

YOUTH WITH A MISSION



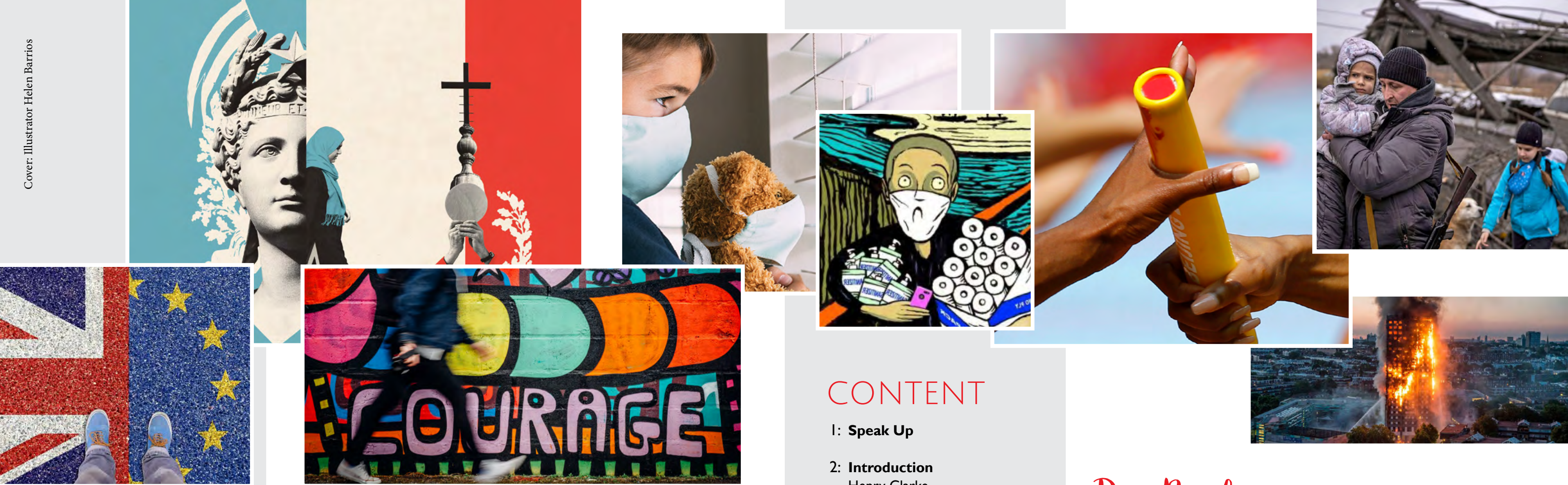
CIJR

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION



“For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory.”

VOLUME 3



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Speak up

FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT
SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES AND
FOR
THE RIGHTS OF ALL
WHO ARE DESTITUTE.

SPEAK UP AND JUDGE FAIRLY;
DEFEND
THE RIGHTS OF THE
POOR AND NEEDY."

MIDDLE-EASTERN PROVERB

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Dear Reader

"The Lord is at hand, do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4 v 6-7.*

In penning this introduction to the CIJR journal volume 3, which focuses on a Europe in crisis mode on many fronts, I urge you to read the insightful contributions that follow prayerfully and with an understanding that only the Holy Spirit alone can give you, asking God for wisdom, meaning, purpose, action and fulfilment.

We are living in the 'end times' and here at CIJR we believe in speaking truth into the circumstances that pervade the world at this time and in which we find ourselves. We are all called of God to play our part and to be sensitive to what He is saying and what He requires of us in these challenging days.

I hope that you will be suitably informed, challenged, heartened and inspired and that both faith and hope will rise from what is shared by our contributors.

Every blessing,

Henry Clarke

President - CIJR

The articles published in this magazine are not dogmas of faith, but rather express different perspectives concerning the numerous crisis that confront Europe today.

Europe in Labour

BY ED SHERMAN

God is shaking the nations, and especially Europe right now. The past few years have seen escalating crises. Brexit shattered the unity of the EU, with Britain being the first nation to formally withdraw from the Union. The COVID pandemic brought death and economic chaos, with ruin to many small businesses.

In his book *Law and Revolution* Harold Berman describes European civilization as founded on Greek rationalism, Roman law, and the Judeo-Christian revelation in the Bible. But he demonstrates that there was not just a synthesis of these three elements. It came as the peoples of the West turned to those sources and transformed and reinterpreted them. The process began in the 11th century for these to lay the foundation for European freedoms, human rights, and the rule of law. After the trauma of the World Wars, the 20th century saw two moments when there was hope that many of the horrors of Europe's history would only be a memory of a darker past. The first was the victory over fascism in 1945, and the founding of the United Nations. In the wake of the Holocaust the nations said never again. Within the following years the seeds were sown with the hope of a united

Europe, leading to the European Union. Shortly thereafter followed the end of the European colonial empires and the emergence of the global south, or the "majority world."

The second was the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet empire in eastern Europe as many nations, including Ukraine, regained independence after many years of Russian and Soviet rule. Liberal democracy had triumphed. The fear of nuclear annihilation that had hung over humanity for so long seemed to be past. It seemed the Cold War was over. There would be local conflicts in the Balkans and Russia in Georgia and Crimea, but nothing that was broader. But the peace of Europe was shattered on 25 February when Russia launched a full scale invasion of Ukraine, starting the largest war in Europe since World War 2. As I write this the Russian army is closing in on Kyiv, capital of a free and independent Ukraine. Whole cities such as Mariupol lie in ruins.

With so much hope at the close of the 20th century, how did we get to where we are today?

**"YET ONCE MORE
I WILL SHAKE NOT
ONLY THE EARTH,
BUT ALSO THE
HEAVEN."**
Hebrews 12:26

It is clear that those moments of optimism failed to account for numbers of historical and spiritual factors.

1 - We did not adequately deal with the legacy of colonialism, in the Middle East and Africa particularly. Colonial borders had been drawn to suit European interests. After independence these contributed to the instability in these nations. Colonialism had undermined traditional leadership, and left bureaucratic states in its wake. This instability has contributed significantly to the threat of terrorism and the refugee crisis.

2 - Western nations failed to help Russia truly transition away from communism, which did happen in many other post-communist countries in eastern and central Europe. In Russia many of the same people and much of the security apparatus from the old Soviet days remained in place, waiting to reassert themselves.

3 - In 1648 the Peace of Westphalia and the revolutionary movements of the 18th and 19th centuries had established that each nation was sovereign over what actions it took within its own borders. The United Nations was still founded on this idea of sovereignty which limited its ability to be effective in the world. Much of the rhetoric around Brexit related to the issue of national sovereignty.

4 - While the European Union was initiated by a group of Christian Catholic statesmen, desiring to see a united Europe founded on Christian values, in subsequent years the European project drifted away from this vision. There has been a failure to articulate the foundation of 'European' values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, because those arose from a biblical foundation. With the widespread loss of biblical faith, there was no solid foundation for these values.

5 - Protestants in much of Europe, especially evangelicals holding to a pessimistic eschatology, have in large measure withdrawn from the public sphere.

6 - Some roots of the Ukrainian war go back much further, to the Great Schism of 1054 between the Eastern Church and the Western Church. Western Ukraine contains many Roman Catholics who look to Rome; Eastern is largely Orthodox and has looked historically to Moscow. Reconciliation between Christians will be key in bringing a true peace.

As we see the nations shaking it is important that we look to what God is doing. His purposes are to see His unshakeable kingdom come, in Europe, and in the world.



Credit : Illustration Helen Barrios



Ed Sherman

was born in Washington State but grew up in Canada. He came to Christ in 1971 in the Jesus Movement. In 1979 he joined YWAM where he served as training director in Heidebeek for many years. In 2003 he became dean of the College of Humanities and International Studies in the U of N until 2017. Since he has been a resource teacher for University of the Nations schools.



Credit : Adobe Stock

Refugees and their impact in Europe

BY KARI TASSIA

JUSTICE AND COMPASSION

“A CRY IS HEARD IN RAMAH — DEEP ANGUISH AND BITTER WEEPING. RACHEL WEEPS FOR HER CHILDREN, REFUSING TO BE COMFORTED — FOR HER CHILDREN ARE GONE.”



Credit: The Scream - Edvard Munch

Refugees are not a new phenomenon on European soil. The latest wave of refugees has just been created in Europe and on the borders of the European Union. The last wave of refugees that had a major impact on European life began in the Middle East just ten years earlier, during the chaos of the Arab Spring.

Refugees have been arriving in Europe for several decades. We remember the boat refugees that arrived to multiple European countries from Vietnam and their neighbouring countries in the mid-1970s. Many also recall the refugees that arrived from Chile. The majority of them have adapted to European life. For several years now, refugees have also been arriving in Europe from various African countries across the Mediterranean. Thousands of lives have been lost due to the turbulent sea.

Why are there so many refugees year after year?

There is no simple answer to this question: people leave in search of a safer and better life, either voluntarily or involuntarily. They often leave because of a crisis, such as famine or armed conflict, but religious and political persecution is also a frequent reason. The idea of a European paradise increases Europe's appeal.

In the last ten years, the number of refugees in the world has doubled from 40 million to more than 80 million.

The arrival of refugees in Europe is not simple and often requires great efforts, not only during the difficult journey, but also in the process of applying for asylum, learning a new language and culture, and finding a place to study or work. Europe as a whole is facing increasing labour shortages, but the education of refugees does not often meet European standards and requires

further training and at least the learning of the local language. The education of children is another major challenge, both for the refugees themselves and for the school system in the new country. In the midst of all these challenges, many asylum seekers are vulnerable to trafficking and other criminal activities.

The European Union has sought to reform the asylum application system and increase solidarity between EU member states, particularly between southern and northern European countries. This is because the arrival of large numbers of refugees in southern Europe has strained relations between southern Europe and other EU countries.

The current acute refugee crisis has already brought more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees to various European countries in the space of a few months. They have been granted immediate work and residence permits because of a special agreement. This has, in turn, caused a negative reaction among those who have already applied for asylum, as it has postponed the decision which they have sometimes been expecting for years.

The arrival of Ukrainian refugees in Western and Northern Europe has led various Christian churches and missionary organisations to cooperate more closely in helping refugees. The same has taken place between spiritual and humanitarian organisations such as the Red Cross and the UN Refugee Agency (UNCHR and IOM).

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”
Matthew 25:35-36

The distress of people has led Europe to open its doors, but other voices can be heard, warning about foreign cultures and religions and various criminal activities. The equation is not simple for social order either.

Asylum seekers looking for a future and a hope for themselves and their families can find themselves in search of easy money.

Here we have both a challenge and an opportunity. We know and understand from European history that Christianity has laid the foundations for the prosperity of our continent. This should mean that the Gospel must be an integral part of our response to refugees.

Only the Creator of life can rebuild the life of a refugee again.



Kari Tassia is the convener for YWAM Refugee Circle. Kari has served in Youth With A Mission since 1984: several years as a church planter in the UK among Punjabis and as the national director for YWAM Finland and the European regional director for FM, unreached people's ministry and staff care. He has served in various European mission networks, linking ministries and churches working among refugees. Kari is married to Maija and lives in Finland. They have two married daughters and four grandchildren.

Consequences of Brexit 2021

Who tells your truth and how loud is their voice?

BY STEVE BISHOP

In the years before the 2016 referendum, the EU was characterised in the British press as a meddling, stuffy, strict distant relative, bent on stopping the UK doing what it wanted and imposing anti-British regulations.

The UK red-top tabloids were adept at taking EU directives and spinning them so far out of shape that by the time they went to press, they were a caricature of the very directive they were rooted in, to such an extent that before the referendum it was estimated that around 15% of UK population believed at least one Euro-myth. (1)

When the referendum was held in June 2016, support for the Brexit campaign was very high among those who read the right-leaning tabloids - the Sun, Express, Mail and Star, and the broadsheet The Telegraph. Support for leaving was lowest among those who read the other broadsheets, or those who read no newspaper at all. Ironically, when the UK joined the European Economic Community in 1975, the leanings of the above newspapers was almost the opposite! (2) When considering the political affiliations of those who voted in the referendum, it is largely those who hail from the political right with concerns about immigration and autonomy that voted leave, the left were characterised as liberal, Euroconformists.

But do journalists really have the capacity to shape the mind of the populace and influence the masses?

One such journalist now holds the post of Prime Minister, and other journalists are part of his cabinet. Mr Johnson has famously been embroiled in controversy for making up quotes, which led to his dismissal on at least two occasions (3) and Mr Gove, who upon leaving university "went for a job interview at the Conservative Research Department, harbouring hopes of a career in Tory politics, only to be told that there were two small problems: he was "insufficiently Conservative" and "insufficiently political". So he became a journalist instead" (4) The referendum in 2016 was called by the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, who was fulfilling a party manifesto pledge to consult the UK population about remaining in the EU, believing a vote would keep the UK in the EU. Hindsight might suggest that Mr Cameron's view that the vote would indicate a strong desire among the people of the UK to remain in Europe has been condemned to history, and the information that accompanied the Leave Campaign dramatised and amplified fears and concerns held by many of those who voted to leave.

The referendum was always going to be a simple "yes/no", "in/out" vote. A binary response.



Credit : www.commons.wikimedia.org/

However, this multi-layered, complex, political and economical situation, that even those in power didn't fully grasp, couldn't be reduced to a simple "yes" or "no" answer. Could it?

Who wouldn't want the NHS to receive £350million per week instead of sending it to the bureaucrats in Brussels? This number was pasted on the side of the big, red, Brexit bus that travelled around the country, and the rhetoric that was in the front seat driving it around convinced many in the UK that the state of the UK health service was suffering as a result of EU meddling, rather than years of cuts under the same political party that pushed the 'leave' vote. (5)

The result of the referendum showed that a small majority, of some of the population, wanted to leave the EU. That's a fact.

Once Teresa May, the UK's next prime minister, triggered Article 50 in March 2017, initiating the beginning of the two-year period for Britain to negotiate its final exit from the EU, until the 'divorce agreement' was finalised on Christmas Eve 2020 and after several extensions were agreed, there have

been numerous reports of miscalculations and a lack of thought through politics.

In a June 2021 Guardian newspaper interview with Lord David Frost, the then Brexit minister, he said that Vote Leave campaigners hadn't expected the impact that Brexit would have on relationships with the countries that Boris Johnson refers to as "our friends and neighbours". He added "I don't think those who campaigned five years ago for Brexit drove the analysis, drove the politics of it. I think they are surprised, quite often, to find relations are in the state they're in." (6)

To make any decision in life, we have to have the facts available. Issues like the 1999 Good Friday Agreement, part of the 1990's peace process, and UK fishing rights, to name just two, with the potential to bring huge political, social and economic upheaval for many aren't simple yes or no issues. These are issues that require diplomacy, time, understanding and interest in the lives of the thousands who would be affected, but it would appear that many in both the press and the government reduced the exit from the EU to be a single, one time event, rather than a complicated, protracted process with slogans like: "Leave means leave" (7), and "Brexit means Brexit" (8). Unfortunately, it transpires that much of the time since the 2016 referendum before the final 'divorce' from the EU, wasn't spent exploring the consequences of the vote, rather, simply reminding people that the separation from the EU was going to happen. What the Brexit process seems to have left in its wake is a series of not-so thought through situations. It would appear that in the case of the 2016 referendum, popular journalism and political hyperbole made the most noise.



Steve Bishop is a missionary with Youth With A Mission since 1999 and has spent around 20% of his life living outside of the UK in both Africa and South America. Steve is married with three adult daughters and one granddaughter, lives in the south of England and loves a decent cup of tea!

The Greatest Epidemic

What if, Covid-19 wasn't as deadly as we were told?

What if, national deaths and infection rates were overstated and based in unreliable testing?

What if, yesterday's conspiracy theories are today's emerging truth?

And what if, our children had the answers?

BY HELEN BARRIOS

Perhaps you feel uncomfortable, indignant, or defiant in front of these questions. Well, it's good to think and to feel, it makes us who we are – it makes us human. It drives us to love, protect and search for connection, and it allows us to feel fear and anxiety.

On the 23rd of March 2020 the UK entered into the first lockdown, with many other European countries already closing their borders, restricting travel, and limiting social interaction. Anxiety propelled Europe as fear dominated our headlines.

So, what happens in the human brain when faced with crisis?

It is scientifically proven that when a human brain faces crisis or experiences heightened levels of stress, fear or anxiety the brain begins to shut down and enters into survival mode. It is also proven that the strongest and most powerful emotion humans can feel is fear. Meredith Moore, Founder and CEO Greylake Training Solutions (1) explains "how in milliseconds our brains release hormones that produce a biological reaction – freeze, fight or flight ... our vision narrows and produces a tunnel effect so we can hone in on the only thing that matters, the dangerous situation.

Place this response, onto the global stage, where, like actors, we found ourselves fighting against an unknown, unpredictable, and deadly monster, which could contaminate and kill us at any time.

Against this backdrop, how did we react?

Let's look back at history. At any pivotal point, whether this be in war, genocide,

or a national disaster, whenever crisis hits, we look for 'heroes.' Someone to guide us, someone to give us answers and someone to offer security. In these situations, we do not naturally question their message or their underlining philosophy or goals, but rather our intense need for a 'saviour' drives us blindly forward.

CERC: Psychology of a Crisis explains how "Under intense stress and possible information overload, we tend to ...

- Not fully hear information because of our inability to juggle multiple facts during a crisis. - Not remember as much of the information as we normally could.

- Misinterpret confusing action messages. Instead, we may rely on habits and long-held practices. We might follow bad examples set by others." (2)

We often see, what is nominated as, 'herding behaviour'. "Herding behaviour refers to how individual decisions are influenced by group behaviour." (3) This behaviour is based on the premise that the rest of the group has done their research and made an educated, independent decision. However, this decision-making process is more often based on whatever information is presented first and most frequently by socially accepted influencers.

This does not underestimate the intelligence of each individual but rather places the emphasis on the ability and willingness to think critically, overcome feelings of fear and anxiety, and look beyond. When people are afraid, they make irrational decisions. A "populace that stops thinking for itself is a populace that is easily led, easily manipulated and easily controlled." (4)

So during the pandemic, what was the central message the general public heard?

In this state of emergency, it is common practise that governments seek to increase their state of power, using any methods available to do so. Employing persuasive tactics that coincidentally, provoke more fear, anxiety, and stress, maintaining society in a constant state of high alert, tunnel vision and adversely impacts decision-making.

The mainstream media bombarded our screens, with images of sick people on ventilators, hospitals on the brink of collapse and empty streets, whilst proven marketing strategies and propaganda strategies were employed, reinforced political agendas.

On the 28th of August 2020, during a press conference the Children's Health Defense, led by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. discussed how governments use fear to control and manipulate the population. "Point a finger at that source of their fear and you can make human beings do anything you want. You can make them go to the slaughter like sheep; you can make them obey." (5)



Throughout the pandemic "32 countries have used militaries or military ordinances to enforce rules ... Others drawn on technology to grow government oversight. To monitor rule-breakers, 22 countries have used surveillance drones. Facial recognition programmes have been expanded, internet censorship has occurred in 28 countries, and internet shutdowns in 13." (6)

But where were the balanced discussions?

Media censorship throughout the world increased under the premise of the people's greatest good. Amnesty International states that "Freedom of expression is under attack and it's affecting our ability to end the pandemic... Silenced and Misinformed: Freedom of Expression in Danger During Covid-19 reveals how the limiting of freedom of expression as well as the ramping up of punishment throughout the crisis has significantly reduced the quality of information reaching populations around the world." (7) Here in the UK, journalists who question the governments mandates are silenced and political correspondence rejected from daily Covid Press briefings, whilst those who stand alongside the government are welcomed to question, their programmes aired freely and news broadcasts continuously promote their ideals. Open Democracy reports that "these incidents are part of a long-growing climate of hostility to journalism here in the UK, emanating right from the top of Boris Johnson's Downing Street."

Credit : www.moffitt.org/

"The Press freedom watchdog Reporters without Borders (RSF) has warned that press freedom in the UK is being eroded." (8)

It is in this insatiable struggle for global power, the public was left with misconstrued information, disabling them to make an educated and balanced response. Maajid Nawaz, Presenter and Broadcaster is just one of numerous journalists who is regularly silenced and in turn, like many others, has lost his job due to openly sharing opinions that are not in line with government mandates. In an interview with Neil Oliver on GB News, Maajid Nawaz opposes the idea of criminalising Covid disinformation proposed by the UK Government whilst discussing the concept of fluctuating truths, demonstrating how "over the past two years, something that was yesterday's disinformation become today preponderant theory." (9)

An example of this can be seen in the investigation into LFT and PCR tests. "The Mail on Sunday investigates whether 'the science' that the Government so often said they were following during the pandemic was flawed ...

Credits : www.riseandshine.childrensnational.org/could-prolonged-isolation-hurt-your-childs-immune-system/

The world is looking for a hero...

"Neither a man nor a crowd nor a nation can be trusted to act humanely or to think sanely under the influence of a great fear."

Bertrand Russell
20th Century Academic and Philosopher.



Credit : www.t-vine.com/covidoscope-brilliant-artistic-expressions-of-our-emotional-journey-through-the-coronavirus-pandemic/

Last month a report by the research charity Collateral Global and academics at Oxford University concluded as much, stating that as many as one third of all positive cases may not have been infectious. If they are right, that's a potentially staggering number – roughly six million cases ... Professor Francois Balloux, director of University College London's Genetics Institute, told The Mail on Sunday: 'Many people may not have been infectious, despite getting a positive test.' (10)

In other words approximately 6 million people, not to mention additional family and contacts who may have been 'pinged' could have had their lives negatively impacted by unnecessarily isolating, potentially losing income and missing weeks of education. This so called unquestionable 'golden standard' that established national infection rates and paved the way for the whole country, is today, the centre of investigation.

But isn't prevention better than cure?

Yes, obviously we should take steps to prevent harm, danger and protect the most vulnerable, but what happens when the information we receive is marred?

How can we then formulate, approve or act on the most suitable plan of prevention?

And who defines the most vulnerable? Is it those whose health could be compromised if they are infected or is it the victims of domestic abuse who were legally bound to stay at home for months with their abuser?

Thankfully, a clear example of where human rights has been protected was when the jobs of the very NHS workers, we rightfully applauded a year earlier, was placed in jeopardy with the government's proposed mandatory vaccine plan in January 2022, potentially losing 73,000 NHS workers and provoking a national staff shortage. (11) Here we saw the public question the potential acts of the government and rise up to question it.

But what are the long-term impacts of the pandemic?

Whilst these ideas may provoke more questions, I believe, there is one strong idea that prevails, fear is the greatest and most dangerous disease, paralysing critical thinking and numbing our response. Above all I would propose the question: how are we going to overcome this epidemic?

Like previous generations, exposed to disasters, war and dictatorships, this generation can now vividly remember when the schools closed, parents lost their jobs, and they weren't allowed to say 'goodbye' to loved ones who had passed away. Today, in the 21st century we repeatedly find ourselves deliberating over civil and human rights, facing economic instability and considering the long-term mental health implications.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that between:

March 2019 and March 2020

1.6 million women and 757,000 men had experienced domestic abuse, with a 7% growth in police recorded domestic abuse crimes.

Mid-May 2020

There was a 12% increase in the number of domestic abuse cases referred to victim support.

Between April and June 2020

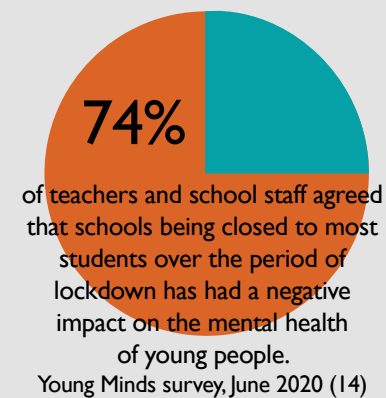
There was a 65% increase in calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, when compared to the first three months of that year. (12)

The NSPCC discusses the huge toll the pandemic had on young people mental health. "From 1st April 2020 - 31st March 2021: - Our Childline service has carried out 73,088 counselling sessions about mental or emotional health.

- 5,646 of these counselling sessions were with children aged 11 or under, an increase of nearly a third (29%) when compared to the year before.

- We also delivered 16,610 counselling

And what about the children?



July 2021 - 1 in 6 children aged five to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem, compared to 1 in 9 children in 2017. (15)



1 in 5 children have a diagnosable emotional, behavioural or mental health disorder.

1 in 10 young people have a mental health challenge that is severe enough to impair how they function at home, school or in the community. (16)

sessions about abuse. (13)

What Works Wellbeing reports that "the group reporting the highest levels of loneliness in the UK is young people." (17) Experience shows that children suffering from mental health problems at an early age are more likely to suffer from long term mental illnesses, unless they access early intervention. "Alarmingly, however, 75% of children and young people who experience a mental health problem aren't getting the help they need." (18)

But how can we respond in this moment of crisis where authorities are denying information, condescendingly taking actions against their own regulations, and enforcing a mentality of fear and isolation, regardless of the long-term consequences?

Hannah Barrios responded and she wrote a book. At the age of 11, faced with even more restrictions in her last year at Primary School; Hannah put pen to paper. Hannah loves writing but not quite as much as she loves hanging out with her friends and family. She is essentially a true representative of a generation of children who had their formal education disrupted and unexpectedly had their mental health challenged in a way recent generations had not experienced. But Hannah did not stay in a position of fear, but rather found a positive way to think of others and wrote her first book 'Everyone Can Shine'.

Hannah's book is aimed at 4 – 7-year-olds and promotes children's mental health, exploring ideas around friends, feelings, and self-worth. Through the two main characters unlikely friendship, Autumn and Sprocket discover how empathy and understanding can build resilience and help deal with negative comments, which in turn enables Autumn to rediscover her true colours.

Hannah, together with her family ran a crowdfunding campaign to publish her book and raised a staggering £4000, in addition to a local government grant reaching a total of £5000. Through gives generosity Hannah has given away over 800 books, shared with over 700 pupils in local primary schools, and aims to give every Primary School in her borough a free copy of her book.



The response to her book has been outstanding, as Heads, Deputy Heads and Year Group Leads praised her for communicating "some real pearls of wisdom and a vital message that is suitable for all." The book supports the Key Stage 2 PSHE National Curriculum and has been recommended as it "covers many issues in a sensitive way and is a must for every teacher and parent."

Hannah now intends to focus on the remaining books in her new book series, whilst publishing a children's activity book and a set of 'Affirmation and Emotion Postcards' that offer advice and practical suggestions for children to explore, manage and express their emotions.

Hannah's aim is clear...

"Through my stories I aim to encourage, empower, and educate my readers. I hope to inspire others to be their very best, finding strength to overcome adversities and discover their unique ability to shine."

So hope is not lost, and fear does not have to take hold. Perhaps we should consider the simple responses of this younger generation, who regardless of position, fear or rejection reach out to others, offer solutions and declare a message of simple truth that cannot be shaken.



Helen Barrios is a designer and illustrator and has worked with YWAM in the area of communication for over 20 years. Helen is married with three children and now lives in London where she runs her own media business.

For more information or to purchase a copy of Everyone Can Shine please visit www.everyonecanshine.com



What makes governing so difficult?

A CHRISTIAN WHO HAS WORKED IN
CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

"Events, dear boy, events."
British Prime
Minister Harold MacMillan

When asked what makes governing so difficult, British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan replied "Events, dear boy, events". He was right. The same is true for most leaders and most organisations. And most of us, too.

At its simplest, whether predicted or not, whether rehearsed or not, whether localised or not, or whether a human failing or a natural disaster, events make governing more difficult. Responding to "an event" of whatever type is difficult and will typically require much time, resources and effort, but trying to resolve the underlying issues that gave rise to the event may take much longer. Few will forget the Grenfell fire tragedy of 14th July 2017: the initial response by the voluntary sector, the local authority and central government lasted weeks. The recovery has taken almost five years, and the community is still deeply affected by it. The initial phases of the Inquiry have been very revealing about the reasons: the combined evidence points to a grave failure of the entire British state over a prolonged period, and will take significant resources, much determination and years fully to rectify.

Few individuals or institutions who have given evidence have come out with their reputations enhanced. Amongst other things, the Grenfell Inquiry has shown ... greed, weakness, incompetence, complacency, a low value placed on safety and of life, and ultimately indeed of the fallenness of man.

Human beings are complex. So are institutions. And the bigger they get, the more complex they become. Further, since the end of WW2 in particular, the role of governments has increased greatly - doing much that used to be done by the voluntary and community sectors and churches. From a Biblical perspective, while some of government's increased remit has been benign, much has been more questionable, particularly when coupled with a strongly humanistic attitude of the government claiming to be able to solve many if not most social problems - while rejecting the key Biblical notion that man by nature is fallen, and hence a sinner. Christians must be realistic about human nature.

Credit : www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-53420807



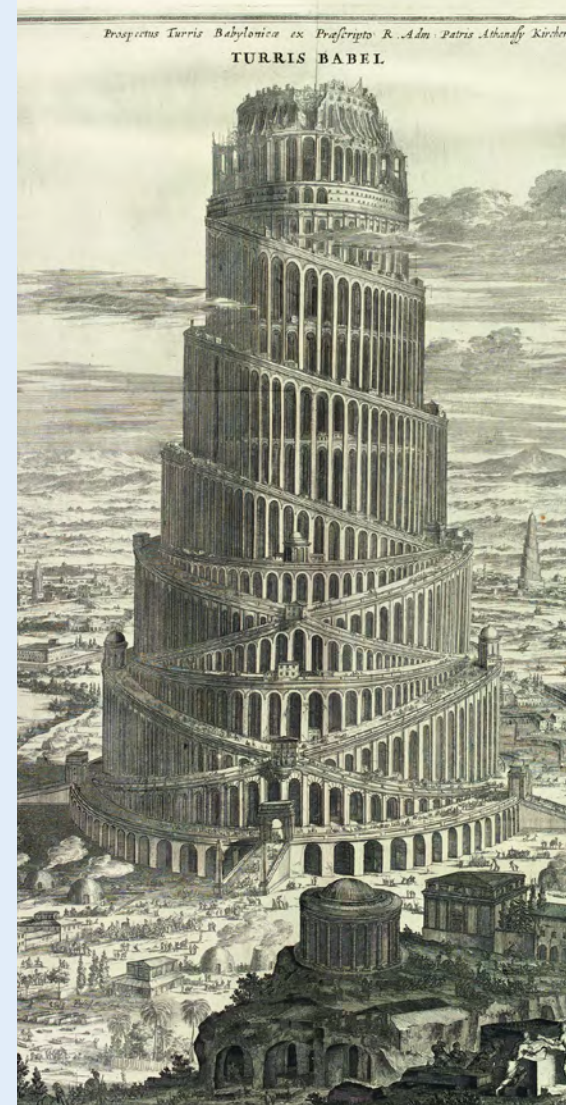
This humanism and the side-lining of God from the marketplace and more widely makes it harder for God to bless our governmental activities: how can God bless what He has clearly said is wrong? The West, and increasingly much of the world's, whole attitude to life (abortion and euthanasia); the rejection of a Biblical understanding of the family and of Biblical standards of sexual morality (including by many churches); the greed, the pride and the lack of commitment to justice for the poor and vulnerable. Let us not ignore either some of what is taught in schools, nor what is shown on television nor the way in which Mammon seems to dominate the marketplace. The Bible tells us that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual powers and principalities - but it is not always clear that many Christians in government fully understand that. Believers in government need to know how to pray and engage with these spirits, how to persevere - as well as to use their Biblical understanding help to frame policy and legislation. In Genesis 11, we read how the whole earth came together, to try to build a tower, to reach God. It is the first recorded instance of how humans came together to try to form a globalistic world - the original One World Government.

The concept of a One World Government has evolved now, and globalists want that same dominant world government, where a small elite would to govern - and control - the vast majority, and likewise a select elite would control the economy. In such a world, borders would be open, and people could go where they want, when they want. And God would be at best marginalised - if not eradicated - from all public life. There have been many attempts at globalisation since - the World Economic Forum being but the latest attempt - but despite the various efforts of many, none has been successful.

The Bible teaches us to be sceptical of utopian plans and the impossibility of human perfection, because we are all, even if personally redeemed, still sinners - yet, many, including some Christians in government, are seemingly oblivious to this.

The recent Russian attempt to invade Ukraine is a manifestation not only of powers and principalities, but also of the current reality of Psalm 2. Globally, things are getting more challenging: some would say that it is because we are in the last days. We have been in the last days since Jesus was crucified and resurrected. But now, much prophecy has been fulfilled, notably the existence of Israel as a country, and the presence in that country of Jewish believers in Jesus (Yeshua); the spread of the gospel to many nations; the increasing persecution and discrimination of believers globally - and the wars, rumours of war, plagues, pestilences and earthquakes.

Hard heads are needed to help steer nations - and church fellowships. A strong Biblical faith is essential - and for leaders who lack such personally, we must pray even more. Perhaps a key reason why Christians have in the main been less successful than they might have been when in office is that some have settled for too little, while others have pursued their own agendas, not God's. I wonder if too many have preferred to sit at the government's table, rather than alone with the King. Overall, too few pass the test that Jethro gave Moses - "But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens".



www.archive.4plebs.org/pol/thread/269312178/

*Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?*

Psalm 2 : 1

Is there a future in this World?

EVERY DAY I HEAR THE SAME QUESTION ...
WHY IS THIS WAR HAPPENING IN UKRAINE?

BY SASHA VOLYANIK



Every one of us can identify with an event in our lives that has impacted us in such a way that there is a distinctive divide; there is a definite before and after and life will never be the same again. On the 24th of February 2022 at 5am this kind of event happened in my life, as well as in the lives of 40 million Ukrainians.

From that morning on my life has become almost surreal, every morning I wake up with hope that everything that is happening in Ukraine is just a nightmare, but unfortunately war is real.



The actual war, started by Russia, did not begin in February 2022 but rather spring 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and the war that followed in the Donbas region. For a fleeting moment, Ukraine became a hotspot for world attention, but after just a few short weeks headlines changed and Ukraine disappeared into the background as the world returned to business as usual. Nevertheless, in the past eight years Ukraine has lost 150,000 people, over 50,000 people have been wounded, 2 million people have been displaced and our nation has lost 7% of its territory.

Repeatedly, throughout these years we have tried to communicate to the world politicians that there was danger coming and not just for our nation but to the world. However, powerful people of today, including the UN, turned their deaf ear and ignored us.

Today, we face the results of this ignorance, where money and business have more value than human life, empathy, and compassion.



Every day I hear the same question - why is this war happening in Ukraine? Of course, there are many answers and opinions to that question, and these are just a few of my personal subjective thoughts...

Firstly, we are living in a sinful world where greed and power have the greatest value and Satan is operating in his "gifts" to the fullest. Secondly, throughout history we can see the rise and fall of endless empires and Russia is no exception.

Some years ago, President Putin stated that the fall of the Soviet Union was the biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century. What we are witnessing today is the desire to turn back time, to regain power and influence over territory they lost, and become a world superpower once again.

When you study Ukrainian history, it is marred with fights, battles, and wars. Geographically, Ukraine is the dividing point between Western and Eastern civilization. Unfortunately, almost of all of these conflicts have passed through our land, many times leaving our country occupied by other nations. My grandfather lived to the age of 92, and unbelievably lived in seven different countries in the same house. However, in Ukraine, this is just a small example of complexity of our life, and yet, **WE NEVER STOP DREAMING.** We dream of having a free and independent Ukraine.



Credits : www.news.sky.com/

In August 1991, with the fall of Soviet Union, we felt the prayers of many generations had been answered. From that moment, until recently, we experienced the longest period of independence in the history of our nation, marking the first independence in the last 550 years. However, over the past 30 years I have lived with the feeling that one day Russia will come back and will do something to take Ukraine back under its control. So what happened in 2014, with the war on the Eastern side, and now with the full invasion, did not surprise me at all.

Every day I stand being surrendered by the pain and suffering; and am amazed by what God is doing amid all the tragedy. We see unprecedented unity in the Body of Christ, in our city, Ternopil. We started a joint relief effort together with of all 32 Evangelical and Protestant churches, we opened 23 shelters for refugees where we can host up to 3500 refugees per night and from the second day of the war, we started evacuation from the most difficult places into Western Ukraine as well as evacuating people to European nations. (approx. 10000+ refugees) We have coordinated a flow of humanitarian aid to the front lines with over 400 tons of supplies being provided through our operation, not to mention assisting others doing similar work. The support and care we receive from our YWAM family and so many different churches and organizations around the world has been overwhelming. We loved, we cared, and we are together moving forward to the victory day.

And allow me to conclude by sharing my thoughts concerning the war in Ukraine and God's Sovereignty to end a season of postmodernism.

For a long time, we were in living in the world of relative truth and tolerance, our Christianity has become personal, cultural and in many ways nominal. God challenged this status quo firstly, through the two years of Covid-19 and now through the war. Through these events we can now see clearly again, differentiating between good and evil and being able to define what is the real truth. In these days the whole world, including the Body of Christ, is experiencing an unprecedented awakening, and this is what gives me hope. I truly believe there is a future for this world.

"My fellow believers, when it seems as though you are facing nothing but difficulties, see it as an invaluable opportunity to experience the greatest joy that you can! For you know that when your faith is tested it stirs up in you the power of endurance. And then as your endurance grows even stronger, it will release perfection into every part of your being until there is nothing missing and nothing lacking."

James 1:2-4

God is in the move, and we need to join Him in His mission.



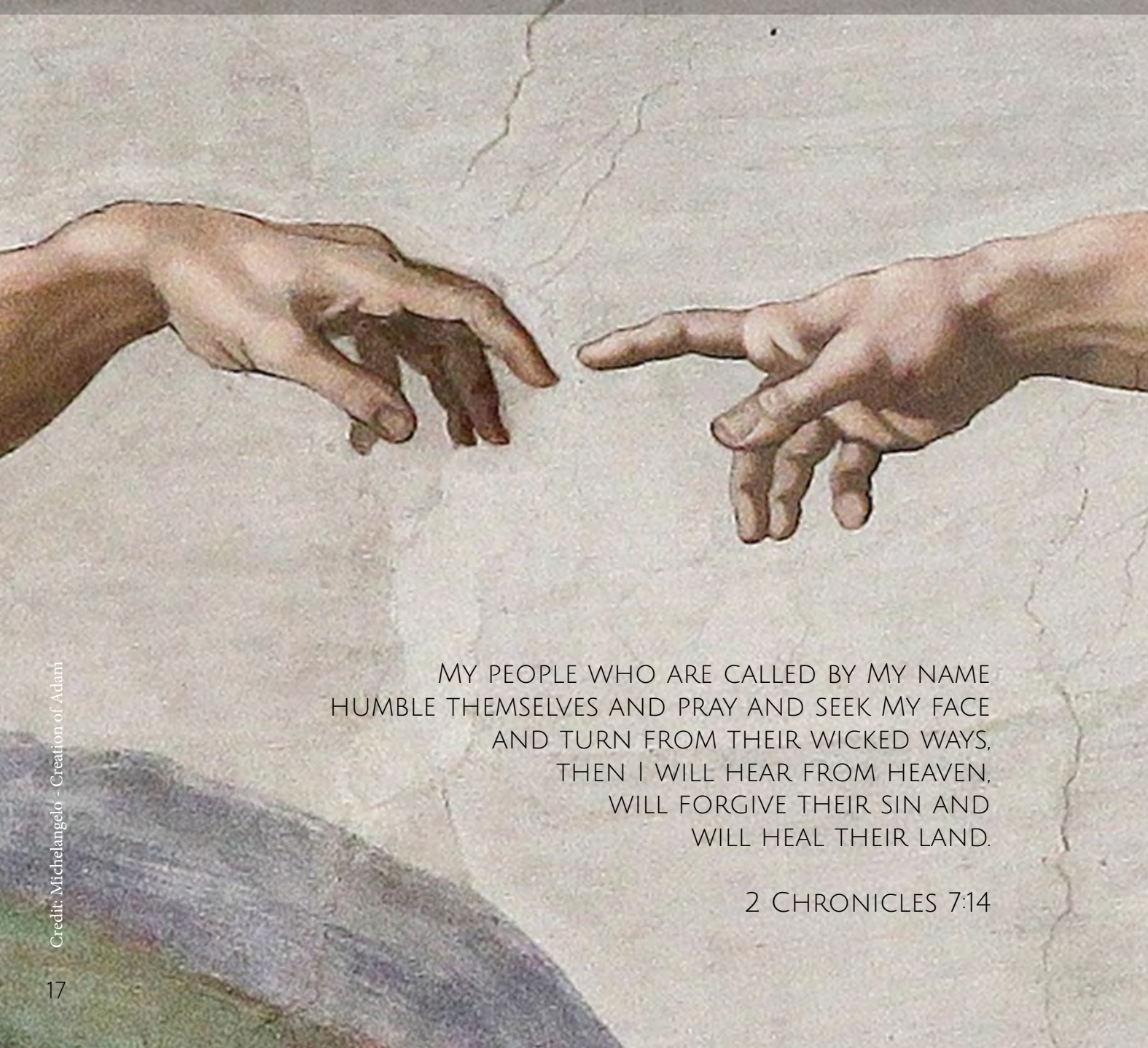
Sasha Volyanik

was born in evangelical family during Soviet Union, and from early age he was called to missions. Sasha joined YWAM in 1995, and served in Ukraine as a base leader, national leader and now as a Eastern Europe convener. Sasha is married to Luda, and together have two children and one grandchild. Sasha's greatest passion is leadership development.

Credits : www.abcnews.go.com/ www.nbcnews.com/ www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/



FREEDOM OF BELIEF



MY PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME
HUMBLE THEMSELVES AND PRAY AND SEEK MY FACE
AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS,
THEN I WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN,
WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN AND
WILL HEAL THEIR LAND.

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

Credit: Michelangelo - Creation of Adam

RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION IN EUROPE



When perception and reality clash - the underlining truth

BY CHANTAL MICHELA

Religious persecution and discrimination are well-documented global realities.

However, when these topics arises most of our thoughts, as Europeans, fly to the terrible ISIS persecution of Christians in the Middle-East, or the Hindu persecution against Muslims and Christians in India or the vicious kidnapping of young non-Muslim girls by Boko Haram in Nigeria.

However, very few of us would associate Europe with religious persecution and discrimination. Europeans tend to see themselves as positively tolerant, embracing diverse opinions, cultures, and lifestyles. However, when we look at data and, in some cases, headlines closer to home, we find that the image Europe has of itself does not always reflect reality.

In 2011, at the opening session of the OSCE high-level meeting on Anti-Christian Violence in Rome, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, addressed the delegates of various European religious organisations

regarding "the violation of the rights of Christians and respond to this challenge through our common efforts." One statement, in particular, stood out as extremely relevant:

"I am convinced that society, which has renounced its spiritual heritage under the pretext of the radical separation of religious life from public life, becomes vulnerable to the spirit of enmity in relation to representatives of any religion. This indeed does create an atmosphere of intolerance concerning Christians and representatives of other traditional religions. This statement can be proven by many examples."

Indeed, Metropolitan Hilarion was right then and has been proven right in the years after his address in Rome up to the present day. It is clear to evident to see various statistics, policies and incidents show that religious discrimination and even violent persecution in Europe do occur, probably more than we are willing and comfortable to admit.

Judaism

- In 2020 there were 2,224 anti-Semitic offences reported to police in Germany which could be classified under right-wing crime.

- Survey results indicate that as of 2018, Jewish people in the Netherlands found anti-Jewish sentiment to have a high prevalence in Dutch society. Over 75 per cent of Jewish people surveyed indicated that according to them, there was a lot or quite a lot of anti-Jewish sentiment in the Netherlands, whilst roughly a fifth of respondents did not consider anti-Jewish sentiments to be very common.

- In 2019, the first of the answers given by the Jews of France when they were asked what were, according to them, the causes of anti-Semitism, was Islamism. Another 42 per cent saw anti-Semitism as resulting from prejudices about Jews that have existed for centuries and are still present today. In addition, more than a quarter of them (26 %) found the cause of this phenomenon in extreme right-wing ideas and ideas conveyed on the Internet and social networks.

- Over 1.6 thousand anti-Semitic incidents were reported to the Community Security Trust in the United Kingdom in 2020, the most of any year in the provided time period. There has been a clear and noticeable increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents reported in the UK since 2013 when just 535 incidents were reported.

Islam

- Among the 234 anti-Muslim incidents recorded by the French Ministry of the Interior and the National Advisory Commission on Human Rights in France in 2020, 43% were anti-Muslim inscriptions. The next two most frequent types of aggression towards Muslims were threatening words and gestures (23%), and leaflets and letters (20%).

Christianity

- In 2019, more than half of the anti-religious acts identified by the French Ministry of the Interior concerned the Christian community. According to the source, these were mainly attacks on religious property. The second most affected community was the Jewish community in France (36.29% of anti-religious acts). It is also interesting to note that in the following year, 2020, the number of anti-Semitic acts was half the number recorded in 2019.

- According to statistics, it appears that Christian places of worship in France were the most targeted sites with 949 acts of vandalism in 2016 and 878 in 2017. The survey reveals that acts of vandalism against all kinds of places of worship decreased in France from 2016 to 2017 except for Jewish religious sites: In 2017, 28 acts of vandalism against Jewish places of worship were counted, compared to 23 in 2016.

- As recently as 2020 there were attacks on churches in the German town of Tuebingen perpetrated by a radical feminist group who vandalized two Christian churches in Germany and burned the car of a pro-life journalist.

- There have been steady reports of cases of persecution of Christians who criticize social evils, for example, clergy and lay believers who criticize homosexuality as sinful often face public ostracism and severe discrimination. The case that comes to mind is the one of a Spanish Archbishop, who reaffirmed Roman Catholic Church teaching held for centuries and was prosecuted for it. Christians are also consistently attacked because of their position on Euthanasia and Abortion.

There have been many more instances and cases all over Europe, although they will rarely make headlines and one has to be willing to dig and search to find them. The understanding of our reality as it is and not as we want it to be is imperative for all human beings as it allows us realise where we truly are and what we can do to change our circumstances. Many people in Europe do not care overly much about religion but they definitely do care about their rights of freedom of thought and freedom of beliefs. If we do not preserve these rights for all, regardless of religion there is no saying what the future might hold.



Chantal Michela is Italian and has been a missionary with Youth With A Mission since 2015. For the past three years Chantal has been sharing her knowledge and passion in numerous Discipleship Training School whilst also teaching in the School of Biblical Christian Worldview. Chantal lives and serves in London.



A new time for Europe

BY ANDERS CARLSSON

Are we creating an inheritance or are we consuming it?

In South America, where my wife and I have been quite a lot, Europe is generally referred to as “the old continent”. That’s connected with what the Americas were called when I “discovered”; the New World. There’s something “old” about Europe. In what sense? One aspect is that most would agree that Europe has passed zenith long ago and is now mostly reaping the fruits of former glory. The USA has dominated global culture, economy and security for many decades now and places like China and even India are in that race currently. Europe is way behind and doesn’t seem to bother too much.

With that said, people around the globe still looks to Europe for answers. “What happens in Europe affects the whole world”, someone said. The question is then; **what does Europe have to offer?**

To be fair, that hasn’t been too much lately. Europe seems to be mostly inward looking, enjoying (until recently) stability and a fairly good level of life. The European Union has created a framework for cooperation and trade that has paved the way for all of this. So far so good. But is there more?

I think so. I think God has given a mantle of leadership to Europe and whenever that has not been picked up there is a vacuum of leadership in a certain way. Sometimes through history that leadership role has been taken not for good. A built in aspect of good leadership is to not look out for your own best first of all. As a leader you are to look out for the best of others and the common cause. Jesus described this in the Bible as leadership of serving. I believe that’s the place Europe needs to be in.

On a cheap RyanAir flight quite many years ago I ended up sitting beside a young Italian guy. He was maybe 21 years old at the time and he had already finished his Masters degree in London and was about to start his career at a major global bank within the next few weeks. We had a good conversation about faith, Italy and Europe during the whole trip. It was around the 2008 financial crisis and Italy was doing especially bad. We talked about hope and I tried to convince him: you can make a difference in your country and also in the continent. I was convinced that I was sitting next to a potential future president or prime minister. He was wrestling with going for what he personally would benefit a lot from or going for something that many might benefit from.

I think that’s the battle ground in Europe today: **are we creating an inheritance or are we consuming it?**

The key is found within our Christian roots of loving even our enemy, walking the extra mile, borrowing without expecting to be repaid, serving others in an unselfish way. (Luke 6:35)

In Youth With A Mission we believe in young people. We believe God can use them to do great things, even lacking experience and sometimes skills and resources. There’s something happening among young people in Europe that gives hope. I see more of that servant heart, looking out for others, willingness to give up what you have for a higher cause. Let’s stand with this generation and teach them the values and life skills they need. Let’s walk with them closely and not abandon them, we don’t want another fatherless generation in Europe.

Credits : www.conqagroup.com/



Anders Carlsson is the National Leader of YWAM Sweden as well as team leader of the YWAM Linköping campus. He has a Bachelor of Social Science from Linköping University. He is married to Sara, together they have four children.

Reflections

BY LYNN GREEN

What an informative collection of articles! I have begun to write after a few minutes of reading each of them; I commend and honour the contributors, and especially the persistent efforts of Rosana Escobar that have led to another edition of this magazine.

However, I am not sure that one important point has been made with sufficient clarity: These are not the views of YWAM, but the views of individuals who are in YWAM, or have been, so I am so pleased to say that there is a place in YWAM for disagreement and debate — freedom of thought and, therefore, freedom of speech. And that includes freedom for me to write.

Lest you doubt that, allow me to express a few different opinions from authors of the articles in this magazine.

I have no doubt that each of the authors hold to a Biblical Christian worldview, so they would agree that the important issues in this edition are most certainly heavily influenced by the **“the rulers... the authorities... the powers of this dark world and...the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”** mentioned in Ephesians 6. I appreciate the analysis that assumes human, historical cause and effect in the relationship between nations of within nations. But I believe the authors know that is not the whole picture.

A few comments on the articles will illustrate what I mean: Many academic authors and teachers highlight colonialism as the root cause of conflict in several regions of the world, but especially Africa. However, tribal xenophobia and warfare and the domination of powerful, but corrupt rulers

existed well before colonialism, this then flavoured colonialism and has continued ever since. Colonialism was morally indefensible but is only partly, and I would say marginally, to blame for the poor quality of life most Africans suffer. (I state this after decades of extensive work in Africa and now many decades of my adult children engaging in business and health work in Africa, including close interaction with several senior ministers and Heads of State.) The “spiritual forces of evil” are evident in everyday life.

There has been much debate about whether each African tribe should have been recognised as a sovereign state with its own territory. But, when colonialism ended with declarations of independent statehood, much of the damage would likely have continued if each tribe had been given its own nation-state. There would have been wars fought over the borders when they were being drawn and would most likely have continued to this day. The efforts to weld several tribes together in an accountable, representative, and democratic state was a worthy hope, but the “spiritual forces of evil”, in the form of lethal tribalism, and rule by corrupt tyrants, existed prior to, during, and after the colonial era.

The worldview of Russia and other Eastern European nations, and the influence of the Orthodox Church, has been largely ignored by analysts of the current violence in Ukraine. There are many expressions of Orthodox Christianity in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. In most cases, they are thoroughly intertwined with nationalism and the coercive power of the state. So it was, and is, in Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church reinforces nationalism and racism, though there are some saintly, individual

exceptions. It is difficult to imagine a process by which that worldview could have been expunged by more influence from Western nations. The window of influence was less than one generation in length and the Western nations are too sceptical of their own Biblical roots to be bold proponents of the values that led to their stability and prosperity.

Concentration of power in the hands of a few is almost always lethal. Separation of powers within nations and balance of powers between nations is a vital concept that has held tyranny at bay. If the United Nations or another global power had a free hand to interfere in the internal affairs of nations, I believe the injustices and violations of human rights would have been different than we have had to date, but worse.

The European Economic Community, which the United Kingdom joined in 1973, was committed to several excellent ideals, one of which was subsidiarity. That principle of pushing authority and responsibility down to the lowest possible level (grassroots government) was widely stated, but the lust for power soon relegated it to obscurity. There was too little protection against the reality that people who gain power usually find that they want more power because they can't enact as much change as they would like. With more power, they become less accountable and less accessible to the public. That is the road to tyranny. To underscore that, the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon expunged the official documents of any reference to its early Christian foundations. The transformation was completed, and the EU was a self-declared humanist supranational political power with final authority over all member states.



On another subject: Evangelicals have engaged extensively in all spheres of life, especially since the 1973 Lausanne conference. It has been a very long time since I heard anyone seriously espouse the unconscionable idea that Christians should, “let the world go to hell because we will be rescued from it”.

And finally: The primary deadly tension between Christian confessions in the Ukraine and Russia is the recognition, in 2018, by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church had the right to secede from the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church and claim equal recognition. The tensions between the Roman Catholic Church and the

Orthodox Church since the Great Schism in 1054 are a factor, but a minor factor compared to the confrontation between the nationalism of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church in the Ukraine has been much less powerful than in Russia because so many Ukrainians have migrated to free, usually Evangelical or Pentecostal churches.

This article may not be what the editor hoped for, but I have no doubt that she will receive it with her usual grace. Long live freedom of thought, freedom of speech and freedom to debate! I look forward to the next edition of this occasional magazine!

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