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Proclaiming the truth

Protecting the freedom to proclaim biblical truth in the public square is vital. We are grateful that God continues to enable The Christian Institute to equip Christians to do this.

We have helped parents expose extreme Relationships Education materials used in hundreds of English primary schools. This is simply sex education by another name.

Christians all across the UK are deeply concerned about the laws to introduce abortion and same-sex marriage in Northern

Ireland. Many think these are the most regrettable things done by the last Parliament.

Those who oppose same-sex marriage or reject radical gender ideology must remain free to speak out. The most vulnerable in our society must also be protected from the twin scourges of abortion and assisted suicide.

All these challenges and more face us in the months ahead. We give thanks that God remains in control. Thank you too for your continued support.

'New relationships lessons a major worry for parents', says Institute

Parents across Britain are increasingly concerned about new primary school lessons on 'relationships' being used as a vehicle for very inappropriate sex education, The Christian Institute is warning.

Relationships Education will be mandatory in all English primary schools from September 2020 with no automatic right of withdrawal for parents.

Most of the content is uncontroversial, addressing areas such as bullying and friendships. However, LGBT activists have pushed for it to include homosexuality, transgenderism and same-sex marriage. In one extreme example, Warwickshire County Council has already begun such lessons in over 200 schools.

A new Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP)



curriculum in Scotland and proposals for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Wales are raising similar concerns.

Parents in Scotland challenged Education Secretary John Swinney over new RSHP materials with one saying it risked "normalising pornography".

In Wales, 87.5 per cent of 1,632 respondents to a consultation about RSE said they do not think it should be

compulsory for 3 to 16-year-olds.

Institute Director Colin Hart said "Every day we're helping parents deeply worried about their children being exposed to highly inappropriate material.

"Campaigners are using the new emphasis on relationships to promote LGBT issues. Some of the worst materials I've ever seen are being used in the name of 'safeguarding'. Good concepts are being twisted to fit a pro-LGBT agenda."

CI warns Govt over lack of free speech safeguards for NI same-sex marriage

The Christian Institute has warned the Northern Ireland Office that it will seek to take legal action if opponents of same-sex marriage are put in jeopardy because of their beliefs. Proper safeguards are missing from the plans for same-sex marriage registrations in the Province from 13 January.

When same-sex marriage was introduced in other parts of the UK, safeguards were put in place to protect those who believe that marriage is only between a man and a woman. This includes faith charities, teachers and other public sector workers, as well as church ministers.



The Institute's lawyers wrote to NI Secretary Julian Smith in November to say new regulations should offer "no less in the way of legal protections than is provided for in the rest of the UK". They added: "We also expect similar assurances to be given by ministers in relation to the impact

on education and for similar appropriate guidance to be issued to schools."

In response, the Northern Ireland Office said it will consult on the plans in 2020, but this would be limited to religious ceremonies for same-sex marriages. This means wider protections will not be

in place before the law changes.

The Institute's call drew support from pro same-sex marriage organisations.

The Rainbow Project and Amnesty International groups accepted that the same protections afforded to Great Britain should also be available in NI.

Ofsted admits to misusing Equality Act

Ofsted has admitted it was wrong to downgrade a Jewish school from Outstanding to Inadequate over its single-sex education policy.

The education watchdog had accused The King David High School in Manchester of breaching the Equality Act 2010 by 'unlawfully segregating pupils on the grounds of faith and belief and sex'.

It backed down after the school threatened legal action. Ofsted will have to pay the school's estimated £80,000 legal costs.

The Christian Institute has since launched *Equipped for equality* – a guide to what schools can and cannot do in the name of equality and human rights.

The publication helps debunk the myths surrounding what schools are



required to do, and spells out the legal protections for parents and pupils.

[Download the briefing: christian.org.uk/e4e](https://christian.org.uk/e4e)



Christian Institute: Govt dropping age-verification 'a victory for pornographers'

Plans for blocks on children viewing pornography online were dropped in October following years of delay.

The Christian Institute called the decision a "big victory for pornographers and the campaign of the Adam Smith Institute".

Director Colin Hart said: "It's a warning for Christians about the values of the libertarian right. Their influence could also lead to other radical changes such as the legalisation of drugs."

A law on age-verification was first mooted by David Cameron in 2015. The Digital Economy Act - containing the checks - was passed in 2017 but the age-verification aspect



was postponed in April 2018 and again in June 2019.

The checks would have required users to prove their age using ID such as a credit card or passport. Online pornography sites that refused to follow the regulations would have been blocked by UK

internet service providers.

The Adam Smith Institute complained that the restrictions would "reduce access to pornography produced for sexual minorities". The Government said the objectives of the Bill would be delivered through other means.

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Latest bid to weaken assisted suicide law fails at High Court



The High Court has rejected the latest attempt to weaken the law on assisted suicide.

Phil Newby - who has Motor Neurone Disease - argued that the current ban interfered with his rights under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Judges refused to hear the challenge, saying the court was "not an appropriate forum for

the discussion of the sanctity of life".

Care Not Killing - which campaigns against assisted suicide - welcomed the ruling and described the challenge as "unnecessary".

A spokesman warned: "If you change the law, vulnerable people will feel pressured into ending their lives."

Govt's definition of extremism 'too broad'



The current definition of extremism as "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values" is too broad and restricts legitimate free speech, the Commission for Countering Extremism has warned.

Its report, *Challenging Hateful Extremism*, said efforts to combat extremism were failing because of the poor definition. It added: "protecting democratic debate and freedom of expression is vital".

Christian printer wins 7-year legal battle in US



A Christian printer sued after he declined to produce T-shirts for an LGBT festival in 2012 has won his case.

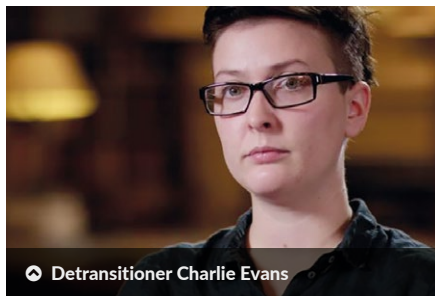
Blaine Adamson (pictured) runs Hands On Originals in Kentucky. He turned down the request because it conflicted with his sincerely-held religious beliefs. He won at two lower courts and the state Supreme Court has now also sided with him.

Hundreds of young trans people now regretting 'gender switch'

Hundreds of young people who have 'transitioned' from one sex to the other say they question their choice, and are contemplating changing back.

Charlie Evans was born female but lived as if she were a man for nearly a decade before accepting her true sex and 'detransitioning' last year. After going public she was contacted by hundreds of young adults who similarly doubt their decision to 'change sex' and are looking for help.

Evans said they were often women "who have had full gender reassignment



surgery who wish they hadn't".

Separately, a woman who lived as a man for eleven years has spoken about how she came to accept her biological sex after first accepting Christ.

From a young age, KathyGrace believed that she had been born in

the wrong body. She started calling herself Keith, took male hormones and underwent surgery.

But now she says: "I really want to help others to understand who they are. Not who they might falsely believe they are, but who they truly are, as God created them to be."

Stonewall rebuked by ex-staff over trans ideology promotion



LGBT lobby group Stonewall has come under fire from former supporters over its promotion of radical transgender ideology.

Campaigners - including one of the group's co-founders Simon Fanshawe - accused Stonewall of undermining "women's sex-based rights and

protections". They called on it to commit "both to freedom of speech and to fact instead of fantasy".

Fanshawe later went on to criticise Stonewall for supporting a self-identification law that "defies biology" and for shutting down debate on the issue.

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Sermon on the Mount



This twelve-part video series sees renowned theologian Dr Sinclair Ferguson (pictured) explain how the famous Sermon on the Mount equips Christians to live a kingdom life in a fallen world.

It is provided courtesy of Ligonier Ministries and is available to watch now at christian.org.uk/theology

COMMENT

Reality check: medicinal cannabis



By Senior
Communications
Officer Sam Wylie



schizophrenia, impaired brain development and cancer. Potential cannabis-based medicines need thorough testing.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recently issued a carefully-worded and narrow endorsement for a very small number of medicines derived from cannabis.

Inevitably, the announcement was grossly exaggerated by campaigners attempting to use 'medical cannabis' as a Trojan Horse for legalising recreational use. They deliberately blur the vital distinction between cannabis and its potentially medically useful components. Cannabis contains over 100 unique compounds, known as cannabinoids. A few of these have been shown to offer medical uses but this does not mean smoking a joint can be equated to using a prescribed medicine.

Despite what you may have read recently, your GP is not about to advise you to smoke cannabis to ease your recurrent back pain. Cannabis is dangerous, being linked to depression,

NICE has previously said "potential benefits offered were small compared with the high and ongoing costs". Now it is reminding clinicians to take into account any history of mental health issues and to consider the potential impact on the "psychological, emotional and cognitive development" of children.

This approach is far too cautious for some. One group which supports the widespread use of 'medicinal cannabis' called on NICE to lower its standards in checking drugs to speed up widespread change.

The Managing Director of Sapphire Medical Clinics said NICE "should consider refining its approach and take a broader view of what evidence to consider when making its recommendations".

NICE should refuse to be cowed into weakening its stance, and the Government should continue to resist legalising or decriminalising cannabis.



Bad news for Northern Ireland as abortion imposed on Province

On 22 October Northern Ireland's strong protections for women and unborn children were repealed. It follows Westminster's July decision to impose abortion on the Province.

The Institute's Northern Ireland Officer Callum Webster called it "desperately bad news". "Abortion is not 'good healthcare' for women and destroys the lives of the most vulnerable people in our society", he said.

A Government consultation on how the law should operate closed on 16 December. It put



forward extreme plans which go far beyond the rest of the UK. The new legislation will be introduced by 31 March 2020.

In September, hundreds

of medics wrote to Northern Ireland Secretary Julian Smith calling for conscience protections.

The health professionals described abortion as the "unjust and violent taking of human life" and sought reassurances over their freedom to refuse to be involved.

A poll taken before abortion was introduced found most people in Northern Ireland opposed the radical change. And a petition challenging Westminster's move was signed by more than 25,000 people.

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