



# Run with perseverance

The Christian Institute

Annual Review 2025



THE CHRISTIAN  
INSTITUTE

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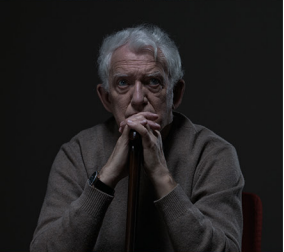
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The Christian Institute is a registered charity whose main object is “the furtherance and promotion of the Christian religion in the United Kingdom and elsewhere”.

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# Welcome



**BY RICHARD TURNBULL**

We give thanks to our gracious, sovereign God for the work of The Christian Institute. May this Annual Review encourage you as we reflect together on his goodness to us.

In August 2024, we were delighted to appoint Ciarán Kelly as the new Director following the unexpected death of Colin Hart. Ciarán brings a wide range of experience from within the Institute and previous roles. I am confident that, under God, we have made an excellent appointment to guide the Institute in the years to come.

In October, our founding Chairman, John Burn, also received his home call from the Lord. A humble and faithful Christian, John epitomised much of the Institute's ethos and vision in his own life as an experienced educator and guide to the Institute's

Trustees. I succeeded him as Chairman in 2021; little did we know that both he and Colin would be ushered into glory only a few years later.

In contrast, we were pleased to welcome Ana Prodan into the Research team following the departure of Nathan Batten, while Administration saw the arrival of Pratigya Dulal and Fungying Koshy started work in Finance. Sadly, we also said goodbye to Alicja Cieniawska and Daniela Martines who both took up new positions as church workers. Ming Shu Chin also left us to spend more time with her family.

It was quite the year for staff weddings. My warmest congratulations go to Johnny and Joanna Timm (née Cook), and also to David McPherson, Janet Davidson (née McIlpatrick) and Nathan Jeal.

Religious liberty, faithfulness to God's law and purposes

for humanity, and advocacy for Christian values in society lie at the heart of the Institute's work. I am delighted that once again we were able to meet with more than 23,000 supporters across the UK and Ireland on these issues in 2024. I greatly admire the faithful witness of those who are taking a stand for God's word in schools, churches, communities, parliaments and councils, and a vast range of local bodies and associations. I am determined that the Institute will do all in its power to support them.

New challenges lie before us. May God give each one of us the courage to face them with grace and truth.

*Richard Turnbull*

Revd Dr Richard Turnbull  
Chairman

# Run with perseverance

In memory of Colin Hart (1963-2024)  
and John Burn OBE (1938-2024)



BY CIARÁN KELLY

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." **HEBREWS 12:1**

Without question, 2024 was one of the most turbulent years for the Institute since its founding as a charity back in 1991. In March, we mourned the loss of our founder and Director Colin Hart. This was followed all too quickly in October by our first Chairman, John Burn OBE, also being called home to glory. I have no doubt that on coming face to face with their Saviour, each heard those precious words that every believer longs to hear one day: "Well done, good and faithful servant".

These were two men who devoted their adult lives to encouraging Christians to "think Christianly". In other words, enabling believers to apply a biblical worldview to every area of life, equipping them to live

out their faith publicly as well as privately.

Colin and John were saints of enormous vision, faithfulness and tenacity; their friendship honing one another – and those around them – "as iron sharpens iron" (Proverbs 27:17). In creating and leading the Institute together over 35 years, they helped shape the UK's legal, political and cultural landscape for the better. As well as The Christian Institute, they leave a legacy in our laws and in our education system that, under God, will prove to be an enduring testimony to God's sovereign kindness and generosity.

As with all those who have died in Christ, they are now part of the "great cloud of witnesses" who



John Burn receives his OBE in 1993 from the late Queen



**JOHN BURN** OBE  
Chairman 1991–2021







**COLIN HART**  
Director 1990–2024



A young Colin Hart outside  
the Houses of Parliament



We give thanks to God for these servant-hearted men who devoted their lives to the service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



“a Christian who stood in the very centre of where the battle raged”

“a serious, determined, quiet, strong and powerful leader”



“a deeply principled and courageous man”

“a great man, who never rested on his laurels”

READ [the.ci/TributesColin](https://the.ci/TributesColin) [the.ci/TributesJohn](https://the.ci/TributesJohn)

encourage us in our race. They have taken their place among those who even now testify to God’s faithfulness and the importance of never giving up.

It is my enormous privilege to follow in Colin’s footsteps as Director of The Christian Institute. This is a weighty task, but one in which I know the Lord will guide and equip both me and the whole CI team. Thank you for all your prayers, both before and after my appointment in August 2024. Along with the great saints of the past cheering us on from the stands as it were, your faithful support for the Institute in the shared cause of honouring Christ is a source of enormous encouragement. In return, with so many issues for the Institute – and therefore you – to deal with, my frequent prayer for you all is that “you will not grow weary and lose heart” (Heb. 12:3).

For all their godliness, and for all they were able to achieve, it

is to neither Colin nor John that the Institute can fix its eyes in the years ahead. There is only one “author and perfecter of our faith” – the Lord Jesus Christ. It is Christ and his finished work (Heb. 12:2) in whom we place our trust and our confidence. It is Christ whom we serve and to him we look as we “run with perseverance the race marked out for us”.

As we strive to defend and proclaim biblical truth in our nation, whether on religious liberty or marriage and the family or the sanctity of life, we know we will be opposed just as sinful men opposed Christ himself (Heb. 12:3). Our response must continue to be to persevere and to fix our eyes on him.

Ciarán Kelly, Director

# Religious liberty

*"It is wrong for biblically faithful preaching, prayer, pastoral care and parenting to be under threat from lawmakers."* Ciarán Kelly

## 'CONVERSION THERAPY'

The Institute's campaign to protect churches and families from new laws banning so-called conversion practices is now entering its seventh year. The UK Government is still promising a "full, trans-inclusive ban", but in September 2024 the Scottish Government delayed its plans. The Institute has threatened both with judicial review. The Irish Government also announced a delay, admitting that it too risked being challenged in the courts.

Any new law is unnecessary and unworkable. Rightly, the law already protects LGBT people from coercion and abuse. No evidence has been offered to justify demands for restrictions on prayer, pastoral conversations and parenting.

We continued to brief and engage regularly with ministers, Parliamentarians and civil servants around the UK. We made them aware of the clear, legal advice we commissioned from two of the UK's foremost human rights lawyers concluding that criminalising

the legitimate expression of religious beliefs would breach human rights law.

Jason Coppel KC explained that a broad ban would unlawfully interfere with the legitimate activities and practices of Christian churches and the expression of gender critical views. Aidan O'Neill KC drew the same conclusions about plans for Scotland and Northern Ireland.



WATCH | [the.ci/CI-Affinity-webinar](https://the.ci/CI-Affinity-webinar)



**Did you know?** A legal opinion from a top KC can cost more than £30,000. But strategic investment like this can help shape legislation, lead to a crucial victory or prevent cases from even making it to court.

## In the news

THE SCOTSMAN

Christian group's lawyer warns conversion therapy laws may breach Holyrood's legislative competence

Daily Mail

**'Orwellian & illiberal'**

Top KC condemns SNP's bid to outlaw conversion therapy  
Plan would bring 'marked intrusion' of State into family life  
'Jellyfish' legislation 'impossible to grasp and has stung in tail'

MailOnline

Scottish parents who refuse to allow their children to change their gender could be **JAILED** under radical new SNP plans to ban conversion therapy

Plans for new trans law 'impossible to grasp' and 'illiberal' argues Aidan O'Neill KC

Scottish Legal News



Support for our Let Us Pray campaign continues to grow rapidly. In February 2024, more than 400 people attended our Scotland conference.



## FREE SPEECH

The problem of poorly drafted laws in relation to 'extremism' and 'hate crime' became a prominent issue once again. The governing authorities need to make better use of the laws that already exist to deal with these complex issues before creating new ones. Christians must guard against laws that have a chilling effect on the free exchange of views.

In March 2024, the Institute told the Government that its proposal to widen the definition of extremism posed a serious and unnecessary threat to free speech. Our briefing to the Joint Committee on Human Rights then highlighted that its

low threshold and vague terminology would endanger rather than protect religious belief.

Controversial 'hate crime' laws came into force in both Scotland and the Republic of Ireland during the year.

Following a lengthy Institute campaign, significant amendments to help protect evangelism and Christian comment on sexual ethics were made to the original Scotland Bill. Helpfully, language on 'incitement to hatred' was also removed from Ireland's law before it came into effect. An earlier version could have seen Christians reading aloud from

Romans 1 accused of 'stirring up hatred' against gay people.

### Hate speech laws

SIR – News that “zero tolerance” hate-crime measures are being considered by the Home Office ([report, August 28](#)) should give pause to everyone who values free speech. It comes hot on the heels of the scrapping of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act and calls to “toughen up” the 2023 Online Safety Act.

Hopefully we can all agree that hating others is wrong. But previous attempts to properly define “hatred” have proven both elusive and divisive; just take a look at the Hate and Public Order (Scotland) Act. Such restrictions can come at great cost to freedom and do not deliver the benefits that are claimed for them. As respected historian Professor Timothy Garton Ash has said: “There is no correlation between the presence of extensive hate speech laws on the statute books and lower levels of abusively expressed prejudice about human difference.”

“Something must be done” is not a sound basis for clamping down on free speech.

Clarin Kelly  
Director, The Christian Institute

**The Daily Telegraph**



**READ | Challenges to free speech** @ [the.ci/ctfs](https://the.ci/ctfs)

## Abortion censorship zones

Censorship zones banning offers of help to pregnant women near abortion centres came into force across the UK and Ireland over the course of 2024.

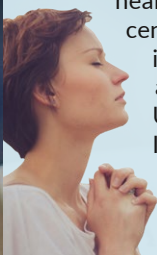
Laws prohibiting harassment and intimidation were already in place. Outlawing free speech and access to prayer and advice will not help vulnerable women in need. Abortions continue to rise to record

levels. In a free society, Christians should be free to witness to what they believe about the

value of human life, and to offer life-saving assistance to those considering abortion.

*“There are people who are only alive today because their mothers met someone ready to give them an alternative to abortion.”*

**Dave Greatorex, Head of Policy and Research**



**Did you know?** Since 2006, our legal team has helped more than **3,500 people** – over 230 of them in 2024 alone.

*We support cases of national importance for gospel freedom to help establish good precedents. This includes defending Christians unjustly discriminated against because of their faith.*

## Susan\*

In 2023, we helped Christian mum Susan bring a successful legal challenge to the High Court after she was dismissed as a parent-governor for questioning the pro-trans sex ed policy at her child's school. Following her reinstatement, in 2024 we helped her put pressure on the Department for Education (DfE) to uphold its own advice on teaching about gender and sexual ethics in schools. As a result, a few weeks after the start of the 2024-25 academic year, Susan's school told the DfE it would no longer teach lessons on 'gender identity'.

*\*Not her real name. Susan has been granted anonymity by the High Court in order to protect her children.*

## Behind the headlines

Most of what we do never hits the headlines. We regularly give practical advice to help Christians navigate difficult situations so they can consistently live out their faith. In 2024, this included:



Helping people concerned about workplace celebrations of 'Pride Month' and to deal with unreasonable demands for Sunday working;



Providing training and other help for street evangelists;



Enabling city councils to understand the impact of their byelaws on street preachers;



Ensuring churches, Christian camps, businesses and medical practitioners have suitable transgender policies and practices, including use of pronouns;



Advising a church denomination on its employment contracts;



Assisting a Christian head teacher facing a hostile campaign by secularists.



*"Thank you so much for all the work you have done on this for us... May God continue to use you to further His Kingdom"*

*"The insight you have provided... helped me a lot. I praise the Lord for your advice!"*

*"It's reassuring to know we have somewhere to go and are very grateful for your guidance."*

*"Thanks again for your time and for the significant impact that the CI's steadfast work makes."*



# Sanctity of life



All human life is precious because it is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

Abortion, assisted suicide, euthanasia and embryo experimentation deny this vital truth.

*"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made... your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalm 139: 14a, 16*

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

Since September 2024, the entire CI team has been heavily focused on opposing assisted suicide Bills at Westminster and Holyrood.

So far, there has been a complete failure to properly scrutinise proposals that would fundamentally shift how society regards those diagnosed with a terminal illness. But there is still time for lawmakers to offer hope to vulnerable people and reject these dangerous Bills.

We ensured Parliamentarians were briefed regularly. This included a major legal opinion we commissioned highlighting how the

Bill for England and Wales – championed by Kim Leadbeater MP – is incompatible with human rights. We also held in-depth panel discussions and webinars to help mobilise Christians to respond to consultations and engage with their elected representatives. Supporters in Wales were instrumental in persuading Senedd Members – including the First Minister and the Health Minister – to reject a motion to accept the principles of assisted suicide.

Above all, we encouraged supporters to pray and we were delighted at how many joined us for two national days of prayer.



[the.ci/assistedsuicide](https://the.ci/assistedsuicide)

## ABORTION

In May 2024, the Institute and its supporters opposed Dame Diana Johnson's attempt to give women in England and Wales the right to kill their babies up to birth without criminal sanction. Her plan was derailed due to the General Election. Tragically, a year later her colleague Tonia Antoniazzi succeeded – amending the Crime and Policing Bill to further liberalise abortion law.

As part of our input to the Scottish Government's review of abortion law, we called for the current abortion limit to be lowered and for greater investment in caring for premature babies.

**READ |** *What have we done?*

[the.ci/whathavewedone](https://the.ci/whathavewedone)



# Marriage and the family

## GENDER IDEOLOGY



The publication of the Cass Review in April 2024 marked an important milestone in the growing rejection of transgender ideology.

The report concluded that the practice of giving 'sex-swap'

drugs to under-18s was based on "remarkably weak evidence". We subsequently wrote to the NHS with recommendations on how it could do more to protect separate-sex spaces and services.

Dr Cass's recommendations have now been adopted by the NHS UK-wide and routine prescriptions of puberty blockers

stopped. A review in the Republic of Ireland is ongoing.

Having campaigned against gender ideology for over 20 years, we welcome this turnaround. It will be helped by the UK Supreme Court's confirmation in April 2025 that in the Equality Act 2010 "man" means biological man and "woman" means biological woman.

## SMACKING

Activists intent on criminalising parents who give their child a gentle smack presented research that they claim shows mild chastisement is abuse. The Institute exposed the research as flawed and misleading and highlighted the dangers of dragging loving parents into the reach of the criminal law.

The Bible teaches that God grants the responsibility and authority of raising children to their parents. The State should only intervene in cases of abuse or neglect – neither of which apply to a gentle smack.



## 'NO-FAULT' DIVORCE

Northern Ireland edged closer to 'no-fault' divorce in 2024. In June, the Assembly backed a motion to allow applications for divorce without assigning blame.

Since similar provisions were introduced in England and Wales in 2022, all but removing the chance for reconciliation, the number of divorce applications has soared.

Jesus emphasised that marriage is for life, but successive changes to the law have fostered a rampant divorce culture. We will continue to make the case for marriage between one man and one woman for life.



# Other work

## PROTECTING CHURCHES FROM UNJUSTIFIED INTRUSION

A church's primary purpose is to preach the Gospel and make disciples by teaching them the whole counsel of God. Even churches with many staff would find it very difficult to monitor every new piece of Government guidance or policy in case it

might affect them. Nor should they have to. But the Institute can help.

In 2024, we equipped churches to respond to the Welsh Government's review of regulatory requirements for

childcare. If current exemptions are narrowed, churches risk being landed with a huge bureaucratic burden – holiday clubs and Sunday schools could face unjustified regulations and inspections.



## PROSTITUTION

In September 2024, we welcomed Ash Regan MSP's proposal to introduce a new criminal offence in Scotland of paying for sexual services. But it should not come at the cost of fully decriminalising the sale of sex. Both the sale and the purchase of sex must be illegal, to send a clear and consistent signal that prostitution is never acceptable.

## PORNOGRAPHY

The Online Safety Act became law in 2023, but Ofcom's work to implement it only began in earnest the following year.



The Institute has warned that the legislation's definition of 'pornographic content' is not robust enough. In March 2024, we wrote to Ofcom to call on it to address 18-rated material and strengthen the overly vague requirement for age-verification checks.

## GAMBLING

Gambling is inherently wrong and poses a grave danger to vulnerable members of society.

Following the UK General Election, Institute Director Ciarán Kelly immediately wrote to new Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy, urging her to tighten restrictions. The Government told the Institute it was 'committed to reform' and in November confirmed online slot stakes would be limited. New restrictions came into force in spring 2025.

We also called on Northern Ireland's Department for Communities to introduce self-exclusion schemes, better age-verification checks and stronger enforcement against firms that breach the rules.



# Education

## Need help?



Email: [education@christian.org.uk](mailto:education@christian.org.uk)

**Did you know?** Since 2019, our team has helped well over a thousand parents, teachers, head teachers and governors from all across the British Isles. We use the experiences of Christian families, teachers and schools to frame policy briefings for politicians and civil servants, as well as in developing general advice.

## ADVISING CHRISTIANS

We offer confidential support and advice on:

- Sex education
- LGBT ideology and 'Pride' events
- Transgender names and pronouns
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity policies
- Maintaining the Christian ethos of a school
- RE and collective worship
- Home education
- Setting up Christian schools

*"It is so positive having someone actually help me with this. I have felt quite alone trying to stand up for something I believe in very strongly"*

*"You gave us some fantastic advice regarding our son's PSHE lessons. This has resulted in the school agreeing to meet with us this Friday."*

*"Thank you so much for your willingness to help us as we try to navigate this very clouded path."*

## INFLUENCING POLICY

In October 2024, Education Minister Stephen Morgan wrote to thank the Institute for its key role in raising concerns about protecting children from radical gender ideology in schools.

Mr Morgan was responding to a CI-coordinated letter highlighting that some schools

were operating a policy of automatic trans 'affirmation', sometimes without involving parents. Signed by well over a hundred teachers, safeguarding leads and other education professionals, it urged the

Government to introduce draft guidance to safeguard pupils from ideologically driven teaching on gender and sex.

*"Education policy has been shaped by trans activism for far too long."*

**John Denning,**  
Head of Education





So much of our work involves helping ordinary Christians understand that they can make a big difference. Numerous proposals for new guidance and resources were put forward again in 2024, particularly in relation to the different forms of sex education teaching around the UK and Ireland. Our expertise meant we were well placed to respond and to equip our supporters to put forward a Christian view.

### **England: Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

For years, LGBT activists have been using RSE to advance their agenda in schools. New guidance consulted on in May 2024 attempted to address some of these problems. If properly implemented, it could help protect children from the worst teaching and make it easier for Christian teachers to comply with the requirements.



### **NI: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)**

The Institute secured important amendments to the Assembly Committee for Education's consultation on RSE, which had been worded in such a way that it required parents to agree that 'LGBTQIA+' issues should be taught in primary schools. The Committee accepted our concerns, changed the consultation and extended its time frame. We produced separate guides for parents and teachers to explain the issues at stake and to help them respond.

The team examined the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment's exemplar materials for teaching about contraception and abortion. We recommended greater emphasis on ethical arguments, including abstinence, the health risks associated with abortion and scientifically accurate education on a baby's in-womb development. We also briefed the Education Authority on incompatibilities between its transgender guidance and the Cass Review's findings.

### **RoI: Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)**

We identified major problems with proposals for primary teaching. Crucially, pupils would not be required to learn about marriage, despite its continued significance to the public, as demonstrated by the March 2024 referendum.

We also highlighted the risk that primary schools could be told to introduce the kind of contentious teaching on 'gender identity' and sexual orientation brought in under recent changes to post-primary SPHE.



### **Wales: Home education**

In April 2024, we challenged the Welsh Government over plans for a child-tracking database that risked usurping the role of parents and turning Local Authorities into State guardians. It is a proposal reminiscent of Scotland's loathed Named Person scheme. The majority of parents do not choose to home-educate their children, but those that do should not be intrusively targeted by the State.

# Citizenship

## ELECTION BRIEFINGS 2024

Our essential guides to the UK and Ireland General Elections set out where the main political parties stand on many issues of concern to Christians.

**56,000** copies dispatched to churches and other supporters across Britain and Ireland.

Over **60,000** online views and downloads.

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.

These can be controversial subjects, yet the Bible is perfectly clear about them.



## A NATION UNDER GOD

We know that the only lasting and real solution to the problem of man's sin is provided in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. But there are many ways we can make a difference.

History shows the tremendous positive impact Christians can have on their governments, not least by prayerfully casting their 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).





# Engaging and equipping



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

The Institute seeks to equip Christians to apply their faith to the issues of the day. Our public meetings play a very important part in this.

Over the course of the year, staff spoke to nearly 23,000 people at 428 events around the UK. At one in Northern Ireland we were able to engage with nearly 350 18 to 30-year-olds on how Christianity has changed the world for the better.

Every church meeting outlines the biblical principles that underpin our work, and shows how those principles should affect Christian involvement in today's society. In 2024, we particularly encouraged believers to consider the Bible's teaching on how Christians should relate to those in authority. Many supporters first learn about our work at one of these meetings. We also undertook our first public meetings in the Republic of Ireland for many years.

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.



## The Colin Hart Lectures

Previously known simply as the Autumn Lectures, in 2024 this annual series was renamed in tribute to Colin. He, along with John Burn, started the Institute out of their shared desire to enable Christians "to think Christianly". The lectures soon followed and have run every year since 1991.

Appropriately, the theme for the first series was 'Iron sharpens iron'. It examined how God powerfully uses Christian friendships to strengthen faith and change whole nations for the better. Institute Trustee Mike Judge began with biblical examples such as Ruth and Naomi. Chairman Revd Dr Richard Turnbull addressed the Wesley brothers and George Whitefield, and later spoke on the famous 'Clapham Sect' of Wilberforce and friends; Kenneth Brownell considered the less well-known Haldane brothers; and David Campbell encouraged attendees with the example of the 'Cambridge Seven'.





# Meet the team

Many of you tell us that you use this photo every day to pray for us. Thank you.



## Back Row:

- Nathan Jeal**  
**Development Officer**  
Develops the Institute's work with churches and supporters.
- Callum Webster**  
**Northern Ireland Officer**  
Develops the Institute's work in Northern Ireland.
- Rhys Roberts**  
**Wales Officer**  
Develops the Institute's work in Wales.
- Nigel Kenny**  
**Scotland Officer**  
Develops the Institute's work in Scotland.
- Jonathan Patterson**  
**Office Manager**  
Supervises the running of the office.
- Arghyadeep Chowdhury**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
Handles correspondence and calls from supporters.
- Sharon Dews**  
**Senior Finance Administrator**  
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Susannah Daubney**  
**Financial Administrator**  
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Joanna Timm**  
**Senior Public Affairs Officer**  
Works with the Deputy Director.
- Louisa Bratley**  
**Personal Assistant to the Deputy Director**
- David Bromley**  
**Education Officer**  
Assists with the work of the Head of Education.
- Jon Errington**  
**Head of Operations**  
Supervises the efficient operation of the Institute.
- Simon Calvert**  
**Deputy Director**  
Responsible for public affairs, including our parliamentary work.
- Dave Greateorex**  
**Head of Policy and Research**  
Responsible for policy and research.
- Sam Webster**  
**Solicitor Advocate In-house Solicitor**  
Manages religious liberty cases.
- Rosalynne Hutchings**  
**Communications Officer**  
Helps with the Institute's communications.
- Angus Saul**  
**Head of Communications**  
Responsible for the Institute's communications.
- Mark Taylor**  
**Senior Multimedia Designer**  
Assists with the design of the Institute's various communications.
- Janet Davidson**  
**Multimedia Designer**  
Assists with the design of the Institute's various communications.
- Daniel Hole**  
**Researcher**  
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Michael Larbi**  
**Researcher**  
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Jenny Olson**  
**Policy Researcher**  
Researches public policy issues.
- Dr Nathan Wallace**  
**Research Associate**  
Researches theological issues.
- Revd Dr Nick Needham**  
**Writer/Editor**  
Writes and edits the Institute's theological publications.
- Johnny Timm**  
**IT Manager**  
Oversees our IT systems.

## Front Row:

- James McIntosh**  
**Senior Development Officer**  
Develops the Institute's work with churches and supporters.
- Barbara Elder**  
**Development Administrator**  
Develops the Institute's work with churches and supporters.
- Sandra Mackay**  
**Personal Assistant to the Northern Ireland Officer**
- Susan Constable**  
**Personal Assistant to the Scotland Officer**
- Pratigya Dulal**  
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Handles correspondence and calls from supporters.
- Dovile Snarskaite**  
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Assists with the administration and running of the office.
- Fungying Koshy**  
**Financial Administrator**  
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Janet McMaster**  
**Financial Administrator**  
Handles the Institute's payments and financial data.
- Daniel Friery**  
**Public Affairs Officer**  
Works with the Deputy Director.
- James Kennedy**  
**Northern Ireland Policy Officer**  
Works with the Deputy Director.
- Alison Bowie**  
**Education Officer**  
Assists with the work of the Head of Education.
- John Denning**  
**Head of Education**  
Conducts research and advises on education issues.
- Kathy Calvert**  
**Personal Assistant to the Director**
- Ciarán Kelly**  
**Director**  
Controls the day-to-day running of the Institute.
- Judi Coulson**  
**Head of Staffing and Supporter Development**  
Responsible for staff and oversees work with churches and supporters.
- Rachel Revell**  
**Assistant to the In-house Solicitor**
- Andrew Wood**  
**Communications Officer**  
Helps with the Institute's communications.
- Marilla Friery**  
**Communications Officer**  
Helps with the Institute's communications.
- Joshua Towers**  
**Multimedia Designer**  
Assists with the design of the Institute's various communications.
- David McPherson**  
**Researcher**  
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Ana Prodan**  
**Researcher**  
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Rhys Curnow**  
**Senior Researcher**  
Conducts general research across a range of issues.
- Dr Sharon James**  
**Social Policy Analyst**  
Conducts research on developments in social policy.
- Robert Drennan**  
**Northern Ireland Researcher**  
Conducts research on Northern Ireland issues.
- David Gillespie**  
**Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland Researcher**  
Conducts research on Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland issues.
- Fiona Rushton**  
**Cleaner**





◀ TURN OVER



## War of the Worldviews

Ciarán Kelly and Dr Sharon James continued their UK and Ireland tour with stops in Preston, Belfast, Leeds and Exeter.

We are living through a clash of worldviews between God's eternal truth

and the dangerous ideology that underpins woke activism and cancel culture. They gave a robust examination of the impact of Critical Theory on society and the Church, and how Christians should respond.

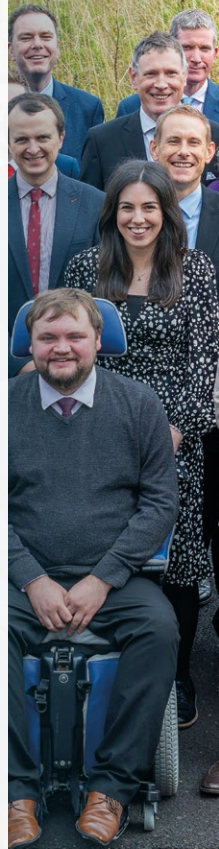
*"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God"*  
2 Corinthians 10:5



## Developing our people

Dr Sharon James, our Social Policy Analyst, continued to train staff on the many issues the Institute has worked on in past years, and on some of the key thinkers who have shaped modern worldviews. Guest speakers covered topics including stem cells, and Christians and civil society.

Staff also heard from Institute Trustees Richard Turnbull and Rupert Bentley-Taylor. They spoke on topics as varied as perseverance, religious liberty in the US, the Creation Mandate and the roles of Wesley and Whitefield in the Evangelical Revival.



## Republic of Ireland

On 29 August 2024, The Christian Institute (Ireland) was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee. This is an important step in the development of our work in the Republic of Ireland. Our application for charitable status is currently being considered by the Charities Regulator.

## UCB teaching shorts

If you only had 60 seconds to speak to 200,000 people, what would you say? Director Ciarán Kelly's short messages on creation, Parliament, full-time discipleship, delighting in the law of the Lord, and more, were a regular feature on UCB radio during 2024.

## Prayer

Prayer is vital in everything we do at the Institute. The team meet daily to pray and we encourage our supporters to pray regularly for the work. Twice a year we hold a special week of prayer where we join together in praying for some of the big moral issues affecting the nation.



Pray with us using the **PrayerMate** app.



*"It has been wonderful to begin this day united in prayer with you."*

*Alison*



## In 2024...



Nearly **9 million** visits to christian.org.uk



More than **700** articles published

Over **5.6 million** times our posts appeared on social media, leading to more than **600k** interactions



Over **2.3 million** views of more than **500** videos

Well over **100** print and broadcast media requests



**90k** audio downloads

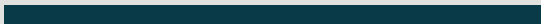


**23k** people at **428** events



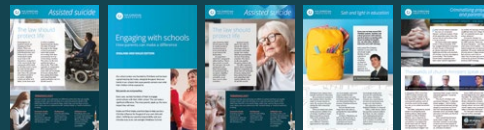
**8** new publications

**63k** supporters (including almost 5.5k churches)  
More than **100k** social media followers



## PUBLICATIONS

[christian.org.uk/publications](http://christian.org.uk/publications)



## SPEAKING OUT

The Institute's research and public affairs teams enable us to respond in detail to consultations across a wide range of issues.

In 2024, we responded to more than 20, ranging from how Ofcom deals with pornography to the strategy for the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and from the NHS constitution to the curriculum for primary education. This diligence requires hundreds of man hours but is crucial in bringing a Christian understanding to public policy. A thoughtful, evidence-based response can stop a bad idea before it gains any momentum.

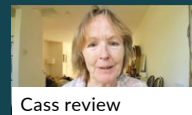
When we ask our supporters to respond, great care is taken to ensure that the often very complex issues can be easily understood.

## IN THE STUDIO

[christian.org.uk/videos](http://christian.org.uk/videos)



Miriam Cates



Cass review



Election 2024



Assisted suicide



**Nearly 12,000 sold!**

Full-time discipleship  
for everyone

[livingchristianity.org.uk](http://livingchristianity.org.uk)



# How we are managed



## OUR TRUSTEES

*From left to right:*

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

The Institute is governed by its 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 Director, Ciarán Kelly, is helped by an executive group, comprising the Chairman, Treasurer and Ken Nelson. They meet regularly 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 on approximately £27,000 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 2023 and 2024.

The summary for 2024 is based on draft and unaudited figures.

The summary for 2023 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 2023 and 2024 (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                                  |     | 2024       | 2023       |
|--|-----|------------|------------|
| General fund                                 |     |            |            |
| Staff  | 53% | £1,959,708 | £1,793,865 |
| Operational costs                            | 32% | £1,199,876 | £964,309   |
| Office and building costs                    | 10% | £385,623   | £358,939   |
| Total for the General Fund                   |     | £3,545,207 | £3,117,113 |
| Legal Defence Fund                           | 2%  | £91,914    | £48,720    |
| Growth Fund and other designated expenditure | 2%  | £71,053    | £34,335    |
| Total Expenditure - All Funds                |     | £3,708,174 | £3,200,168 |

| Income                     |     | 2024       | 2023       |
|----------------------------|-----|------------|------------|
| General Fund               |     |            |            |
| Unrestricted               | 92% | £3,882,403 | £3,245,692 |
| Sales                      | <1% | £1,893     | £3,647     |
| Total for the General Fund |     | £3,884,296 | £3,249,339 |
| Legal Defence Fund         | 7%  | £298,395   | £299,634   |
| Growth Fund                | <1% | £26,286    | £3,207     |
| Total Income - All Funds   |     | £4,208,977 | £3,552,180 |

# 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 between one man and one woman 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 between a man and a woman (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. Historically, the definition of marriage in our law was: "the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others" (Hyde v Hyde and Woodmansee, 1866). This is consistent with the biblical view.

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. For example, it is unfair that a household with a single earner on £50,000 pays more tax than a household with two earners on £25,000 each.

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). Liberalisation of divorce law in Britain has 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 that marriage is between a man and a woman. We also have to be clear that all sex outside marriage is wrong. This means that fornication, adultery and homosexual activity 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.

Child abuse is wrong and entirely incompatible with Scripture. Instead, the Bible expects parents to exercise loving discipline over their children. As part of this, most parents use mild 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). Making the administration of reasonable chastisement a criminal offence is wrong, as are other moves which usurp the authority of parents.

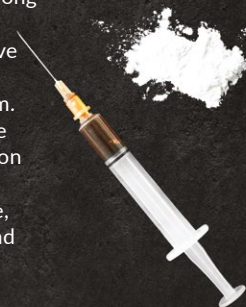
Christians ought particularly to be concerned by any proposals which weaken the moral protections for children. Jesus gave a serious warning of judgment against those who cause children to sin (Matthew 18:6). This is an apt warning in these days when children have their innocence stolen from them.

Parents are ultimately responsible for the education of their children, even where this has been delegated to the state. This is rightly reflected in UK law (e.g. Education Act 1996, Sections 7 and 9). Pupils should be educated in line with their parents' values and the state should not undermine those values, other than in the most exceptional circumstances.

The unique role of parents must also be upheld in decisions about healthcare. The presumption should be that parents make decisions about what is in their child's best interests. The threshold for overturning this presumption should be very high. In several prominent cases, views of parents have been discounted too readily.

### 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 decriminalisation or legalisation of all drugs. Blanket policies not to prosecute certain drug-related offences, such as possession for personal use, effectively decriminalise and normalise such behaviour, and must be resisted.



### 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.<sup>1</sup> 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).<sup>2</sup>

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".<sup>3</sup> 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."<sup>4</sup>

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."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *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

<sup>2</sup> 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

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

<sup>4</sup> *The Sunday Times*, 29 February 2004

<sup>5</sup> 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 age 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 to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he 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).

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. There must be freedom for minority faiths and philosophies, except where these are plainly immoral. A state may not compel religious belief. However, no state can be neutral in terms of morality or religion. Given the UK's constitutional arrangements, there is a privileging of Christianity at certain public ceremonies such as thanksgivings, funerals of public figures, and rituals and prayers at the beginning of Parliaments. There is also state provision for schools with a Christian ethos and emphasis on Christianity in assemblies and religious education, while ensuring opt-outs for those of other faiths and none. To change our constitutional arrangements establishing the Protestant Reformed faith could 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, almost half the UK population claim a Christian allegiance (cf. the National Census 2021 in which 46.2% 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 and their online equivalents. 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 (including taxation): 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). Anyone with a smartphone can effectively have a casino in their pocket, making the addictive nature of gambling all the more dangerous.

(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

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Ciarán Kelly, 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. Evil-doers 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.



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*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”*

Hebrews 12:1

