



Now thank we all our God

The Christian Institute

Annual Review 2020



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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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The Christian Institute, Wilberforce House, 4 Park Road,
Gosforth Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8DG
0191 281 5664 | info@christian.org.uk | www.christian.org.uk



Welcome



BY JOHN BURN

Welcome to our Annual Review 2020. May you be greatly encouraged as you read it.

We give thanks to God for providing for all our needs during 2019. He continues to do far more than we ask or imagine. And even as coronavirus has overshadowed everything in recent months, He has enabled the Institute to continue working effectively. For everything the Institute has been able to accomplish, the glory goes to Him alone.

Staff grew in number over the year. Sophie Honeyman began work as PA to Sam Webster, replacing Hannah Ballard who left the previous year. We also welcomed Toby Lucas and Sam Driver to the Research team.

Daniela Martines joined the Education department to assist John Denning with the increasing number of

requests for help from parents, teachers and governors. In our Communications team, we said goodbye to Victoria Young and Marc Stamatiou but welcomed Janet Mcilpatrick. Hannah Beijeman took on the role of PA to Simon Calvert in place of Laura Brewis.

More than ten years after joining as a graduate, Sam Wylie left the Institute for a new career in the civil service. We wish him well. Frank Oliver has taken a well-earned retirement after more than nine years with us. My heartfelt thanks go to them both for their years of service. Lydia Zhang has joined the Finance team to replace Frank.

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Research Assistant Michael Taylor on his marriage. Congratulations also go to Rodney and Sarah Aiken, and Peter and Victoria Marsay – both couples have had new

babies in recent months. Sarah and Victoria are much-missed former members of staff.

Our staff spoke to over 18,000 people at nearly 400 presentations around the country in 2019 – our highest total to date. This is in addition to our day-to-day work on research, online and print publications and various campaigns. Such was the demand for our Living Christianity series that we had to reprint it twice. Work is under way on an entirely new edition for 11-16-year-olds.

We are grateful to God for the faithful backing of our supporters. May He give us the grace we need to face the challenges of the year to come.

John Burn OBE
Chairman

Now thank we all our God



BY COLIN HART

**"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever." PSALM 107:1**

God's kindness is on display all around us. His creating and sustaining work goes on. As Jesus said, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:45). And as the Apostle Paul said, God "supplies seed to the sower and bread for food" (2 Corinthians 9:10). Not only the seed for the crops, but the bakers who bake the bread.

During the COVID crisis our times have been hard and strange, but God's common grace is at work. Thank God for those who provide our food – from the farmers to the supermarket shelf stackers and the delivery drivers.

All over the world Christians have the custom of saying 'grace' to give thanks for food. God's kindness in providing food is part of his common


grace to all, whether people believe in him or not.

One of the most famous musical settings of 'grace' is the hymn 'Now Thank We All Our God' ('Nun danket alle Gott'), by Martin Rinkart.

Rinkart was a minister in the German city of Eilenburg during the Thirty Years War in Central Europe. The conflict cost millions of German lives, mostly through hunger and illness. Tragically, many died due to plague, including Rinkart's own wife. In the epidemic of 1637, Rinkart was left as the sole pastor of the city. He officiated at over 4,000 funerals, sometimes 50 per day.

Written around this time, Rinkart's hymn shows his faith shining through the most severe testing. Despite appalling loss of life all around him and immense pressure





*1 Now thank we all our God
with hearts, and hands and voices;
who wondrous things has done,
in whom His world rejoices;
who, from our mothers' arms,
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.*

✪ Written by Martin Rinkart,
circa 1636, translation by
Catherine Winkworth, 1856.

*2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever-joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
to keep us in His grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.*

*3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and Him who reigns
with them in highest heaven:
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.*

on him personally, Martin Rinkart calls us to give thanks.

There are many situations in life – like the pandemic – where Christians have the same trying difficulties as everyone else. But Christians also suffer because of their faith (2 Timothy 3:12) and because of their devotion to the glory of God. As Peter says, godly Christians are “tormented” in their souls when God’s standards are mocked by those around them (2 Peter 2:8). Our hearts are stirred when God’s name is derided. But though that is a right response, we must not forget to be thankful.

Supporters of the Institute can thank God for three things.

First, thank God that, despite relentless attacks, it is still protected in law to hold the belief that marriage is only between a man and woman. That’s why Ashers bakery could win its case. True marriage is a precious institution. Christians must do everything they can to defend it.

Second, thank God for the freedoms we enjoy. Churches may not have been able to meet for a while during

lockdown, but there has never been any restriction on proclaiming the Gospel over the internet and through publications.

Third, thank God that our society and our Government acted with the overriding aim of saving lives during the pandemic.

During the lockdown some public bodies issued blanket ‘do not resuscitate’ forms for vulnerable people to sign. This was stopped by the NHS at a national level. Another ‘expert’ said over-90s should not ‘clog up’ hospitals. Thank God that such voices were ignored too.

The hymn rightly urges us to give thanks “Now”, but along with thankfulness, we have God’s gracious invitation to bring him our petitions (Philippians 4:6) even on a daily basis (Matthew 6:11). Do give thanks to God for all his help during another year, and ask God to bless the works of our hands in the year ahead.



Colin Hart, Director

Religious liberty

CORNERSTONE FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICE V. OFSTED

For many months, the Institute has been helping Cornerstone (North East), a Christian fostering and adoption support agency undertake legal action against Ofsted.

It is England's only evangelical fostering and adoption agency and an example of God's injunction to "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless" (Psalm 82:3).

In June 2019, an Ofsted inspector downgraded Cornerstone's fostering work and labelled its Christian ethos 'discriminatory' because it only works with evangelical Christian carers and supports traditional marriage.

On 7 July 2020, the High Court found that Ofsted was wrong to try to

force Cornerstone to work with non-evangelical Christian carers. This is a firm rejection of the idea that Christians must abandon their faith when they enter the public square. This is very good news.

However, the Court also ruled that the exception in the Equality Act 2010 permitting religious organisations to impose restrictions on grounds of sexual orientation does not apply to Cornerstone. This meant Cornerstone could not require its carers to abide by its Christian beliefs on appropriate sexual conduct.

Crucially, this hinged on the Judge's view that Cornerstone recruits its carers on behalf of, and under contract with, local authorities. This ruling goes against a decision by the Charity Commission in 2011.

The Institute continues to support Cornerstone as its lawyers consider a possible appeal.



Cornerstone
because foundations matter.



Cornerstone CEO Pam Birtle

HARRY COULTER

The Institute has also been supporting the case of Revd Harry Coulter, a Christian minister mistreated by a Belfast hotel because of his biblical beliefs about marriage.

In October 2019, Revd Coulter held a meeting for people concerned with the impending redefinition of marriage in Northern Ireland. Part way through, hotel staff demanded he bring the meeting to an end, citing a complaint from another patron. His fifty attendees had to leave and no justification was offered by the hotel.

With our help Revd Coulter is pursuing legal action for unlawful discrimination and breach of contract. Solicitors acting for Revd Coulter are seeking an apology and a refund of his booking fees and legal costs.



Let
Defe
Fun

GOSPEL FREEDOM

We have been involved with the legal teams of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), and Destiny Church, Edinburgh. The BGEA was banned from public venues around the UK because Franklin Graham (pictured) holds to the biblical doctrine that marriage is only between one man and one woman. This clearly emboldened Edinburgh Council to act against Destiny Church on similar grounds. If these Christian groups can be banned from hiring public venues, the same could potentially apply to any church. We do not want that to happen.



FREE SPEECH

Dale Mcalpine



The Institute helped Christian street preacher Dale Mcalpine pursue a claim for being wrongfully arrested and detained for six hours. Dale received £4,000 plus costs from Cumbria Police, which opted to settle his claim without going to court. This

is a positive outcome for Christians across the country and an important reminder that there is no law against preaching the Gospel. Dale donated the £4,000 he received to the Institute.

Commission for Countering Extremism

We have continued to urge the Commission for Countering Extremism to recognise concerns over laws embracing concepts like 'hate speech' and 'non-violent extremism'. When it launched its call for evidence last year, we asked Institute supporters to put forward a Christian perspective. Helpfully, the Commission agrees that the current definition of extremism as "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values" is too broad and restricts legitimate free speech.



HATE CRIME

In late April 2020, the Scottish Government published its Hate Crime and Public Order Bill. This creates new 'stirring up hatred' offences on religion, sexual orientation, and transgender status. There may be profound consequences for free speech and religious liberty. These offences could easily impact our freedom to call people to repent of sin and proclaim Christ as the only way of salvation.

Northern Ireland's Department of Justice has also commissioned a review of hate crime. In some ways the threshold there is even lower than in Scotland. We are concerned about offences that capture insulting words or behaviour that are not intended to stir up hatred. Laws introduced during the Troubles now risk being exploited to shut down free speech.

Many of those who oppose Christian truth claim disagreement is 'hatred'. This has implications for many walks of life. For example, parents have been accused of hatred for objecting to their children being taught LGBT ideology in schools.

We are engaged in detailed legal work so that we can explain the problems with these laws to politicians and the media.

Marriage and the family

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IN NORTHERN IRELAND



In July 2019, Westminster voted to impose same-sex marriage on Northern Ireland, despite huge public opposition. The first civil ceremonies took place in February 2020.

Citizens of Northern Ireland risked being given fewer protections than those in the rest of the UK. The Ashers case had shown us that some are willing to try and use the law to punish those who disagree with same-sex marriage. We briefed supporters so they could understand the free speech issues at stake, and encouraged them to contact their elected representatives.

We also wrote directly to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, to set out our concerns. We called for the same

protections in the Province that already apply on the mainland and provided extensive legal analysis showing that anything less would be unacceptable. Encouragingly, in January the Minister set out a series of protections very similar to those in England and Wales.



However, these do not yet address what is taught in schools, or what rights teachers and other public sector workers who disagree might have.

A consultation on introducing religious ceremonies for same-sex marriage closed in February 2020. Again, the Institute and our supporters responded. The results have not yet been published but we will closely examine any proposals to make sure churches are properly protected.

NAMED PERSON LAW FINALLY AXED

On 19 September, the Scottish Government officially announced the end of the compulsory Named Person scheme. It came three years after the UK Supreme Court struck down the central planks of a law which foisted a state official on every child in Scotland to look after their 'wellbeing'.

The Christian Institute spearheaded the legal action against the scheme, starting back in 2014.



NO-FAULT DIVORCE

The marriage-wrecking Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill became law in June 2020. The new law allows a spouse to end years of marriage in just six months without giving any reason.

Sadly, the Institute was one of only a few organisations challenging this hugely damaging legislation. We worked with a number of MPs and Peers who stood up bravely for the institution

of marriage. Despite their best efforts, there was little opposition as it passed through Parliament.

Divorce is not God's design and the legislation makes it much easier. A husband or wife will be able to end their marriage without having to offer any justification. This will almost certainly lead to thousands more divorces every year.



GENDER RECOGNITION ACT CHANGES HAVE NOT PROGRESSED

The Government said it would set out plans for changing the Gender Recognition Act in the summer of 2020.

It has been reported that proposals to make it much easier to change legal sex by 'self-declaration' will be scrapped. Minister for Women and Equalities Liz Truss has also indicated that under-18s

and single-sex spaces will be protected.

Similar plans in Scotland were put on hold because of the coronavirus outbreak. Under the plans, applicants need merely state that they have 'lived in the acquired gender' for three months, followed by a three-month 'reflection period'. The safeguards preventing 16 and 17-year-olds from changing legal sex would also be stripped away.

The Institute is working on new briefings explaining how radical transgender ideology has been able to spread so rapidly – especially among young people – and how Christians can respond.



📍 Liz Truss MP

SMACKING BANS



Wales followed Scotland in passing a law that will criminalise parents who gently smack their own children. This is an unprecedented state interference in family life and the Institute has remained at the forefront of those opposing it.

Through our role in the Be Reasonable campaign, we have shown how thousands of families are likely to be adversely affected.

Medical ethics

ABORTION

On 22 October 2019, Northern Ireland's good laws protecting women and unborn children were repealed. These have been responsible for saving an estimated 100,000 lives since 1967.



Tragically, the changes go far beyond the rest of the UK's already liberal law. Abortions are now allowed for any reason up to twelve weeks. There is no requirement for two doctors to agree – a safeguard that applies, at least officially, on the mainland.

Along with other pro-life groups, the Institute mobilised its supporters to oppose the changes. We also distributed an updated version of our *Abortion* briefing.

However, despite huge resistance from the Northern Irish public, the new regime came into force at the end of March. Thankfully, it has not yet fully been put into practice. John Larkin QC, until recently Northern Ireland's Attorney General, raised a number of legal issues with the regulations. The Assembly at Stormont has also voted against them.

The unborn, the most vulnerable in society, are made in the image of God. They deserve protection. We will continue to speak out on their behalf.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the Government and the nation have united to protect lives, including the elderly and medically vulnerable.

In February, the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) opted to maintain its opposition to assisted suicide, following a survey of its members. And back in November the High Court rejected another attempt to introduce assisted suicide through the courts.

These are encouraging signs for the future.

MEDICAL CANNABIS

One of the people helping lead the UK's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic – Professor Chris Whitty – warned last year that rushing into cannabis-based medicines risked a “disaster” like the thalidomide scandal.

The head of NHS England, Simon Stevens, also warned that medical cannabis risks “normalising drug use”. He said the Government's decision to allow some doctors to prescribe medical cannabis products could turn out to be a “big mistake”.

To give supporters the facts, in April 2019 we produced our new *Going soft on cannabis* publication.



Education

EQUIPPING PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Every day The Christian Institute's Education team helps parents, teachers and school governors by giving them tailored, practical advice. In 2018 we helped over 100 of them. In 2019 it was more than 250. And this vital work continues to grow.

Parents are deeply concerned about their children being exposed to highly inappropriate material in school lessons. Many Christian teachers are worried about being required to choose between their career and their faith.

Good concepts such as 'healthy relationships' and 'safeguarding' can be misused to promote promiscuity, homosexuality and transgenderism. Often these are justified with vague appeals to 'equality law'. In response, we created *Equipped for equality*, which debunks the myths surrounding what GB schools are required to do because of the Equality Act. More resources are set to follow.

Parents make a difference by raising sensible concerns when they spot the unbalanced promotion of LGBT issues. This helps to persuade schools to accommodate parents' beliefs.

But sometimes legal pressure is required. In February 2020 we warned Warwickshire County Council of possible legal action over its explicit and misleading relationships and sex education programme. In March, the Council announced it was withdrawing the materials "with immediate effect".



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Welsh Government has announced it will amend legislation to make sure RE covers non-religious worldviews like humanism. Despite overwhelming public opposition, it also said that it will end the right of withdrawal for parents from both RE and sex education from 2022. We briefed our supporters, who were among the hundreds who responded.

HOME EDUCATION

We helped supporters in England and Northern Ireland respond to consultations on requiring home educating parents to register their child with the authorities. This risks undermining the legal principle that the ultimate responsibility for educating children lies with parents, not the state.



Citizenship

ELECTION BRIEFING 2019

Our essential guide to the General Election set out where the main political parties stood on many issues of concern to Christians.

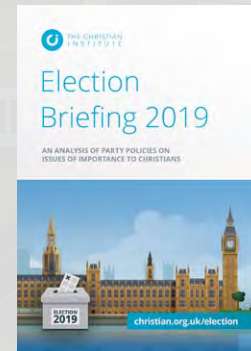
55,000 copies dispatched to churches and other supporters across Britain – its largest print run to date.

Over **13,000** downloads

New **interactive** version

Our analysis covered those issues where important Christian principles are at stake and biblical standards directly apply. Broadly, it addressed religious liberty, the sanctity of life, marriage, the family and issues of gender identity.

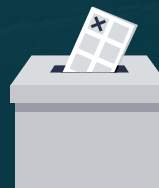
In modern Britain these can be among the most controversial subjects, yet in our view the Bible is perfectly clear about them.



A NATION UNDER GOD

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. But there are many ways we can make a difference.

History shows the tremendous impact Christians can have on their governments through being salt and light. The Christian Institute believes that Christians should take the significant opportunity elections provide to do this, by prayerfully casting our vote.



We are also called to pray that our authorities would provide freedom for the Gospel and 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 righteously (Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-14).

Developing our people

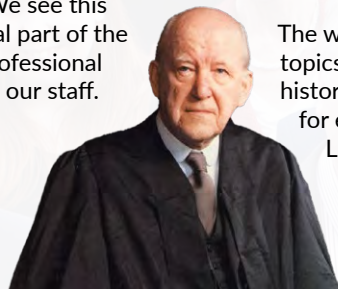
STAFF TRAINING

Our staff benefit from regular training on key thinkers, past campaigns, legal cases and ethical issues. We see this training as a vital part of the personal and professional development of our staff.

We concluded our series on key 20th century

thinkers with CS Lewis, John Stott and Dr Martin Lloyd-Jones (pictured).

The wide range of training topics also included the history of the campaign for eugenics, the Lausanne Movement, the 'emerging church' and radical gender ideology.



GUEST SPEAKERS

We welcomed several people to speak to staff on a variety of important topics. Guests included retired Consultant Obstetrician Pam Nobbs; former Head of Public Policy at the Christian Medical Fellowship Philippa Taylor; author and blogger Dr Will Jones; Director of Supporter Strategy at Coalition for Marriage Dr Tony Rucinski; and Institute trustees Revd Rupert Bentley-Taylor and Revd Dr Richard Turnbull.



Teaching and meetings

THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE EXISTS FOR THE FURTHERANCE AND PROMOTION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION.

ENGAGING WITH CRUCIAL ISSUES

Since the Institute began, we have sought to equip Christians to apply their faith to the issues of our day. We do this through our publications and website. We are also committed to holding public meetings.

Meetings in 2020 have been affected by the lockdown but in 2019 alone staff spoke to over 18,000 people at nearly 400 presentations around the country – our highest total to date.

Our meetings include biblical teaching on all people being made in the image of God, Jesus' command for his followers to live as salt and light, and the vital importance of marriage and family life. We give presentations about current ethical issues from a biblical perspective.

In addition, we held a number of meetings specifically on how to respond to radical transgender ideology in schools. We also held six meetings in Northern Ireland to address the seismic changes on abortion and same-sex marriage there. And in Scotland we spoke to 200 church leaders

over the course of an eleven-meeting tour in February. We also exhibited and distributed our free resources at 77 Christian conferences around the UK.

The Institute has five full-time members of staff devoted to holding church meetings. Many more are routinely involved in planning, publicity, and writing or giving presentations.

We are always delighted to be asked to speak in churches. We are grateful to those who open their doors to us, although sadly it is not possible to accept every invitation.

If you would like us to speak to your church, contact us at: development@christian.org.uk



🕒 (L-R) Regional Officers Gareth Edwards, Callum Webster and Nigel Kenny with Development Officers Josh Coghill and James McIntosh.



PREACHING FOR PREACHERS

Institute trustee Rupert Bentley-Taylor continued his popular Preaching for Preachers series with 'Preaching 2 Thessalonians today'.

In 2019 he spoke to nearly 200 church leaders in Newcastle, Cardiff, Bristol, Loughborough, Bury St Edmunds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Chessington and Sevenoaks.

Paul was writing to a church under pressure, assailed by society, troubled by false teaching within, confused about the future ahead and divided over how to respond in the present.

Paul speaks wonderfully confident words of prayer and assurance in God, clarifying words of warning and encouragement about the future, and challenging words about the pressing demands of living obedient lives.



RESOURCES

Publications

Designed to help Christians live faithfully as believers in today's society.

the.ci/publications



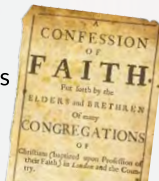
CI podcasts

The regular CI podcast series covers various issues of interest for Christians in Britain's shifting culture. In 2019, topics for these longer listens included Relationships and Sex Education, Transgenderism and a look back at 2018's landmark Ashers victory. *Listen at the.ci/podcasts*

Autumn lectures

In 2019, the theme for our annual series of lectures was 'Independency and freedom' – examining the quest for religious liberty in the 17th century. Lectures considered the early Baptists and independents, the Pilgrim Fathers, the Commonwealth under Cromwell, the Restoration of Charles II and the wider spirituality of the Puritans.

Institute trustee Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, Dr Matthew Bingham of Oak Hill College, pastor and author Ian Cooper and pastor and former lecturer in church history Phil Arthur addressed the origins and price of religious freedom in that century. The speakers stressed the many important lessons for believers today.



Week of prayer

Our popular week of prayer launched in 2018 and is now a fixture in the Institute's calendar. It is held twice a year, in spring and autumn. Churches and individual supporters have expressed their deep appreciation of the short, clear prayer points on national issues which enable them to pray in a focused and informed way.

Meet the team



Back Row:

- James McIntosh**
MTheol MTh
Development Officer
Develops the Institute's work with churches and supporters.
- Alicja Cieniawska**
LLB
Assistant Office Manager
Assists with the administration and running of the office.
- Christine Thwaites**
Cert Ed
Administrative Assistant
Handles correspondence and calls from supporters.
- Barbara Elder**
Administrative Assistant
Handles correspondence and calls from 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.
- Brian Steemson**
MA (Cantab) FCA
Financial Administrator
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Rodney Aiken LLM**
Legal Assistant
Assists with the work of the Legal Defence Fund.
- Sam Webster BA**
Solicitor Advocate
In-house Solicitor
Manages religious liberty cases.
- Jamie Gillies BA**
Public Affairs Assistant
Works with the Deputy Director (Public Affairs).
- Hannah Beijeman**
LLM
Personal Assistant to the Deputy Directors
- Simon Calvert LLB**
Deputy Director (Public Affairs)
Responsible for public affairs, including our parliamentary work.
- Ciarán Kelly BA**
MSc
Deputy Director (Staff and Communications)
Responsible for staff and oversees communications.
- Mark Taylor BA**
Multimedia Designer
Assists with the design of the Institute's various communications.
- Matt Crouch BSc**
Senior Multimedia Designer
Assists with the design of the Institute's various communications.
- David Olatunji BA**
Creative Media Assistant
Promotes the work of the Institute through multiple media platforms.
- John Denning**
BSc PGCE
Education Officer
Conducts research and advises on education issues.
- Dave Greateorex**
LLB
Head of Research
Supervises the research work.
- Toby Lucas BA**
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.
- Callum Webster**
MA MSc
Northern Ireland Officer
Develops the Institute's work in Northern Ireland.
- Nigel Kenny**
LLB DipLP
Scotland Officer
Develops the Institute's work in Scotland.
- Susan Constable**
Personal Assistant to the Scotland Officer

Front Row:

- Johnny Timm BSc**
IT Manager
Oversees our IT systems.
- Josh Coghill**
MA
Development Officer
Develops the Institute's work with churches and supporters.
- Kim Welford**
Administrative Assistant
Handles correspondence and calls from supporters.
- Jonathan Patterson**
BA
Office Manager
Supervises the administration and running of the office.
- Marilla Dobson BA**
Administrative Assistant
Handles correspondence and calls from supporters.
- Jon Errington**
BA DipTP
Head of Operations
Supervises the efficient operation of the Institute.
- Janet McMaster**
ACA
Financial Administrator
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Lydia Zhang MAAT**
Financial Administrator
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Sophie Honeyman**
Assistant to the In-house Solicitor
- Judi Coulson**
BA PGCE
Senior Administrator
Assists senior staff in the efficient operation of the Institute.
- Jane Carriellies BA**
Public Affairs Assistant
Works with the Deputy Director (Public Affairs).
- Louisa Bratley**
Personal Assistant to the Director
- Colin Hart BSc**
PGCE
Director
Controls the day-to-day running of the Institute.
- Angus Saul BA**
Senior Communications Officer
Helps with the Institute's communications.
- Peter Marsay**
Cameraman/Video Editor
Produces audio-visual output.
- Janet McIlpatrick BA**
Multimedia Designer
Assists with the design of the Institute's various communications.
- Daniela Martinez**
MA
Education Administrator
Assists with the work of the Education Officer.
- Sharon James**
MA (Cantab) MDv
PhD PGCE
Social Policy Analyst
Conducts research on developments in social policy.
- Rachel Gillies LLB**
Senior Researcher
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Sam Driver BA**
Research Assistant
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Rhys Curnow BA**
Senior Researcher
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Sunao Glass BA**
Research Assistant
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Sandra Mackay**
Personal Assistant to the Northern Ireland Officer
- Gareth Edwards**
BA PhD
Wales Officer
Develops the Institute's work in Wales.
- Fiona Rushton**
Cleaner



◀ TURN OVER

Engaging...



4.7 OVER **million**

VISITS TO OUR WEBSITE

CHRISTIAN.ORG.UK



1, OVER **000**

POSTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA
FACEBOOK
TWITTER
INSTAGRAM



OVER

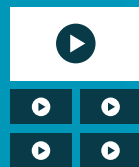
9.27m

TIMES OUR
POSTS
APPEARED
ON SOCIAL
MEDIA

LEADING TO OVER

800k

INTERACTIONS



OVER

1.3m

VIEWS OF MORE THAN

360

VIDEOS POSTED ONLINE



60k

IN TOUCH SUPPORTERS



62k

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



OVER

130

PRINT AND BROADCAST
MEDIA REQUESTS



CHRISTIANINSTITUTE



@CHRISTIANORGUK



CHRISTIANORGUK



CHRISTIANORGUK

...Equipping



740

NEWS ARTICLES
AND FEATURES
PUBLISHED ON OUR
WEBSITE



13

NEW
PUBLICATIONS



OVER

18,000

PEOPLE AT NEARLY

400

PRESENTATIONS



OVER

70,000

AUDIO DOWNLOADS

200

PER DAY



living
CHRISTIANITY

following Jesus in every area of life



livingchristianity.org.uk

LIVING CHRISTIANITY

Our Living Christianity course continues to be very popular and is now on its third print run.

A new US edition has recently been released, available at livingchristianity.org.uk/us

We are also working on a version of the course for young people.

How we are managed



TRUSTEES OF THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE

From left to right:

Ken Nelson MBE
Trevor James (Treasurer)
Rod Badams
Revd Rupert Bentley-Taylor
Revd David Holloway
Revd Dr William Philip
John Burn OBE (Chairman)
Mike Judge
Revd James Leggett
Revd George Curry
Dr Philip Robinson
Revd Dr Richard Turnbull

The Institute is governed by its twelve-member Council, who act as Trustees and are legally responsible for the registered charity.

The Council meets regularly throughout the year. The Trustees' knowledge, skills and support are invaluable to the organisation. They are all current or former church leaders or preachers.

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 Richard Turnbull. They meet regularly with the Director to discuss the Institute's affairs.

The Christian Institute relies upon the generosity of its supporters. Our charitable work continues because our supporters are willing to give financially to it. Over 99 per cent of our income comes through such gifts. We give thanks to God for his continued provision through the generosity of his people.

Giving to our work (excluding the Legal Defence Fund) is split between regular giving, e.g. by standing order, and one-off gifts. By faith we rely upon approximately £25,000 arriving each week, either through the post or online. If you are able to give regularly by standing order it is a great help to us in our planning and budgeting.

Finance summary

This summary is provided to indicate to supporters how funds were obtained and spent during the years 2018 and 2019.

The summary for 2019 is based on draft and unaudited figures.

The summary for 2018 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 2018 and 2019 (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



Jon Errington,
Head of Operations

Expenditure		2019	2018
General Fund			
Staff	54%	£1,483,338	£1,445,471
Printing and stationery	8%	£208,561	£163,414
Postage and telephone	11%	£292,080	£311,737
Travel	5%	£144,349	£141,570
Research materials	2%	£63,358	£62,783
Rent and building running costs	4%	£121,446	£127,731
Equipment and depreciation	5%	£136,690	£112,189
Conference and meetings costs	1%	£27,803	£27,829
Professional fees	4%	£97,738	£131,646
Miscellaneous	1%	£20,816	£2,757
Total for the General Fund		£2,596,179	£2,527,127
Legal Defence Fund	5%	£145,739	£222,967
Growth Fund	<1%	£2	£2
Total Expenditure – All Funds		£2,741,920	£2,750,096

Income		2019	2018
General Fund			
Unrestricted	94%	£2,763,633	£2,867,941
Sales	1%	£17,338	£2,490
Total for the General Fund		£2,780,971	£2,870,431
Legal Defence Fund	5%	£154,198	£266,788
Growth Fund	<1%	£1,320	£1,320
Total Income – All Funds		£2,936,489	£3,138,539

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 25 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. 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 TRANSSEXUALISM

Transsexuals are people who are biologically male or female, 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 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, 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 So it is 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

Many people voluntarily give their time to the work of The Christian Institute. This is a great blessing to us all. I wish to thank everyone who helped during 2019. I apologise to any whom I have inadvertently omitted.

The Trustees: John Burn (Chairman); Rod Badams; Revd Rupert-Bentley Taylor; Revd George Curry; Revd David Holloway; Trevor James; Mike Judge; Revd James Leggett; Revd Dr William Philip; Dr Philip Robinson, Ken Nelson MBE, and Revd Dr Richard Turnbull. Their advice, support and encouragement is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to John Bailes, who continues to give his time voluntarily to the work of the admin office following retirement. Also to Chris Prest for representing the Institute at meetings around the country. Thank you to all who have spoken at Christian Institute meetings, given seminars to staff and helped us to organise meetings.

I am grateful to the speakers at our 2019 Autumn Lectures: Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, Dr Matthew Bingham, Ian Cooper and Phil Arthur. Thank you to George and Kathryn Curry, Pat Johnson, Ruth Shutler, Judith Sword and Edith Avery for their continued help in making these a success.

Thank you to those who gave their time to speak to staff about their own work and experience during the year: Pam Nobbs, Revd Rupert Bentley-Taylor, Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, Philippa Taylor, Dr Will Jones and Dr Tony Rucinski. These seminars are so encouraging to us in our work.

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Hexham Community Church, Melvin Cockerill, Ceri Edwards, Graham Emerson, Roger Fay, John and Fiona Garvie, Philip Helm, Rana Kundi, Revd Malcolm and Mrs Katie Maclean, Bobby Mackay, Revd Gordon and Mrs Laura Mackenzie, Revd Donald and Mrs Suzanne Martin and Jeremy Walker and family.

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Finally, we remember with gratitude another volunteer, Graham Oakes, who gave assistance to the Research department for many years and who died in February 2020.



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
INSTITUTE

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Psalm 107:1

