

REDEEMER BUDGET STRAINS EXPLAINED BY PRESIDENT KRYGSMAN



JUSTIN EISINGA
REPORTER

Photo by Rachel DeBruyn

2014 has been an ironic year for Redeemer University College. In June, Redeemer said goodbye to its largest graduating class ever. This fall, however, Redeemer experienced its lowest enrolment levels in many years. To be precise, enrolment levels dropped a hefty 12 per cent. As a result, Redeemer’s administration has been forced to find ways to save money in order to protect the vitality of the institution.

To say this drop in students and its accompanying budget strain were unexpected is far from the truth, though. In fact, the province of Ontario has warned universities across the province about a drop in student enrolment for several years. Redeemer is not alone in this experience; Wilfred Laurier University, for example, experienced a 14 per cent drop in enrolment.

This drop in student enrolment comes down to two major factors. The first is simple demographics; the number of university-age people in the province of Ontario is shrinking.

The second factor, on the other hand, has more to do with student anxiety about employability. College programs have experienced growth in Ontario, while University programs, specifically in the Humanities and Liberal Arts, are not so attractive. At the end of the day, students today are enrolling in programs that promise employability and job security, neglecting to consider the value of a Liberal Arts education.

Redeemer has had to respond to these challenges in several ways. Primarily, President Hubert Krygsman recognizes the need for Redeemer to become financially

viable. Redeemer has carried a heavy debt for many years, something Dr. Krygsman wants to cut in half at the very least. Thus, he instructed his Vice Presidents to find \$1.5 million in expense reductions.

At the same time, however, the President of Redeemer has worked with the admissions department to create an aggressive recruitment strategy. This strategy includes the creation of new recruitment tools, the hiring of a recruiter for Western Canada and the creation of a new award for first-year students.

On top of these developments, Dr. Krygsman is intent on building up Redeemer’s current program offerings, as well as creating new paths of study. Although some of these program changes are still under wraps, Dr. Krygsman does want to make it clear that more attention will be given to experiential learning opportunities, such as co-op programs, internship placements, and other avenues for students to gain experience in the workplace and make strong connections.

What this all means is that there will be obvious cuts in some areas, while in others there will be a recognizable increase in profile, something Dr. Krygsman knows will be difficult for all to understand. “It will be a strange sensation to be making reductions in some areas where we have too much capacity for our current size,” says President Krygsman, “while we will be adding strategically to offer a wider array of programs and activities. When you’re in the middle of that, it’s tough to take.”

But Dr. Krygsman thinks it will be worth it in the end. “I believe the result of all this will make Redeemer more attractive to students and offer a wider array of programs

and activities,” stated the President of Redeemer. “It will also make Redeemer more financially viable for the long-term.”

These financial challenges may leave students wondering about increases in tuition, but the President assures that the rise will not be significant in the coming years. As part of their agreement to secure the Ontario Tuition Grant for Redeemer students, any tuition increases the school makes are capped at 3 per cent. This level of increase is the same across the board for all Ontario universities. With the rising cost of materials and resources, tuition increases are a sad reality in today’s education climate.

Financial challenges are never fun for the life of any individual, and the same goes for our institution. President Krygsman finds himself in a difficult situation in the months and years ahead as he leads Redeemer University College to financial viability, and hopefully to an increase in student enrolment. Dr. Krygsman is taking it with stride, confident that the decisions being made are honourable and right for the health and flourishing of the institution he has been chosen to lead.

When asked what students can do to contribute in these difficult times, the President says he wants to see students do what they do best. “Spread the good word,” says Dr. Krygsman emphatically. “Tell your family and friends about the wonderful education at Redeemer!” The truth is, our education is unique. Although it may feel like we are limiting ourselves by attending this small university, this couldn’t be further from the truth. A Christian liberal arts education is a gift we should not take for granted; in fact, it is a gift we need to talk more about.

Crossing Cultures: A Day of Service and Learning

HELENA SCHUURMAN

This fall was my eighth CrossCulture, if I’m counting correctly. Although it was about 5 years ago, I clearly remember my first because it impacted me tremendously – it was one of the first times I talked to strangers about Jesus, the first time I thought about prayer as actually powerful enough to yield palpable answers, and, looking back, one of the first times I actually went to downtown Hamilton.

This year, I went for a second time as a CrossCulture Representative, leading a group to a service site. The location I was going to go to got switched around last minute,

and I ended up going to the Lectio House, a house set up by a couple for the purpose of being a place of refuge, retreat and reflection for people working in Hamiltonian ministries. At this CrossCulture I learned about the rest and times of solitude needed for people that do ministry. I heard God speak to me through the couple that hosted us. I heard Him tell me things I desperately needed to hear, and at the end of the day I left encouraged and renewed.

I’ve noticed such a gap between the upper town folk and downtown folk here in Hamilton. The beauty of CrossCulture is that we all get to witness a different culture that we may not otherwise come into contact with – a culture

that’s a little more down-to-earth, gritty and loud.

Maybe this is just my perspective, but I experience God in a bit more of a down-to-earth, gritty, and loud way downtown. Yahweh is working so uniquely in our city, in different ways from up here on the mountain. CrossCulture is beautiful because it gives us a chance to see a different side of His character that may otherwise not be experienced by some. I have fallen in love with the Lord’s work downtown, and I long for more of us to come face to face with this and learn from what’s happening.

Continued on page 3



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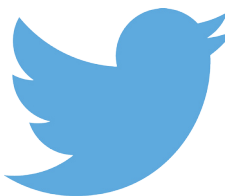


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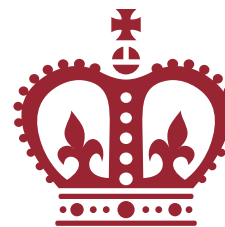
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Letter from the Editor: Cold Winds and Sovereignty



LAURA HEMING
EDITOR-IN CHIEF

October has come in heavy.

It seems as though the cold winds have brought along with them heavier hearts for many of the people around me, including myself. I feel as though there have been cold, hard issues that God has been bringing into fresh light for me these past few weeks, and I often wonder if I can hold a steady grip on anything.

I'm learning more and more about the concept of seasons in this very popular and sentimental season of Pumpkin Spice Lattes, cozy sweaters and all that jazz. Recognizing different seasons in life is recognizing that sometimes life is just really heavy and really hard. The more life progresses, the more I see a colder world, and the more I see that my attempts to wrap myself in a warm blanket of relief seem to falter.

I find myself crumbling under the burden of my saturated thinking. Leaves are changing, people are changing, and the very things I held in positions of importance are changing.

The other day, a close friend told me that if four years ago she were to picture what her life would be like today, it would not look like it does now. That is always how it goes, isn't it? We have these big plans, these tidy, groomed ideals of what life will be, and we begin to realize that we can't always make those things happen.

One of my favourite authors, Wendell Berry, talks about this concept in his book *Jayber Crow*. He says, "This, I thought, is what is meant by 'thy will be done' in the Lord's Prayer, which I had prayed time and again without thinking about it. It means that your will and God's will may not be the same. It means there's a good possibility that you won't get what you pray for. It means that in spite of your prayers you are going to suffer."

Sometimes to suffer means to be in the will of God. Despite my confusion of why my heart is often heavy-laden with the hurts of others or the races that exist in my mind, I am overwhelmingly humbled. I am learning over and over again that suffering exists not because of a God who punishes or couldn't care less, but because of a God that is never finished with making us new. God's will is not always a big, unattainable mystery, but it often is. We are called to be present in the things we endure — present in suffering, present in rejoicing and present in moments of confusion and brokenness.

As you read October's edition of the Crown, you may find there are many heavy issues that we have decided to bring to light and discuss. We as a team encourage you to allow yourself to feel remorse, feel anger, feel joy and feel confusion about these topics. We invite you to recognize that even as the world around us changes and seems to cry out for release, there is a redemptive healing in feeling things deeply and learning that God is, despite what we wish we could do to make things better, making all things new.

Letters to the editor and article submissions must be sent to thecrown@redeemer.ca and must include the name and contact information of the writer, although we may print anonymously by special request. Works submitted as letters will be edited for clarity and length only.

The opinions expressed in *The Crown* are not necessarily those of Redeemer University College's student body, faculty, or administration.

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Redeemer Food Drive Part One: Where It Begins

JUSTIN EISINGA
REPORTER

On Friday, September 5, over 150 Redeemer students and 10 faculty/staff helped fill the gap for a local food bank. The food bank, run by local organization Neighbour 2 Neighbour, provides food assistance to individuals and families primarily living in the Hamilton Mountain community.

Although students were unable to beat previous records of food collected, they were nonetheless able to collect over 8,600 pounds of food. This is quite an accomplishment, considering any donation to the Neighbour 2 Neighbour food bank helps provide for the roughly 1,100 families that require their Food Access Program each month.

Hunger is a reality on the Hamilton Mountain and throughout the greater Hamilton area, and Redeemer students help contribute to the relief of hungry bellies each year. But food banks are a reality for many Canadians, not just those living in Hamilton. Roughly 850,000 Canadians visit a food bank each year. According to Food Banks Canada, 36.4 per cent of these visitors are children and youth.

Hunger is a real experience for many people living in cities and towns across our country, and food banks are one of the main sources of food for those who find it difficult to afford groceries on a regular basis. Yet, these food banks

rely on the local community to fill the shelves so that those in need can eat.

Over the next several issues of The Crown, we will attempt to follow this food in order to learn more about where it goes after we collect it and to put faces to the people who end up eating it.

We want you to know where the food that Redeemer students collected ended up. We want you to know who the people are that may be eating the box of cereal or can of soup students picked up off the front porch of one of our own neighbours. In doing so, we hope to create a better understanding of the food bank system and the people who use it.

As followers of Christ, we are called to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the prisoner. Yet, often times we feel afraid or nervous, and as a result we distance ourselves from those who are poor instead of creating relationships with them. On top of this, the stigma that is attached to food bank users is not helpful for us or for them, as it builds walls up and creates distance, making it difficult for those who are privileged to empathize and for food bank users to perceive access to such services. Who knows, one day even you may need to access a food bank.

Our prayer is that this series of articles will break down some of those walls that keep you from stepping into places of need, and allow you to flourish in the places God has called you to.



Students help at local eatery & exchange, 541 Hamilton.

Crossing Cultures (Cont'd)

CrossCulture does exactly what its name implies – it crosses cultures together. A sense of deep unity among people of all different walks of life is experienced because of the event. Going to CrossCulture inevitably means meeting people that are very different from us, but that's the beauty of it. We can all share our humanity in common, our broader experiences of joy and pain and need for a Saviour – those are the things that can and do unite us.

Every time CrossCulture rolls around, I get excited to worship with brothers and sisters from all over the greater Hamilton area in the morning, then separate and serve in the community

in the afternoon, and then come back together at the end of the day to continue worshipping. I see it as strangely symbolic of the ideal for our lives: gathering as a community of believers, scattering and sharing Christ's love as we go and coming back together afterward, still unified. God's name is glorified so richly on that day, and it's my prayer that He will continue to be glorified in our daily lives as we gather and scatter unceasingly.

So come out to CrossCulture this spring. There are so many ways to be a part of the day, and I'm quite certain that you'll be blessed to attend.

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 4:
Hamilton Votes: the 2014
Municipal Election
Who they are, and why we need to vote

Page 4:
It's the Start of the Hockey
Season (and I Feel Just Fine)
Anticipating what's new and not so new in the 2014-2015
NHL season

Page 5:
Good Guy Google: Google's
New Anti-Porn Policy
Internet search tycoon makes a step to prevent the search of
pornography

Page 5:
Does British Columbia Hate
Christianity?
Beyond the win of the Law School case, what is the future of
Christianity in Canada?

Page 6 & 7:
Buying Sex is Not a Sport: A
Gender Perspective
A breakdown from a male and female perspective on the is-
sue of sex trafficking

Page 8:
Chips Ahoy with Otto de
Bruijne
A conversation with the creator of the canvas chapel

It’s the Start of the NHL Season (And I Feel Just Fine)

RYAN VAN TIL
CROWN STAFF

It’s finally October, the most pleasant month. Finally trees are shedding a colourful carpet, annoying bugs are dying by the bucketload, and, most importantly, a new hockey season is starting.

I’ll be upfront, I’m a Leafs fan, which means I cheer for the blue and white and whoever is playing against the Habs; it also means I’m used to the season (sometimes it feels like the world) ending in a “whimper and not a bang.” I’m used to being a fan of the team with the most expensive game tickets, which somehow is rated the worst sports franchise in North America.

As a friend of mine, in an uncharacteristically poetic moment, said, “Cheering for the Leafs is like having beautiful yet insane girlfriend. Every once in a while things will go alright and it’ll be awesome, but in the long run it will fill you with ruin and regret.”

But all the same, I’m hyped for the new season. So, I’ll try

to avoid the pessimistic, and often apocalyptic, tone that dominates most articles about Canada’s hockey teams. I’ll look past my crazy-beautiful, beautifully-crazy Leafs.

But, in reality, there’s nothing to be really excited about with this new hockey season. The Winnipeg Jets are old news. There’s no game-changing rookie or unorthodox yet brilliant coach on the scene to turn a team around – or even a few heads. The good teams are still good; the bad teams are still bad. No Olympics. The biggest news about Don Cherry is that he’s still commentating somehow.

However, there’s something still to be said, so I’ll explain why I’m looking forward to doing:

Criticizing the NHL. It’s as much a cliché among Canadian hockey nuts as complaining about losses, but it’s still fun. I enjoy looking at the record low attendance at Panthers games or tens of millions of dollars lost on the Coyotes, knowing that would never happen in Hamilton or Quebec City. There’s something great about thinking I could manage the league better than the people who are paid millions to do so.

Playing armchair General Manager. Trade Clarkson! Rip the “C” off Phaneuf! These are just a few of the things I would do if I were a GM. It also works when thinking about other teams, too. When it seems I’m right, I get to wear a smug “told you so” smirk, and when the games prove I’m wrong, well, I just forget about those times.

Watching games with friends. This is kind of a mixed bag because a few of my close friends are ultra Habs fans, but . . . no, actually that makes it more fun. I can’t wait to yell and shout at my friends when my team beats theirs, hang out and drink beer. I can’t wait to get into arguments about who is the better player – Kessel or Pacioretty (obviously Kessel, no bias). It’s really what makes my first two points so fun, too. For me, the season is about more than just bringing like-minded people together, most of the fun is hanging out with people who get on my nerves and think differently.

So I’m ready to have my heart broken, get exasperated with the management and mocked for my team loyalty. But I’m also ready to have a lot of fun with all that. That’s why I feel just fine at the beginning of this new season.



Dallas Stars vs. the Vancouver Canucks at the Rogers Arena

Hamilton Votes: What You Need to Know about the Municipal Election

JUSTIN EISINGA
REPORTER

Every four years, citizens across the country come together to take part in one of the most important duties that exists in modern society. The outcomes of this event affect the everyday lives of each person living in Canada. The significant occasion that is the municipal election may be the most important bastion of democracy we have left. As Preston Manning puts it, “The state of democracy in the country as a whole is closely related to the state of democracy at the local level.”

The decisions that are made at the local level really do impact our everyday lives. Whether it is the maintenance of roads, the provision of public transit, or the removal of trash, municipal politicians are responsible for the health and wellbeing of the places we live. Unfortunately, in Hamilton’s 2010 municipal election, only about 40 per cent of eligible voters turned out to have their say in how the city is run. This year, on October 27, candidates are hoping this will change.

Candidates have taken to diverse platforms to get the word out to the diverse demographic that makes up Hamilton. From Twitter to Youtube to the old-fashioned public debate, Hamilton’s political wannabes have rolled out all the stops to get their campaign promises out there.

This year, with crucial transit decisions taking centre stage, the hope is that the voter turnout increases. What’s the big deal with public transit? On the table is a billion-dollar investment that would see Light Rail Transit built from Eastgate Square in Stoney Creek all the way to McMaster University in Westdale.

Ever since the current mayor, Bob Bratina, announced that he did not intend on running for the top municipal seat again, several front-runners have emerged in the competition for his seat of power. It comes as no surprise that one billion dollars has created quite the divide between the leading mayoral candidates.

One of these candidates, former mayor Fred Eisenberger, has emerged as a top pick, and not just because of his past experience running the city’s political machine. Eisenberger is running on a platform built on attracting new business and encouraging citizen engagement. As for public transit, Eisenberger is in support of Light Rail Transit, but wants to create a more thorough consultation process with Hamilton residents to determine the right way forward.

Brad Clark, a former Conservative MP and recently the city councillor for Stoney Creek, is not on the same page as Eisenberger. Clark is completely opposed to Light Rail Transit, opting for a beefed up version of the current bus route that spans from Eastgate to McMaster. Other campaign highlights include a promise to find ways to save tax dollars and a commitment to improving the delivery of

public services.

The most progressive of the leading candidates is Brian McHattie. With a background in planning and community development, McHattie has a bold vision for Hamilton. A city councillor since 2003, McHattie has put all of his weight into supporting Light Rapid Transit. Aside from this, McHattie is intent on creating a more transparent and open city hall while also focusing on building stronger and more active neighbourhoods in the city.

Now that you’re educated on the mayoral race, you may be wondering how, where, and even if you can vote. The good news is that as a student, you are able to vote in both your home city and in Hamilton. If voting in Hamilton’s election is something you are interested in doing, you won’t have to go too far. There will be a polling station set up at Meadowslands Fellowship Christian Reformed Church from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday, October 27. All you need to bring with you is a piece of identification with your name, indicating your Hamilton address; if your ID doesn’t have this address, just bring some mail or correspondence that does.

Be an active citizen. Engage in the political system as much as you can. Don’t forget that your vote actually does make a difference, especially at the local level. You never know when you might need to talk to your own city councillor about an issue that’s close to your heart.

Good Guy Google: Google’s New Anti-Porn Policy

Internet Search Tycoon takes a step to prevent the search of pornography

JOSH VOTH

On Saturday, June 15th, 2013, Google’s official blog released an article titled “Our Continued Commitment to Combating Child Exploitation Online,” which addressed several issues regarding the exploitation of children both online and offline. The post also informed readers of Google’s stance on the accession of pornographic material via the Google search engine.

In the past, Google has been the scorn of many, as circulating rumours point towards a corporation which delves in information sharing, privacy infringement and a whole other range of outrageous behaviours. Yet Google seems to be ignoring the world’s demand for net-neutrality, and this is huge. Net neutrality is simply the principle that Internet service providers and corporations such as Google, Facebook, and Twitter should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favouring or blocking particular products or websites.

In an odd plot twist, Google is no longer supporting pornographic sites, and although they will not discontinue the ability for users to link to websites containing explicit material, they will be discontinuing their ad services for these pornographic websites. Essentially, Google will no longer profit from these sites.

Google favours the safety of its users, saying, “It is critical that we take action as a community – as concerned parents, guardians, teachers and companies – to help combat this problem.” So much more can be done regarding the safe access of content online. Google is standing its ground and has committed to fight child pornography. It has even donated \$5 million dollars to help eradicate websites that exploit children.

Companies like Google are egregiously responsible for what they do – regarding the services they offer and the ways in which they handle our data as well as the way we access and are exposed to materials online. Undoubtedly, the web is not a safe place, but it is wonderful as a Christian to see Google taking a stand against something that

has plagued so many people.

I think it is also duly noted that Google’s unofficial slogan is “Don’t be evil,” and I think in these regards, they are holding fast to such commitment. If you are still unsure about using Google as your search engine of choice, there are some excellent alternatives such as DuckDuckGo.com and ixquick.com which do not save any type of user data – unlike Google. Both of these search engines have pledged to help us have a safe experience on the World Wide Web.

Companies and corporations like Google are continuing to prevent explicit and illegal material from showing up online, and, in an article posted on Relavent Magazine. com, we find this statement: “It’s hard to know how much money this new policy will cost Google. But, considering some stats estimate that 12 percent of all websites contain pornography, and 25 percent of all search engine requests are porn-related, the number could be massive.” With this knowledge we can make a pretty accurate guess that Google is taking one for the team, and this should not be forgotten. Well done, Google.

Does British Columbia Hate Christianity?

College of Teachers Persecutes Christians at Trinity Western University

MICHAEL EMMANUEL

It appears amongst the Canadian provinces, the worst one to be a Christian in is British Columbia. I have come to this conclusion because of the number of times stories of outrageous persecution have come out of the province.

In retrospect, it seems too long ago to be relevant that in 2002 Chris Kempling, a high school counselor, was suspended from his school by the British Columbia College of Teachers for daring to write against homosexuality being introduced into the curriculum. Despite his charitable attitude and reasoned social scientific position, Kempling was defamed for making “derogatory comments” and being “discriminatory.” But this was only the beginning of the litigations to come out of beautiful B.C.

This wasn’t the first time the College of Teachers made the news for persecuting Christians, and it wouldn’t be the last. In 1996, the group attacked Trinity Western University’s right to have an education program. The accusations are now a familiar one: Trinity Western’s abstinence covenant was discriminatory against homosexuals and would lead graduates to be discriminatory. Never mind that the abstinence policy is equally discriminatory to heterosexual premarital relations. In 2002 the B.C. Supreme Court upheld Trinity Western’s right to have a teachers college since, according to Trinity Western’s Dr. Saffold, “People cannot be arbitrarily penalized or barred from participating in public life simply because they hold religious views.”

Despite this victory for Trinity Western, it seems the same abstinence covenant would bring the school back under fire when the school submitted a proposal to establish a school of law to the Federation of Law Societies of Canada in 2012. The Federation delegated the right to accept Trinity Western law students to the provincial law societies. The Law Society of Upper Canada in Ontario voted against approving the law school this spring, and the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society conditioned acceptance on the grounds students could opt out of signing the covenant. Currently the Law Society of British Columbia is undecided but is supposed to hold a final referendum by the end of October. Once again, the accusations were that Trinity Western’s students would be discriminatory in their practice of law because of their faith positions.

These stories are starting to become familiar, though. It was the events transpiring in Nanaimo B.C. that took things to a whole new level.

On May 5th 2014, the Nanaimo town councilors voted 8-1 to revoke approval of the “Beyond You” Leadercast event, sponsored by Chick-fil-A, to be held in the town

convention centre. The event was to be a daylong conference on leadership, including speakers like Laura Bush and Desmond Tutu, and was entirely taxpayer funded. Why did this event on leadership have to be banned? Well, Chick-fil-A came under media fire in 2012 when owner Dan Cathy made public statements upholding traditional marriage. The Nanaimo councilors didn’t want to associ-

“The only way we can avoid persecution is to take desperate measures desperately, like pretending we don’t actually believe Christian beliefs.”

ate themselves with that viewpoint even if in the form of allowing a conference sponsored by a business owned by the man. Councilor Jim Kipp claimed banning the event was no worse than banning an organized crime ring since, the Christian view of marriage should “almost be a criminal point of view in this day and age.” Despite the fact the event had nothing to do with homosexuality or Christian view of marriage, the councilors denounced the event as “hateful.”

Activist and news pundit Ezra Levant caused the story to go viral when he posted footage of the council meeting online. After 4,300 people signed and submitted Levant’s petition at www.TheRealBigots.com, the Nanaimo City Council released a statement of regret that its resolution had been, “perceived as being directed at or discriminatory against Christians.” Note, this was not an apology for calling Christian beliefs criminal and comparing Christians to terrorists, but simply regret that these statements were perceived as discriminatory. Since then Levant has raised funds to sue the city for its obvious Charter violations.

This last story takes the cake though.

Just earlier this month, Bethany Paquette, a graduate of Trinity Western, applied for a job at Amurak Wilderness Corp. and was rejected for being under qualified. Only, the rejection did not end there. Olaf Amundsen, supposedly the company’s hiring manager, followed the rejection by saying, “Unlike Trinity Western, we embrace diversity, and the right of people to sleep with or marry whoever they want.” Amundsen continued that he blames Christianity for having destroyed his Norse culture and way of life. Paquette sent a response defending her right to believe free from discrimination and ended the email with, “God bless”. Outraged, Amundsen retorted that if he met God, he would have sex with Him. Paquette is bringing a suit against Amurak to the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

I have a hard time convincing people that Christians are not free in Canada. I mean, how could I argue something like that as I write for a Christian based media publication at a Christian university where I am free to worship God according to the way I believe and to share that belief with others? But these stories demonstrate that Canada is not the bastion of freedom we like to imagine it is. Christians have been asleep at the switch. And the progression of persecution is getting bolder at every turn. It started with lone Christians who actively spoke out in the public square being charged and disciplined. Then it moved to Christian institutions holding Christian beliefs being refused rights to participate in public. Now we see Christians being publicly persecuted for even being associated with anti-progressivist views. And we only looked at one province.

Oftentimes we manage to escape persecution because we don’t act like real Christians. We leave the grunt work to the Chris Kemplings or the Trinity Westerns. And when they are silenced or ignored or attacked by the media and the public, we cry foul, but then continue about our pietistic living. But stories like these show that that is not enough to avoid persecution anymore. It’s out there looking for us. The only way we can avoid persecution is to take desperate measures desperately, like by pretending we don’t actually believe Christian beliefs. Or worse, we actually do stop believing Christian beliefs – instead we apologize for those who do. But Christ didn’t hide, nor did he apologize.

The other option is that we stop getting bullied around. It wasn’t a majority of LGBTQ activists who got the laws changed. It won’t take a majority to change them back. And after all, one man with God is never a minority. So will we make Canada God’s land or not?

BUYING SEX IS

On October 2nd, 2014, The Crown’s senior and junior reporters attended a human trafficking event held in Redeemer’s auditorium. “Buying Sex Is Not a Sport” is a movement seeking to alter our view of the sex trade. It emphasizes the severity of the issue in our own backyards and the immense role we play in either combatting or fuelling it. Seeing as the demand for the purchase of sex rises during populous events, the 2015 Pan Am Games, to be hosted by Toronto with some events coming to Hamilton, only adds to the urgency of our awareness.



From the Ladies

ELISE ARSENAULT
REPORTER

If I’m honest, girls, this evening broke me. Once back in my dorm, an overwhelming sense of helplessness overtook me. Never before was I so conscious of the horrendous expanse and complexity of this issue. It’s real, and it’s all around us. I can only begin to unravel it now with a kind of tunnel vision, focusing on one story at a time.

Katarina MacLeod deeply experienced the horrors of the sex trade, having taken part in it for 15 years before escaping. Her story is long and still unfolding, and while I won’t delve into its entirety, I will highlight some of her boldest words. She takes no time in correcting the claim that most prostitutes choose their line of work.

“Every woman I worked with came from somewhere broken,” says MacLeod. “The majority of women were abused in some way, shape, or form before entering into the sex trade. When you are abused and don’t get help, it changes things in you; it ruins you. I chose to be a prostitute for lack of choice.” Others claim that many enter the trade for a short time, pay off debt or tuition, and leave. Katarina stresses the contrary.

“It doesn’t happen. Because when you first start making fast, big money, your head blows up. You think ‘these men are paying me to be with me.’ But very quickly you

learn that they’re only seeing you because you’re fresh meat. They’re trying to see how much they can get away with, and you soon learn that you’re nothing but another hole to these men. By that time, the shame and the guilt have taken over.” Katarina recounts her survival of sexual abuse (beginning at age five and lasting for decades), exploitation, drug addiction, kidnapping, physical abuse and domestic trafficking. She exposes the destructiveness of a glamorized trade and the peace that came with escape and complete surrender to Christ.

The issue of human trafficking is massive. We may never have the chance to stop the spread of a pimp’s prostitution ring, or to sit and speak with women whose stories mirror Katarina’s, but there are several ways to get involved locally. I urge you to prayerfully consider one of the following opportunities, or likeminded ministries.

Helping Hands Street Mission’s *A Place for Grace* is a Christian-based peer group for women in the sex trade in downtown Hamilton. They are in need of volunteers for prayer, cooking meals and building relationships with the women who attend.

“Buying Sex Is Not a Sport” is seeking volunteers to silently stand outside Pan Am 2015 venues and wear their t-shirt while games are being played. For more information, contact info@buyingsexisnotasport.ca.

Educate yourself on Bill C-36, a law that may be passed to

criminalize the purchasing of sex.

Read the “Male Perspective” article. Examine yourself, and consider inviting the men and women in your life to discuss how we as individuals can be challenging the demand of purchased sex.

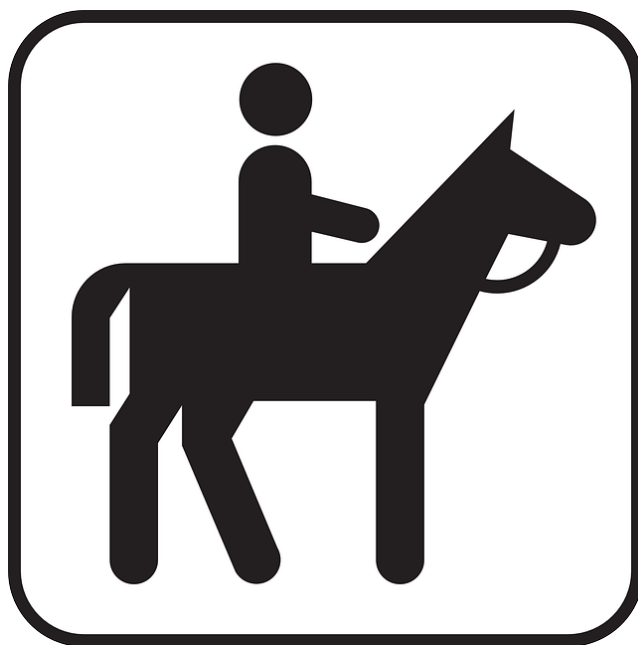
If you suspect a woman you know is at risk of being, or is, involved in human trafficking, call the Hamilton Police Human Trafficking unit at 905-546-3885, or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

Restoration comes with action, and we are called to act. Look at the case of the adulterous woman in John 8. Plagued by shame, she is dragged to the temple courts beneath clouds as heavy as the stones of men. Jesus has the power to sentence her, yet draws in the sands that threaten to bury her. We don’t know the whole of her story before this moment, but He does. Jesus calls the teachers of the law to drop their stones before the adulterous woman.

Like the teachers of the law, we too must drop our stones. And, like Jesus, we too must stand. This means dropping judgment, apathy, blindness and separation. This means standing on love, righteous anger and unceasing prayer. This means yearning for hearts wrought by hard truths and thirsting for redemption. This means having eyes to see, and ears to hear the God whose ways are higher than our own, and by whose hands all things hold together.

NOT A SPORT.

“Buying Sex Is Not a Sport” consisted of four speakers: Katarina and Sandi, two women freed from lives of prostitution, Constable Beck of the Hamilton Police Service, and Dan Rossi of the Calgary Police Force. Each one stresses the participation of both men and women in this issue. Seeing as involvement looks different for each part, our reporters have decided to approach it from both male and female perspectives.



From the Men

JUSTIN EISINGA
REPORTER

Let's be frank, men. Silence is the norm when it comes to actually doing anything about the pervasive sexuality of our culture. Sure, it has become easier and more comfortable for us in the Church to talk about pornography and sexual sin, but how many of us have had healthy conversations about sexuality with our friends outside of the Christian circle.

I recall far too many conversations with former co-workers who wanted to spend a night at the nearest strip club. I also remember the endless rude comments about members of the opposite sex, many of which make me cringe at the very thought that someone actually said such things. The worst part is that I did nothing to stop these conversations or to attempt to change the way these friends thought about women and sexuality. In fact, I contributed to these harmful dialogues.

The power of peer pressure and the desire to be accepted is strong; our culture is driven by a constant need to be liked. Yet, as a community of Christ-followers, we need to push against these tendencies and carve out a new way

forward. This is what the people behind “Buying Sex Is Not a Sport” have a vision for: a group of men and women dedicated to changing the way we think and talk about the sex industry.

They also aren't shy about targeting the main demographic that purchases sex in Canada (and throughout the world, for that matter): men. This collective of faith-based organizations is asking a bold question: have you asked the men in your life if they buy sex?

According to “Buying Sex Is Not a Sport,” 1 in 9 men in Canada buy sex at some point in their lives. These numbers shouldn't exist at all, but they are real. The truth is, it is men who create the demand for the sex trade.

At the same time, men remain the minority in the discussion surrounding the sex industry, something Dan Rossi, a Calgary police officer, sees as a problem. “This is not just a woman's issue, but a human's issue,” says Rossi, who spoke via streaming video at the “Buying Sex Is Not a Sport” event.

Rossi pointed to Romans 12:2 as a foundation for men to build from, which encourages followers of Christ to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the

renewal of your mind”. Ultimately, Rossi wants men to be reminded that “if you let culture dominate, then it will dominate your perspectives on women.” Instead, men need to let God renew their minds in order to change their perspectives and transform the culture around them.

Each time we don't call out our friends who talk about a female inappropriately, we allow the oppression of women to persist. Each time we remain silent when our friends talk about purchasing sex (whether it is at a strip club or on a street corner), we allow a soul-destroying industry to exist. Each time we view pornography, we stunt the renewal of our minds and hinder our participation in the renewal of the world around us. If these are areas of your life that you struggle with, I encourage you to find mentors and friends who can keep you accountable and help you renew your mind.

At the end of the day, though, I implore you to pray about this issue and find ways that you can stand against the exploitation of women. “To fight this battle we need to start it on our knees,” says Dan Rossi. “You'll stand tallest on your knees.”

Chips Ahoy with Otto de Bruijne: An Interview with the Creator of the Canvas Chapel

ELISE ARSENAULT
REPORTER

On the 3rd of October, I had the delightful opportunity to speak with Dutch artist Otto De Bruijne and his wife Renée over tea and cookies. Sporting a grey beret and a cheeky smile, de Bruijne answered all my questions with the utmost warmth and sincerity. Certain answers he shouted, others he whispered and many he accompanied with song (until his wife gave him a playful nudge and some Dutch chastising).

I am therefore honoured to share with you a selection of the wisdom this man offered with a sharpened wit and golden heart.

The Crown: Is one of your paintings, or a certain group of them, closest to your heart?

Otto de Bruijne: In 1992, I had a burnout. I was about 41 or 42, and I had worked for twenty years in missions in Africa. But then I was home and so tired, and it took me one and a half years to come out of that.

That is when I first began drawing and eventually painting. I made fourteen paintings, all 80 by 80 centimetres, of the symbols in the Church. They were my first works in painting, and I did them in nine weeks! It's crazy because they're all 80 by 80 centimetres! All acrylic, in a kind of graphic design, all very fresh and strong. It was then that I knew I was an artist.

The Crown: Did you ever intend to pursue the arts before 1992?

Otto: No! No! I must say that it was the Lord that guided me. It may sound strange, but I thought that missions alone was what I was supposed to do. Then the Lord said to me, "Many people can do this, but there's only one who can use your unique gifts."

Of course it was good to do all these amazing things, but was it the best for me? Sometimes the good is the enemy of the best, you see? My call is a creative call, and the Lord had to show me that.

In effect, I worked for 20 years in a relief and development agency to help the poor. Now, I am 20 years further, and I am doing arts. Both are commissions given by the Lord. Both are equally valid. Both are equally in the heart

of the Lord. There's no discrepancy, there's no contradiction between the two. It's the same Lord; it's the same call. And what is the basis of this all? It is communication. He called me as a communicator. Maybe in 10 years time I'll be communicating in a different way!

The Crown: So what was the defining moment that turned your heart from missions to art?

Otto: As you know, I was in a burnout and depressed. What was the turning point? I was driving along the rivers in my country when I saw a very old church, which was from the 10th century and built in the classic Roman style. I saw it on the border of the river, with trees all around it in spring. I thought, "I have to draw this," so I went to a bookshop and bought a drawing pad and pencil, and I sat there for a full day. Morning, to afternoon, to six o'clock, I drew this church. The next day I came back, then the third day, then the fourth day, then the fifth day – the same church – for six days!

I realized that in difficult times, you are inward-looking. Of course you have to do that for a while, but then you must become outward-looking. I had to look outward to see and to draw the church and the trees. I was concentrated not on myself but on the objects. That is what took me out of myself. When I drew it, I rediscovered again that drawing and painting are my gifts. That is when I made the fourteen paintings. First it was a therapy, then it became a calling.

The Crown: You evidently have such joy in the Lord! Have you always?

Otto: When I came to Christ I relativized myself. I started laughing at myself because I saw that I am just this little man! We come by for eighty years or so and then we are a leaf in the wind. It was then that I found humour, for humour is the ability to relativize ourselves, to reduce ourselves to the right proportions. We must find this humour, because today all of man is either puffing himself up, or talking himself down.

So when people ask how I became a Christian, I say it is because of joy. I still remember when I came to youth group as a teenager and there was a song, it was a revived hymn sung with a trumpet. Oh, I'll never forget that trumpet! The trumpet brought me to Christ!

The Crown: What would you say to someone caught between their heart's desire and what might seem more



Otto with his wife, Renee.

practical?

Otto: It depends very much on your age, for first you have to experiment and make mistakes. You have to discover, over many years, how to discern between the good and the best.

We were foster parents for five children when we were married at 21 or 22 years old. We wanted to serve the Lord and do something good, but we were not good in it at all! So after two years we had to stop, but we did try.

There's a certain time of your life that you have to serve in an environment that you have not created yourself. You must walk a path where others are with you and you are not the chief; first you have to learn.

Then you develop and create your own path, this is the difference between a pupil and a teacher. A teacher has found his own path. Somewhere, uphill, you will make a path for your own uniqueness, but people want to do that too early. They become arrogant, but you have to have a period of being taught where you are first shaped and moulded.

The Crown: What is one last thought you'd like to leave with Redeemer students?

Otto: For the students, I would say this. If you lay your ear on the heart of the Father, the Father will tell you that you are His dream. He will say that He wants your life to blossom to the fullness of what He has in mind for you. So please, hear His voice.

Caucasian Chalk Circle: A Theatre Review

DAVID FEDDEMA

The production of Bertolt Brecht's "Caucasian Chalk Circle" done by Oxford University students at the Oxford Playhouse incorporated several excitingly artistic elements into the play while also disregarding some of the original playwright's primary ideas.

The play itself was written shortly after World War II, and the years of conflict covered within the epic play showcase the playwright's thoughts and intentions. Opening with a dispute over land ownership in Soviet Russia, the play introduces the usefulness of theatre in the hopes to solve the argued issue. This scene reveals to the spectators the context of the drama to come, but was cut from the Oxford Playhouse production. Because of this change, one is left with a staggeringly different interpretation.

The audience is shown, instead, the play beginning with a rebellion that displaces the servant Grusha Vachnadze from her fiancé, the soldier Simon Chachava. The audience is then explicitly told of the temptation to do good by the narrator as Grusha takes and cares for a royal infant left behind. The story of their survival, however, is only half of the play; the other half is that of Azdak becoming judge over the land. Introduced as a rascal, Azdak takes the law into his own hands when he is judge and ends his career after presiding over Grusha and the governess's case of the ownership of Michael.

Within this production there were many elements that were inventive and daring. One of the predominant artistic choices made was to substitute the child Michael out for a puppet. This was an incredibly daring decision

not only because he is the character that the end conflict pertains to, but also because the character must age six years on stage. These challenges were overcome quite successfully by the production company, who built a finely detailed puppet that was made up of many joints. When the child was a baby, it was no more than a bump in a bundle of blankets whose head was able to wobble. After aging, however, it took a puppeteer to bring life to the boy. They did this well, and the movements of the puppet were well rehearsed, able to portray a living, feeling child.

A second artistic design that was well used was that of the set. The stage was mainly bare, and the only permanent fixture was the two leveled scaffold. The whole structure had a white sheet draped over it which was used to cast shadows from behind. This allowed the players to create seemingly endless parades of soldiers, or silhouettes of hanged men, solving the problem of a monstrous cast. The drape even extended with a blue sheet to be the required canyon between Simon and Grusha after their many years apart. The set design was an artistic method to solve the practical problems.

As an ensemble, the student performers were mediocre with two exceptions, that of Luke Rollason playing Azdak and Jack Sain playing Arkadi. Their performances brought energy into the action, and their appreciation for comedic timing lighted upon the more serious undertone of the play.

In regards to the authorial intention of the performance of the play, the Oxford University students' production obviously took a step in a different direction. Bertolt Brecht was a firm believer in *verfremdungseffekt*: the idea that in order to have an audience consider seriously the

content of a play, the production must be self-consciously theatrical and rid the audience of suspense. The way the play was originally written is a testament to this theory, beginning every scene with the summary of the action to come, and having the play-within-a-play watched by both patrons and performing observers. Finally, Brechtian plays have been most successful and authentic to the text when the actors play in a distanced and cooled down approach, rather than have the audience caught up in the emotional tension. These elements were seemingly purposefully abandoned by the production; instead, the action was performed the same way a typical drama would be.

The characters were brought to life, and the audience was led through the story with a clear emotional idea of which mother was in the right at the end. The production, however, didn't solely stick with conventional theatrical devices. They included the introduction of each scene, kept the narrator as an external storyteller and had the musicians somewhat exposed to sight. These devices weren't inherently advantageous or disadvantageous aspects; they simply lacked a clear reason. Whereas a Brechtian production gives them the purpose of breaking down the idea that theatre is an illusion, this production claimed no overt resolve.

The play was entertaining and utilized some interesting components to make the production engaging for the audience. It had well done performances but in areas was lacking justification for production decisions. While as an attempt at Brechtian theatre it was poor, as a story it was well performed and artistically clever with some unclear choices.

Gone Girl: Three Weeks Gone

A Review of Box-Office Hit Starring Ben Affleck

RYAN VAN TIL
CROWN STAFF

David Fincher’s *Gone Girl* is not Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl*.

In case you’re unfamiliar with the name, director David Fincher has a track record of elevating schlocky, pulpy novels (*Fight Club*, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*), adding humanization, perfecting tone and, most importantly, injecting the story with his slow, dark style. “Mediocre” books became “good” movies.

What was different about Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl* was that it was already a “good” book, acclaimed by both critics and audiences. The book tells the story of a wife, Amy, who goes missing on her fifth anniversary; a question looms ominously over the story: is her husband, Nick, responsible? Crammed with thought-provoking and relevant themes – such as the ugly side of marriage, commitment, and knowing another person – and reliant on journal entries to tell the story, it seemed an impossible book to film well. Furthermore, like a Fincher movie, the book was dark, full of twists and stylish in its own way.

Somehow, though, Fincher copied his success, once again elevating the source material. How? The explanation follows a three-act structure eerily close to that of the book.

Author Loses Story:

An almost instant bestseller, *Gone Girl* caught the attention of film production houses. This is the step in which the author loses his or her story, or as some hardcore book fans might put it “sell their book to the devil”. It is almost a cliché by now that the book “was better than the movie”

Author Gillian Flynn sold rights to the movie for 1.5 million dollars, and that could have been the end of her involvement.

Filmmaker Meets Story:

Those who have read *Gone Girl* will find a bit of humour in the fact that David Fincher’s wife was the one who, upon reading it, recommended that he adapt it into a film.

David Fincher adapting a novel can either be an author’s dream come true or a nightmare. He’s the guy who said that *Star Wars* was actually about the robot “slaves” C3Po and R2D2 trying to make sense of the over-complicated world at war around them, which scared Disney producers from asking him to direct the upcoming *Star Wars* sequels. Fincher has a mind of his own when he takes on a project; he can miss the point of his source material and make his own movie (*Alien 3*) or bring out the best in the source material (the *Social Network*). Fortunately for Gillian Flynn, Fincher’s wife recommended he keep Flynn on as the screenwriter, foiling Fincher’s initial plans to make the characters less likable and re-write the third act.

Author Gets Story Back (or vice versa):

This is the part of the story that tells how the book became better. Gillian Flynn got her story back, but with an asterisk tacked on. This story had to be under 150 minutes, which posed a problem for a near 20 hour audiobook, and fit into Fincher’s darker, more serious mind. One of the book’s problem is that it is gluttonous in its overindulgence in long journal entries, laborious explanations of feminism, far too many characters, and an ending that overstays its welcome by spanning nearly the last quarter of the book.

This is where the world of Hollywood came to the rescue. At the end of the day, a film production company cares about the profitability of a film. So, market research, finding out what people want to see, and rewrites, to cut down the movie and streamline it, are necessary. It may seem heartless and inartistic, but it was just the medicine an oversized book like *Gone Girl* needed.

The film boasts a more consistent tone and atmosphere. This is something generally kept better in films than in books, but it’s very noticeable in this instance. The book often cut from horrifying events to awkward comedy, and from shocking revelations to humdrum scene setting. Fincher kept the film consistent, and somehow wrings fantastic performances out of the miscast Tyler Perry and Neil Patrick Harris. The film’s unsettling soundtrack also fits perfectly with the story, sounding so foreign it seemed that only hell could produce such instruments.

There is also a feeling of immediacy in the film. While the



book meandered over details, setting scenes, and establishing characters, the film movies along steadily with purpose.

In fact, Gillian Flynn’s own clunky-at-times dialogue (“I’m the guy who wants to take you away from all this awesomeness,” Nick tells Amy after they first meet; the line doesn’t make sense in context, either) is the weakest point in the film.

Almost paradoxically, it is the money-centered Hollywood process that made a “good” story “great”. *Gone Girl* didn’t improve in spite of the Hollywood system; it improved because of the system.

Jennifer Lawrence Scandal or Crime?

Inside Tabloid Corruption



Jennifer Lawrence at Press Conference

LAURA HEMING
CROWN STAFF

The odds have not favoured the side of humanity and common decency these past few weeks for Hunger Games starlet, Jennifer Lawrence. Lawrence broke the silence in *Vanity Fair* regarding the outbreak of stolen nude photos

that polluted online websites.

"It's my body, and it should be my choice, and the fact that it is not my choice is absolutely disgusting. I can't believe that we even live in that kind of world," She was reported as saying by the CBC.

Always slow to speak and quick to portray herself with dignity, Miss Lawrence has rendered a deep wound that was caused by this sex crime (or, as the media refers to it, this “scandal”).

The question that we should be asking after hearing something like this is “what is happening to our world when a mass portion of humanity starts consuming someone else’s body like a product?”

Tabloids and celebrity gossip sites alike have long had the power and ability to destroy the dignity of people in the spotlight, and it has become normalized. The sad thing is that we indulge in it. We allow ourselves to delight in the misfortunes of celebrities because they become to us “the untouchables.” The Hollywood mentality has become that which says, “They are already famous, so why does it matter if they are getting attention through it anyway?”

The fact that there are people whose careers are propelled by the ups and downs of someone else’s life is quite a tragedy. Regardless of whether what a celebrity does is morally right or morally wrong, it is no one’s right to breach privacy rights, as well as distribute the findings

publically. There is a deep corruption in finding pleasure, gaining money, or finding life purpose in spreading gossip and taking away the dignity of another human being.

The world is not a place that has everything together — that is known more clearly now than ever. It has become a place where a young woman’s privacy can be completely violated, and she can still be blamed for it. She can be responsible for sex crimes against herself because she was “dressing too scandalously”, or had “risqué photos unlocked on her computer.”

The real “scandal” is the fact that it has become accepted in society that we can, for our entertainment, read about the heartbreaks and misfortunes of people in Hollywood before we pay for the groceries to feed our families. It is unfortunate that there are people who are real, vulnerable and fragile, and their fame is taken advantage of. Sexual exploitation is not just sex trafficking. It has become easier to excuse sexual exploitation when it is in the media because we feel entitled to see into the lives and bodies of celebrities. We, however, have some sort of power: a power to look away at the grocery store checkout line, to educate ourselves on real news, not news that embarrasses and humiliates.

Humiliation is not entertainment. Exploitation is something to fight, not to indulge in. What will it take for us to learn?

A Battle Worth Fighting For

SARAH POAPS

This summer for a whole week I sat on the sandy beaches of North Carolina, experiencing the ocean’s salty spray. I watched the daily progression of the tide up the shore and then back down. I spent the majority of my time reading books and cooling off my toes in the crashing waves.

On the last day, I woke up early with my dad to watch the sun rise over the boardwalk. We watched in silence as pelicans flew to the north up the beach. The sun was hidden, slowly rising from behind clouds, but clearly not the same hidden we use to describe something we cannot find.

This year I have found myself desperately craving to have my heart from the years when I was between 17 or 18 years old. I seemed to have so much excitement for whatever God had in store for me, willing to do or go anywhere for Him. Now that I am living the life I was so excited for, I am a heck of a lot more apprehensive for this upcoming jump, into deeper and deeper waters.

I feel as though I am on the verge of a new life transition, which I indeed am. But I find that it is preventing me from living where I am currently. It’s a frustrating tension that I welcomed somewhere between August and September.

While I wrestle with this state of mind, I am surrounded by kingdom themes. I see it in each sermon, teaching, class and book that is presented before me. The kingdom is at hand; it is present. We are demanded to respond here and now, not in the next season of our physical life.

I am sitting next to a crackling fire with cool apple cider, and I am brought to an emotion I cannot describe. I have been frequently brought back to the thought that we are not fighting flesh and blood. Alas, I have been wrestling with my flesh, doing the things I do not want to do. It is certainly an active and tangible reminder that this fight is not worthwhile – with my flesh that is.

Instead, I resolve in my mind to trudge on to find the battle that is worth fighting for, in the midst of this painful flesh that demands my attention. I find I am persistently being reminded that the fight against my flesh has already

been won. It is overcome. An act of grace mixed in tension with my humbled defeat. For what am I truly fighting for after all?

So now I continue to fight, but against something that I do not fully comprehend. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. These things we cannot physically see.

I don’t know what this means, I don’t really know how to respond to this. But I suppose I am responding in desperate prayer. A revival and redemption in my heart to smile upon each morning with hope that the kingdom is at hand and we are demanded to respond. The one who desperately loves us, who washes our feet, is asking us to step out to him and respond. What does this look like for you? The mass expanse of the ocean reminds me of the character of God. The crashing of the waves, the constant roar – it is mysterious, terrifying and beautiful all at once.



Courageously Vulnerable: Is It Strong to Be Weak?

CARLY VERVERS

"To love at all is to be vulnerable." – C.S. Lewis

Have you ever noticed that most people hate the word “vulnerable”? The word just seems to bring about the idea of weakness. Vulnerable is defined as being susceptible to physical or emotional attack or harm. It’s synonymous with words like helpless, defenseless, powerless, impotent and weak – none of these words are ones that we want to hear in regards to ourselves.

Why, then, does C.S. Lewis say that to love is to be vulnerable? And why do I agree with him?

The second week of school, my RA asked us what we wanted our dorm vision to be for the year. Do we want to be the dorm that always has people over? The dorm that bakes for everyone?

We decided that we want to be centered in Christ, rooted in Him and founded on Him – the branches to His vine. We were throwing out words that we wanted to grow in, places where we wanted to shine for God – shining in sports and academics, growing in our love, treasuring laughter and family.

And then my RA used the word “vulnerable”. She asked us what we thought about that and if we wanted to be vulnerable. Most of the girls reacted the way you’d expect them to – one said that she didn’t like the word, another suggested open or honest instead. Why would we want to be vulnerable? Isn’t that the same as being weak or powerless or helpless? Why would anyone want to be that?

The thing is, I don’t think being vulnerable equates to being weak. I think being vulnerable is one of the most courageous things you can do or be. It takes a certain amount of strength to wear your heart on your sleeve, to risk your heart being broken by letting someone close enough to really, truly see it. When you love someone, you give them a piece of yourself. It’s impossible not to. How can you love someone and not risk your heart? How can you love someone and not let them in? To truly love someone means to lay your love, your heart, on the line, knowing that they might break it. It’s a risk, but it’s worth it.

As I’m writing and thinking about this, I can’t help but think of Jesus. Talk about being vulnerable for love’s sake. Helpless, defenseless, powerless, impotent, weak, susceptible – these are not the words that come to mind when I think about Jesus. And yet, when He was spread out on the cross for us, He was weak. He was dying – He did die. To love at all is to be vulnerable.

Jesus loves us enough that He died for us. He was willing to let His strength be stripped away and replaced with weakness. Just imagine it. The Son of God hanging on a cross, vulnerable, susceptible to attack – physical, emotional and spiritual attack. The wind whipping at Him. The nails driven through His skin. The mocking scorn aimed at Him from the people below. The full separation from God. Jesus was so vulnerable. His blood spilled, His body broken. Even God the Father turned away. Jesus was all alone, and more vulnerable than He had ever been, than anyone has ever been.

That vulnerability, in my opinion, is the ultimate display of strength and of love. I said before that loving someone

means giving them a piece of yourself. Jesus didn’t just give us a piece of Himself; He gave us everything. He didn’t hold anything back. He offered His heart, His body, His blood, knowing that some of us will never accept Him. That some of us will never want Him. That’s vulnerability. That’s love. That’s strength. That’s courage. That’s bravery. That’s my Jesus.

What does that mean for us, though? How can we be vulnerable for love’s sake? I think it’s in being honest about our faults and shortcomings. It’s in coming clean about our pasts and our struggles. It’s in asking the hard questions. It’s in putting our pride aside when we’re in the wrong and apologizing. It’s in confessing our sin to one another. It’s in loving each other without expecting anything in return, without judging each other or putting one another down. It’s in loving freely, loving deeply, loving relentlessly. It’s in risking our hearts. It’s in standing up for other people, for what we believe in. It’s in standing before God, realizing that it’s only made possible by His grace. It’s in admitting that we’re all desperately in need of that grace. It’s in recognizing that we are weak, but that God is strong. It’s in going after the wandering sheep. It’s in telling people about the faith we have, the gift of eternal life that we have received. It’s in obeying the Spirit. It’s in being the hands and feet of God, doing what He tells you, going where He leads you.

Maybe it’s an oxymoron. Courageously vulnerable. But that’s what I want to be. Risking my heart. Wearing it on my sleeve. Seeing people’s hearts and letting them see mine. Being vulnerable for love’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Who's Afraid of Secularism?

ROBERT JOUSTRA
VIA COMMENT MAGAZINE

If “strong civil religion tends to replace strong civil religion,” what will this look like in a post-Christian America?

“Don’t Panic” is what Douglas Adams inscribed, in large, friendly letters, on the cover of *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*. His reason, as he explains it, was that the book “looked insanely complicated” to operate, had many omissions, and contained much that was apocryphal, or at least wildly inaccurate. This is not a bad tree of adjectives for secularism. And neither is Adam’s accompanying admonishment: “Don’t Panic.”

We up north, at least, can take a few deep breaths. Societies like Canada, namely ones with weak(ening) civil religious cultures, shouldn’t panic. I think we’re headed for a post-secular age. But some societies, like the United States of America, with strong civil religious histories, may be in for a troubling post-Christian phase. This is because strong civil religion tends to replace strong civil religion. The American gospel isn’t going away, but the characters and plot are changing.

This can get complicated. To get a sense of this, consider that in 2009, Daniel Philpott was trying to make things less confusing when he distinguished no less than nine different “concepts of the secular”: four positive or neutral definitions and five negative. In her more recent book, *Fighting over God*, Janet Epp Buckingham simplifies further, describing two legal-cultural traditions in Canada’s approach to religion/secularity: the English/Protestant and the French/Catholic. I’ve argued this intersects usefully with two dominant approaches to the secular in Canada: (1) Judeo-Christian secularism, a secularism founded on and made possible by the Judeo-Christian tradition in public life; and (2) *laïcité*, a secularism founded on and made possible by the removal of religion from the public sphere.

This breakdown gets us a little closer to the kind of secularism that religious people are afraid of. Ominous phrases like those once uttered by David Cameron advocating for a “muscular liberalism” make pluralists nervous about whether a thickening of “public values” won’t leave once loyal, now suspicious, subjects on the wrong side of state drawn values boundaries. But there are solid historical reasons to be optimistic north of the 49th parallel. There are, somewhat sadly, inverse but equally solid reasons to be pessimistic south of it.

It is my opinion that Canada is moving into an increasingly post-secular future. There is good evidence to debate this, ranging from the Charter of Quebec Values to Trinity Western University’s most recent troubles launching its law school. But this evidence only seems extreme if it’s taken out of historical context. Consider that in 2001, when Trinity Western tried to launch its teacher’s college, it never even got beyond the province’s College of Teachers before landing in court. When it recently tried to launch its law school, a large number of the provinces’ law societies approved it, as did the province itself. In fact, the individual societies of Ontario and Nova Scotia had to break rank with the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to dissent, suggesting that TWU has more support than it did in 2001 when the Supreme Court was already handing down an eight-to-one ruling on behalf of their teacher’s college.

What about the Charter of Quebec Values? First of all, that Charter needs to be understood within a European context, which is extremely anxious about its wide and expanding diversity. The anxiety, at least, is not imaginary because, like Canada, European societies are far more diverse as a result of birth rates and immigration than they used to be. Foreign Affairs calls urbanization, youthful religious resurgence, and aging boomer sentiments among the “megatrends” changing the world. In other words, the Charter is hardly the victory cry of a now-dominant secularism, it is a last gasp of a cultural consensus under demographic siege. Politics is often downstream of culture, and there is no surer mark of fragility and crisis in a culture than the need to legislate its existence and protections. Finally, even when the proposed charter came in front of the people of Quebec in the form of a provincial election, it was demolished at the polls. Not only did the desperate political ploy to legislate thicker values expose the fragility of those very things, but the ploy itself was totally defeated by popular consent.

The trend seems to be toward a more open society, buttressed partly by the global resurgence of religion come home, held in tension by traditional, but potentially transitory exclusive secularism in elite spheres like the academy, law, politics, and media. Even there the evidence is unevenly distributed where, unlike decades ago, we can now name multiple, major advocates for a more open, secular society. The question is how embedded this exclusivity is in these spheres, and whether, over the long-run, it has the moral funding, intellectual vitality, and demographic trajectory to thrive. I don’t believe it does.

Jocelyn Maclure and Charles Taylor in *Secularism and Freedom of Conscience* argue that strong civil religious cultures tend to be replaced by strong civil religious cultures. This is the case, they say, in Quebec where, after the Quiet Revolution, a strong civil religious Catholic political culture was supplanted for an aggressively secular civil religious culture. They find similar trends in Turkey and

challenger, a kind of civil religious secularism, has its own moral and ethical code (now) with the force of American law, which precludes public religious practice that violates its core conviction of non-discrimination. Why is everyone so panicked? Because what’s at stake isn’t about a couple hiring cases here and there, but which civil religion is going to carry the day. There is no *deux-solitudes* (two-solitudes, or two different but coexisting poles) in American civil religion: there is a winner, and there are losers.

Compare this to Protestant/English Canada, which had a civil religious tradition, certainly, but one which was more understated. It was also largely (but not entirely) toppled, but continues to enjoy something like public existence and engagement, even if not exclusively any longer on its own terms. It has morphed from what I have called a kind of exclusivism to a kind of open pluralism. The tradition still largely defaults preferentially to Christian sources as the enabling framework for civic and political virtue (in other

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France, where formerly strong “religious” civil religions were replaced very rapidly by equally strong secular-liberal civil religions. They write, “[t]hat type of political system replaces established religion with secular moral philosophy.” Maclure and Taylor say this is what Jean-Jacques Rousseau meant by “civil religion,” and when strong civil religions are toppled in political cultures, the probability is that they will be replaced by a rival, equally strong, civil religious tradition. Thick moral content is needed to combat and supplant thick moral content. The Charter of Quebec Values is a good news story because it shows that the secular-liberal civil religion of the Quiet Revolution is petering out; its civil religion is weakening, rather than being overrun by another strong civil religion. This is good news for a more open society.

This is a bad news story for the United States of America, unfortunately. America is considered, most often by those outside of it, a highly civil religious country. And if strong civil religion usually begets strong civil religion, then the expectation for outside observers would be to see America move very quickly from a kind of Protestant Americanism to a kind of post-Christian secularism. We would expect this secularism, further, to be far more intransigent and far more aggressive precisely because it must do the heavy lifting of exorcising an existent “Protestant” civil religion. Of course, this is a bit of an armchair prediction, and neglects certain basic problems of social science, like whether the United States can even any longer be spoken of meaningfully as “one society” with a “civil religion” in the same way as, say, Quebec or Turkey or France were. So while you can take that prediction with a grain of salt, Taylor’s suggestion that strong civil religion begets strong civil religion nonetheless gives us a spectrum of ominous options in post-Christian America.

Read this through the latest civil religious arm wrestle about President Obama’s recent executive order on discrimination in hiring. Probably the first thing you’ll notice is that everyone has really freaked out. This is partly because the disagreement, namely the freedom to sustain religious codes of practice for religious hiring, is about which civil religious tradition is publicly preeminent. The incumbent Judeo-Christian secularism is holding the line that not only is the freedom to hire within the bounds of religious conviction, but it’s a necessity that such institutions be afforded that freedom for a plural society. The

words, it thinks its own tradition is true), but happily acknowledges that rival rationales also join productively in the common work of politics and public life. You don’t need to believe in the Christian God, or hold Christian beliefs, or partake in Christian practices to make substantial contributions to Canada’s common life.

This gets close to what Taylor, in *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*, calls a “radical redefinition” of the secular. What deserves to be called secular, he argues, is not some transient arrangement of institutions, or the relationship of the state to religion, but rather the correct response of the democratic state to diversity. The “post-secular” secularism we need now is one which sustains the principles of democratic liberal politics, but is agnostic on the rationale (religious or otherwise) by which people arrive at those principles. The state, in other words, does not monopolize the rationale or the practices that make the constitutive values of liberal democracy possible. It is a gamble, definitely, and a risky one in a time of anxiety when trust is low. It’s what Paul Brink describes as politics without scripts, where both Christianity and secular liberalism have been disestablished.

Can Canadian political culture capitalize on this kind of radically redefined secularism? I’m optimistic it can, partly because of its long history adjudicating rival civil religions within the same political system, and partly because of the growing demographic diversity of religious people, especially newcomers, to the country. There is no strong civil religious kid on Canada’s block to muscle the country into a kind of secular exclusivism, and Canada’s historic institutions are deliberately designed to prevent precisely this because of historic Protestant-Catholic tensions. Canada disestablished “Christianity” so long ago that we’re onto disestablishing secular-liberalism.

But where I’m optimistic about post-secular Canada, I’m pessimistic about post-Christian America. The logic of strong civil religion begetting strong civil religion is not a social scientific law, but it does seem probable and convincing. Maybe, like Quebec, American political culture can survive the slow weakening of its civil religion, rather than a rapid hostile takeover.

Who’s afraid of secularism? I guess it depends where you live.

ACROSS

- 1) Wound covering

5) Drains of strength

9) South American dance

14) Glowing ring

15) You, to a Quaker

16) Smooth, as feathers

17) Distinctive flair

18) Long-ago days

19) Allayed

20) React to a mouse sighting?

23) Cover-up participant

24) Runner at the Winter Games

25) Persistently annoy

29) Preschool attendee

31) It comes before an extra point?

35) Responded to the alarm

36) Underneath

38) Melodramatic cry

39) Some Steinways
- 42) Tirade cause

43) New money in 1999

44) Mollusk shell material

45) Relative of a gull

47) Room offerer

48) Acropolis metropolis

49) Very large coffee-holder

51) Make a goof

52) Classic song by the Drifters

61) Bar at night, perhaps

62) About

63) Geometry figure

64) ___ sanction

65) Dock

66) One glib with a fib

67) Artist's plaster

68) Seductively attractive

69) Repair socks

DOWN

- 1) Mares and hens

2) Math course, briefly

3) Apple spray of old

4) Tibia, for one

5) Do some thwarting

6) Get ___ of (reach by phone)

7) Gilpin of "Frasier"

8) "___ and ye shall find"

9) Communicate, in a way

10) "Aladdin" setting

11) Plateau

12) BBC nickname (with "the")

13) Buzz Lightyear's owner

21) Purport

22) Prevent, at the bar

25) Common practice for a nun?

26) Cognizant of one's surroundings

27) ___ as a judge

28) Wild blue yonder

29) Mortise filler

30) Ransom of cars

32) Cavalry weapon

33) Like clipped sheep

34) Caravan pit stops

36) Farm structure

37) Like January days

40) Feeling contrite

41) Word to a doctor

46) Surgeon's aides

48) National Guard hangout

50) Old-fashioned, in a fashionable way

51) Antique auto

52) Math subject, informally

53) Improve, as a skill

54) A long, long, long time

55) Apologetic comment

56) Lake near Niagara Falls

57) Having no need for a comb

58) Sutherland solo

59) Brown or black animal

60) Fisherman's "the one that got away"

INFANTILE

By JoLene Andrews

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