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Contending for the truth

It is vital to uphold biblical truth on issues such as marriage, birth sex and parental responsibility. This includes fighting for the freedom to speak out in the public square.

We are grateful that God continues to provide The Christian Institute with the resources to equip Christians to be salt and light in our society.

Churches, businesses, schools, even the family home are under assault from aggressive secularism in our nation. The Ashers bakery case

in Northern Ireland is just one example of this. The Supreme Court will hear the case in early May and then decide whether compelled speech is lawful.

We also face unprecedented state intrusion into family life. Bringing up children, including their education and discipline, is primarily the responsibility of parents, not the state.

Year after year your prayers and action have made a vital difference. Thank you for your continued support as we contend for the truth.

Ashers: Supreme Court beckons

The case of Ashers Baking Co. has made headlines around the world.

Its Christian owners, the McArthurs, turned down an order for a same-sex marriage campaign cake. As a result this family has been hauled through the courts.

The 'gay cake' case is now scheduled to be heard at the start of May by the UK Supreme Court – sitting for the first time in Belfast. It will consider whether it is lawful to force someone to use their creative skills to celebrate ideas so utterly at odds with their own beliefs.

In Northern Ireland, unlike the rest of the



▶ Amy and Daniel McArthur

UK, marriage remains solely between one man and one woman.

Despite this, lower courts ruled against Ashers. Although judges recognised the family did not refuse the order because the customer was gay, they decided Ashers had broken

sexual orientation, religious and political discrimination laws.

The Christian Institute is helping the McArthurs defend themselves.

Public opinion also backs this brave Christian family. People from all walks of life support Ashers – they

recognise their own freedom could be next.

Most importantly, the McArthurs are sustained by the same deep Christian faith that prompted them to first take their stand for marriage back in 2014.

Read more online:
christian.org.uk/ashers

Chief Inspector of schools hits out at The Christian Institute



By Colin Hart,
Director

In a recent high-profile speech, Ofsted head Amanda Spielman took a swipe at The Christian Institute. Her remarks made the front page of The Times.

We have been justifiably critical of the way Ofsted has carried out its inspections, particularly of Christian and Jewish schools.

One independent Christian school in Reading was told that other faith leaders, such as an Imam, should be invited to take assemblies. Teachers and pupils in other Christian schools have been asked their personal views on same-sex marriage. Inspectors have demanded to be told whether pupils know anyone “born in the wrong body”. An Orthodox Jewish School was even criticised for failing



◀ Amanda Spielman has implied that Christians are extremists.

to teach five-year-olds about transsexualism.

In her speech, the Chief Inspector expressed horror at the idea The Christian Institute could be thought of as “the sole voice of Anglicanism”. She declared herself to be against ‘extremists’, implying this term could be used of Christians. She called for “muscular liberalism”, seeming to equate liberal democratic freedoms with social liberalism.

There seems to be a view that

social conservatives are against liberal democratic freedoms and are on the first step of an escalator leading to violent extremism.

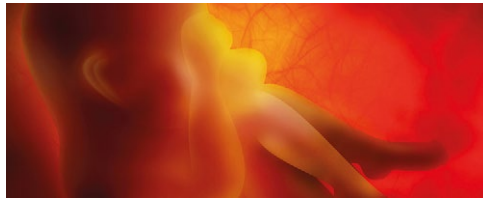
The day that people are compelled to sign up to socially liberal secularism is the day liberal democracy will die. We are thankful to God that this isn't the case. It may upset the Chief Inspector, but in a liberal democracy even powerful bodies like Ofsted can still be held to account.

Ofsted

Welsh Govt adds to undermining of NI abortion law

The Welsh Government wants to follow England and Scotland's lead by providing women from Northern Ireland with free abortions. These would be through the NHS, funded by taxpayers.

This move will further undermine the Province's good laws against abortion and weaken protections for the most vulnerable in society.



Northern Ireland has one of the most pro-life legal frameworks in the world – abortion is only allowed to preserve the life of the mother. This ensures that the value

of human life is upheld and protected by healthcare professionals throughout a woman's pregnancy. It has been calculated that around 100,000 people are

alive today who would have been aborted if Britain's Abortion Act applied in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland's democracy is being attacked. The devolved assembly at Stormont has voted against liberalising the law and the Belfast Court of Appeal also backed the Province's right to decide its own stance on abortion.

Govt seeks backing for compulsory Relationships Education subject

The Government has asked the public for views on the planned new statutory subject of 'Relationships Education'.

This will be taught in all primary schools across England – independent as well as state schools – from September 2019.

Ministers want to deny parents the right to withdraw their children from the classes, claiming that the new subject will be uncontroversial.

But children as young as four will be taught about "different types of relationships", which

LGBT activists want to ensure includes homosexuality, transsexualism and same-sex marriage.

Colin Hart, Director of The Christian

Institute, is concerned that Relationships Education will amount to sex education by another name.

He said: "So-called sex education experts

want explicit materials and LGBT issues taught from infancy.

"This is not what parents want and the state must respect their beliefs."



Classes could be compulsory for children as young as four.

Families under fire: CI Scotland Tour

Scotland faces transgender lessons for four-year-olds, the Named Person scheme, and parents being criminalised for a loving smack.

This triple whammy of unprecedented state interference in family life prompted our 'Families under fire' tour in Scotland during January and February.

From Stornoway to Lesmahagow, concerned Christians turned out in their hundreds to oppose the creeping intrusion of the state.

While recognising the scale of the challenge, they took great encouragement from the Institute's historic Supreme Court win over the Named Person scheme.

WOULD YOU LIKE US TO VISIT YOUR CHURCH?



We visit over 300 churches a year across the UK to talk about the work of The Christian Institute. If you would like your church to be one of them, contact: development@christian.org.uk

Families under fire

Opposing state intrusion into family life

- ▶ Transgender lessons for 4-year-olds
- ▶ Named Persons
- ▶ Criminalising smacking



Men offered smear tests if they say they are women

Men who claim to be women when they register with their GP are being routinely invited to breast cancer screenings and smear tests. Conversely, guidance from Public Health England says that women claiming to be men when registering will not ordinarily be offered the tests. The NHS was accused of putting lives at risk with an "immoral and dangerous" practice.



Secularists compare Archbishop Welby to Hitler

The National Secular Society has likened Justin Welby to Adolf Hitler. Speaking in the House of Lords, the Archbishop said "confidence in any personal sense of ultimate values has diminished" in secular schools. The NSS compared his remarks to Hitler's 1933 statement that "secular schools can never be tolerated".



Justin Welby

Minister: Changing smacking law in Wales *will* criminalise parents



Parents who smack their children in Wales can expect to be prosecuted if reasonable chastisement is made illegal, the Welsh Children's Minister has admitted.

Previously the Welsh Government claimed the move "isn't about legislation to

criminalise parents". But in January Huw Irranca-Davies said "you can't rule it out".

In February, the NHS admitted it would treat smacking as child abuse if the law were to change. Doctors and nurses who smack their children would also

face suspension from their jobs and criminal investigation.

The admission came in response to Freedom of



Information (FOI) requests from the Be Reasonable

campaign to Cwm Taf University Health Board and Public Health Wales.

Belfast Sunday trading extension: city council reopens controversy

A public consultation has been launched on extending Sunday trading hours in Belfast – less than a year after the last proposal was overwhelmingly rejected.

John Hannett, General Secretary of shop workers' union Usdaw, told Belfast City Council it was wasting its time because there had been "no change in the public mood".

The Christian Institute's Northern



Belfast city centre

Ireland Officer, Callum Webster, warned: "Retail staff are already under enough pressure to work on Sundays and extending

opening hours will only increase this."

Last May the DUP, Sinn Féin and the SDLP all opposed extending Sunday trading.

Bermuda repeals same-sex marriage

In February, Bermuda became the first country in the world to repeal same-sex marriage. A Supreme Court ruling in the British Overseas Territory last year legalised the unions, ignoring the result of a referendum. However, after a change in Government, the traditional definition of marriage has been restored.



PM pledges to curb addictive betting machines



Theresa May has said the maximum stake gamblers can wager on Fixed-Odds Betting Terminals will be reduced. The highly addictive machines have been closely linked with problem gambling. During Prime Minister's Questions, Mrs May said the current £100 maximum stake per spin "will be cut" – but did not reveal by how much.

Ocado drops blasphemous beef jerky after complaints

Online supermarket Ocado has stopped selling a product that used gratuitously offensive language about Jesus Christ, following complaints.

The Christian Institute raised concerns about "Christ on a Bike" beef jerky, but initial complaints were met with statements that the company would continue to sell the product.

However, an Ocado staff member subsequently told one Institute

supporter: "I'd like to reassure you that we no longer stock the product and did not mean to cause any offence".

The news was welcomed by Institute

Deputy Director Ciarán Kelly, who had invited the supermarket to "think again about lending their brand to something so gratuitously offensive".



Experts cautious over presumed consent organ donation plan

Organ donation specialists are expressing concerns over plans to introduce a presumed consent system in England.

In February, MPs backed an 'opt-out' organ donation Bill after the Government promised its "wholehearted support". The Bill will now go for further scrutiny in Committee.

Prof Chris Rudge, former National Clinical Director for Transplantation, said changing

the system "may take away people's faith and trust in organ donation".

And Keith Rigg, a consultant transplant surgeon, warned: "There is no clear evidence that this has resulted in an increase in organ donations and transplants where it has been introduced".

Wales has already introduced a presumed consent scheme, but there is no evidence it has increased donations.



Radical transgender proposal endangers Scottish children



The Scottish Government has consulted on its plans to allow people to change their sex by 'self-declaration'. This would remove the current requirements for medical consent and two years living as the opposite sex.

Other proposals include lowering the minimum age to obtain a 'sex change' certificate

from 18 to 16 and giving legal recognition to those who claim to be 'non-binary' – neither male nor female.

The Christian Institute has warned that the plans risk manipulating young people into doubting their birth sex.

Similar 'sex change' plans for England and Wales were

reportedly delayed at the end of last year. Justine Greening (pictured), then Education Secretary and Equalities Minister, admitted they were "complex" and "divisive".



Your legacy would 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 would enable us to continue working to preserve Christian freedoms for future generations.



☎ 0191 281 5664
✉ legacy@christian.org.uk
🌐 christian.org.uk/legacy

UK age of consent failures contrast with new French law

In France, sex with children under 15 is to be classed as rape, irrespective of 'consent'.

The move came following public outrage at the acquittal of a man accused of raping an 11-year-old girl. It will give more protection to 13 and 14-year-olds than UK law.

Here, having sex with a child under 13 is automatically treated as rape. But for 13 to 15-year-old victims where absence of consent



cannot be proven, the offence is sexual activity with a child, which carries a lower sentence.

Recent abuse scandals have been characterised by a widespread failure

to apply the age of consent.

A 2018 report highlighted how state agencies gave girls as young as twelve contraception but failed to prosecute their abusers.

THE LATEST NEWS AND RESOURCES: CHRISTIAN.ORG.UK



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