

‘CHRISTIAN AID’: Is it a ‘Christian’ organisation?

Each year **‘Christian Aid’** designates a special fund-raising week and this year it ran from 10th-16th May 2021 as you can read on this link –

https://www.christianaid.ie/christian-aid-week?qclid=Cj0KCQjw4v2EBhCtARIsACan3nypeObB5of9d96zs9euSj1G17yAX3yphsVliadY5KARzOSNFq6KerQaAlrSEALw_wcB

During that week, a mature collector for **‘Christian Aid’** called at our house and he asked if I would like make a donation for the work. I explained that my wife and I were Christians but that we would not be supporting **‘Christian Aid’** because of its inappropriate use of funds in South Africa many years ago. He stated he was unaware of anything of that nature and explained that **‘Christian Aid’** “does a lot of good work”. I replied that Christianity was not primarily designed to be a ‘social agency’. He said they do mention the gospel but **‘don’t ram it down people’s throats’** to which I replied by saying that the command is to **“preach the word ... in season and out of season” (2nd Timothy 4:2)**. At this point he decided to leave and said he would note that we should not be troubled in the future. My view is that it is very questionable for this organisation to designate itself as **‘Christian’**.

PAST PROBLEMS

So, what exactly was I referring to when I mentioned the ‘inappropriate use of funds in South Africa many years ago’? In truth, I couldn’t remember the ‘specifics’ when I mentioned them to the collector at my door so I contacted my friend and fellow contender in South Africa, Shaun Willcock of **‘Bible Based Ministries’** – web site located on <https://www.biblebasedministries.co.uk/> - this is part of what I wrote –

Hi Shaun,

At the back of my mind there is something about **‘Christian Aid’** having given funds many years ago to support terrorist/marxist groups in South Africa. Am I right and do you have anything in writing about it?

God bless

Cecil

This was part of Shaun’s reply to me –

Hi Cecil

That’s a very good memory you have there! Yes, **“Christian Aid”** did that. In SA there was an institution called the Institute of Contextual Theology (ICT), a radical liberation theology institution. Its first general secretary was Frank Chikane, former Black Consciousness activist who became general secretary of the SA Council of Churches. A later general secretary of the ICT was RC priest/liberation theologian Smangalis Mkhathshwa. Anyway, one of the donors to ICT was **Christian Aid**. In 1987, for example, grants received by the ICT from **Christian Aid** amounted to SA R30,576.

Also, **Christian Aid** made grants to the SA Council of Churches (SACC). Over half the grant aid from **Christian Aid** to the SACC was to support two very political programmes, the Dependents' Conference and the Asingeni Relief Fund.

Then there was "The Road to Damascus: Kairos and Conversion", a pamphlet published by the ICT in 1989, and also published jointly in Britain by the Catholic Institute for International Relations, and **Christian Aid**. This pamphlet was an assault by the advocates of liberation theology on those parts of the Church (using the word broadly) which did not as yet support liberation theology...

Another good source is **Revolution or Reconciliation? The Struggle in the Church in South Africa**, by Rachel Tingle. Christian Studies Centre, London, 1992.

Also, although I don't have a copy of it, I see a reference to **Christian Aid: A Betrayal of Faith?** Published by **International Freedom Foundation**, UK, January 1992. Perhaps this has more information.

I hope this helps!

In bonds of grace
Shaun

I have been able to obtain a copy of **Revolution or Reconciliation? The Struggle in the Church in South Africa** and in it I read the following –

'In February 1991, John Kane-Berman, the executive director of the SAIRR (South African Institute of Race Relations) put forward his own apparently surprising explanation for this climate of violence. He argued that the Christian leadership in South Africa "has helped to legitimate violence as an instrument of liberation" (p 4) ... The first chapter of this study describes how changes in thinking within the World Council of Churches led to increasing legitimisation of the activities of the South African liberation movements, including their readiness to use violence. The *second chapter deals with what is meant by contextual theology and how it differs significantly from orthodox Biblical theology ... Chapter 5 describes the sources of funding of the radicalised Church in South Africa (pp 8-9) ...

*The ICT (Institute for Contextual Theology) was set up in 1981 following discussions between a number of radical South African theologians ... and members of the **Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians**. Funded almost entirely by grants from overseas donors, which have included the British aid agencies CAFOID (Catholic Fund for Overseas Development), **Christian Aid**, and the Irish Catholic aid agency, Trocaire, the goal of the ICT has been to "contribute towards a theological base for the realisation of meaning, method and a theological source of a new society in Southern Africa". Putting this more clearly, the overriding aim of the ICT has been to produce a specifically South African contextual theology justifying radical political change ((pp 82-83)

In this account we have seen the key role played by the *South African Council of Churches (SACC) in supporting the development of a South African liberation theology, and the political liberation struggle of the ANC, PAC and allied groups (p 166) (* Cecil – the **WIKIPEDIA** entry for the 'South African Council of Churches' located on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_African_Council_of_Churches includes this statement - '**During the anti-apartheid struggle, the SACC was in alliance with liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC)**')

The degree to which the SACC is genuinely representative of the broad spectrum of Christian opinion in South Africa is, however, open to considerable doubt. This is for two reasons. In the first place, neither of the two largest denominations or Church groupings in the country are members ... Other significant denominations ... do not belong to the SACC ... Secondly, and more significantly, it is doubtful how far the policies of the SACC are representative of the grassroots opinion of those Church denominations which do belong ... the Eloff Commission, which was set up in 1981 to inquire into the history and activities of the SACC, concluded in its detailed study published in 1983 that, with few exceptions, SACC policies were initiated by heads of department, not member Churches (pp 166-167)

One telling indication of the member Churches' lack of support for, and also lack of influence over the SACC is the extremely small proportion of the Council's budget which comes from its members' affiliation fees ... From where then did the SACC get its money? The answer is that **virtually all of it came from overseas donations ... In the UK, the largest donor by far has been Christian Aid**, which gave R7,158,099 over the five-year period; other British donors have included Oxfam and the British Council of Churches (pp 168-171)

The SACC has enjoyed a yearly income between 1987 and 1990 averaging R23.28mn. (i.e., about £6mn) **Hardly any of this, however, has been spent on traditional Christian missionary or evangelistic activity** ... even its "Church and Mission" departments have been involved in promoting forms of radical, contextual theology. The SACC's "Justice and Society" activities form the practical outworkings of its commitment to **political liberation** ... much of the "Justice and Society" expenditure has gone on providing legal aid and other forms of support for those involved in civil disobedience and violence, **including alleged terrorist offences**. Only limited information is disclosed about the use of its semi-secret **Asingeni Relief Fund** ... but previous SACC General Secretary, Bishop Tutu, has stated that the purpose of the Fund is to **"empower the powerless in their liberation struggle"**. Much of the SACC's activities have thus had very obvious political implications (pp194-195)

Neither the ICT, nor the SACC would have been able to exist in anything like their present form if it were not for the support they have received from overseas, particularly from European Church aid agencies ... Two **British** aid agencies, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and **Christian Aid** have made grants to both the ICT and the SACC – **more than half of the grant from Christian Aid to the SACC was to support two of its most obviously political programmes**, the Dependant's Conference and the **Asingeni Relief Fund**' (pp 195-196).

Shaun mentioned the **'International Freedom Foundation'** and it is interesting to read what **WIKIPEDIA** says about this grouping on – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Freedom_Foundation

In particular I noted these comments – 'The director of the **IFF's** London office, at 10 Storey's Gate, Westminster, was Marc Gordon (b. 1966). On January 31, 1989 in a BBC Radio 4 interview, Gordon praised Western Goals (UK) for its activities in **"exposing left-wing political activities of charities"**, such as Oxfam and **Christian Aid**'.

In Shaun's response to me he also mentioned brief references he had made to **'Christian Aid'** in his own book **"Holy War" Against South Africa** and I want now to cite relevant quotes from what Shaun wrote –

'The Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT) was established in 1981. Closely allied with the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and also the South African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC), and funded by foreign religious groups such as the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid and Trocaire (the Irish Roman Catholic aid agency, this radical agency promoted liberation theology in South Africa.

Its first general secretary was Frank Chikane – who later became SACC general secretary. A later general secretary of the ICT was Roman Catholic priest, Smangalis Mkhathshwa, who had been general secretary of the SACBC. Thus, it can be seen how these various religious organisations overlapped, in furthering the Marxist revolution, all working for the same ultimate goal. For Rome, of course, the plan was to use the revolutionaries as the muscle to usher in eventual roman Catholic control over South Africa and it was prepared to work hand in hand with the liberal Protestant denominations in order to bring this about (pp 123-124) ...

the SACC, (South African Council of Churches) claiming to represent "God's people" used its funds to defend people guilty of murder and other sins – and justified doing so! ... The Eloff Commission also discovered a most significant fact, which the SACC itself always sought to hide: it did not enjoy the support of a large number of blacks, or black ministers ... the SACC ... is a dangerous, antichristian body, a true daughter of its parent, the World Council of Churches (pp 130-131)

The advocates of liberation theology call themselves "progressive" (Cecil – not to be confused with my recent article on so0-called Progressive Christianity) or "prophetic" Christians ... The Institute for Contextual Theology was at the forefront of this assault. In 1985 the ICT decided to study the groups which criticised liberation theology ... and in 1988 the ICT's AGM had as its theme a study of "right wing religion" in South Africa ... This led to a conference in Harare in August 1989 on "right wing religion". The papers from this conference contained attacks on such scriptural doctrines as the deity of Christ, his virgin birth, atonement, resurrection, second coming, as well as on the doctrine of salvation. This is because the Christ of God is not the Christ of liberation theology: that "Christ" is a revolutionary, a guerrilla fighter, and the doctrine of salvation as set for in Holy Scripture is not the doctrine of liberation theology: that doctrine is one of "salvation" from political "oppression" by violent revolution.

Then in July 1989 the ICT document "The Road to Damascus: Kairos and Conversion" was published in South Africa and also in Britain by the Catholic Institute for International Relations and Christian Aid. Thus, it was an ecumenical project in which Rome played a major part ... The only true Christians were said to be those who advocated liberation theology: and those who did not were said to be persecutors of the Church ... What a diabolically clever assault on the true Gospel! ... "The Road to Damascus" followed the typical liberation theology line. It turned the Lord Jesus into a political liberator ... The document stated that Christians must work for justice and (political) liberation – that this is their mission, and that those not involved in such a work worship a false God' (pp 198-200)

Details of how to purchase Shaun's book via Amazon are located on

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Holy-War-Against-South-Africa/dp/1903930049> and

https://www.amazon.com/Holy-War-Against-South-Africa/dp/1903930049/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=holy+war+against+south+africa&qid=1621843142&s=books&sr=1-1

PRESENT PROBLEMS

Here in Northern Ireland staunch advocates of **Christian Aid** have included the Religious Affairs correspondent of the Belfast Telegraph, **Alf McCreary**, and articles relevant to this topic can be found on these links –

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/how-the-churches-practise-what-they-preach-in-africa-28686224.html>

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/alf-mccreary/as-a-child-a-voice-in-my-head-told-me-to-say-goodbye-to-dad-i-told-him-i-loved-him-and-he-died-during-the-night-37651096.html>

In an excerpt from an article penned by '**Protestant Revival**' and located on <https://protestantrevival.wordpress.com/tag/alf-mccreary/> we read –

'The apparently "leading" religious figures interviewed each week by the old ecumenist **Alf McCreary** in the Belfast Telegraph are almost invariably deeply unimpressive ... With **Christian Aid** leader **Rosamond Bennett** claiming to have been saved without asking for forgiveness of sins and saying God might be a woman'

Another article that I came across and that appears to be of 'recent vintage' is called '**Siblings of Shalom: Theological reflections on peacebuilding**' and it was produced by **Christian Aid** – it can be accessed on this link –

<https://www.christianaid.ie/sites/default/files/2019-10/theology-of-violence-to-peace.pdf>

On page 6 it contains a '**Foreword**' by the '**Chair, Christian Aid Ireland**' – and who is that? – the '**Rev. Dr**' **Liz Hughes** who was **Alf McCreary's** long-time 'minister' at Whitehouse Presbyterian Church where he himself for a time served as an elder.

Over the years I have written several articles challenging the utterly unbiblical and unchristian views expressed by **Alf McCreary** in some of his Belfast telegraph articles. I also had occasion in 2013 to write not only about him but also about his then 'minister', **Liz Hughes**. That article was entitled –

‘Rev’ Liz Hughes and ‘Elder’ Alf McCreary: “Blind leaders of the blind”?

and can be accessed via this link –

https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/current-concerns-2013/Liz_Hughes_blind_leaders_at_Mass.pdf

The other articles expressing my concern about **Alf McCreary’s** views and actions can be accessed on the following links –

<https://www.takeheed.info/the-abuse-by-alf-mccreary/>

<https://www.takeheed.info/alf-mccreary-the-queen-and-the-dalai-lama/>

<https://www.takeheed.info/alf-mccreary-cross-with-presbyterian-moderator/>

<https://www.takeheed.info/the-bible-what-alf-mccreary-didnt-write/>

<https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/December-2014/Alf-McCreary-December-Darkness.pdf>

https://www.takeheed.info/Assorted_Articles/Contemporary/alf-mccreary-says-koran-does-not-sanction-violence.pdf

In the **Christian Aid** article, ‘**Siblings of Shalom: Theological reflections on peacebuilding**’ favourable references are made to **Rev Norman Hamilton**, a former moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and also to the role played in Northern Ireland affairs by **E.C.O.N.I** (Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland). Both **Mr Hamilton** and **E.C.O.N.I** were the subject of an article penned by myself in 2010 and it can be accessed via this link –

https://www.takeheed.info/Assorted_Articles/Ecumenism/norman-hamilton-is-not-a-mainstream-evangelical.pdf

From all of this we can see that locally here in **Northern Ireland**, **Christian Aid** is very much supported and headed by those who practice and promote unscriptural false-ecumenism and who focus very much on a ‘social gospel’, at times not too dissimilar to the distortions promoted in South Africa.

Then, looking at **Christian Aid** on a **UK** level there are also major, **present problems**. On this link you can see details of the **Board of Trustees** - <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/about-us/board-trustees> and the ‘**Chair**’ of the board is **Rowan Williams** – former Archbishop of Canterbury – that should certainly ring alarm bells for genuine Christians as **Mr Williams** exhibited no clear knowledge of genuine biblical faith during his tenure of high ecclesiastical office.

Back in 2002 when **Rowan Williams** was installed as Archbishop of Canterbury, 'Latimer Trust' published a 42-page booklet called **'The Theology of Rowan Williams'**. It was written by **Garry J. Williams MA. DPhil.** and I want to quote some revealing portions from it –

'The critique closes with an examination of the pastoral consequences of Williams's theology, and an argument that in the light of those consequences his appointment cannot be welcomed by Anglicans as a positive event (p 2) ... for the present time it is the points of disagreement on central doctrinal issues which demand our attention ... it will be apparent that the difficulties with Williams's theology are in fact central doctrinal questions (pp 3-4) ...

Williams depicts hell as a state of being unable to perceive the truth, and so he finds that teaching about hell functions as language which persuades us not to lost touch with reality ... Language about hell, we see, has a purpose sufficient to justify it, even if it does not refer to a state which will exist (pp 18-19) ...

We find a judicial conception of sin and the atonement at the centre of the Old Testament and the New ... but we do not find it here. The doctrine that Jesus bore in our place the judicial wrath of God which sin deserved has been displaced by the idea that he became the great victim of human hatred. This idea is itself true ... but, within catholic (Cecil – 'universal' and not 'Roman') theology, that is not the reason for its atoning power ... the unjust hatred was the vessel for God's hatred for sin to be poured out on himself in Christ instead of on his people.

This Gospel doctrine is absent in Williams ... Williams writes of "the awful language, beloved even of some of the finest theologians and preachers of an earlier age, about God's 'offended holiness' which needs to be mollified' ... This forensic pattern of guilt and deserved retribution dealt with by substitution is central in scripture, but Williams replaces it with a victim theology, where the atonement is about men inflicting wounds, not God bearing his own judgment in Christ. This is, in short, a different doctrine of salvation from that of the bible, the early church, the Reformers, and therefore from the formularies of the Church of England ... Williams says in the quotation above that he is rejecting a doctrine of "an earlier age" (pp 28-29)

Williams defends homosexual practice on the basis that it is no more non-productive than heterosexual acts using contraception. That is not the right comparison. ... The totality of the marriage relation is potentially reproductive, whereas the totality of homosexual acts is not. It is this which indicates that the totality of one is acceptable where the totality of the other is not (p 33)

The sexual ethic which Rowan Williams espouses will have terrible eternal effects, since it is a matter of salvation and condemnation. It is identified as such within the framework of biblical theology... For a senior presbyter in the church ... to defend such an epitome of sin is to place himself in conflict with the Gospel and to imperil the souls of the men and women who follow him ...

He reports that his thinking on homosexuality has emerged through counselling people facing homosexual temptation. His opinion is that homosexual practice will not always be wrong for them ... and he has taught them that God has no problem with gay sex ...

In this way the senior presbyter of the church has been instrumental in encouraging people to engage in what the Apostle Paul regards as an embodiment of human rebellion ... The archbishop has taught and is teaching people, now millions of people in this country and around the world, a sure way of being shut out from the presence of God for ever.

That by itself would be reason enough to oppose the appointment of Rowan Williams as Archbishop of Canterbury, but sadly there are further reasons. We have also to consider the understanding of sin and salvation which Williams holds. This is one which will not bring sinners to grasp their judicial guilt before an offended, holy, sin-punishing God.

They will not hear of the substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ bearing that punishment for sin in place of sinners. They will instead be comforted as victims and urged to look to the ultimate victim who atoned by triumphing over human hatred ...

Given his views on these issues, the theology of Rowan Williams puts souls at risk of perishing' (pp 36-37).

What a devastating critique of only some of the aberrant theology of **Rowan Williams**, the man who is the 'Chair' of the 'Board of Trustees' of **Christian Aid (UK)**.

Also, on the web site of **Christian Aid (UK)** we find details of what are referred to as 'Sponsoring Churches' - <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/about-us/our-people-partners-sponsors/sponsoring-churches>

Just how '**Christian**' are some of these 'Sponsoring Churches'? Well, there are a number that would fail the test of being faithful, orthodox, biblical churches such as –

**Greek Orthodox Church
Russian Orthodox Church**

(See - <https://www.gotquestions.org/Eastern-Orthodox-church.html>)

**Unitarian and Free Christian Churches
Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland**

(See - <https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2016/August/Unitarianism.pdf>)

Seventh Day Adventist Church

(See - <https://www.takeheed.info/news-from-the-front-sept-1999/>)

The title of this article was phrased like this

**'CHRISTIAN AID':
Is it a 'Christian' organisation?**

In the light of the **‘Past Problems’** and the **‘Present Problems’** I think it would be fair to answer the question part of the title in the negative. I have no doubt that there have been and perhaps there are many well-meaning but sadly misguided believers who have thrown their support behind this organisation – but should they?

In **2nd Corinthians 6**, amongst a number of rhetorical questions, the Apostle Paul asks **“what concord hath Christ with Belial”** (v 15).

According to **Vines Dictionary of New Testament Words** the word **“concord”** literally means **“a sounding together”** (p 118) and is cross-referenced with the word **“agree”** (p 20) which refers to the **“agreement of persons concerning a matter”**.

According to **Unger’s Bible Dictionary**, in the Old Testament the word **‘Belial’** had the meaning of **‘worthlessness, wickedness’** and in the New Testament it was **‘understood as applied to Satan, as the personification of all that is bad’** (pp 131-132).

In the light of the **‘Past & Present Problems’** that I have identified in relation to **Christian Aid**, discerning Christians should realise that, in obedience to God’s Word, they can have no **‘agreement concerning the matter’** of funding very dubious, **‘worthless, wicked’** anti-gospel organisations in the name of Christ as it is clear that these organisations fit the descriptions of **“Belial”** as outlined by **Unger**.

The lead-in to those rhetorical questions posed by Paul says this – **“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers”** – no cause, no matter how ‘noble’ it may appear should be designated as **‘Christian’** if it means disobeying this clear command of the Scriptures.

Paul rounds off this portion in **2nd Corinthians 6** with another command – **“Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you”** (v 17). These are the biblical grounds on which I told the collector at my door that my wife and I would not be supporting the collection for so-called **Christian Aid**.

Cecil Andrews – ‘Take Heed’ Ministries – 10th June 2021

