

Mainstream Media Claims Christians' Hysteria About Persecution in the West Is 'Groundless' and 'Morally Distasteful'

The Guardian has been criticized by The Christian Institute for claiming that Christians' concerns about marginalization in the U.K. are "hysterical", "morally distasteful" and "groundless."

An editorial in the paper suggests that the severe persecution of Christians overseas means Christians in the U.K. should not complain about the lesser problems in their own country.

It also describes Christian evangelism as "obnoxious and embarrassing" but says it should not be made illegal.

Institute spokesman Simon Calvert said: "Most U.K. Christians do not need *The Guardian* to remind them that their own marginalization should not be put on a par with the persecution of believers overseas."

'Vital for Society'

"But this does not mean that highlighting such marginalization is "hysterical." Why are Christians the only people the *Guardian* thinks should keep quiet when they are mistreated?

"The editorial seems to equate "civilized society" to "endorsing homosexual relationships." In so doing it seeks to devalue centuries of orthodox Christian thinking and entirely ignore the fact that Christianity has made arguably the biggest single contribution to the civilized society our

country has enjoyed for hundreds of years.

“More than that, they ignore the fact that the principle of religious liberty, Christians being able to live out their faith in the public square, is vital for a truly civilized society.

Ordinary Christians

“The Christian Institute has helped many ordinary Christians who have been punished for simply wanting to live out their faith in a consistent way.

“Former housing manager Adrian Smith was demoted and suffered a 40 per cent pay cut, simply for disagreeing with gay marriages happening in churches on his personal Facebook page.

“And Christian registrar Lillian Ladele was pushed out of her job after Islington Council tried to force her to officiate at same-sex civil partnership ceremonies.”

Ashers

The Guardian refers to Ashers Baking Company, another Christian Institute case, which hit the headlines when the owners were taken to court simply for declining to decorate a pro-gay marriage campaign cake.

Mr. Calvert said: “The editorial clearly implies that Christians should behave as if things they believe to be wrong are actually right. *The Guardian's* approach leaves no scope for courteous, conscientious disagreement.

“Whilst mangling the facts of the Ashers case, it says that “being asked to ice a cake for a gay wedding is hardly martyrdom. It’s just the price of living in a civilized society.”

‘Gratuitous’

“It may concede that ‘no one should be compelled to make propaganda for a cause they think false or pernicious,’ but excludes Ashers from that. It also says ‘Christian evangelism should not be made illegal.’

“The fact that *The Guardian* (is) even discussing the possibility speaks volumes about where they are coming from, as does their gratuitous remark that personal evangelism is ‘obnoxious and embarrassing’ and their implied slur that Christian employees are ‘difficult.’

“After years of being told that Christian morality should not be allowed to have any influence on the law, Christians might be surprised to see *The Guardian* now admitting that ‘any society has to privilege some ethical viewpoint and some virtues.’ Clearly, they mean their own secularist viewpoint, not the Christian one, which they assert is ‘mistaken.’”

‘Sinister’

Letters criticizing the editorial’s claims were subsequently published by the newspaper.

One respondent questioned whether it would now be supporting a campaign to remove the right for conscientious objection to military service, in light of the editorial’s disregard for individuals’ conscience.

Another described the editorial as “sinister” and “exultant at the state seeking to suppress the expression of Christian conscience.”