

## God is dead and it's killing our society.

I was on holiday when the riots struck. As looters began to torch my city, I was on a plane with my family heading towards America. It was a disconcerting feeling being on the other side of the world watching footage of my country tearing itself apart.

In the weeks since, I've heard countless stories of businesses decimated, their owners losing everything and families who spent the week fearful and house-bound, bags packed in case they needed to escape quickly. The consequences of these riots will be felt in our nation for a long time to come.

As I read various people's attempts to come to terms with what occurred, I was struck by the proliferation of voices, diverse in their worldviews and faith positions, but united in their diagnosis: 'This is exactly what happens when a society tries to kill God.'

These recent riots are but one example of a larger epidemic. We have seen bandit attacks on the border of Somalia, a 20-hour multi-pronged attack by the Taliban in Kabul, and of course the 10th anniversary of the devastating attacks on the Twin Towers on 9/11. All point to the fact that society is broken.

In between seeing the sights of New York and catching up on the news from England, I read *The Rage Against God* by Peter Hitchens. He argues that without God, there is no reason to enter into the 'inconvenient obligations' upon which our society is based, and where atheism has flourished at the hands of the 'Militant Godless', society has been all the weaker for it.

As I watched the riots, and as I have read the news, I am inclined to agree.

From where does a decent, well-meaning, selfless human being get his internal sense of morality if not from a divine moral lawgiver? And from where do those who commit atrocities against their own kind get their permission to do so, if not from the denial of that same lawgiver?

Even comedian Russell Brand, commenting on the riots, wrote: 'I know, as we all intuitively know, that the solution is all around us and it isn't political, it is spiritual.'

Writing in *The Wall Street Journal*, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks argued that we are now feeling the force of decisions made decades ago in which Judaeo-Christian morality was jettisoned. We thought we could do away with God and still maintain a strong society. How wrong we were. The West is particularly guilty of 'attempted deicide'. In fact as Micklethwait and Wooldridge of *The Economist* note in their book *God is Back*, Western Europe is one of the few places in the world where the belief that God is dead still exists!

Sachs cites a member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, tasked with finding out what gave the West its dominance. He said: 'At first we thought it was your guns. Then we thought it was your political system, democracy. Then we said it was your economic system, capitalism. But for the last 20 years, we have known that it was your religion.'

I was fascinated to read a BBC report suggesting there may be as many as 60 million Christians in China, more than in the whole of Europe! When other nations begin to covet our Judaeo-Christian heritage, this should cause us to think carefully about giving it up.

Society should think twice about killing off God, lest in so doing it signs its own death warrant.

For societies to flourish, they need at their core a belief in the existence of God. It is not simply the foundation for moral action, it's what gives us hope and keeps us straining and striving towards a better future.

**David Stroud**, Leader of the Newfrontiers UK Team and Lead Elder of ChristChurch London

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# Strictly no difference



It is very difficult to summarise or explain such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

I believe that the best thing will be to begin at the beginning. In 2008 we attended the 5th International Conference of Christian Police celebrated in London. This was the beginning of an endless number of blessings for us as we saw Christian police officers from all over world adoring God together within a well structured and developed organisation. We thought that the best thing we could do was to bring this experience to Spain. We wanted to organise a few conferences here so that all the Christian policemen of our country could see it and be part of it.

We put our hands to the work, and without realising it, we were creating history in Spain. On 30th September and 1–2 October we celebrated the 1st European Conference of Christian Police Officers at the Trypp Hotel in Guadalajara. Delegates from Albania, Austria, Germany, Moldova, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, United Kingdom and most of the regions of Spain gathered together for this memorable event.

As we listened to the reports of every country represented, we realised that, in spite of the kilometres that separate us, there is strictly no difference between us. In our profession we suffer the same problems, live through the same experiences, join in the same sufferings and the same blessings; only the language separates us and in these conferences we saw that it made little difference.

We enjoyed times of praise that only could belong to God; it was an unction of the Holy Spirit. The worship group included three policemen, two wives of policemen, two daughters of policemen and a brother-in-law of a policeman. Miky, a policeman with two years' service, was the director of praise and he chose the songs that were Spirit-inspired as God moved in the praise of his people.

During the conference, Juan Manuel Nombela, Director of Coordinadora de Policías Christianos led a session on 'The Policeman and his Marriage' and Tony Britten (ICPF) led another session on 'The Policeman and the Family'. Short Bible studies were led by Felix Ceccato (Switzerland) and Don Axcell (United Kingdom).

I want to express my gratefulness, first to our God and Father who has allowed us to organise this event, and secondly to all those who in some way have taken part in the whole programme.

Also I am grateful for the support and untiring effort of Tony Britten, Robert Sharp, Felix Ceccato and to the President of ICPF Matthias Lehmann; without their, support, prayers and presence in this European Conference of Christian Police Officers, things would not have been the same. Grace dear brothers; we will always be in debt to you.

**Juan Manuel Nombela** (CPC Spain)

## Blown away by the evidence

I did not grow up in a Christian home. I would have called myself an atheist for the first 20 years of my life. I was happy(ish) but constantly striving for genuine contentment. I went to Exeter University and met a few Christians who did not fit the negative stereotype I had always given them. One of them, now my wife, was particularly influential. She had a self assurance that I wanted for myself. I also met Christian lads who were bright and talented and yet had a humility that impressed me.

I began to look into the character of Jesus. I read books and studied John's Gospel with a mate. All my 'trump card' arguments that I had used to arrogantly 'disprove' Christianity fell away. I was not quite as clever as I had thought. I learnt that Christianity is a historical religion, rooted in truth and able to withstand investigation.

I became utterly compelled by the character of Jesus Christ. He was unlike anyone I had ever encountered. I had always thought he was a hippy in a dress with some interesting moral ideas. I was confronted with the King of the universe, a man who claimed to be the Way, the Truth and the Life, a man it was not wise to oppose! I figured he needed to be followed and ultimately it was he alone who made sense of life. I examined the resurrection and was blown away by the evidence for it being true. That was the clincher for me.

In time I grew in awareness of my own personal rebellion against Jesus, and the fact that he had a way of dealing with it. I saw his love and gentleness alongside his justice. I gave my life to him in 2003 and live to enjoy him, serve him and help build his church.

**Will Hitch** (Metropolitan)



Will Hitch at the Metropolitan Branch Annual Celebration

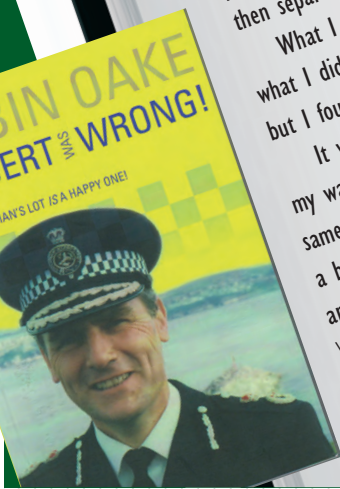


# A Bright Yellow Book

I was 15 when I became a Christian. I was in the fifth year at an East End comprehensive school. I remember being literally carried into the Christian Union one Tuesday lunchtime. I thought I was already a Christian, mainly because I was born in this country. I didn't know any different then. I treated the Christian Union as somewhere to hang out with my mates. At least when it was raining there was somewhere to go. One Tuesday we had a guest speaker who brought with her some people from a group called Saltmine. They told us how they were holding an event at a church in Manor Park on the Friday involving music and drama and that we should go along and that we could find God as well. That got our backs up more. Who were they to tell us that we weren't Christians? Well, the Friday came and I had been thinking all week, maybe I should go along. Some of my friends were going and I asked if I could go with them. I sat on the hard wooden seats and watched the drama and had a good laugh and listened to the music. The music was really good, not what I was expecting. Then up came a middle-aged man, also from east London. You could tell from the accent. His name was Doug Barnett and he began talking about his life and how God had made a difference to me and about me. At the end of the meeting, I found I was going forward to ask for prayer and ask Jesus into my life. Then when I went back to my friends after the meeting, they had big grins on their faces. They knew that I had made the step of asking Jesus into my life. It came to finding a church. Well, what better place than to join my friends at their church? It wasn't big; it was a small evangelical church with normal people, in everyday clothes.

Over the years I faced some good times and tough times as a Christian. But no one said it was going to be plain sailing. With God's help I became a police officer fourteen years ago, a real answer to prayer. Ten years ago was the hardest time. I lost my mum to cancer, got married nine months later and then separated about nine months after that. Unfortunately there were mistakes on both sides. What I have found over the years is that God will forgive if you give everything over to him but you also have to forgive yourself as well. That is what I didn't do for ages. I don't think I blamed God. I blamed myself. I fell away from God, from the Church. I still kept in touch with my friends but I found it hard getting back with God or wanting to. I had become the prodigal son. I wanted to experience things I had never done before. It was in 2009 that my friends from east London invited me to go to the Saltmine holiday in August. I told them that I was nervous, anxious but happy to get my walk with God back on track. When I arrived at the site my friends asked how I felt. I picked it up, looked at it then placed it back. I had noticed a bright yellow book with a policeman in uniform on the front facing outwards. I picked it up, looked at it then placed it back. I walked away and got a coffee. I went passed the bookstall again, there it was, a bright yellow book with the title *Gilbert was wrong* [now published as *With God on the streets*]. I picked it up looked at the front and back cover and found myself buying it. It appealed to me as I was now a police sergeant.

I took this book back to my room and began to read it. I can't stand reading the best of times but, this book, I couldn't put down. It was written by the ex-Chief Constable of the Isle of Man, Robin Oake. Robin spoke of his life as a Christian and of being a police officer. I knew just reading this book that the Holy Spirit was doing something in me. It was at one of the meetings that God really challenged me again and I recommitted my life to him, asking for his forgiveness and for him to be at the centre of my life. James Southgate (Metropolitan)



## CHAPLAIN HONOURIED

A British Army padre has won a gallantry award for supporting frontline soldiers in Helmand province — unarmed. With only his camouflaged Bible and a shepherd's crook for defence, Padre Andy Earl dodged Taliban bullets that even pierced his armoured vehicle. Earl, 50, spent six months on tour, comforting the injured and counselling soldiers. He received the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service for 'exceptional pastoral care'. The former policeman and vicar from Nottingham worked alongside bomb disposal soldiers and with the Engineer Regiment. Earl denies that he took an unnecessary risk: 'Throughout history Army chaplains have always tried to be at the place of greatest danger. That is not reckless, it is going to the place where there is the most fearfulness and the most spiritual need.'

With thanks to the Sunday Telegraph and Sunday Express  
Andy Earl was West Yorkshire CPA Branch leader for a time.



## Police Pocket Testament

Our project to provide a Police Pocket Testament for our colleagues continues towards its first printing. The additional material has been prepared, the scripture text has been formatted and the cover designed. It will not be long now until the first copies roll off the presses.

We are still short of our target of £20,000 for the project, but as every donation is added to the fund, the total raised so far is amended in the newsflash section of the CPA website. Do continue to put this project before your churches to gain their practical support.

As a taste of what is to come, we are publishing a picture of the cover design with this report.

NEW TESTAMENT  
PSALMS AND PROVERBS



# Christ in You, You in Christ

As a child of God, you are in Christ and He is in you. Each is significant in the following ways:

Being in Christ means that you receive the benefits of all that He has done for you through His death, burial, resurrection and ascension;

Christ being in you means that you receive the benefits of His presence, His character and His nature within you.

Being in Christ changes your position before God;

Christ being in you changes the inward condition of your heart.

Being in Christ allows you to see what God wants you to become;

Christ being in you means that you can become what God wants you to be.

Being in Christ means that He is the atmosphere in which you live your day;

Christ being in you means that each day His strength is your strength, His peace is your peace, His power is your power, His victory is your victory, His life is your life.

God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made Christ to be wisdom itself. He is the one who made us acceptable to God. He made us pure and holy, and He gave Himself to purchase our freedom. (1 Corinthians 1:30 NLT)

For it has pleased God to tell His people that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. For this is the secret: Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in His glory. (Colossians 1:27 NLT)

## OUR PURPOSE is to

glorify Jesus Christ in the Police Service.

## OUR MISSION is to

- encourage and support Christians in the Police Service
- communicate in words and action, the truth, message and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to colleagues and the community we serve
- build bridges between the Christian community and the police.

## OUR VISION is to see

- an active and growing Branch of CPA in every Police Service in the UK and every Christian in the Police Service to fulfill their potential in Jesus Christ
- colleagues and those we serve come to know Jesus Christ personally
- police and churches working together in every community to reduce crime and improve quality of life.

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