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Do not be anxious for anything

Many are anxious at this uncertain time. We can take comfort that God is sovereign – he is in control.

We give thanks to God for how he has used the Institute in recent months.

We're delighted Scotland's intrusive Named Person scheme has finally been scrapped – three years after our landmark victory against it in the Supreme Court. It gives us great joy to see how we have been able to make a difference for parental freedoms, religious liberty and

more. Yet so many areas of society are threatened by secular 'progressive' values.

It is vital Christians stand firm against the false claims of the transgender lobby. We must oppose moves to ban smacking, liberalise drug laws and downgrade marriage. And as we mourn the tragic killing of so many unborn children, we must be resolute in championing the sanctity of human life.

Please continue to pray for God's mercy on the nation. Thank you for standing with us.

Success for five-year CI campaign

After a five-year campaign spearheaded by The Christian Institute, the Scottish Government has finally announced it will scrap its intrusive state guardian scheme.

Three years ago the UK Supreme Court ruled unanimously against key elements of the Named Person scheme, which appointed a state guardian for every child in Scotland.

However, it was only in September this year that Deputy First Minister John Swinney (pictured) formally agreed to repeal the legislation.

Institute Director Colin Hart said: "We thank God for the news. Parents will be



delighted and relieved.

"For years we have said the Named Persons scheme is wrong in principle. It is parents, rather than the state, who have the responsibility for raising children. That's the Christian view of the family."

Under the original plans, every child in Scotland was to be assigned a "named

"The mandatory Named Person scheme for every child, underpinned by law, will now not happen."

John Swinney to the Scottish Parliament, September 2019

person" – an employee of the state to oversee their 'wellbeing' or 'happiness'.

The Christian Institute launched its legal action against the Children and Young

People (Scotland) Act in July 2014. Two years later, Supreme Court judges ruled that the data-sharing provisions in the Act breached the right to a private and family life.

Institute's legal work reaps rewards for street preachers

Christian street preachers in the UK are benefiting from the work of The Christian Institute's legal team.

Last year, Avon and Somerset Police in Bath unlawfully dispersed a group of street preachers including Dale McAlpine. The Christian Institute intervened and this summer Dale and his colleagues found police around the country much more aware of their freedom to share the Gospel.

He said that when police officers approached them in Lincoln, "they spoke to us and listened for a while, left, and we never saw them again". When police were summoned in Bath by



hostile passers-by, the officers made sure the preachers were not in any difficulty and upheld their freedom of speech.

The Institute's In-house Solicitor Sam Webster welcomed the change in approach: "Some Christians fear

they are no longer able to share the Gospel publicly. This is not the case. I hope they will find the positive experience of Dale and his fellow preachers encouraging."

► For more visit the.ci/LDF



No-fault divorce Bill in the balance

Radical plans to make divorce far quicker and easier in England and Wales hang in the balance.

The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill appeared to be halted when Parliament was prorogued in September. The Bill re-emerged when the Supreme Court ruled that was unlawful. Its future may now depend on the timing of a General Election.



Under the Bill a husband or wife could walk away from their marriage without giving any reason, and leave their spouse no opportunity to contest the divorce. Proceedings could be

rushed through in just six months.

The plans lack public support. Official consultation results revealed 83 per cent of respondents – which included many Institute supporters – disagreed

with removing the right to contest a divorce.

Institute Director Colin Hart branded the Bill, "the most anti-family legislation since the introduction of same-sex marriage."



Drug deaths at record high



Britain has been branded the 'drug capital of Europe'.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics showed that drug deaths are at record levels.

A separate study, the European Drug Report 2019, also revealed that almost 40 per cent of drug overdose deaths in the EU occurred in the UK.

Drug deaths in England and Wales have increased to their highest level since 1993, while in 2018 Scotland saw 1,187 people die in drug-related cases.

Pro-drugs campaigners are demanding both the decriminalisation of cannabis, and so-called shooting galleries where addicts can be given drugs and inject themselves. So far the Government has resisted the demands.

Going soft on cannabis
Download now: [the.ci/gsoc](https://www.the.ci/gsoc)

COMMENT

Pray for those in authority



By Colin Hart,
Director

In 1 Timothy 2, believers are urged to pray for *"kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness"*. This is not praying for an easy life, but because it *"is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth"*.

Praying for those in authority is about the good of our fellow citizens, and ultimately the salvation of souls and the glory

of God. It is a Gospel issue. And it is particularly urgent at the present time.

We should give thanks for the stability and freedom we have enjoyed for many years in the UK. Political turmoil allows wickedness to flourish.

We've already seen terrible action taken under the cover of the current disarray, such as MPs voting to impose same-sex marriage and abortion on Northern Ireland. No-fault divorce, assisted suicide and weaker drug laws could all follow.

Let us pray fervently that they do not.

Brexit uncertainty: How should we respond?

Christian Institute trustee Rupert Bentley-Taylor gives us some help.

[the.ci/brexit-response](https://www.the.ci/brexit-response)

#mychristianvote

A General Election could be imminent. The Christian Institute will provide useful information to inform your vote.

[the.ci/election](https://www.the.ci/election)



ONLINE RESOURCES

1 in 4 babies aborted



Nearly a quarter of babies in Great Britain are aborted. Excluding miscarriages, 23.7 per cent of pregnancies were aborted in 2018, official figures show.

It comes as accounts from abortion giant Marie Stopes International reveal UK taxpayers are its biggest funders. In 2018, the UK provided over £48 million of funding.

BBC tells kids there are over 100 'gender identities'

A BBC resource for children aged nine to twelve features a Relationships and Sex Education teacher telling children there are over 100 'gender identities'.

The video, part of a series from BBC Teach, also suggests a child "might be gay" if they like someone of the same sex "in a slightly different way" to other friends.



'Don't rush to affirm trans identity' warn NHS experts

Parents who encourage their children to 'change gender' may be doing more harm than good, NHS experts are warning.

Activist groups such as Mermaids and Stonewall are pushing radical gender ideology to children at ever younger ages.

But the experts say allowing a child to change their name, clothes and pronouns could lead to more serious issues later in life.

Dr Bernadette Wren is Head of Clinical Psychology at the Tavistock



and Portman Trust, which is responsible for the NHS's primary gender identity clinic for children.

She warned that by encouraging their children to 'socially transition', parents may be leading them into greater

problems when the child enters puberty and is hit by a "wall of reality".

Dr David Bell also said that children who take hormones or undergo surgery as part of 'transitioning' risk "serious and irreversible damage".

Adult stem cells help blind see and stroke patients recover



Ethical stem cells have been used both to treat sight loss and to dramatically improve the likelihood of recovery for stroke patients.

In recent weeks, a British man left blind in one eye after an acid attack and a partially-

blind woman in Japan both saw improvements after treatment with adult stem cells.

The cells are also being used to help improve the prospects of stroke patients recovering by rejuvenating damaged tissue, a small study has shown.

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COMMENT

Reality Check: Hate crime



By Ciarán Kelly,
Deputy Director
(Staff & Comms)

We hear a lot these days about a rise in 'hate crime'. Yet in reality it may be neither 'hateful' nor 'a crime'.

According to Home Office rules if a 'victim' believes that a crime has occurred, that's "usually sufficient" to justify recording it. So a crime may be recorded when none has been committed.

And then there's the question of 'hate'.

A hate crime is defined as "any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim

or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice" based on one of five categories: religion, faith or belief; race, ethnicity or nationality; sexual orientation; disability; or gender identity.

But both the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service note, "There is no legal definition of hostility" so it can be understood to encompass "ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike". So recorded 'hate crimes' will include instances of perceived unfriendliness or dislike.

In short, 'hate crime' may not be motivated by hate and may not even be a crime.

Smacking banned in Scotland

Parents in Scotland face criminal charges for smacking their children, after politicians passed a controversial ban.

Despite public opposition and warnings of widespread investigations into families, in October MSPs voted by 84 to 29 to outlaw mild smacking.

Wales could follow suit. Legislation on a ban there received initial backing from Assembly Members in September. Caroline Jones AM (pictured) revealed she had been

"inundated" by parents "scared that they will be turned into criminals". It is estimated that 1,500 parents a year could face police investigation in Scotland and Wales.

In both countries, public consultations showed more than two-thirds of individual respondents were against a ban. Official estimates of the cost of implementation in Wales alone range from £2.3 to £3.7 million.



Institute's 'right to pray' case benefits council 7 years on

Councillors in Wales have defied secularists' demands and vowed to keep praying before the start of council meetings.

Denbighshire Council was told its Christian prayers were discriminatory by one of its councillors, who got backing from the National Secular Society (NSS).

The prayers are conducted in the council chamber prior to meetings, but are concluded before any formal business starts and do not breach any laws.

Denbighshire Council refused to bow to pressure, citing a Christian Institute legal case involving Bideford Town Council in 2012.

In that case, the NSS claimed that council prayers discriminated against atheists and breached their human rights.

But the High Court ruled against this central argument, establishing the principle that public bodies need not be secular in order to comply with equality and human rights law.



Your legacy will help Christians to be salt and light

None of our work would be possible without the generosity of our supporters. Leaving a gift in your will to The Christian Institute will help us to continue working to preserve Christian freedoms for future generations.

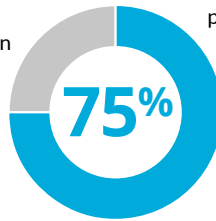


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Three in four say extremism definition is 'unhelpful'

Most people think the Government's definition of extremism is unhelpful, an official consultation has found.

Over 2,500 members of the



public submitted views to the Commission for Countering Extremism with **nearly 75 per cent** saying the definition was "unhelpful" or "very unhelpful".

"Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist."

Government's Counter-Extremism Strategy, 2015

🔗 For more on the difficulties arising from a vague definition of extremism see: the.ci/extremism

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