

Fireman demoted and eight disciplined in gay pride row

By Robert McAulay

A FIRE station watch manager was yesterday demoted and eight of his men were disciplined for refusing to hand out leaflets at a Gay Pride parade.

The firefighters were also ordered to undergo an 'intensive course' of diversity training.

They fell foul of their bosses after disobeying orders to attend the march dressed in their uniforms.

The men, members of Red Watch based at Cowcaddens fire station in Glasgow, claimed it would have been 'too embarrassing' and not part of their duties to attend the city's Pride Scotia march in June.

One of the men even got his priest to plead with fire brigade bosses that he should have been excused on moral grounds.

All nine men who had faced the disciplinary hearing were yesterday given written warnings. However, the harshest punishment was handed to the watch manager, who was demoted to a job with a £5,000-a-year cut in salary.

Last night, the decision provoked an angry

reaction from Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow Mario Conti.

He said: 'There was no question of these officers' competency or commitment being called into question. They had legitimate concerns about being the subject of taunts and jokes.

'And in some cases their religious sensibilities were, being grossly offended by people dressed as priests and nuns lampooning the Church.'

The archbishop added: 'The duty to obey one's conscience is a higher duty than that of obeying orders.'

Tory MSP Phil Gallie said: 'All they did was put forward personal reasons for not wanting to be involved with this march and now they have been disciplined by the politically correct brigade.'

One fire service insider said many staff members were unhappy with the decision. He added: 'The men should have been given the choice of handing out leaflets.'

'If the BNP have a march in Glasgow, does that mean firefighters have to attend that as well?'

But a spokesman for Strathclyde Fire and

Rescue last night defended its decision. He said: 'Firefighters cannot pick and choose to whom they offer fire safety advice.

'The service has a responsibility to protect every one of the 2.3million people it services, irrespective of race, religion or sexuality.'

The 'diversity training' the men must attend includes lectures on racism', disability, gender and religion. Brian Sweeney, chief officer of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue said: 'Fire doesn't discriminate and nor do we. We won't permit and we won't promote any racism, any sectarianism, any bias to any gender, any sexual preference.

'We will not tolerate any kind of racism or discrimination in the fire service.

'This is a strong disciplinary action that is very serious, that is placed on their personal record file, that puts them in a very difficult employment position, so this is not a mild slap on the wrists.

'If dismissal was the appropriate remedy for the offence that had been committed, then they would have been dismissed.

'Clearly, the tribunal didn't take that view and I support them on that.'

'The important feature is that all nine firefighters have said that, given the same circumstances, they would go out and would do that work - a concession on their part that they should have done that job.'

Daily Mail 1.9.06

Colombian mother of four murdered for evangelising

On Friday 7 July, Leftist rebels in Colombia's Meta Province hired a gunman to kill a Christian mother of four after she refused to stop proclaiming Christ. Because Jenifer (pseudonym) was leading insurgents to Christ, many were defecting from their illegal armed group.

On 7 July the insurgents arrived in Jenifer's village in Meta Province with a hit list containing the names of Christian leaders to be executed in the region. Her name was on the list. They asked her why she was preaching the Gospel when she'd not been given permission to do so. A hired gunman then shot Jenifer in her chest and shoulder. Still clinging to life, she was dragged to the feet of the assassin who shot her 15 times.

Jenifer's violent murder leaves four children, aged 14, 9, 3 and 5 months without the care of their mother. Her husband had already left the country.

Although, in the months before her murder, Jenifer had found the courage to resist the demands of the armed groups, in

the past, Jenifer had been forced to cooperate with insurgents against her will, preparing them meals and transporting illicit drugs. Likewise, some of her brothers and nephews had become subversives or collaborators.

However, Jenifer had found help to escape involvement with the insurgents, and in time she turned to the faith in Christ that her mother had taught her. When the insurgents learned that Jenifer was winning rebel souls to Christ, they approached her and invited her to rejoin their ranks in exchange for money and power. She refused and when they found out that she intended to continue spreading the gospel, they added her to their hit list of Christian leaders.

Churches closed

During the time that the insurgents took over the region the church suffered widespread persecution. Believers were scattered and the rebels closed some churches and murdered several pastors.

When the peace talks failed the country's

army reclaimed the region but the insurgents refused to stop operating in some of the villages and towns. The churches remained closed and the preaching of the Gospel was restricted.

It was during that time, about a year ago, that Jenifer feared for her life. As she was on her way to an insurgent camp one day to deliver food to them, she was overcome by an intense fear of death and concern for her children.

In the last months of her life, she became more acquainted with Scripture and continued to raise her children in the ways of God. She spoke to others with conviction about the love of Christ, winning a nephew to Christ who became an active underground preacher to the insurgents.

Eddie Lyle, CEO of Open Doors UK and Ireland, commented, "The Christian Church needs to rise up in prayer and support for these Christians." (*Open Doors*)

British Church Newspaper 4 August 2006

Pakistani Woman Raped for Leaving Islam

Christian family forced into hiding to protect young mother's convert identity



Photo: Compass Direct

Saher Shafi

Attacked by her own family, one Muslim's decision to convert to Christianity highlights the precarious situation of Muslims in Pakistan who leave their faith.

Sehar Muhammad Shafi, 24, has fled her home city of Karachi with her husband and two young daughters after being attacked and raped for changing her faith. Shafi told Compass that her family lives with the fear of being discovered. "My husband is keen to get a marketing job," Shafi said. "But I don't want him to do something that open, where he will be known." Though returning to Islam would seemingly solve many of Shafi's problems, the Christian woman said that is not an option. "It is not a joke to change religions," she said. "We've fallen in love with Jesus, so how could we betray him?" (*Compass Direct*)

British Church Newspaper July 2006

Mob in Nigeria Stones Woman to Death for Evangelising

Local church leaders said Muslim extremists overwhelmed police officers providing refuge for an unidentified Christian woman in a town in Niger state on June 28 and stoned and clubbed her to death for doing street evangelism.

David Atabo of the Roman Catholic Church in Izom said he witnessed the killing of the woman. He told Compass that she had met a group of Muslim youths, shared the gospel with them and gave them tracts. When nearby Muslim elders learned that the woman had preached to the youths, he said, they claimed she insulted the prophet of Islam, Muhammad, and ordered that she be killed.

Police rescued her and took her into

continued on page 11

protective custody, but a mob stormed the police station. “The police, realising that the Muslim crowd was overwhelming, smuggled the woman through a back door to escape with her, but the Muslims blocked all escape routes, and at this point the police abandoned the woman to save their lives,” Atabo said. “She was clubbed to death.”

Daniel Mazuri, pastor of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) Good News Church in Izom, said those at the scene of the incident told him Muslims accosted the woman and accused her of insulting Muhammad. The Muslims claimed she dropped a letter in a mosque insulting Muhammad, he said, but friends of his in the police force told him this was false. Mazuri said his inquiries led to the conclusion that Muslims doctored a document in order to create a religious crisis in this town. (Compass Direct)

British Church Newspaper 21.7.06



Soldiers receiving Bibles Photo: Open Doors

How Long, O Lord?

How do you react to reading reports about Christians who were either murdered or viciously assaulted? These two cases of murder were the result of Christian women witnessing for Christ. While far from the typical Christian experience of the West, such stories should challenge us as to how often we retreat into our comfort zones and also as to how much time we spend praying for our persecuted brothers and sister.

In Revelation 6:9-10 we read: “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice saying, how long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth”. Their cries for justice are answered in verse 11 “And white robes were given unto everyone, that they should rest yet

for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” They have the assurance that their prayers will be answered, but the time has not arrived yet for judgement. It would seem that this passage has a bearing on the return of our Lord and the end of the world. When everyone of God’s elect has been brought into the fold and the number of the martyrs is full, then the sixth seal of verses 12-17 will be opened which introduces the judgement day.

The book of Revelation was written to comfort the persecuted believer and abounds with consolations. God sees their tears, hears their prayers, sees their death as precious and assures them of final victory. Truly, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

By Mr Jack Bell

CHILDREN’S CORNER

Hello Boys and Girls,

I have recently come home from a very special holiday in South India where I visited a Children’s Home. Some of the boys and girls don’t have any parents and some were found living in the streets, one boy lived in the railway. Some couldn’t walk but the Home paid for operations to make them better. I visited a girl who was in hospital having a painful operation to lengthen her leg. Her name is Manga and although she was in pain she still smiled a lot. Please pray for her and pray for all the boys and girls in the Home. They all seem very happy yet they don’t have the toys or clothes that you have. Some have become Christians so please pray that many more will come to trust in the Lord Jesus. And while you are praying for them, thank the Lord Jesus for your parents and the lovely home that you have and all the nice clothes you have to wear, and all the toys you have to play with. The Bible tells us that every gift comes from God.

Lots of love. Mrs. Glass. God Bless



Manga

WOMEN'S VIEW

Hello Everyone, I have just recently returned from a 2 week trip to South India. The purpose of my trip was to visit Grace Children's Home which is run by Grace Third World Fund in Isle of Man. I, along with others in my church, sponsor children in the Home, in my case it is a 7 year old boy called Veerababu. It was a real joy to meet him and a very emotional one, especially when after I had my photograph taken with him and he looked up at me with his big brown eyes and said "Thank you". It really floored me and I found myself asking what is he thanking me for, I'm only taking his photograph and he doesn't even know I am sponsoring him. But these children are so grateful for the smallest thing. It is very humbling.

The children in the Home are well looked after and I could see they are happy children. Timothy Babu and his wife Sheela who run the Home really love the children and show concern over their health etc. And, although there are 85 children in care, when I asked Sheela for details of the children we sponsor, she could give them to me without looking up any files.

I really feel privileged that I was able to go on this trip, not just because I now feel closer to Veerababu, but also because of the other experiences I had. For example, I visited a Leper Colony. I didn't quite know what to expect, but was a bit taken aback by how happy they seemed to be, laughing and joking. And then when we were led into their little church and they

started to sing and clap their hands, some with shortened and twisted hands and arms and smile with twisted faces, it made me feel ashamed of how I sometimes sit in the house of God. I have so much to praise God for.

I learned many lessons on my trip and God willing, will share them with you in the next issue.

God Bless. M.Glass



PS If anyone reading this article doesn't already give to a Missionary Outreach, I would recommend this Charity to you. I would be happy to send you more details should you wish to sponsor a child or send a one off gift.



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