

Myth of the Lesser of Two Evils



In the Christian life, there's no such thing as the lesser of two evils. Even in those life-or-death worst-case scenarios we love to raise during ethical discussions, there is always a way to avoid violating God's standards of right and wrong.

God promises us this in the following Scripture passage: *'So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it'* (1 Corinthians 10:12-14).

It is this principle of absolute right and absolute wrong that distinguishes Christianity from the culture. Even more important than the principle of an absolute right and an absolute wrong is God's promise that Christians can always discover the difference; that we will never be faced with a time when we have to choose between two wrongs.

Right and wrong in the life of a Christian is based on the Bible, which is *objective, unchanging, eternal in its perspective, and comfortingly stable*. Culture,

however, will base its standards of right and wrong on what is currently accepted as legal and currently accepted as moral. This means the ethics of humanity is *subjective, fluid, situational and distressingly unstable*.

Because this is true, doing the right thing as a Christian means we will sometimes appear insensitive and even harsh to non-Christians. *(In fact, Christianity's fundamental premise—that only through Jesus Christ is salvation possible—seems unfair to a world judging by human rather than divine standards.)*

When we adhere to the standards of Jesus Christ, we also risk seeming legalistic, petty or out-of-touch.

This friction between Christ and culture is an insurmountable obstacle until we introduce the concept of love into the equation. If our words and deeds aren't stamped with compassion; if love isn't overwhelmingly evident in us, then the narrow confines of Christianity's ethical boundaries will render us, and our faith,
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unattractive and inconsequential to the culture at large, and to the people around us.

So, while a right way forward is *always promised* to us by God, as evidenced by this 1 Corinthians passage, that right way forward will not always appear to be sensible, *or the right thing*, in the eyes of people around us. Only if they see the love of Christ in us will the ethics of Christ be tolerable, perhaps even attractive, to them.

Fortunately, ethical dilemmas seldom present themselves as worst-case, life-or-death scenarios. *Unfortunately*, this absence of urgency tends to make Christians lazy about ethics from a Biblical perspective.

We must never be satisfied with that laziness, with choosing between the lesser of two wrongs. And we must never be lazy about love, for it is the Rosetta Stone by which everything we do is interpreted. Let us commit ourselves, then, to loving people so much that we long to find the right path; not because it serves us best, but because it serves them best, and pleases God most.

Randy Kilgore

www.madetomatter.org. Used with permission.

Too Busy

Sometimes we know that God is telling us that we are too busy, but are too busy to do anything about it. This was the case for me until God reminded me that my focus was on what I was doing and had slipped away from who I was doing it for.

Mark Holdcroft

(ex-Cheshire, now serving
God in Slovakia)

Arrested by Christ



Former prolific Hertfordshire burglar and drug addict Steve Cattell told an audience of more than 100 how he had turned his back on his favourite addiction, committing thousands of burglaries, when he became a Christian. He also explained how his faith in Christ has given him the strength to stop drugs and rebuild his family life.

Steve was one of three speakers at an event at Hertfordshire Police HQ organised by the Herts branch in May to mark the 125th anniversary of the Christian Police Association. He was joined by Don Axcell, Executive Director of CPA, who talked about the work of the organisation, and Deputy Chief Constable Simon Parr, who explained the benefits of having an active branch in the constabulary.

Herts branch leader PC Chris Upton said: 'We praise God that so many staff and church supporters joined us from all over the county to celebrate this milestone. The evening was a great success and we have forged new links with churches who have pledged to pray for staff and get to know their local officers better. I am sure that our founder, Catherine Gurney, would be pleased to know that the CPA continues to support police and police staff in so many ways.'



Celebrating 125 Years

31 October - 2 November

**A special conference is being held
in the Autumn at the High Leigh
Christian Conference Centre,
Hoddesdon, Herts.**

The conference will commence with a
celebration dinner on the **Friday** with
an after-dinner speaker.

On **Saturday** afternoon the venue
moves to a public service at All Souls
Church, Langham Place, London,
where the speaker is Rev Rico Tice,
Associate Minister at All Souls.

Back at the conference centre on
Sunday, our closing speaker will be
Rev Dr Derek Tidball, former Principal
of the London School of Theology.



**Join us for all or part of the
conference.**

**Booking forms available from
CPA headquarters or on the
CPA website.**

Celebration Service

3pm

Saturday

1 November

All Souls Church

Langham Place

Bring family and friends



The Work of all Works

There has recently been a tidal wave of violence on the streets of Glasgow. All of us are shocked at the deaths of two young women and the attempted murder of a third, not in downtown Chicago or Rio but right on our doorstep. Many of us have been involved working in these incidents and are now exhausted mentally, physically and emotionally.

For all of us, how do we meet stress with prayer and forgiveness; how can we be good news to the person right next to us; how can we be involved in the momentous yet exist in the present moment; how are we to stay spiritually vibrant whilst extremely busy and exhausted simply doing our job?

On the cross Jesus did the work of all works. So how do we draw strength from the cross? 'Fix your eyes on Jesus' is the cry. Every day, every task, every journey, needs to be hallmarked by this. Watch what he did, how he did it, and then copy. To do this you will need to keep ditching stuff that gets in the way. 'Everything that hinders' has to go, along with 'entangling sin' otherwise you can't move.

But the start (The Author) and the finish (Perfector) is all about Jesus – not what would he do but what he did do and what he has done.

And what he did was to endure the Cross and scorn its shame for one reason alone – 'the joy set before him'. And now you have the gold. There will always be struggle, hardship, stress and strain but the overriding characteristic is joy. Joy is that deep sense of meaning, purpose, exhilaration and satisfaction that emerges from knowing we have been made right with God and are co-labouring with Christ. Every single one of us has been called by God to work within the Police Service to bring about justice and show mercy. Justice and mercy met at the cross and as police men and women and FSOs, we work ourselves into the ground to bring about justice because that is what Jesus did.

The cross was the hardest, most demanding piece of work ever done and we get what he worked and paid for. Jesus has been with each one of us, working alongside us, working in us, working through us, blessing us as we have given our all to try and bring justice to those who have been wronged. May you all be blessed and continue to be a blessing to all those around you.

Carole McQueen

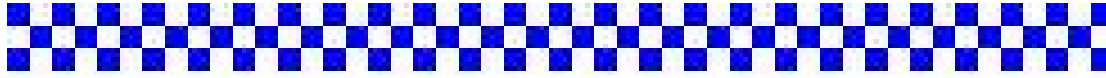
(From Strathclyde Branch Prayermail)



CPA Lanyards

CPA lanyards are available from the Headquarters office. They have white lettering on a black background and are fitted with a quick-release safety joint.

Cost £1.50 each plus postage.



CPA National Conference

My journey began with an early morning start to Liverpool Street where I caught the 7:55 train to Stansted Airport. Here I met with some of the members of the CPA as we were travelling together on the same flight. The captain informed us that turbulence would be inevitable because of the weather. I had already started praying while we waited for take off, but God was preparing the weekend for us, as once we reached our required altitude the sky was clear and beautiful, no turbulence.

We stayed at Glenada Conference Centre, in Newcastle, Northern Ireland, by the sea under the Mourne Mountains. We had CPA representatives from county forces all over England, Wales and Northern Ireland with around 100 people in total attending.

Our theme for the weekend was 'Hope' and the first meeting on Friday evening was attended by Sir Hugh Orde, the PSNI Chief Constable, who gave us all a warm welcome. Various CPA leaders from different parts of the country spoke of the challenges they have faced and the work that they are doing within their forces. We were all encouraged by the growth of the CPA and hearing news of new brothers and sisters coming to Christ through the witness of Christians within the police.

Saturday morning was the CPA AGM followed by two sessions led by Detective Superintendent Robert Drennan, PSNI. In the afternoon we had free time to look around the local town, walk along the beach or take a long walk in the Mourne Mountains.

In the evening we visited the local Presbyterian Church in the town centre

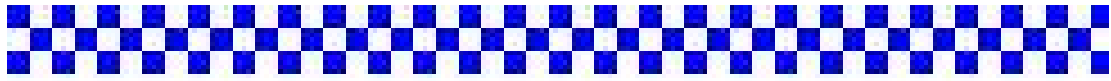
and heard a powerful testimony from an ex-Irish terrorist whose life was turned around in prison by the power of God's Word. For those who doubt that God exists, this testimony is evidence of the power of God's Word and shows that it is still working in people's lives today. God can change anyone, we should never write anyone off. God can change the hardest of hearts no matter who the person may be.

We also heard a message from Rev Jonathan Currie about Lazarus and the rich man and the reality of hell. We were reminded that hell is as real as heaven, and if we do not come to God in true repentance and faith in Christ there is no hope. We all have a choice to make. We were really challenged by the sermon, which encouraged us to tell friends and family about the love and mercy of God and to keep praying for those who do not know God, and for those who have lost their way.

During the breaks from our sessions we had a great opportunity to build relationships with new colleagues, as well as strengthening those that already existed.

On the Sunday we had a morning service with Holy Communion led by David Mitchell of the Northern Ireland Branch and Cliff Harries (Leicester) brought us a message from God. After lunch, we all left for home.
Virtue Ryan (Metropolitan Branch)





Out of Africa

My walk with Christ has been for almost as long as I remember because I recall when I was a young child growing up in Africa, being frightened by the sounds of the African bush at night and couldn't sleep, so I would imagine myself curled up on a blanket next to God's throne where I would feel safe and secure. In those early years my grandmother was a big influence on my life and I recall her reading to me from her daily reading notes and then praying with me before I went to sleep. I also recall my mother teaching me and my siblings to recite some simple prayers which I can still remember to this day.

My family moved to the UK when I was seven and the next significant milestone I recall was being given a Gideon's Bible in my first year at high school. I really sensed God calling me to read it, which I did. It was about this time that I gave my life to Christ, asking him to forgive me for my sins through his sacrifice on the cross, and making a personal commitment to follow him. I don't recall the day specifically and there were no momentous feelings, or even anyone leading me – it just seemed the natural thing to do between God and me.

At university I was involved in the Navigators and Scripture Union where I grew as a Christian through home groups and Christian fellowship. After University there followed what I generally described as two

wilderness years, in that I fell into a pattern of work in the week and then walking, skiing or surfing at weekends and not being involved with any form of church or fellowship.

I then returned to Africa where I re-affirmed my commitment to Christ and was baptised along with my wife whom I'd met and married there. Over the next 15 years or so I was involved in the Lord's work wherever I lived.

By the year 2000 the Zimbabwe situation had deteriorated, resulting in the breakdown of law and order. Then late in 2002 my faith was tested to its limit as my world fell apart around me. The government 'compulsorily acquired' our home (a small farm) forcing us to leave; the company I ran became unviable; my wife left me for someone else with the resultant breakdown of our family. I very much felt I was '*walking through the valley of the shadow of death*' (Ps. 23:4). To continue to trust the Lord 'to work all things to the good of those who love him' (Ro 8:28) was very hard and I will always be grateful for the love and support of the Christian friends and family who met with, prayed for and encouraged me through this time.

During this time I often recalled the story of the footprints in the sand and had to remind myself that there was only one set of footprints in the sand and though it seemed like they were mine they weren't; God hadn't left me – he was carrying me! My Bible was a great source of comfort and hope through this time, but one verse stood out particularly for me '*The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms*' (Deut 33:27). Such testing



times are not times of growth, they are times of pruning and refining, of just hanging onto one's faith – the growth comes later! I believe God undertook for us and opened a way for us to leave Zimbabwe and move to the UK, furthermore in helping us reach an arrangement whereby our two children remained with me, yet their mother was able to live sufficiently close for daily contact with them. This again brought new challenges and the need for me to rely on God's provision as I started in mid-life with nothing, taking on single parenting as well as being self-employed in order to work flexibly to suit the children. Through this God taught me to '*... seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own*' (Matt 6:33-34).

During this time and after a lengthy

application process and prayer in the interim I joined South Wales Police as a police constable where I seek to bring Christ's values to my work, to my colleagues and to all walks of society that I deal with, witnessing for Christ as and when I believe he calls me and the opportunity presents itself. This can sometimes be daunting, but over the years God has shown me '*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go*' (Josh 1:9). Though the way may be difficult, would I be without Christ in my life? Absolutely not!
Chris Hawksley (South Wales)

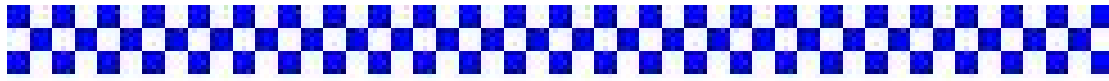
As we personally face the challenge of Chris's testimony, may we also remember the many Christians still in Zimbabwe and facing persecution (Editor)

Called Home



James Armstrong served in the Royal Ulster Constabulary between 1934 and 1946 before resigning to embark full-time in Christian ministry. When interviewed in 2000 about those days he concluded his interview by saying 'I apologised to my doctor recently for taking so long to die! I promised him that I wouldn't take any longer than was absolutely necessary.' I said, 'When the call comes I'll answer promptly and joyfully!'

After a number of years of failing health, that call eventually came on Sunday 16 March 2008 at the ripe old age of almost 93 years. Our highly esteemed brother now knows what it is to be 'absent from the body and present with the Lord'. We share with his wife Jean, sons David and Andrew and daughter Helen in both the joy and the sorrow that such an event brings. We assure them of our prayers.



The Aim of the Christian Police Association is:

- To promote and foster the fellowship of Christians in the Police Service in that unity which is enjoyed by those who are born again by the Spirit of God;
- To demonstrate this relationship to God in a concern for righteousness both on and off duty; and
- To obey Christ in proclaiming his gospel, especially to members of the Police Service that they might be brought to know him personally.

The Power of Three

The following three-word phrases can enrich every relationship:

I'LL BE THERE – ‘Being there’ is at the very, very core of civility.

I MISS YOU – This powerful affirmation tells partners they are wanted, needed, desired and loved

I RESPECT YOU – Respect is a powerful way to affirm the importance of a relationship.

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT – The humility of admitting ‘maybe I’m wrong’.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME – We should never be ashamed to own up that we have been wrong.

I THANK YOU – Gratitude is an exquisite form of courtesy.

COUNT ON ME – ‘A friend is one who walks in when others walk out.’

LET ME HELP – Without being asked, a real friend pitches in and helps.

I UNDERSTAND YOU – One of the most powerful tools for healing your relationship.

GO FOR IT – Encourage their uniqueness – everyone has dreams that no one else has.

*And the three little words that you were expecting to see have to be reserved for those who are special; that is **I LOVE YOU**.*

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