



He shines in all that's fair

The Christian Institute
Annual Review 2017



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The Christian Institute is a registered charity whose main object is “the furtherance and promotion of the Christian Religion in the United Kingdom and elsewhere”.

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Welcome



BY JOHN BURN

I trust that you will be encouraged by reading our Annual Review. The review covers the many activities of The Christian Institute in 2016. During 2016 we gave thanks to God for the Institute's 25th anniversary. He has done far more than we asked or imagined when the Institute was formed all those years ago. To God alone be the glory.

Since the last review, we have welcomed Iain Hamill as Head of Finance. This fulfils a longstanding plan to expand the work of the finance team. Iain is a chartered accountant and treasurer of his church. He works to Jon Errington, who has taken up the role of Head of Operations. Angus Saul and Pádraig O'Halloran have joined us as Communications Officers and Josh Coghill as a Research Assistant. In autumn 2016 Alicja Cieniawska and Barbara Elder started as Admin Assistants and Sharon Dews as Finance Administrator.

We received the sad news in May 2016 that Admin Assistant Kath Oliver had died at home, following a battle with cancer. Kath was a faithful Christian and strong supporter of the Institute's work long before she joined the staff. Our deepest sympathies go to her family

and relations, three of whom are Institute staff members.

We have said goodbye to Stewart McLurg, Jonathan Wood, Vic Marsay (née Hawkins), Sam Mason, Hannah Tarrant (née Compton), Judith McKeown and Dave Boswell. We are very grateful for their contribution in different roles. In early 2017 Michael Taylor joined us as a Research Assistant and Marc Stamatiou as a Multimedia Designer.

As well as our considerable research, online activity and campaigns, staff spoke to almost 14,000 people at 251 meetings in 2016. We are especially grateful to Daniel McArthur, Hazelmary Bull and Adrian Smith who spoke at key meetings about how our Legal Defence Fund has offered strong support.

We are so thankful for the tremendous backing of our supporters. May God give us all grace to face the challenges of the year ahead.

John Burn OBE, Chairman

He shines in all that's fair



BY COLIN HART

Psalm 24:1 proclaims: "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it".

Our world was made by God and belongs to him. The evidence of our Creator is all around us. As Romans 1:20 says, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

So we can say of God that "He shines in all that's fair". This line comes from a hymn penned over a hundred years ago by the American pastor Maltbie D. Babcock:

*This is my Father's world,
The birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white,
Declare their maker's praise.
This is my Father's world:
He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass;
He speaks to me everywhere.*

Many passages of the Bible attest to the fact that, even after the Fall, something of God's character shines through in his creation.

And because he is the Creator, God is intensely interested in his world. Proverbs 15:3 tells us that: "The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good." Psalm 104 talks about God's providential care for men and animals: "He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth" (verse 14).

In a famous passage describing the glory of Jesus Christ, Colossians 1:16 reveals that "all things were created by him and for him". So we learn that the Father made this whole universe by the Son and for the Son. The Apostle Paul goes on:





“For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross” (1:19-20).

God is holy and so the only solution to man’s sin is found in Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection. Before ascending to heaven, Christ commanded that this good news should be taken to all nations. But for this Gospel message to be proclaimed there has to be stability in the world so that ordinary life can continue. God promised this, even in the aftermath of the worldwide Flood: “As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease” (Genesis 8:22).

Not only does God ‘shine in all that’s fair’, he provides for all he has made. This points us to *common grace*, God’s blessings to all people outside of salvation. As Jesus taught, his Father “causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matthew 5:45).

God gives marriage and the family to people everywhere, for the good of children, communities and society as a whole. Every person is made in God’s image and has a conscience. God also institutes nations and governments to restrain evil by the force of law or arms. In a democracy Christians can seek to influence their political leaders

for good. Every Christian in the UK has freedom to speak out and the freedom to vote, a privilege denied to many people across the world today.

Because God has a concern for this world, we should too. Let us be “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” as Christ commanded (Matthew 5:13-16), especially when there is so much that is wrong in society. Let’s do those good works which adorn the Gospel (see Titus 2:10b). We have the opportunity to glorify Christ in our different callings here in a fallen world, in this brief time before eternity dawns.

Only when Jesus returns, inaugurating a new heaven and a new earth, will everything be put right. We can look forward to that great Day with joy and with confidence. As the final verse of Babcock’s hymn says:

*This is my Father’s world.
O let me ne’er forget
That though the wrong
Seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father’s world:
The battle is not done:
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and Heav’n be one.*

Colin Hart,
Director

Religious Liberty

Colin, Karen, Daniel and Amy McArthur of Ashers Baking Co.

ASHERS BAKING COMPANY

During 2016 the Institute continued to support a Christian-run bakery in Northern Ireland which has faced legal action for declining to produce a pro-gay marriage campaign cake.

The McArthur family, who own Ashers Baking Company, said they could not fulfil the order because it conflicted with their Christian belief that marriage is the union of a man and a woman.

The taxpayer-funded Equality Commission for Northern Ireland launched a legal action against the bakery.

In October 2016, the Court of Appeal in Belfast rejected the bakery's appeal against an earlier ruling which said that the business broke the law by declining to decorate a cake with a pro-gay marriage campaign slogan.

The judges ruled that the bakery had broken sexual orientation and political discrimination laws, despite accepting that the McArthurs didn't know the sexual orientation of the customer. The case now looks likely to go to the UK Supreme Court.

The Institute believes that the Ashers case, along with some others that we have been involved in, demonstrates the need for equality law to be changed so that freedom of conscience is respected. Daniel McArthur, the General Manager of Ashers Baking Company, said: "If equality law means people can be punished for politely refusing to support other people's causes, then equality law needs to change."

But while Ashers may have lost so far in the court of law, they have decisively won in the court of public opinion. National newspapers and some homosexual commentators

have condemned the ruling, with editorials in both The Telegraph and The Guardian warning of the damage to freedom of speech. Journalists have widely reported the fact that it was the requested message on the cake, not the customer, that Ashers objected to.

We have been encouraging Christians across the UK to pray for the McArthur family. We have also set up a petition to allow people to show their support for them, which has been signed by over 21,000 people.

Ashers Baking Company appeared in the BBC programme 'The Battle for Christianity' in March 2016. During a piece about the work of the Institute's Legal Defence Fund, which continues to support the bakery, the programme showed interviews with the McArthurs and our Deputy Director Simon Calvert.

OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF CHURCHES

There are serious concerns over plans to subject church youth work in England to 'British values' inspections. Under the proposals, Ofsted will be given the power to carry out extremism checks on out-of-school settings. Concerns are heightened because of Ofsted's apparent dislike of schools with a Christian ethos. The Government's consultation on the plans stated that any "extremist" or "undesirable" teaching which is incompatible with 'British values' will be prohibited. Any place which provides instruction to under 19-year-olds for more than 6 hours in any week would be covered. This could catch various forms of church youth work, such as holiday Bible clubs, some summer camps and even Sunday Schools.

The proposed scheme forms part of the UK Government's wider counter-extremism strategy.

We urged our supporters to respond to the consultation on out-of-school settings, which closed in January 2016, as well as asking them to raise their concerns with their MP. Although the

Government has not yet responded to its consultation, in January 2017 a minister stated that over 18,000 responses had been received. We believe most of these came from concerned Christians.



The plans have been roundly criticised, including by MPs in a Westminster Hall debate in January 2016, by ex-head of the Army Lord Dannatt, and by Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights in July. But in response to the Committee's report, the Government confirmed its intention to go ahead with the plans.

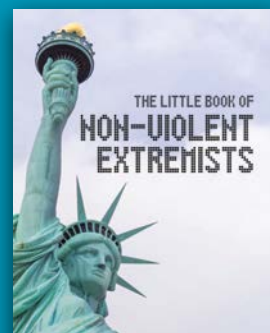
Wales

The Welsh Government published virtually identical proposals in its own consultation in February 2016, which stated that any "undesirable" teaching which is "incompatible with our values of mutual respect and tolerance, or which promotes extremist views" will be prohibited. We also helped supporters in Wales respond to a consultation on making professional youth workers, including those in the voluntary sector, register with a regulator and abide by a Government-defined code.



NON-VIOLENT EXTREMISTS

One of our most popular publications of last year was *The Little Book of Non-Violent Extremists*. This shows that some 'non-violent extremists' turn out to be heroic people of global significance. The Government's counter-extremism policy wants to silence those who show "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values", but these values are very vaguely defined. Our little list of heroes could easily have breached this threshold were it in place in their day.



Marriage and the Family

NAMED PERSON VICTORY AT THE SUPREME COURT

In a wonderful victory for families' freedom, the UK Supreme Court ruled in favour of our judicial review of the controversial Named Person scheme. This intrusive legislation was introduced in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act in 2014, and assigned every child in Scotland a named person – an employee of the state – to look after their 'wellbeing'. The named person was given coercive power to interfere in personal family matters, including sharing a child's confidential information, without the consent of parents. The Named Person scheme threatened to undermine the unique role of parents and erode the right to a private family life.

Alongside CARE, TYMES Trust and the Family Education Trust we launched a judicial review of the Named Person scheme. In July 2016 five Supreme Court judges, including two from Scotland, unanimously struck down the central part of the scheme. They ruled that the information-sharing provisions contained in the Act breached the right to private and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Supreme Court also ruled that it would have to be made clear that any advice offered by a named person is entirely optional.

This ruling really was an answer to the prayers of many Christians, and we believe it will have implications for the whole UK in protecting families from state officials wrongly sharing their personal information. The judgment can be used more widely, for example, to help protect children from intrusive classroom discussions about their personal beliefs.

Despite the wholesale changes that will need to be made to the legislation, the minister in charge of named persons, John Swinney MSP, said the Scottish Government remains "absolutely committed" to the scheme.

We are continuing to support the No to Named Persons (NO2NP) campaign, which is ensuring that the Scottish Government abides by the Supreme Court ruling. NO2NP is also helping people find out if their personal information has been wrongly shared.



🕒 NO2NP campaigners outside the UK Supreme Court, including the Institute's Sam Webster and Simon Calvert.

INSIDE

- How much should we know about transsexualism?
- What does the Bible say about transsexualism?
- How do we defend transsexualism?
- What's the best way to support transsexuals?
- How do we support transsexuals?

CALLS FOR MORE TRANSEXUAL RIGHTS

Transsexuals are people who are biologically normal but whose gender identity does not match their biological sex. They may have been born as a man but now identify as a woman, or vice versa. They may have been born as a woman but now identify as a man, or vice versa. They may have been born as a man but now identify as a man, or vice versa. They may have been born as a woman but now identify as a woman, or vice versa.

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TRANSSEXUALISM IN FOCUS

The issue of transsexualism has become increasingly high-profile, with politicians, celebrities and a large section of the media all keen to promote and normalise it. The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee is pushing for liberalisation of the law, including allowing self-declaration (so that people can change legal sex without any need for a medical diagnosis or to have lived as a member of the opposite sex). The Committee also wants to lower the age for changing legal sex from 18 to 16, and give legal recognition to those who self-identify as neither male nor female.

exalts human emotion and will above God's design as our Creator. The Institute is helping Christians to understand the Bible's teaching that God made people either men or women (Genesis 1:27). This is determined from conception and written into our DNA. In Christian theology a person is a coherent whole: body and soul.

In 2016 we produced two new briefings to help Christians get to grips with the Bible's teaching and know how to talk about the issue with others. One is a general analysis of transsexualism, including the current legal situation. The other is a guide for parents, to help them raise any concerns they may have about what is being taught at their child's school.

Transsexuals are people who are biologically normal – with healthy bodies – but who live as someone of the opposite sex. This wrongly

Radical gender ideology: Protect your child

Is your child's school teaching that girls can become boys?

<4.5k schools are affected

Human beings are made in the image of God. We are born either a boy or a girl.

WHAT CAN PARENTS SAY? [SEE INSIDE](#)

LOOK OUT FOR THESE GROUPS:

- Parents & Carers**
- Gendered Intelligence**

SMACKING BAN IN WALES

Wales' First Minister has promised to push ahead with a ban on parental smacking. Carwyn Jones says it is a priority for this Assembly term.

But removing the 'reasonable chastisement' defence will criminalise loving mothers and fathers, and will overwhelm the police and social services with trivial reports so that real cases of child abuse are missed.

Together with the Family Education Trust, the Institute has launched a new initiative – the Be Reasonable campaign – to oppose the Welsh Government's plans.

We have also been writing to our supporters about mainstream Christian belief on smacking and to help them prepare for the promised consultation.



Education

EDUCATION OFFICER



In 2016 our Education Officer John Denning continued to equip Christian parents, teachers and schools to

be salt and light in the education system and to push back against the secularisation of education in the UK. He is doing this through casework and policy work. John has been addressing national and regional conferences and leading seminars for teachers and governors. He has also met high-profile public figures.

Together with other staff, John has been working to counter Ofsted's wrong interpretation of 'British values' and highlighting the dangers of Government plans for Ofsted to inspect church youth work. He has also given tailored practical advice in a number of different situations, helping parents, teachers and governors respond to concerns about sex education and liberal gender ideology. The Christian Institute is working hard to ensure that Christians are given confidence in dealing with contentious contemporary issues. We want to help them seek fair treatment and respect for their beliefs.

TOO MUCH, TOO YOUNG UPDATED

In response to the continued push from the House of Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee, as well as lobby groups, to liberalise the law on sex education in schools, the Institute published an updated version of our *Too much, too young* publication in autumn 2016. Our booklet uncovers explicit resources that have been recommended for primary-aged children by local councils and others.



RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

In March 2017 the Government announced that all primary schools in England will be compelled to teach 'Relationships Education' with no opt-out for parents. A new subject of 'Relationships and Sex Education' will be taught in secondary schools.

The Government intends to consult in the autumn on regulations and guidance setting out the detail of the new requirements.

Sanctity of Life

NORTHERN IRELAND ABORTION VOTE



In February 2016 the Northern Ireland Assembly defeated amendments that would have weakened legal protections for unborn babies in the Province. MLAs voted 59 to 40 against amending legislation to allow abortion in cases of severely life-limiting conditions. They also voted 64 to 32 against allowing abortion in cases of sexual crime. The Institute's Northern Ireland Officer, Callum Webster, said these were "heartening" results, which upheld protections for women and unborn children. Several MLAs raised concerns about the proposed changes in the law, including the fact that it could pave the way for abortion on demand.

CHOOSE LIFE - SHALOME'S STORY

The Institute had the privilege of spending time with the family of Shalome Harwood, a little girl with a rare brain condition. The one-year-old is alive because her parents, Colin and EJ, from Huddersfield, rejected doctors' diagnosis after a 20-week scan that she was "incompatible with life" and would only have minutes or hours to live.

In an exclusive interview with the Institute they said Shalome has 'enriched their lives' and that they count "every day a blessing". "We believe that God has a purpose for everyone, even Shalome", they said.



◁ Shalome's parents tell how they count every day a blessing.

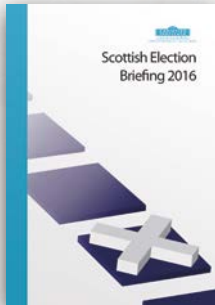
DUTCH STUDENTS' VISIT

In November the Institute hosted a group of Dutch nursing students. The group, from a Christian college, were on a trip to the UK organised by Wilco Kodde, whom the Institute has previously commissioned to do research on ethical issues in the Netherlands. They were given a tour of the Institute's offices and staff gave two presentations.

One lecture was about assisted suicide and euthanasia, looking at the situation in the Netherlands, where these practices were formally legalised in 2002. The number of cases of euthanasia continues to rise inexorably, with cases now involving people with dementia.

Citizenship

ELECTIONS



On 5 May 2016 there were elections to all of the devolved assemblies – in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

We produced a briefing for the election to the Scottish Parliament, which provided factual information about the policies of the political parties and key background information on recent legislation. We highlighted the main parties' positions on the areas of marriage and the family, medical ethics, education, religious liberty in the UK, matters of public morality and the constitution. We also produced candidate 'QuestionCards' to help Christians find out the views of the candidates standing in their constituencies.



The Institute produced a briefing for supporters in Northern Ireland ahead of the elections there. In the briefing we provided tips and advice on how to speak to candidates. We encouraged supporters to raise with their candidates issues such as divorce, charitable status for Christian groups, adoption, homosexual marriage, euthanasia, abortion, gambling and freedom of speech.



For the Welsh Assembly elections we produced candidate 'QuestionCards', containing six key questions to ask Assembly candidates on issues like parental smacking and religious liberty.

CHRISTIANS AND VOTING

The Christian Institute believes that Christians should use the opportunity we have to vote. Christians in Britain today live in a collapsing culture in which God's moral law is openly flouted. Things will not get better unless this is addressed. We know that the only lasting and real solution to the problem of man's sin is uniquely provided in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, we are to pray that our authorities would provide freedom for the Gospel and freedom for Christians to live "peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Timothy 2:1-2) and that they will fulfil their God-given mandate and govern according to God's moral law (Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-14). Elections provide an opportunity for Christians to be salt and light.



Other News

GAMBLING CONSULTATION

Between October and December 2016 the Government held a call for evidence on gambling, focusing on Fixed-Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs), which are known as the 'crack cocaine' of gambling. Gamblers can wager up to £100 every 20 seconds on the machines.

The Institute encouraged those with a particular concern about gambling to respond to the call for evidence. We contacted supportive churches around the country involved in running debt counselling and informed them

of their opportunity to respond to the consultation. The Institute also submitted a response, expressing concerns about the dangers of FOBTs.

In December MPs on the All-Party Parliamentary Group on FOBTs issued an interim report advising the Government to cut the maximum stake from £100 per spin to £2. It also advised the Government to review the number of FOBTs allowed in betting shops and to give councils extra powers to prevent clustering of betting shops.

PETER BULL 1939–2016

Peter Bull, the guesthouse owner whose legal battle to defend biblical marriage went all the way to the Supreme Court, died peacefully in hospital in July, aged 76. A same-sex couple launched legal proceedings against Peter and his wife Hazelmary after being refused a double bed in September 2008. Although the Bulls lost their legal case, their Christian witness has challenged people across the UK to remain faithful to the Lord Jesus in their own workplaces.



NEW PUBLICATIONS

Guardianship

Who will look after your children if you die? is a short leaflet designed to help parents understand the importance of naming trusted guardians to look after their children in the event of their death.



The Huguenots

We produced a briefing on the inspiring story of the Huguenots in 16th and 17th century France. The leaflet explores the gradual loss of religious freedom in France at the time, and the lessons that we can learn today.

Engaging Christians...



3,362,722

VISITS TO OUR WEBSITE IN 2016



26% LIKES



15% FOLLOWERS



33% VISITS

INCREASE IN 2016



14,000

PEOPLE AT

251

PRESENTATIONS IN 2016

500,000

VIEWS OF

229

VIDEOS POSTED IN 2016



203

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES FEATURING INSTITUTE CASES OR COMMENT IN 2016

133

PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA REQUESTS IN 2016



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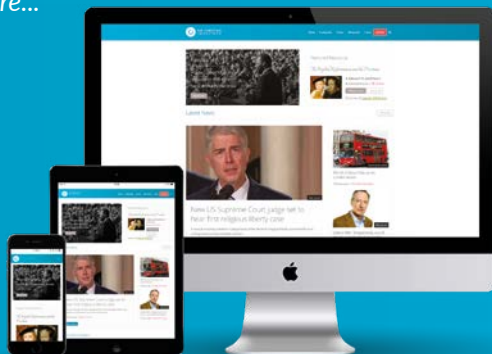
CHRISTIANORGUK

...Equipping Christians



NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED OCTOBER 2016

Christian perspective on the news; multimedia resources; your MP's voting record; and much more...



CI BITESIZE NEWS SERIES RELEASED AUGUST 2016

Expanding our weekly news digest – snippets of the week's news in a mobile-friendly format.



Meet the Team



Back Row:

- Fiona Rushton**
Cleaner
- Callum Webster**
MA MSc
Northern Ireland
Officer
Develops the
Institute's work in
Northern Ireland.
- Barbara Elder**
Administrative
Assistant
Handles
correspondence and
calls from supporters.
- Alicja Cienlawska LLB**
Administrative
Assistant
Handles
correspondence and
calls from supporters.
- Johnny Timm BSc**
IT Manager
Oversees our IT
systems.
- Benjamin Mitchell BA**
Development Officer
Develops the
Institute's work
with churches and
supporters.
- Jason Abdelnoor**
BSc MSc PGCE
Finance Clerk
Works on book-
keeping and accounts.
- Sharon Dews BA**
Financial
Administrator
Handles the
Institute's payments
and financial data.
- John Bailes**
Finance Clerk
Works on book-
keeping and accounts.
- Sam Webster BA**
Solicitor Advocate
In-house Solicitor
Manages religious
liberty cases.
- Judi Coulson BA**
PGCE
Personal Assistant
to Humphrey
Dobson and Senior
Administrator
- Humphrey Dobson**
BA
Deputy Director
(Policy and Staffing)
Responsible for policy
and staffing.
- Simon Calvert LLB**
Deputy Director
(Public Affairs)
Responsible for public
affairs, including our
Parliamentary work.
- Jane Leung BA**
Public Affairs
Assistant
Works with the
Deputy Director
(Public Affairs).
- Mark Taylor BA**
Multimedia Designer
Assists with the
design of the
Institute's various
communications.
- Sam Wylie BA**
Communications
Officer
Helps with
the Institute's
communications.
- James Gillies BA**
Communications
Officer
Helps with
the Institute's
communications.
- Matt Crouch BSc**
Senior Multimedia
Designer
Assists with the
design of the
Institute's various
communications.
- John Denning BSc**
PGCE
Education Officer
Conducts research on
education issues.
- Rodney Aiken LLM**
Senior Researcher
Works on major
projects with the
Director.
- Josh Coghill MA**
Research Assistant
Conducts general
research across a
range of issues.
- Paul Mawhinney BSc**
Research Assistant
Conducts general
research across a
range of issues.
- Michael Taylor BA**
Research Assistant
Conducts general
research across a
range of issues.
- Nigel Kenny LLB**
DipLP
Scotland Officer
Develops the
Institute's work in
Scotland.

Front Row:

- Sandra Mackay**
Personal Assistant to
the Northern Ireland
Officer
- Christine Thwaites**
Cert Ed
Administrative
Assistant
Handles
correspondence and
calls from supporters.
- Kim Welford**
Administrative
Assistant
Handles
correspondence and
calls from supporters.
- Jonathan Patterson**
BA
Office Manager
Supervises the
administration and
running of the office.
- Amanda Dobson BA**
Development
Assistant
Assists with
databases and
supporter work.
- James McIntosh**
MTheol MTh
Development Officer
Develops the
Institute's work
with churches and
supporters.
- Iain Hamill**
MA ACA
Head of Finance
Supervises the
financial
administration.
- Frank Oliver**
Financial
Administrator
Handles the
Institute's payments
and financial data.
- Jon Errington**
BA DipTP
Head of Operations
Supervises the
efficient operation of
the Institute.
- Hannah Ballard LLB**
Personal Assistant
to the In-house
Solicitor
- Louisa Bratley BA**
Personal Assistant to
the Director
- Colin Hart BSc PGCE**
Director
Controls the day-to-
day running of the
Institute.
- Sarah Aiken BA**
Personal Assistant to
the Deputy Director
(Public Affairs)
- Pádraig O'Halloran**
BA
Communications
Officer
Helps with
the Institute's
communications.
- Peter Marsay**
Cameraman/Video
Editor
Produces audio-visual
output.
- Ciarán Kelly BA MSc**
Head of
Communications
Oversees the
Institute's
communications.
- Angus Saul BA**
Communications
Officer
Helps with
the Institute's
communications.
- Marc Stamatiou BSc**
Multimedia Designer
Assists with the
design of the
Institute's various
communications.
- Sharon James**
MA (Cantab) MDv
PhD PGCE
Social Policy Analyst
Conducts research
on developments in
social policy.
- Dave Greatorex LLB**
Head of Research
Supervises the
research work.
- Rachel Gillies LLB**
Research Assistant
Conducts general
research across a
range of issues.
- Rhys Curnow BA**
Senior Researcher
Conducts general
research across a
range of issues.
- Rebekah Keiller BA**
Personal Assistant to
the Scotland Officer

Meetings and Teaching

ENGAGING WITH CRUCIAL ISSUES

Since the Institute began, we have sought to help equip Christians to engage with the issues of our day. This means we host regular lectures, seminars, conferences and meetings. Organising and speaking at meetings is a substantial activity for the Institute. In 2016 Christian Institute staff gave presentations at 251 events, speaking to almost 14,000 people.

Our general meetings include biblical teaching about all people being made in the image of God, Jesus' command for his followers to live as salt and light, and the importance of family life. We give presentations about current ethical issues and inform our audience with key facts and Christian teaching. We also regularly distribute our teaching resources and speak to Christians at conferences around the UK. During 2016 we had 45 such opportunities.

The Institute has seven members of staff whose work is mainly devoted to operating our meetings, and as many as 26 others are routinely involved in planning, publicity, and writing or giving presentations.

25TH ANNIVERSARY LDF TOUR

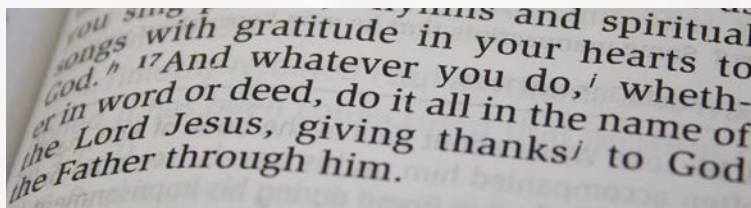


Callum Webster led a tour of meetings to recognise the 25th anniversary of the Institute and to raise awareness of our Legal Defence Fund. Daniel McArthur and Hazelmary Bull spoke at

the meetings in England; Adrian Smith spoke with Hazelmary in Northern Ireland. These were attended by 1,035 people with 106 people signing up to the mailing list.

STUDENT TEACHING VIDEOS

Over the last year we have been working on a new DVD series which aims to challenge students and young people to apply the Bible to all of life. The good news of Jesus Christ leads to transformed lives, including at work, in ethics and in our role as citizens (Colossians 3:17). The series will explain key Bible teaching that underpins our engagement with the world. We plan for it to be used by churches and student groups to encourage a new generation of believers to be salt and light in society around them. We hope the series will be released near the end of 2017.



GUEST SPEAKERS

Over the course of 2016 the Institute welcomed a number of guests to give talks to the staff on a variety of subjects. The speakers included Prof. John Wyatt; Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, Director of The Centre for Enterprise, Markets and Ethics; Josephine Quintavalle, from Comment on Reproductive Ethics; John Smeaton and John Deighan from SPUC; Dr Peter Saunders, CEO of Christian Medical Fellowship; Andrea Williams, CEO of Christian Concern; Revd Melvin Tinker of St John Newland, Hull; Dr Chris Sinkinson; and Institute Trustees Rod Badams, Revd Rupert Bentley-Taylor and Revd Dr William Philip.

AUTUMN LECTURES

Our annual series of Autumn Lectures took place in Newcastle, and the theme for 2016 was 'Our Living Hope'. The first lecture was delivered by Dr Andy Gemmill, Director of the Pastor's Training Course at Cornhill Scotland. Using 1 Corinthians 15, he considered how the resurrection of Christ is inextricably linked with the past and future resurrection of those who are in Him.

The second lecture dealt with the question of justice, and in particular the Christian's response to injustice. The speaker was Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, Director of The Centre for Enterprise, Markets and Ethics.

Revd Angus MacLeay gave our third lecture, speaking from 1 Peter. He noted that there are striking parallels with Peter's readers and the 21st century West - like them we are exiles from our true home and face descending darkness in our society.

The fourth lecture, delivered by Revd Dr Kevin Bidwell, focused on the real suffering believers may face. He encouraged Christians to keep walking by faith and trusting Christ, despite discouragement.

Our final lecture was taken by Glynn Harrison, who spoke about Christians living in today's culture in a talk entitled 'False hopes and a better story'.



Dr Peter Saunders



John Deighan



Josephine Quintavalle



Revd Dr Richard Turnbull



Revd Melvin Tinker



John Smeaton



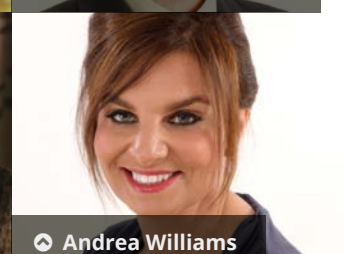
Dr Chris Sinkinson



Revd Dr William Philip



Revd Angus MacLeay



Andrea Williams



Prof. John Wyatt



Revd Dr Kevin Bidwell

How We Are Managed



TRUSTEES OF THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE

From left to right:

Trevor James (Treasurer)
Rod Badams
Revd Rupert Bentley-Taylor
Revd David Holloway
Revd Dr William Philip
John Burn (Chairman)
Geoff Fox
Revd James Leggett
Revd George Curry
Dr Philip Robinson

We give thanks to God for his continued provision through the generosity of his people. As a charity The Christian Institute relies upon the generosity of its supporters who are willing to give financially to it. Over 99 per cent of our income comes through such gifts. Giving to our work (excluding the Legal Defence Fund) is split between regular giving (e.g. by standing order) and one-off gifts (i.e. we do not know about them in advance). We therefore rely upon roughly £25,000 arriving each week, either through the post or online giving. This is a challenge to the staff and Trustees. If you are able to give regularly by standing

order it is a great help to us in our planning and budgeting.

The Institute is governed by its ten member Council whose skills, knowledge and support are invaluable to the organisation. The Council are the Trustees and are legally responsible for the registered charity. The Council meets regularly throughout the year.

The day-to-day running is the responsibility of the Director, Colin Hart. He is helped by an executive group, comprising the Chairman, Treasurer and Geoff Fox. They meet regularly with the Director to discuss the Institute's affairs.

Summary of Financial Information

This summary is provided to indicate to supporters how funds were obtained and spent during the years 2015 and 2016.

The summary for 2016 is based on draft and unaudited figures.

The summary for 2015 is based on the audited accounts for that year but does not form part of the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements of The Christian Institute.

Copies of the full audited annual accounts for 2015 and 2016 (when available) can be obtained by contacting our office:

The Christian Institute,
Wilberforce House,
4 Park Road,
Gosforth Business Park,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
NE12 8DG



Iain Hamill MA ACA,
Head of Finance

Expenditure		2016	2015
General Fund			
Staff	44%	£1,281,913	£1,229,525
Printing and stationery	6%	£175,142	£154,259
Postage and telephone	9%	£258,872	£249,115
Travel	5%	£153,168	£149,877
Research materials	2%	£54,379	£58,802
Rent and building running costs	5%	£151,485	£151,627
Equipment and depreciation	2%	£63,677	£72,251
Conference and meetings costs	<1%	£12,763	£16,631
Professional fees	6%	£169,306	£116,888
Miscellaneous	<1%	£3,918	£3,205
Total for the General Fund		£2,324,623	£2,202,180
Legal Defence Fund	18%	£518,167	£349,401
Other restricted funds	2%	£45,744	£43,999
Total Expenditure - All Funds		£2,888,534	£2,595,580

Income		2016	2015
General Fund			
Unrestricted	86%	£2,447,797	£2,073,510
Sales	<1%	£2,374	£3,677
Total for the General Fund		£2,450,171	£2,077,187
Legal Defence Fund	12%	£333,666	£479,699
Other restricted funds	2%	£47,071	£39,653
Total Income - All Funds		£2,830,908	£2,596,539

What We Believe

1. GOVERNMENTS EXIST TO RESTRAIN EVIL

Governments are vital for civilisation. The rule of law is the basis of order and civilisation. Authorities are instituted by God for the good of everyone to restrain evil. The Bible teaches that governments are ordained by God to punish the wrongdoer and to commend those who do right (Romans 13:3-4; 1 Peter 2:14).

The Bible plainly teaches that it is the duty of every Christian to submit to authority. This includes the payment of taxes: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established... This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing." (Romans 13:1,6). "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and commend those who do right" (1 Peter 2:13-14).

It is the duty of those in authority to punish those who do wrong. The punishment envisaged in the Bible clearly includes physical force. The Apostle Paul notes that a ruler "does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer" (Romans 13:4).

It is right and proper for the state when deciding on appropriate punishments to consider deterrence and reformation. But desirable though these aims may be, punishment cannot be separated from the concept of just desert or retribution. Justice demands that the guilty are punished as their deeds deserve. For this reason it is detestable in God's sight for the guilty to be acquitted or the innocent condemned (Proverbs 17:15).

The New Testament teaching on submission to authorities was given to the Church in the context of corrupt authorities. There may be circumstances where the Christian cannot obey the state: if the state should command what God forbids or forbid what God commands then the duty of the Christian must be to obey God rather than man (Acts 4:19; 5:29). The supreme example of Jesus Christ teaches that Christians will experience persecution and injustice in this life.

All judgment dispensed on earth is provisional. One day God will dispense perfect justice "so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God" (Romans 3:19). The Bible teaches that "man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). This judgment will be on the basis of

works in this life, and is not to be confused with justification which is solely obtained through the merits of Jesus Christ's atoning death on the cross.

In a democracy Christians can seek to be salt and light and use their democratic rights for the good of the Gospel. It is often said today that the law should not be used to enforce morality. This is quoted against Christians, as if we are the only ones who believe the law should be based on a moral position. In reality, everyone has a 'moral' position upon which their view of the law is based.

Secularists passionately believe that their assumptions should be the basis of our law and policy. However, Christians have always recognised that the purpose of national laws is to restrain evil. So morality cannot be divorced from the law.

God knows how we are made. He knows what is best for us. We believe the Bible contains the 'Maker's instructions'. Only God's moral law can truly protect people and promote what is good. Christians want to see God's moral law obeyed. This brings glory to God and it is also what is truly best for people. Christians want to see public policy which is consistent with the teaching of Christ and the Ten Commandments.

In a democracy Christians have the freedom to argue their case like everyone else. Our responsibility is to speak out for what is right. We are not responsible if men and women reject what they have heard.

It is because we love our neighbour and want what is best for them that Christians should speak up for what is right.

And when Christians speak up, very often they will find that non-Christians agree with them. Man is fallen, but God's image has not been entirely eradicated. Men and women still have a conscience which can agree with God's standards (Romans 2:14-15).

Christians believe that there is not only special revelation found in the Bible; there is also general revelation which comes through nature and conscience. Thus there is a higher universal moral law as distinct from the specific laws of individual states. Because these specific laws can be in defiance of the moral law and what is right, governments and individuals can be held accountable. This happened with the Nazis in the mid-twentieth century, where laws were held to be immoral. This and similar tyrannies resulted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which are based on the moral law. If governments, ignoring the moral law, enact immoral legislation giving rise to so-called 'rights', Christians, people of other faiths and people of no faith, seeking to uphold the moral law, have a duty to protest.

2. MARRIAGE IS SACRED

It is now being argued that marriage is no better than any other type of relationship and should not have a special status in law. It is said that marriage is just a piece of paper. But this is not how God sees it. At the beginning of creation God spelled out the importance of marriage to mankind when, after Eve was created for Adam, the Bible records: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Marriage is a creation ordinance and therefore God's teaching on marriage and sex is relevant to the world as well as to the church. Marriage is meant for the good of all people – not just Christians.

Marriage clearly is different from other types of relationship. Marriage is part of God's 'common grace'. The Bible clearly teaches that the only context for sexual activity is within lifelong monogamous marriage (1 Corinthians 6:9). Marriage is the proper context for raising children. Even secular research shows that marriage is head-and-shoulders above other types of human relationships in terms of the benefits it gives to adults and children. In the past marriage was protected in the Western legal tradition because of the unique social benefits it offers. Today marriage has lost much of its unique status in public policy. The Christian Institute is concerned about any legislation, public policy, benefit or tax requirement that undermines marriage and Christian family patterns. The family is a fundamental carrier of values and is at present being undermined. This is evident not least in the area of divorce. Jesus emphasised that marriage was for life, but successive reforms of the divorce law have fostered a rampant divorce culture. God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16) and Jesus clearly aligned himself against easy divorce (Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12). Successive reforms of the divorce law in Britain have increased both the divorce rate and the number of children born outside marriage. The Institute believes that the legal framework should be reformed so that divorce is discouraged and reconciliation encouraged. Divorce law should not acquit the guilty and condemn the innocent.

When Paul went to Athens he found it "was full of idols". Paul attacked the rampant idolatry (Acts 17:16-34). In our own day there may not be idols on every street corner, but there is the all-pervasive worship of sex. Christians must continue to argue for marriage. We also have to be firm that all sex outside marriage is wrong. This means that fornication, adultery and homosexual practice are wrong. Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery, "Go, and sin no more" (John 8:11).



3. PARENTS HAVE A GOD-GIVEN AUTHORITY OVER THEIR CHILDREN

In the Bible it is parents who have the responsibility for raising children. Parents have a God-given authority over their children. The fifth commandment requires a child to honour its father and mother (Exodus 20:12). This was quoted by Jesus and by the Apostle Paul.

Parents are expected to exercise loving discipline over their children. As part of this most parents use physical chastisement such as smacking. Discipline must not be harsh. Fathers are told to instruct children according to what is good and not to exasperate their children (Ephesians 6:4). That discipline can be painful is clearly accepted in Scripture (e.g. Hebrews 12:7-11). Attempts to make the administration of reasonable chastisement a criminal offence should be strongly resisted as should other moves which usurp the authority of parents.

Christians ought particularly to be concerned by any proposals which weaken the moral protections for children. Jesus gave a serious warning of judgment against those who cause children to sin (Matthew 18:6). This is an apt warning in these days when children have their innocence stolen from them.

4. DRUG TAKING IS WRONG

The Bible bluntly teaches that drunkenness is wrong: "Do not get drunk on wine" (Ephesians 5:18). Intoxication and loss of control are intrinsic to taking drugs. Intoxication is also wrong because of escapism. People cannot solve their problems by running away from them. Down the ages Christians have been at the forefront of battling against the epidemic of public drunkenness and the personal tragedy of alcoholism. Now Christians must take a stand as it becomes ever more fashionable to argue for the legalisation of all drugs.

5. 'HARM REDUCTION' APPROACHES ARE UN-CHRISTIAN

Teenage pregnancy and drug taking are recognised as two of the major social problems affecting this country.

Telling young people to steer clear of drugs and to abstain from sex until marriage is now viewed as 'indoctrination' and a waste of time. Such approaches have been ridiculed as a simplistic 'just say no' message. For the past twenty-five years the argument has been made that preventative approaches which give strong moral guidance to young people do not work.

Instead, 'harm reduction' approaches have been advocated with the justification that telling young people not to take drugs or engage in underage sex will not stop them doing it, therefore it's better to allow them to do it and ensure they do it safely. This harm reduction philosophy has led to young people being told how to have 'safer sex' and how to take drugs 'safely'. This philosophy is superficially appealing because it has a desirable goal – the reduction

of harm. Many people have been taken in by this profoundly naïve philosophy. But by opposing restraint, harm reduction actually increases the number of people involved in a harmful activity rather than reducing it.

Harm reduction was originally introduced to help drug addicts who were hooked on a chemical substance. As part of a programme to end their addiction, addicts in danger of killing themselves were given advice on how to take their drugs more safely. The important point was that the aim in view was to end the addiction. This original approach has now largely been abandoned. Heroin addicts are now being given methadone on a long term basis.

Of even wider significance is the fact that harm reduction approaches have been extended to cover the whole population of young people rather than just those who are addicts. From a Christian perspective, harm reduction greases the tracks of sin. Instead

of telling young people that actions inevitably have consequences, harm reduction presents as a paradise what is inherently dangerous.

Harm reduction creates an atmosphere of acceptability that encourages more people to engage in harmful activity and stigmatises those young people who remain opposed to it. This will result in increased harm, not reduced harm. This is clearly seen in the field of sex education. Since 'safer sex' education was introduced the number of children engaging in underage sex has increased. The levels of sexually transmitted disease have also rocketed, as have teenage abortions. Meanwhile, it has become almost impossible for young people

to feel free to say they want to wait until they are married before having sex. Harm reduction has increased harm, not reduced it.

Harm reduction undermines the rule of law and parental authority. It leads young people into wrongdoing. It sends out the message that taking drugs or engaging in underage sex is acceptable. Increasing use of the harm reduction philosophy is leading to increasing failure. The only answer that the gurus of harm reduction can give to this is to say that there must be more use of harm reduction at ever younger ages.

By contrast, where preventative approaches are used they have been seen to succeed. Take, for example,

smoking. The Government has embarked on a tough anti-smoking campaign that tells people in no uncertain terms: don't smoke. It has launched hard-hitting advertising campaigns with heart-rending stories of people suffering from lung cancer. Smoking is now banned in almost all workplaces and public buildings. Instead, we see smokers huddled outside because smoking is not allowed inside. The result of the public education programme has been a decline in smoking amongst men aged over 35. This led to a 43% reduction in the lung cancer rates for men over a 25 year period to 1999 (see *Social Trends*, No 32, 2002, page 126). If we can promote 'just say no' to smoking, why not to activities which are illegal and morally wrong?

6. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM MUST BE PRESERVED

Christians are to pray for the governing authorities "that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness". Paul says, "this is good and pleases God our Saviour who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:1-4). In other words, we are to pray for freedom to live the Christian life and to proclaim the Gospel.

When religious liberty is threatened, gospel liberty is also in danger. It becomes more difficult to proclaim the Gospel and more difficult for Christians to live out godly lives that witness to the Gospel. Jesus himself warns his followers not to lose their distinctive 'salt', lest they become

useless and trampled on by men (Matthew 5:13). Jesus wants us not to be ashamed but rather to put our light on its stand. Christians should therefore be concerned greatly about any laws or policies that limit our religious liberty.

Christians must submit to the Governing authorities except where they require what God forbids or forbid what God requires (Acts 5:29).

The Christian Institute has been very concerned about laws which limit religious broadcasting and seek to impose unwarranted secular restrictions on churches – such as being forced to employ unbelieving staff.

These days there is a deliberate twisting of what 'religious liberty' actually means. Religious liberty is not only the liberty to believe certain things in our head, but the liberty to act according to those beliefs. It is, for example, the liberty to gather with like-minded people, to form associations with those who share our faith, to tell other people about our faith, and to speak out against what we believe to be wrong.

It is this liberty to act on our beliefs that is under attack in our day. Part of this stems from the growing chasm between Christian values and the values of those in public life.

7. LIFE IS SACRED FROM CONCEPTION

The Bible clearly teaches that human life is precious and that murder is wrong (Genesis 9:6). Uniquely among all creatures only man has the capacity for a relationship with God. Only man has a soul. Only man was made in God's image, God's likeness (Genesis 1:26).

The Bible talks of God establishing and sustaining this relationship with an individual from conception (Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 139:13). It follows that the human soul must be present from conception. Body and soul cannot be separated until death.

The incarnation of Christ also has important implications for medical ethics. Jesus Christ reveals not only the nature of deity but also the nature of what is human. The incarnation of the divine Son of God began with the conception and not the manger in

Bethlehem – he “was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the virgin Mary” (see The Apostles' Creed and Matthew 1:20). Since Jesus shared our humanity and was made like us in every way (Hebrews 2:14,17), our own human life must also have begun at conception.

The early church was at the forefront of ending the practice of abortion in the Roman Empire.

The Christian Institute therefore affirms that human personhood begins at conception and that the human embryo is precisely that – a *human* embryo. There are enormous practical implications which flow from this belief. Not only is abortion wrong, but also any practice which deliberately destroys human embryos. This includes human cloning and the use of drugs which prevent the implantation of an embryo.

8. CHRISTIAN BELIEFS ON TRANSEXUALISM

Transsexuals are people who are biologically normal, but who believe themselves to be members of the opposite sex – they say they are ‘trapped in the wrong body’. And so a male-to-female transsexual will assume the identity of a woman. Often transsexuals undergo a ‘sex change’ operation. The Gender Recognition Act provides many legal rights for transsexuals.

Three fundamental premises lie behind the Act: *one*, human psychological states rather than human bodily nature can determine a person's gender; *two*, it is right for a surgeon to deform a healthy body in the interests of a psychological disorder; and, *three*, the State should validate psychosocial confusions having precedence over unambiguous biological sex.

Christians say these premises are wrong from biblical teaching, and also church tradition and common sense reason.

Firstly, the Bible teaches that a human person is a mind-body whole. So the body determines personhood, not just the mind. The first Christian heresy was to deny that “Jesus Christ has come *in the flesh*” (1 John 4:2). Genesis 1:27 records: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Biblical Christians hold that ‘sex change’ surgery desecrates a body made in the image of God. And the Bible



teaches that the State should validate what is right and not what is wrong (Romans 13:3).

Secondly, the Church of England's 2003 discussion document also equated transsexualism with the ancient heresy of Gnosticism.¹ Both see the body as unimportant and the mind as all important. Gnosticism was strongly condemned by early Christian theologians such as Irenaeus (c130-200 AD) and Tertullian (c155-220 AD).²

Thirdly, the philosopher, Sir Peter Strawson, also holds that a person must have “*both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics... [so] the orthodox have wisely insisted on the resurrection of the body*”.³ It is therefore wrong to determine a person's gender because their mind cannot accept their body. As the then Bishop of Winchester stated in 2004: “When the bill passes into law, for me the words woman and man will no longer mean what they have always meant and the government will have introduced marriage between two people of the same sex.”⁴

Churches try to care for transsexuals and to speak to them about the Gospel. The Christian response to a transsexual, as with any other person, should be prayer, care and counsel as for any with psychological

difficulties and where necessary repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). There will, of course, be differences in the pastoral approaches that are taken. However, when it comes to deciding who should join ladies' prayer meetings or be leaders, who should use the ladies' lavatories or take Holy Communion, surely individual churches should have the freedom to decide this themselves? Surely the law should not leave churches wide open to legal actions in secular courts over such matters?

The theologian Oliver O'Donovan (Emeritus Professor of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology, University of Edinburgh) has argued: “If I claim to have a ‘real sex’, which may be at war with the sex of my body and is at least in a rather uncertain relationship to it, I am shrinking from the glad acceptance of myself as a physical as well as a spiritual being, and seeking self-knowledge in a kind of Gnostic withdrawal from material creation.”⁵

¹ *Some Issues in Human Sexuality - A Guide to the Debate*, discussion document from the House of Bishops' Group on Issues in Human Sexuality, Church House, 2003, page 249

² Berkhof, L, *The History of Christian Doctrines*, The Banner of Truth Trust, latest edition 2002, pages 45-51 and 62-63; Elwell, W A (Ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Paternoster Press, 1999, pages 444-447, 569 and 1078-1079

³ Strawson, P F, *Individuals - An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, Methuen, 1959, pages 104, 116

⁴ *The Sunday Times*, 29 February 2004

⁵ O'Donovan, O, *Transsexualism and Christian Marriage*, Grove Booklet on Ethics, 1982, page 11

9. CHRISTIANITY AND THE STATE

Jesus Christ is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords “far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come” (Ephesians 1:21).

Scripture clearly teaches that God's present judgment is a reality for nations which defy Jesus Christ: “Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him” (Psalm 2:10-12).

Christians are to pray for those in authority and for the state to provide freedom for the Gospel to be preached and for men to live “quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (1 Timothy 2:1-3). A ruler in authority is “God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer” (Romans 13:4).

Christ's kingdom can never be identified with any particular nation or political party. While it is not the role of a state to coerce individual citizens to adhere to particular beliefs, the state can never be neutral as regards values. Christians are to work for the state to adopt Christian values and to implement godly laws.

There are different views among Christian people regarding the establishment of religion.

However, as a matter of fact the Coronation Oath is an explicit denial of the secularity of the United Kingdom; and the establishment of the Protestant Reformed Christian religion in general, and of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland in particular, still defines the UK as constitutionally a Christian country. These constitutional arrangements will remain in force until there is intentional constitutional change to the contrary.

In promoting the Christian faith The Christian Institute seeks to affirm the universal Lordship of Christ and to challenge secular humanism, theological liberalism, universalism and other ideologies.

The Institute affirms:

(1) Salvation solely through the atoning work of Jesus Christ (John 14:6); and

(2) That biblical Christianity maintains the true basis for tolerance, democracy and human dignity; and

(3) Its commitment to freedom *for*, not freedom *from* religion. No state can be neutral in terms of morality or religion. When a state has a majority who claim allegiance to one religion, it may not enforce that one religious belief. There will, however, inevitably be a privileging of that religion at certain public ceremonies such as thanksgivings, funerals of public figures, and rituals and prayers at the beginning of Parliaments. Also it will be privileged in education, while ensuring opt-outs for those of other faiths and none. There must be freedom for minority faiths and philosophies except where these plainly transgress the moral law. To fail to privilege one religion would be for the State positively to endorse either a secular humanistic philosophy (which results in atheism), or a "multifaith philosophy" (which is opposed by faithful people in all religions). Currently Christianity is privileged in the United Kingdom where the majority claim a Christian allegiance (cf. the Coronation Oath and the National Census 2011 in which 59% of all people in England and Wales stated their religion as Christian). The Christian Institute sees this as entirely appropriate and is committed to the ideals behind the current Coronation Oath whatever future form of constitution the UK may have.

10. GAMBLING IS WRONG

Gambling is any activity in which wealth changes hands, mainly on the basis of chance and with risk to the gambler. Such activities include betting, fruit machines, lotteries, casino games, scratchcards and card games. Creative effort, useful skills, and responsible investment are not integral factors.

There are three legitimate ways in which wealth may change hands – by giving, by working for it, or by genuine exchange: anything else is virtual theft and so a breaking of the 8th commandment. As has been said: "Gambling is a kind of robbery by mutual agreement; but it is still robbery, just as duelling, which is murder by mutual agreement, is still treated as murder."

Of the three impulses behind gambling – the desire for gain, the desire for a thrill and the desire for competition, the moral and ethical problems are focused on the desire for gain.

(1) Gambling directly appeals to covetousness and greed "which is idolatry" according to the Apostle Paul (Colossians 3:5). Gambling breaches the 1st, 2nd, 8th and 10th Commandments. It enthrones personal desires in place of God. Jesus warned: "You cannot serve both God and Money" (Matthew 6:24). A greedy and unrepentant person is an idolater who cannot obtain salvation (Ephesians 5:5).



(2) Gambling directly depends on other people incurring financial loss. Jesus said that you should “do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12). But gambling depends on doing to others what we would *not* have them do to us. At that point no gambler desires the best for his fellow man. Instead he is indifferent to his fellow gamblers or wants them to lose so that he can win. In any honest business transaction it is the intention of both parties to benefit, yet with gambling the intention is to gain but the gain is at the other’s expense. We are called to do good to all people, not to do harm (Galatians 6:10).

(3) Gambling denies the biblical work ethic which links honest labour with reward. The Apostle Paul said “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need” (Ephesians 4:28). Gambling holds out the dream that it is possible to get something for nothing. It can encourage laziness rather than work. Laziness is condemned in Scripture (e.g. 2 Thessalonians 3:10).

(4) Gambling is a reckless use of resources. It undermines the creation mandate to be stewards of creation and to work (Genesis 1:28; 9:1-2). The Bible teaches that all

things belong to God (Psalm 24:1) and that man will have to give an account for his stewardship of all that he has been given (Matthew 25:14-30).

(5) Rather than facing up to reality, gambling is a form of escapism. The gambling industry trades on people’s vulnerability to temptation and relies on the fact that statistically it is the industry that wins practically every time. Those who gamble often are not thinking rationally about risk. Instead they are thinking about luck and superstition. Chance is glorified and God’s sovereignty denied (Job 42:2; Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:16,17; Hebrews 1:3). Scripture makes clear that trust in God and trust in luck cannot co-exist (Isaiah 65:11).

(6) There is evidence that gambling disproportionately affects the poor who face particular temptations because of their strained financial circumstances (Proverbs 30:8-9). It is very wrong to exploit this vulnerability.

(7) Gambling is inherently addictive. As with alcohol or drug addiction, compulsive gamblers lose control of their lives. This is plainly contrary to the teaching of the Bible, which



teaches us to be self-controlled (Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:22-23; Titus 2:11-12; 1 Peter 5:8).

(8) Gambling is the very opposite of contentment (1 Timothy 6:6-10). Man’s duty is to seek first God’s Kingdom and trust that God will meet his needs (Matthew 6:30-34; Philippians 4:19).

Mainstream Christian belief has always viewed gambling as incompatible with the Bible’s teaching. Gambling was strongly opposed by Tertullian, Hugh Latimer, John Wesley, William Wilberforce, C H Spurgeon and William Temple. On this issue, Thomas Aquinas is not representative of mainstream Christian belief.

Gambling does not cease to be wrong because a proportion of the take is devoted to so-called good causes. Many are misled at this point, and persuaded of the legitimacy of the National Lottery, for example. The end does not justify the means.

Thanks

The work of The Christian Institute is greatly blessed through those who voluntarily give their time to the organisation. The following are some of those who helped during 2016. I apologise to those I have inadvertently omitted.

The advice, support and encouragement of the Trustees is much appreciated both by me and by the staff. During 2016 the Trustees were: John Burn (Chairman); Rod Badams; Revd Rupert Bentley-Taylor; Revd George Curry; Geoff Fox; Revd David Holloway; Trevor James; Revd James Leggett; Revd Dr William Philip; and Dr Philip Robinson. The Executive Committee, made up of John Burn, Geoff Fox and Trevor James, meets regularly to oversee the smooth and efficient operation of the charity.

Thank you to all those who have spoken at Christian Institute meetings, given seminars to staff and helped us to organise meetings. Many more have offered us hospitality.

I would like to thank Chris Prest for his work in representing the Institute at meetings around the country, covering many miles each year. Our special thanks go to Mike Judge who stepped in at very short notice to give a presentation on

behalf of the Institute, and to Daniel McArthur, Hazelmary Bull and Adrian Smith for their participation in our LDF tour.

I am grateful to the speakers at our 2016 Autumn Lectures series who were: Revd Dr Kevin Bidwell; Dr Andy Gemmill; Dr Glynn Harrison; Revd Angus MacLeay; and Revd Dr Richard Turnbull. Thank you to George and Kathryn Curry, Pat Johnson, Ruth Shutler, Judith Sword and Edith Avery for their help at our Autumn Lectures in Newcastle.

Staff at the Institute are greatly encouraged to hear of the work and experience of others. Thank you to those who gave their time to speak to staff during the year: Rod Badams; Rupert Bentley-Taylor; John Deighan; Josephine Quintavalle; Andrea Williams; William Philip; Peter Saunders; Chris Sinkinson; John Smeaton; Melvin Tinker; and Prof John Wyatt.

The hospitality of Christians and congregations around the UK is a great blessing to staff as they host our meetings and help such events to run smoothly. Thanks to Keith and Marion Buchan, Stephen Clarke, Paul and Grace Coxall, Ian Donnell, Ken and Helen Foot, David and Naomi Forbes, Iron Hall Evangelical Church, the McArthur family, Iain

Alasdair Macdonald, Pastor Bobby Mackay, Colin McKee, Richard and Karen Moon, Melita Rosario and West Row Baptist Church for their help and hospitality.

In recent years a number of couples and individuals have been willing to share their personal experiences under our 'Choose Life' banner. Their stories have been released online to encourage others in similar circumstances and I am extremely grateful to all those who have been willing to do this. I would like to thank Colin and EJ Harwood for agreeing to share with us and be filmed during 2016.

Our mailing volunteers continued to provide invaluable service, often at short notice. Those who helped during 2016 were: Edith Avery; Paul Burn; Howard Chapman; Esther Curnow; Geoff Hambler; Gordon Heiniger; Ann Hodgson; Peter Howbrook; Sally Hutter; Mike Johnson; Brian and Mary McRoy; Malcolm and Caroline Peters; Becky Smith; Peter Sword; and Jacqui Turner. Of course, Pat Johnson's work in organising these volunteers is very much appreciated.



Colin Hart, Director

Basis of Faith

We are committed to the truths of historic, biblical Christianity including:

- A.** The existence of the one, eternal God, Creator and Lord of the universe, who in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, both governs all things according to his will and is accomplishing his purposes in the world and in the church.
- B.** The inspiration of the Holy Scripture in its entirety by God's Spirit through the human authors, and its revelation of God's truth to humanity. The Bible is without error not only when it speaks of salvation, its own origins, values, and religious matters, but it is also without error when it speaks of history and the cosmos. Christians must, therefore, submit to its supreme authority, both individually and corporately, in every matter of belief and conduct.
- C.** The inherent value of all human beings, in consequence of their creation by God in his own image, and their sinfulness and guilt since the Fall. This has rendered them subject to God's wrath and condemnation, and has resulted in their alienation from his life, suppression of his truth, and hostility to his law.
- D.** Salvation from the guilt, penalty and all other consequences of sin solely through the work of Jesus Christ – his perfect obedience, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection and exaltation as Lord. He alone is truly God and truly man, the only mediator between God and man. There is salvation through no other person, creed, process or power. Each sinner is justified before God and reconciled to him only by his grace appropriated through faith alone.
- E.** The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit for the individual's new birth and growth to maturity, and for the Church's constant renewal in truth, wisdom, faith, holiness, love, power and mission.
- F.** The one, holy, universal and apostolic Church, which is the body of Christ, and to which all true believers belong. The Church's calling is to worship and serve God in the world, to proclaim and defend his truth, to exhibit his character and to demonstrate the reality of his new order.
- G.** The personal and visible return in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ to raise the dead and bring salvation and judgment to final completion. Evildoers will suffer eternal punishment. God will fully establish his kingdom when he creates a new heaven and a new earth from which evil, suffering and death will be excluded, and in which he will be glorified for ever.



THE CHRISTIAN
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The earth is the LORD's and everything in it.
(Psalm 24:1)

