

My Somerset Life

A diary by Brian Snellgrove

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An Encounter with an awesome Christian organisation

The first breath of Spring, plus following my intuition

A day of responding to the first breaths of Spring by us working in the garden, digging, pruning, cutting and somewhat obsessively collecting firewood to save money on the gas bill and because live fires are much more satisfying than staring at a hot radiator. I got a strong impulse to go to the Baptist church in Street which is about 3 miles south of Glastonbury where there was to be a talk given on the Christian faith addressing current social and political problems, organized by The Christian Institute.

The Christian Institute

I have only had brief contact with this organization but now I am very excited to find a vibrant UK based organization, evidently founded 30 years ago, with a formidably well qualified staff to put political pressure on parliamentarians and to assist those who had been victims of injustice among many other functions. For the first time Francoise and I decided to go there by bus, the 376, which goes from Bristol to Street and which could conveniently drop us right outside the door of the church.



Street Baptist Church (details) itself is a modern building about six years old and regularly draws congregations of 200 people to their Sunday service. We caught the bus at 17.45 and arrived at the church just after 18.30 It is a lovely drive through the countryside and I sat in my preferred seat at the front on the top deck. On arrival we discovered we were the first and were warmly greeted by David and Nigel who were the co-presenters . They asked us where we were from.

They had driven down from Newcastle to be with us which in itself is quite a feat. How long to drive from Newcastle to Street in Somerset? According to my GPS it would take five hours 36 minutes for three hundred and six miles. I admire the dedication behind this . It's not a money thing, it's a vision thing and these are the sort of people that I like to mix with . They had laid out 80 chairs but when it came to it they needed another 20 chairs to accommodate everyone who came. I was most impressed with the efficiency of the meeting

The speakers spoke turn and turn about for about 10 to 15 minutes each, brief videos were presented to explain the work of the organization; the lights were turned down smoothly and seamlessly so it was almost like being in a theater . The speakers David and Nigel articulated with conviction and clarity. Nigel had been a defense barrister so he knows his

way around the system .



At the side of the hall there were a remarkable number of very well produced literature on various topics such as the conversion therapy ban, Michael Gove's new extremism plan threatening religious freedom, assisted suicide, Critical Theory, the transgender craze, criminalizing prayer and parenting. Each leaflet was folded into three pages and was easy to read, fact-filled, and very well designed. Just as important they were up to date. From the design point of view they are easy on the eye executed by someone who really knows their stuff.

See example below about an 'assisted suicide' leaflet. (3 A5 pages fold into one) Brilliant crisp layout and design.

Endangering lives

ASSISTED SUICIDE UNDERMINES THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

In January 2021, Lord Sumption controversially suggested that some lives are less valuable than others. "Thankfully, there were strong objections to this idea. The value of a human life is not based on perceptions of someone's autonomy, contribution or capacity. Once we start ranking the value of people's lives in this way, we breach a fundamental principle which protects everyone that all lives are of equal value. Cancelling this principle will have far-reaching consequences for our society. The law must not affirm the idea that some lives are not worth living. It sends the terrible message to suffering and vulnerable people - who are made in God's image and worthy of respect - that they have a duty to die. No wonder many people with disabilities or terminal conditions do not want the law to be changed."

Lord Sumption

EXISTING LAW PROTECTS VULNERABLE PEOPLE

People who contemplate ending their own lives and ask for help to do so are at their most vulnerable and emotional. They need a clear, firm law to protect them in their darkest moments. Instead, campaigners would doctors and others to help people kill themselves. It is the ultimate in hopelessness. If we see someone contemplating jumping to their death, we do not offer them a path. Changing the law would put pressure on the vulnerable to end their lives for fear of being a financial, emotional or care burden. Over half of those in Oregon who died by assisted suicide in 2019 and 2020 cited the fear of being a burden on others as a reason for ending their lives. Even if individuals do not put this pressure on themselves, there will inevitably be external pressure in some cases. As pro-life MP Danny Kruger has argued, allowing assisted suicide can create an expectation:

"If you 'may' terminate your life because it is not worth living, surely you 'ought' to do so? And if you 'ought' to do so, surely others should encourage you to do the right thing?"

Proposed 'safeguards' are worthless

Supporters of changing the law cite various proposed 'safeguards'. For example, that the person must be over 18, have a terminal illness that means they are likely to die within six months, and have a "voluntary, clear, settled and informed" wish to end their life.

But so-called safeguards can never work. Once society decides that assisted suicide or euthanasia are valid choices for some, where does it stop? Evidence from other countries shows us that once a society starts down this path the 'safeguards' always disappear.

THE SLIPPERY SLOPE IS INEVITABLE

There is stark international evidence on how ineffective and short-lived 'safeguards' are:

- Netherlands:** In the Netherlands, the key criterion of ' unbearable suffering' is now understood much more broadly. There has been a marked increase in euthanasia cases for dementia from 12 in 2009 to 562 in 2019 and for patients with psychiatric disorders from 0 in 2009 to 68 in 2019. Hundreds of euthanasia cases have involved elderly people who were not seriously ill but had conditions associated with normal old age. Euthanasia has become so accepted that there are attempts to open it up to those who are simply 'tired of life'.
- Belgium:** In Belgium, the 2002 law on euthanasia was initially confined to adults. This was extended in 2014 to allow euthanasia for children with no lower age limit. Euthanasia is now used much more broadly than in its early years. It is now applied to people with the first symptoms of chronic diseases like Alzheimer's, patients suffering from depression, and older people suffering a combination of conditions. Euthanasia has become so accepted that there are attempts to open it up to those who are simply 'tired of life'.
- Canada:** Canada only legalised euthanasia in 2016, but has already scrapped the requirement for a person to be terminally ill and will extend it to those with mental illness from 2023. A court determined that the restriction to the terminally ill was 'incompatible' with Canadian human rights and equality laws. That this happened so quickly after the original legislation shows how soon 'safeguards' can be eroded once the principle is abandoned.

NORMALISING KILLING

Wherever assisted suicide or euthanasia is introduced the volume of cases rises over time as the change to the law changes the culture:

- Netherlands:** In the Netherlands, reported cases of euthanasia and assisted suicide have more than tripled since the law was introduced (3,482 in 2002 to 6,261 in 2019).
- Canada:** In Canada, both euthanasia and assisted suicide were 'legalised' in 2016. Since then, "medically assisted deaths" have increased significantly every year. There were 7,595 medically assisted deaths reported in 2020, a jump of 34% compared to 2019 which itself was 24% higher than 2018. They now account for around 2.5% of all deaths.
- Oregon:** In Oregon in 2020, 245 people died under the so-called Death with Dignity Act, a 28% increase from 191 in 2018. This is the highest number since the Act was introduced, and almost four times the number ten years earlier (65 in 2010). Of the 245, only three were referred for psychiatric evaluation to check their mental competency to make the decision.
- Belgium:** In Belgium, reported euthanasia cases have increased more than ten-fold, from 235 in the first full year to 2,456 in 2019.

UK CAMPAIGNERS WANT TO GO FURTHER

UK assisted suicide campaigners openly admit that the proposals put forward for debate here do not go as far as they want.

In June 2021, Andrew Mitchell MP, co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Choice at the End of Life, conceded that current proposals are narrower than many advocates would like.

Campaign group My Death My Decision (MDMD), formerly the Society for Old Age Rational Suicide, wants assisted suicide to be legal solely on the basis of an individual's feelings of suffering, without any requirement for an end-of-life prognosis.

Michael Irwin, a patron of MDMD, believes assisted suicide should be offered to those who feel "their lives have been fully lived", and has even proposed making all old people over a certain age eligible for help to commit suicide.

AC, Cravling is a strong supporter of assisted suicide. He objects to limiting it to terminally ill patients, believing this is "too restrictive". He says it is simply "a good first step".

Andrew Mitchell MP

My Death My Decision

What a joy it was to find such a professional organization dedicated to the work of God on this planet .

There was also talk of latest proposed acts legalizing abortion up to the moment of birth if it is found that there is a defect in the child. It was also talk of people having do it yourself kits at home to induce abortion. That was also talk of restricting the rights of parents to have any say or influence their children into what sex they wanted to be (as if that were based on any sound science). Their education and legal department will take up the case of anyone. They recommend ACTION as well as PRAYER

As an example of their legal help there was a Scottish man who was preaching the gospel in the street and an anonymous person accused him of being homophobic and he was arrested but eventually not charged. He was awarded 5,000 pounds for being detained for 90 minutes and the police had to pay a total of 15,000 pounds including costs.

The presentation ran from just after 7pm until 8:15 p.m. when there were questions.

With regards to the dystopian material that I read on a daily basis this was a splendid mixture of reality, balancing the

ingress of evil influence with good news stories . I felt moved to stand up at the end of the talk and say that my heart had been moved and I do appreciate them coming all the way to see us. People tend to take these actions for granted.

Find out more



If anyone wants to know more about this Newcastle on Tyne based national group they should visit christian.org.uk or give them a call on 0191 281 5664 You can get advice about how to contact your local MP and how to

phrase a letter for best response, various publications, literally hundreds of helpful videos. This is serious campaigning against evil.

Example of a good 'fighting' video is below

This Christian parent governor was axed for questioning school's sex education policy. [click on this text](#)

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With over 1 million words and 7,130 images.

You can search for any place or topic including Bath, Frome, Wells, Bristol, Glastonbury, Cheddar, or you can search topics such as Christian, meditation, philosophy. You will also find extensive writings on Swansea, Cardiff, Weston Super Mare, London, Avebury.

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