

August 7, 2009

Dear Brethren and Friends,

We are seeing more and more stories in the media in the UK, about Christians who are feeling discriminated against, as well as claims by some church leaders that Christianity is being "marginalized."

Cherie Blair, the Catholic wife of former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, has also publicly stated that Christians are being marginalized in the country. In her opinion, not many people in Britain dare to discuss their faith openly. These comments correspond with her husband's comments when he said that he feared speaking about religion as Prime Minister, as he didn't want to be labeled "a nutter." Mr. Blair said that, while it was commonplace in the US and elsewhere for politicians to talk about their religious convictions, "you talk about it in our system and, frankly, people do think you're a nutter."

A leading churchman in the UK stated that "the rise of secularism has led to a liberal society, hostile to Christian morals and values, in which religious belief is viewed as 'a private eccentricity' and the voice of faith groups is marginalized."

Earlier this year one top BBC radio and television presenter, himself a churchgoer, claimed that being a Christian in Britain is becoming "socially unacceptable."

In the workplace, there have been quite a number of reports of those being fired or suspended because of their Christian beliefs. One example was that of a policeman describing himself as a Christian, who objected to being "bombarded" at work by emails and posters promoting gay rights and events. He had replied to colleagues by quoting religious texts showing that homosexual activity was sinful. He was fired for misconduct. A number of other similar cases could be quoted.

I saw a discussion on British television very recently about this issue, and it became clear that if those on the program were representative of the country, then indeed Christianity is being marginalized.

And at the end of last month, we had the spectacle at the prestigious Gallery of Modern Art in Glasgow of visitors being allowed, even encouraged, to write comments on the text of the Bible. As would be expected in such a situation, this led to a number of "puerile and obscene remarks," as one report put it. The Pope, quite rightly, condemned this "disgusting taxpayer-funded exhibition." He went on to say that the stunt would not have been contemplated with a copy of the Koran. In that case, Muslims would have been on the streets, demonstrating against what they would have considered blasphemy. Due to many public complaints about the exhibition, the organizers have been forced to put the vandalized Bible on show in a locked case, while still allowing visitors to write comments on blank sheets of paper. And all this in the name of art!

While we have quoted matters that pertain mainly to "orthodox Christianity," it is interesting to consider that if they have problems with the society with which they generally integrate, how much more will those members of God's Church be "marginalized" and even persecuted as we approach the end of this age?

In the book "Being British: The Search For The Values That Bind The Nation," Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister in the UK, stated the following: "Asked what is the chief British virtue, many people might reply that it is tolerance." He went on to say that "Some would argue that tolerance was the way that our nation on this small island could secure a way for very different faiths and traditions to live together."

And yet, as the leading politician in the UK, he has allowed and supported legislation to be passed, and is presiding over laws, including those pertaining to homosexuality and so-called "hate crimes," that negate the very quality that he extols.

How "tolerant" is our nation if someone is legally prosecuted for quoting certain parts of the Bible, particularly those connected with homosexuality, which is a practice that the great God of the universe roundly condemns in His Word? This seems to have either escaped the

legislators or they have ignored our great history for which the teachings of the Bible have been the basis on which our constitution has been built. However, so many of those in power seem to have little time for those teachings that have helped shape and mould our country over the centuries. We now seem to be ruled by those who have an agenda to criminalize Christianity and exercise intolerance toward those whose faith is based on biblical admonition. A similar trend of legally threatening those who stand up for biblical teaching has recently been seen in the USA, especially since the new liberal administration under President Obama came to power. You might want to read our free booklet, *"The Fall and Rise of Britain and America,"* for more information on the present social conditions in both countries.

In Genesis 20:11, Abraham said "there is no fear of God in this place." Exactly the same could be said of the UK, and many other so called Christian nations at this time.

Quite recently, Mr. Norbert Link had a death threat in comments made about the "Standing-Watch" program. Here is a faithful minister, an Evangelist in the true Church of God, receiving this threat to himself and his family because he dares to propound the true biblical message.

But should we be surprised? Not if we really understand what the Bible teaches about the end time! We have to be about our Father's business while there is still time.

The book of Revelation is instructive about what will happen just before Christ returns. We know that a religious leader will arise in Europe and shall continue to "intend to change times and laws" (Daniel 7:25). The sequence of events is outlined in our free booklet *"Europe in Prophecy,"* which we are currently advertising on the Internet, and to which we are getting quite a lot of response. A similar free booklet, *"The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord,"* is currently advertised successfully via the Internet in the USA and Canada.

This religious leader will cause "both small and great to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or name of the Beast [a future political European leader], or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:16-17).

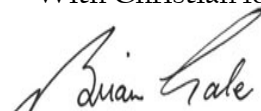
When this happens, the tolerance that we have historically enjoyed, but which is now being eroded, will then have become a thing of the past, especially in the UK and the USA which will be at odds with the political and religious European system at that time. There is certainly a level of intolerance at this time but this will pale into insignificance in the future when real intolerance will, ironically, actually come from a religious source—the "woman riding the Beast" (see Revelation 17), which will precipitate a time of trouble "such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21).

Some of the problems that we can all face are complacency and neglect. It may now be summer but most people seem no longer to be as worried about the financial crisis as they were a short while ago, and armed conflict is often thousands of miles away. We can get so embroiled in our everyday activities of earning a living, looking after our families and many other areas that we have to take care of, that looking forward to the Kingdom of God may not always necessarily be at the forefront of our thinking on a regular basis. If this is the case, we must reverse this behavior and keep our focus on where it should be.

We must continually "seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33). By getting our priorities firmly in place, we will not be caught unawares, as some will be as the parable of the wise and foolish virgins clearly indicates (Matthew 25:13).

Exciting but dangerous times are ahead. Let us all be true to our calling, making sure that we "endure to the end" (Matthew 24:13) so that Christ will be able to say to us: "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

With Christian love,



Brian Gale