

**A Matter of**

**LIFE**

OR

**DEATH**

**The Struggle for the Soul of Our Nation**

**January 2015**

*maranatha community*

## **A Matter of Life or Death - The Struggle for the Soul of Our Nation**

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Many people are today questioning the kind of society which is emerging in Britain. This document, published by the Maranatha Community and presented in Parliament in January 2015, is for those in leadership positions throughout the United Kingdom: in the various political parties in Parliament, and in church, social, academic, educational and commercial leadership positions. It is a wake-up call. It is a call to action. In particular, it is a challenge for all of us to recognise the heavy responsibilities we carry for future generations.

### **Background**

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Twenty years ago the Maranatha Community pointed to the 'storm clouds' which were approaching our nation. *'A Call to the Nation'* was launched in the House of Commons. It warned of signs of serious national decline. Substantial factual evidence was presented and millions of copies were read throughout the United Kingdom. There was an immediate and positive response. The following year, the Community issued *'A Call to the Churches'*. This was presented to church leaders pointing to the significance of what was happening.

Arising from this, in 1995, at the invitation of Viscount Caldecott, a senior Peer, the Maranatha Community presented the document *'What on Earth are we Doing to our Children?'* in the House of Lords. This led to a special parliamentary consultation introduced by the Lord Chancellor, a special debate in the House of Commons and a National Children's Conference in Coventry Cathedral. The issue of children was driven to the top of the political agenda. An updated edition of this document, *'The Big Question - What on Earth are we Doing to our Children'* was published in 2012.

In 1997, the Community arranged the *'Unmasking the Spirit of the Age'* conference in Westminster and convened the first National Child Abuse Conference in London. Numerous initiatives were subsequently taken to focus attention on the family. After much research the Community launched its *'Family & Marriage'* report in the House of Commons. This was followed by the publication of *'Western Culture & The Christian Gospel'*, inspired by a Maranatha member Bishop Leslie Newbigin.

In 2004, a further national statement was made *'The State of the Nation'*. This was launched in Parliament together with a supplementary document *'Crisis & Glory'* which was presented to church leaders. Again, these were warning statements and following this, the Community published a detailed report *'Our Christian Identity – The De-Christianising of the United Kingdom'*.

In 2008, at the time of the banking collapse, the Community pointed to the significance and seriousness of our situation and has continued to take a broad range of initiatives, producing a range of factual reports, addressed to leaders in all walks of life.

### **About the Maranatha Community**

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*The Maranatha Community is a Christian movement founded in 1981. It has members across the world and they include Anglicans & Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Salvationists, Presbyterians & members of the United Reformed Church, members of the New & Independent Churches. 'Maranatha' is a prayer. The Community is committed to praying and working for unity, renewal and healing both in Church and Society and takes initiatives for social aid projects at home and overseas. It conducts research and provides advocacy on many issues of injustice. It has initiated many community and international projects. It is a servant ministry for the Church and is deeply involved in leadership training.*

January 2015

# We now face a social, economic, moral and spiritual crisis.

A sickness has penetrated the heart of our national life. It is most clearly evident in the desperate plight of many children and young people. Escalating numbers suffer mental ill-health, hundreds of thousands of 16-24 year olds are without employment, education, training, purpose or hope. Increasing numbers of children are being 'looked after' by local authorities as tens of thousands experience the trauma of family breakdown.

In our national life we have seen the exposure of gross misbehaviour and deliberate mis-selling by banks, phone hacking by the Press, falsified MPs expenses, NHS scandals, police corruption, the neglect of the elderly and abhorrent child abuse outrages. The normalisation of pornography, the sexualising of our children, increasing promiscuity and infidelity in relationships are all symptomatic of a sick society. Sadly, and significantly, the Church has not been exempt from this sickness.

Poverty is re-emerging with an ever-growing gap between the rich and the poor and many are now living with significant insecurity. A chasm has appeared between those in positions of power and the general population, causing a dangerous drift towards cynicism, disconnection and despair. As politicians begin to admit that the years ahead will bring further drastic economic and social changes, **who is there to turn to for answers?**

# A Dangerous Situation

As a nation we are far less secure financially, politically and socially than is generally supposed. The 2008 banking crisis brought us to the very edge of a precipice and our economy remains extremely vulnerable to the vagaries of the international financial system. Trust between banks and their customers has been destroyed. There is grave uncertainty in the world economy and unexpected events, whether domestic, foreign or both have the capacity to rock our finely balanced and fragile economy into collapse.

As life and the structure and needs of society have become more complex, legislation has become increasingly complicated and confusing and government more remote. As a result, the processes of our democratic society have become grossly inefficient and wasteful.

The encouragement of a 'have now, pay later' attitude, with grossly irresponsible lending and borrowing over decades, together with poor stewardship of our national resources, means that we have accumulated a huge national debt. The burden of this debt will cripple future generations and has been aptly described as 'intergenerational theft'. The levels of borrowing and indebtedness to which we have become accustomed are unsustainable.

Our insecurity is not only economic. Increasing family breakdown is indicative of the weakening of a basic commitment and fidelity in relationships. The deliberate and remorseless undermining of the marriage-based family – the basic building block of a civilised society – brings instability to the affected children, family members, local communities and society as a whole.

For centuries, Britain has brought bedrock stability, not only to its own citizens, but to nations across the world. Historically it is recognised that this has been due to the Judaeo-Christian foundations of our national governance and the structure of our society. The aggressive imposition of a secular humanist agenda across our national institutions, with the targeted undermining of Judaeo-Christian principles and practices, has produced a spiritual vacuum with nothing to fill it. When foundations are destroyed, structures collapse.

Are we prepared to face up to the seriousness of our sickness? The only hope is to diagnose and treat our underlying condition rather than simply trying to alleviate the symptoms. Adjusting the dials of the life-support machine will not help. On what will the Britain of the future be built?

## When foundations are destroyed, structures collapse.

### **A steadily rising national debt**

UK national debt surpasses £1.47 trillion and is growing at the rate of £5,170 per second. This equates to £21,377 of debt per citizen and £36,769 of debt per taxpayer. (*nationaldebtclock.co.uk as at 2 January 2015*)

### **Crippling personal debt**

Total personal debt in Britain has reached £1.43 trillion, almost as high as the country's national economic output. Excluding mortgages, the average household debt in the UK is £7,975. (*Centre for Social Justice, November 2013*)

### **The real situation**

Factoring in all unfunded liabilities, real national debt is £6 trillion. This is four times our GDP and amounts to £400,000 per average family (*Terry Maher 2015*)

### **Rising cost of family breakdown**

The cost of family breakdown has risen to £46 billion last year, an increase from £30 billion in 2000. (*The Relationships Foundation 2014*) This amounts to over £1,500 per year per current tax-payer.

### **Children in desperate need**

£1 billion/year is spent on just under 5,000 children cared for in children's homes, averaging £200,000 per child (Report from the APPG Joint Inquiry into Children who go Missing from Care, June 2012)

# Human Unhappiness

Unprecedented levels of unhappiness, stress and hopelessness are widespread, particularly in young people. This is apparent in emotional and behavioural disturbance and in a wide variety of sicknesses of body, mind and spirit.

Over the past half century we have allowed our society to be re-shaped by both libertarian and secular humanist influences. The right of individual adults to see, do and have what they want has taken precedence over our corporate responsibility to nurture and protect children in a healthy, secure and stable environment. At the same time, the denial of the spiritual dimension of life has devalued the unique preciousness of individual human beings and interpersonal relationships.

The extent of the devaluation of human life is evidenced in the increased number of women having multiple abortions, the encouragement of promiscuity amongst young people, the grim reality of modern-day slavery and the persistent drive to legalise euthanasia.

Having banished God from our national conscience, thinking and living, we have seen the emergence of an individualistic, acquisitive and self-centred culture, motivated by a materialistic desire for self-gratification.

This has affected all aspects of life, ranging from patterns

of spending as opposed to saving, increasing demands for faster services, the experiential highs of so-called 'recreational' drug use to the scorning of preserving sexual relations for marriage. Human relationships have become disposable and a consumerist-driven, hedonistic mentality favours short term pleasure over sacrifice for the sake of long term value.

There is an image-driven, celebrity-focused lifestyle, in which character has been made secondary to an obsession with appearance, triviality and gossip, which leads many to a destructive dissatisfaction with themselves and their lives. Escape and comfort is all too often sought through the use of alcohol, drugs, sex, food and even forms of self-harm, all of which rapidly become addictive. For the young, with the help of Internet sites, suicide has become an alarmingly popular option.

In a society that is materially rich, many are now asking "What has gone wrong?" The truth is that personal happiness and contentment will never be found in material things or in techniques purporting to bring peace, nor in the rat race for wealth. We need to rediscover the spiritual dimension of life and that health and wholeness are rooted in living in right relationships with ourselves, others and ultimately God who made us.

## **Serious neglect of children**

One in 10 children are severely neglected in childhood (*NSPCC, 2012*)

## **Hospitals flooded with alcoholics**

There were almost 1 million alcohol-related violent crimes and 1.2 million alcohol-related hospital admissions in 2010/11 (*The Government's Alcohol Strategy, HM Government, March 2012*)

## **The lost children**

Hundreds of children trafficked into the UK disappear from care every year, many within 48 hours and often before being registered with children's services. Over 60% of these children are never found again. (*Report from the All-party Parliamentary Group Joint Inquiry into Children who go Missing from Care, June 2012*)

## **Crime generated by substance abuse by the young**

The immediate cost of crime committed by young people misusing drugs and alcohol is just under £100m per year. (*Department for Education, Feb 2011*)

## **Children wrestle with suicide**

14,863 children contacted ChildLine in 2012/13 about suicide, up from 12,260 in 2011/12 (*ChildLine, 8 January 2014*)

There is an immediate need to take stock of what is happening to the fabric of our society and to recognise the nature of the crisis which is upon us.

Having embraced the lie that belief in God is a matter of personal, private preference we, and especially those of the younger generations, are now facing fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of life itself.

The roots of the dismissal of God can be found in the teaching of key thinkers: Feuerbach declared God to be an invention, Marx branded belief in Him to be an opiate, Freud rejected Him as an illusion and Nietzsche, who inspired Hitler, proclaimed Him to be dead.

The miserable message of Jean Paul Sartre has permeated contemporary culture: *“Every existing thing is born without reason, prolongs itself out of weakness and dies by chance”*. Similarly, a sense of nihilism, anarchy and lawlessness is reflected in Albert Camus’ statement: *“I believe in nothing and that everything is absurd”*. Like Somerset Maugham, many have come to the conclusion: *“There is no reason for life and life has no meaning”*.

Educationalists have propagated the postmodernist rejection of absolutes in favour of relativism in which nothing is inherently right or wrong, true or false, good or evil.

Fundamentally conflicting views are regarded as equally valid; doubt is presented as superior to belief and agnosticism as preferable to conviction.

The secular humanist assertion that we have come from nowhere and are going nowhere inevitably leads to a state of being lost or, as the Beatles prophetically sang, becoming a “Nowhere Man”.

Commentator Clifford Longley observes, of western civilisation, *“Having constructed a society of unprecedented sophistication, convenience and prosperity, no-one can remember what it was for”* and Pope John Paul II warned, *“A culture that no longer has a point of reference in God loses its soul and loses its way, becoming a culture of death”*.

Because we are essentially spiritual beings, this climate has generated a search for a spiritual dimension of life and healing, with many exploring New Age practices and techniques. At the same time as Christians are being sacked for holding to their principles in the workplace, the NHS and government are funding hundreds of Buddhist Mindfulness courses and so-called Reiki healing.

As individuals, and as a nation, we have taken for granted the inheritance of our past and have allowed ourselves to be robbed of our unique purpose and destiny. Having abandoned our moral compass and anchor, we have settled into an amoral, comfort-orientated lifestyle, and have drifted into danger. It is time to wake up and decide what kind of future we will give to our children.

## It is time to wake up.

### **Rising poverty**

Around 5 million people are paid below the living wage. The level of benefits for an out-of-work adult without children now covers only 40% of what the public considers to be a minimum standard of living. For families with children, this figure is now more than 60% (*Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2013, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, published 8 December 2013*)

### **Introducing children to money-lending rackets**

In 2012, children aged 4 to 15 saw 596 million payday loan TV adverts, up from 466 million in 2011 and 3 million in 2008. (*Ofcom 10 December, 2013*)

### **The disillusioned young**

37% of young people not in education, employment or training rarely leave the house, 40% feel they are ‘not part of society’, 33% have suffered depression and 15% have a mental health condition (*NEETS Survey, UCU/Comres, 16 July 2013*)

### **The anxious young**

Young people have higher levels of anxiety, depression, and behaviour problems than they did 30 years ago. (*Nuffield Foundation 2012*)

# What is our Vision?

There is an ancient Biblical proverb handed down through countless generations which says, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish*” (Proverbs 29.18)

For centuries, the core life and mission of the British nation was defined by the Biblical vision of God’s Kingdom, with the starting point of the unique dignity and worth of each human being. The very basis of democracy, freedom, the rule of law and basic human rights were, and remain, rooted in Biblical principles and teaching. This motivation led to the establishment of health and welfare services, philanthropy and charitable bodies, including the building of hospitals, orphanages, schools, universities and hospices, not just in Britain but across the world.

A vision that is outward-looking, working for the common good, over and above personal gain, giving particular care to the weak, the disadvantaged, the vulnerable and those suffering, is in itself rewarding and life-giving. Our national unhappiness is the result of the dissatisfaction that comes from introspective self-centredness, where the joy of giving to others is superseded by concern for self, which in turn leads to the atrophy of the soul and ultimately death.

The change in our personal and national outlook has not happened by chance. It is the result of a deliberate and aggressive assault on religious belief and practice and especially the Christian Church, its faith, teaching and work in this nation.

Christian beliefs and values are frequently and repeatedly mocked publicly, Sunday is no longer respected as a

special day of rest and worship and there is growing discrimination against individual Christians who seek to live according to their faith, within an increasingly antagonist and intolerant culture.

There has been a fervent promotion of secular humanist ideas over recent decades in the media, commerce, education and politics, which has sought to undermine the time-tested rock of the Judaeo-Christian foundation of our nation, replacing it with an ideology that amounts to shifting sand.

There is no such thing as spiritual neutrality. When the spiritual dimension of life and the morality that goes with it are abandoned, we are left with either political correctness - the product of secular humanism - with all its intolerance and coldness, or an alternative belief system.

When we look at the evidence of the rapid decline in so many aspects of our national life over the last 50 years, we must surely conclude that the secular humanist experiment has been a costly failure.

There is a window of opportunity in which we can make a decision to change the direction of our national life. There is a need for a new kind of moral and spiritual leadership, which will not be found through the manipulation of a political manifesto but only through the decision to re-orientate the heart of this nation. It is time to consciously choose life and health and to turn away from those poisonous influences which bring death and destruction.

## **Children need both parents**

81% of people think it is important for children to grow up living with both parents (Centre for Social Justice Nov 2012)

## **Children reared by lone parents**

There were nearly 1.9 million lone parents with dependent children in the UK in 2013 (Office for National Statistics Oct 2013)

## **Children involved in crime**

In total more than 34,600 youngsters between 10 (the age of criminal responsibility) and 17 were convicted of a crime in 2013. Nearly 5,000 children aged 16 & 17 convicted that year had more than five previous convictions each.

## **Thousands of sex attacks on children**

18,915 sexual crimes against children under 16 years were recorded in England and Wales in 2012/13, equating to 35% of all sexual crimes (Office for National Statistics, 2013)

## **Thousands of women assaulted**

In 2012, around 1.2 million women suffered domestic abuse, over 400,000 women were sexually assaulted, 70,000 women were raped and thousands more were stalked (Home Office, 10 February, 2014).

# What Future for our Children?

The younger generations in Britain are the victims of the secular humanist experiment of the last five decades. They have been deprived of a clear framework of reference on which to grow and develop their potential, having been advised, through our education system, that they should invent their own values for life.

Bombarded by the ever-increasing opportunities of the communications revolution, with the immediate availability of limitless competing ideas and images, they are vulnerable to information overload and confusion. This 'other' world of Internet and Social Media has also contributed to the chasm of separation between generations. Alongside an increase in family breakdown, so that now a young person has only a 50% chance of living with both parents by the time they reach 16 years, many young people are crying out for someone permanent in their lives, who will tell them truthfully what is right and what is wrong. In addition, parents have been made to feel inadequate and have been disempowered as the primary educators of their children.

Immense damage has been done by the promotion of violence, promiscuity and pornography. Driven by ruthless commercial interests, deep wounds have been inflicted on a civilised society and especially our children, distorting and corrupting their experience of relationships and diminishing their dignity and identity.

The young have been taught that sexual intercourse is a recreational activity, rather than an act of union and commitment with the potential for creating new life.

They have been sold the lie that condoms, made freely available in schools, will protect them; the result is that it is now normal for children to have sex with children, for children to bear children, even for children to have abortions without their parents' knowledge. They are also the victims of an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, some of which are incurable and some possibly affecting their ability to have children. They have been robbed of their innocence and of the protection of modesty and sexual morality.

In recent years, it has come to light that even some within the Church have lost sight of its teaching and responsibility to protect the young, the weak and the vulnerable; for this we must repent and seek forgiveness.

Despite all this, it is in the younger generations that there is real hope for the future of our nation. Their creativity and energy, together with their technological skills, channeled into healthy exploration, with guidance in the realm of relationships, give opportunities for a new beginning.

The young are sensitive to injustice and hypocrisy. They are brimming with idealism and impatient for change. But for a politically disengaged generation the value of their contribution cannot be assumed or harnessed without first restoring their hope, trust and confidence in authority structures and the political process, which must be directed towards the common good. It is incumbent upon the older generations to ask how they can serve and build up the younger generations born into our broken society.

## **Breakdown of relationships robs children of parents**

Family breakdown has doubled over the past 30 years and one million fathers now do not live with their children. (*Hansard 14 January 2013*)

## **Children in care**

At the 31st March 2014 there were 68,840 'looked after' children in the UK - an increase of 7% since 31st March 2010 (*Department for Education 30 September 2014*)

## **The new child culture of texting and 'sexting'**

Children aged 12-15 send 255 text messages in a typical week (*Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report, OFCOM, published 3 October 2013*). Up to 40% of children have been involved in "sexting" (NSPCC, 2012)

## **Thousands of truants**

333,850 schoolchildren enrolled at state-funded schools were classed as persistent absentees in 2011/12. Of these, 212,495 attended secondary schools (*Department for Education 19 March 2013*)

## **An epidemic of sexually-transmitted disease among the young**

Young adults (aged 16-24) account for more than half of STI diagnoses, despite making up only 12% of the population (*Public Health England, November 2012*)



In the timeless Biblical book of Proverbs we read, “*Righteousness exalts a nation*” (Proverbs 14.34). Righteousness means ‘right relationships’. Christian teaching promotes right relationships with others, ourselves, our environment and supremely with God. Each of these spheres of relationship has a fundamental bearing on the government of a nation. It is time to put right the relationships in our personal and national lives. Healthy relationships produce healthy families, healthy children, healthy communities and a healthy society, marked by stability, peace and prosperity for all.

There is need to put right the relationship between politicians and their constituents; to put a right accountability into the relationship between those governing the economic systems and the ordinary people they serve; to affirm and strengthen relationships between the older and younger generations; to use every possible means to strengthen marriages and family relationships; to promote a right attitude of responsibility in every individual for their personal health and wellbeing.

The exhortations of the Bible, with the evidence of human history, make it clear that there are consequences to the rejection of God and His ways. In dismissing God from our culture we have effectively sabotaged the social cohesion through which God protects and heals communities.

The vast majority of British people, including those with roots from overseas and of different religions, want to see a return of the caring, sharing, generous and loving society which has been an important characteristic of our national identity. Love is at the heart of the life and message of Jesus Christ.

Judaeo-Christian teaching and practice is the only belief system which embraces those who follow other religions and traditions or none as equals in worth and dignity. It is because of this that Britain has been known as a tolerant, free and fair society, where many have sought a safe haven.

We cannot and must not remain silent in the face of human need and suffering. Eli Wiesel warned, “*The greatest evil in the world is not anger or hatred, but indifference*”. The most fruitful way forward in our current situation is to firstly face up to the truth of what is happening; this is not in order to point the finger of criticism and judgment but rather, to weep with sorrow for the wrong choices we have made and for those who suffer as a result. In the words of Tony Campolo: “*Christianity... is a call to have one’s heart broken by the things that break the heart of Jesus*”.

The crisis we now face is not primarily economic, political or social - it is spiritual. We are literally seeing a struggle for the soul of our nation. It is a matter of life or death for Britain as we know it and it calls for a clear choice for the future.

### **Most teens use Facebook**

62% of all 12-15s have a Facebook profile and 24% have a profile on Twitter (OFCOM 3 October 2013)

### **Thousands of registered sex offenders**

At the end of March 2013, 43,664 registered sex offenders were being monitored in the community (*Ministry of Justice, published 31 October, 2013*)

### **The suffering of abused children**

Around 190,000 of UK children who suffer contact sexual abuse at some point during childhood will fall victim to contact sexual abuse by a stranger or an adult relative (other than a parent or guardian) before turning 18. This represents an average of more than 10,000 new victims in the UK every year (*Threat Assessment of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, June 2013*)

### **Thousands of web pages featuring child abuse**

9,550 webpages investigated by the Internet Watch Federation in 2012 included images of child sexual abuse. 81% involved child victims aged 10 or under. 53% depicted sexual activity between adults and children including rape and torture (*Operational Trends 2012, IWF, accessed 13 February 2014*)

Across the UK exciting initiatives are demonstrating that damaged and broken lives can be turned around by the discovery that God has a unique purpose for every individual and that this can be attained through a real, living relationship with Jesus Christ.

Young offenders are experiencing the satisfaction of giving to others, rather than being motivated by taking, and are learning that they are of value and worth to society; young people who have grown up in the 'care' system, traumatised by abuse or neglect, are finding that they can achieve academic qualifications and be set free from the enslavement of drugs and prostitution. Thousands of lives have been transformed by the love, care and practical teaching of Christian churches, organisations and ministries.

The transformation of our nation starts with the transformation of individual people, with new attitudes and fresh expressions of life with all its potential. This is the radical change that is needed across the nation.

This is the way in which the young can bring inspiration and hope. The evidence of their transformed lives are like seeds of hope which can be scattered and watered throughout the nation.

A huge amount of direct action to help those in urgent need is being carried out week by week by vast numbers of committed Christians and church groups, largely unpaid. They are bringing hope to the hopeless through a wide variety of projects. For example they are assisting with numeracy, literacy, workplace skills, making young people employable, combating addictions, providing care and support for the lonely, vulnerable and elderly, debt relief, family counselling, feeding the hungry, helping the homeless and much, much more.

There is hope. The course of our nation can be changed. It only requires a decision, followed by the first step of taking action. *"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing"*. (Edmund Burke)

## **Voluntary Services to local communities**

A quarter of regular churchgoers (among both Anglicans and other Christians separately) are involved in voluntary community service outside the church. Churchgoers overall contribute 23.2 million hours voluntary service each month in their local communities outside church activities. (*Church of England statistics 2009/10*)

## **Feeding the hungry**

In 2013-14 foodbanks fed 913,138 people nationwide. Of those helped, 330,205 were children. In the first six months of the following year (April-September 2014) almost 500,000 people were fed. (*Trussell Trust*)

## **Helping families out of debt**

Over 2,500 families (5,750 adults and children) became debt free in 2014. (*Christians Against Poverty 31.12.14*) 96% of those who become debt free stay debt free long term (up to 6 years). (*Christians Against Poverty 4.12.12*)

## **Giving transformed young offenders a future**

Over the past 32 months 29 young ex-offenders have engaged in Christian rehabilitation. Of these, 9% have reoffended (national average 80%); 70% are now in full time employment. (*The Message Trust*)

## **Getting young people back on course**

96% of young people who attend a TLG Education Centre will go back into mainstream school, further training or onto employment. (*TLG The Education Charity*)

## **Volunteers making a difference**

The charity Christians Against Poverty run 270 debt centres nationwide, helping 27,500 people each year. (*capuk.org*)

## **Voluntary youth work**

One charity contributes over 20,000 hours of youth work, though over 300 separate activities per year. This brings 100,000 young people into contact with staff and volunteers through classroom and community activities, after-school clubs, gigs and work in prisons and young offenders institutions. (*The Message Trust*)

# There is HOPE

There is absolutely no situation or person so damaged that cannot be brought to wholeness and freedom.

*"I place before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life so that you and your children will live..."*

(Deuteronomy 30.19)

# The CHOICE is ours

*"The culture in which we find ourselves is in turmoil...the West is engaged in a momentous battle, one in which it is risking its very soul"* (Ravi Zacharias). If we recognise the seriousness of our situation and are prepared to act, it can be changed.

Britain, despite its size, has demonstrated leadership across the world. This national calling remains, but will only be fulfilled in the measure that we, as a nation, are secure and rooted in our national identity and confirm our foundational values. History and the key attributes that define British culture confirm that our foundations and identity are solidly based in Judaeo-Christian belief, teaching and practice. To continue to forsake this will result in the collapse and demise of Britain as we know it. However, a reaffirmation of our foundations and identity will bring restoration and new life. Jesus says, *"The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"*.

**If you share the concerns expressed in this document, you can make a difference. As a first step, visit [www.lifedeath.org](http://www.lifedeath.org) to show your support, learn from others and share your ideas. Let us choose life, not death. Together we can bring about a change. Together we can bring hope and life to our nation. If you agree with us, are you prepared to join with us and others now?**

**“Let gratitude for the past  
inspire us for the future”**

François Fénelon

History tells us there is no doubt Britain's legacy has been global. That inheritance includes implanting Judaeo-Christian values and moral standards, rooted in the Bible, across the world. The Christian imprint left on so many countries includes democracy, education and healthcare systems and social development.

Britain has always been a tolerant country, welcoming people from other lands and of other faiths. In recent years, however, many from abroad, grateful for their Christian heritage, have been astounded by the moral, financial and societal decay they have encountered in modern Britain. Indeed, some have told the Maranatha Community they have been moved to tears by what they have seen.

The fabric of our national life has undoubtedly been impoverished and the nation beset with wrong and broken relationships. Righteousness means right relationships. *Righteousness exalts a nation* (Proverbs 14.34).

Having once established laws and institutions to defend the rights of children and to promote their education and welfare, our society now struggles to cope with the consequences of their despair, disenchantment and desperation. From the horror of child abuse to bequeathing overwhelming debts and a moral and spiritual vacuum: this is the inheritance we are now passing on.

In spite of the bad news, good things are happening.

There is a better way.

There is hope.

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