

THE STATE OF THE NATION

..... A Nation That Does Not Trust Will Always Live in Fear

February 2009

A nation that does not trust will always live in fear.

In January 2009 the BBC's home editor Mark Easton reported on a survey by the New Economics Foundation, indicating that levels of trust and belonging among British under 50s, were the lowest in Europe. He wrote that, "trust was the glue that held society together, so the fact that we as a nation had such poor levels of trust was deeply disturbing."

The Archbishop of York, Rev Dr John Sentamu called on Christians to, "wake up and defend their beliefs." However if we as a nation live in an atmosphere of mistrust and fear, then defending our freedoms, or sharing and practicing our Christian faith becomes a risk taking exercise. If all our words and actions are taking place in an atmosphere of mistrust and fear, then eventually society in the words of Mark Easton comes unstuck.

Freedom Discarded

In several incidents of late both Christian and political activity has been curtailed because of fear and mistrust. If a member of the House of Lords says he will bring thousands of Muslims to protest outside Parliament over a film, the contents of which we may or may not agree with, our freedoms are discarded because the authorities are afraid of the repercussions. If a Christian is stopped living or practicing their faith, in the public arena, it is because the authorities are afraid of the consequences of those actions, even though they may be of great benefit to an individual or community.

The very actions by those in authority then create more fear and mistrust. The people elected to protect our freedoms, to provide the ingredients of the glue that holds communities together, have through their decisions and actions, allowed fear and mistrust to grow.

Foundations of the Christian faith....

Through the last 40 years Church leaders have generally remained silent as laws that undermined Christian faith and values that have been the foundations of our nation's life in every area of society, have come onto the statute book. Starting with Roy Jenkins MP and his permissive society we have become a nation with few boundaries that in itself creates mistrust and fear, and we are now reaping what we have sown.

Two of the great foundation stones of the Christian faith as taught by Jesus, are love and acceptance. Interesting that having told God we as a nation don't need Him and His commandments: we end up with the exact opposites, fear and mistrust. According to Mark Easton's report, four other conclusions were drawn concerning the countries' wellbeing:

There is a general FEAR of crime

We do not TRUST the institutions

The more we WATCH the TV, the more unhappy a country appears to be

If a country is RICHER, it doesn't mean it is necessarily happier

The call must therefore be to the leaders of our institutions, local and national Government, the Church, the police, commerce and industry, to stop and ask the question where does fear and mistrust lead us as families, communities and as a nation? Our history tells us that it produces dysfunctional family, community breakdown and at national level, wars and rumours of war. If we are therefore to learn from our history, our leaders; those in authority must act and must act speedily. As we are seeing a painful cleaning up in the financial sector from the coveting and greed, so we must see in our law making the removal of spin, Godless laws, wheeling and dealing, being replaced by the practice and honouring of truth, right living, humility and servant hood.

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The message of the gospel.....

The Christian Church must also boldly, through word and action, clearly demonstrate the message of Gospel. The Biblical truths of the 10 commandments, the sermon on the mount, the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, His kingdom on earth as in heaven, the forgiveness of sins through His death on the cross, and the true love and acceptance by God the Father of us as His sons and daughters, all of which is the complete antidote to fear and mistrust, must be clearly and unashamedly proclaimed.

As Archbishop Sentamu said, this Christianity is the tapestry upon which our country's heritage was woven. Our laws, our education, our health, much of our music, arts and sport came from past generations, for whom the Christian Gospel was their guide and rule book.

The Consequences of doing nothing.....

The consequences of us doing nothing, of maintaining the status quo, are frightening both for us and future generations. There are those who wish to see in these islands a secular society. There are those who wish to see an Islamic society. There are those propagating some mish mash of multi faith and there are those who just hope it will turn out alright. For the sake of future generations we must, in the words of St Paul, "Fight the good fight of faith, believe to see His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven and that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Mission & Prayer together.....

Over the years of the World Prayer Centre journey, we have sought to interweave the two strands of the Christian Gospel, mission and prayer. Our mission is based on the biblical basis of Isaiah 58 and the commands of Jesus and our prayer based on the biblical principle stated in Isaiah 56 and again by Jesus that, "God's house must be a house of prayer for all nations." This is the heart of our vision.

The World Prayer Centre in its design and activity will demonstrate to all who visit, that the Christian gospel is about the love, forgiveness and acceptance of God for the whole world through His Son Christ Jesus and that love can eradicate mistrust and fear in every human heart.

