

## **REPORT: Dr Clifford's Police Interview (18.3.17)**

Dear friends,

Following a complaint by Norwich City Council, I was interviewed at Bethel Street Police Station, Norwich on the morning of Saturday 18 March 2017. The interviewing officer was PC Matt Taylor. For around 45 minutes, the officer conducted himself in a professional and courteous manner.

The complaint concerned the following e-mail, sent originally to a list of around 300 recipients (including three members of Norwich City Council who banned Norwich Reformed Church from its hired council-owned worship and outreach venues five years ago over my leaflet 'Why NOT Islam').

As the preamble makes clear, the occasion of the e-mail was the Epiphany service at Glasgow Cathedral when, on being invited to read a passage from the Qur'an, a Muslim guest chose verses which blasphemed the Lord Jesus Christ. I considered my 'Christ NOT Muhammad' text (the second part of the above leaflet) an appropriate response to this shocking event.

### **THE INTERVIEW**

After cautioning me, PC Taylor stated the legal basis of the investigation:

Section 29B of the Public Order Act 1986 makes it an offence for a person to use threatening words or behaviour, or display any written material which is threatening, with the intention to stir up religious hatred.

The interview covered issues arising from the purpose, structure and possible consequences of 'Christ NOT Muhammad'. I defended myself against accusations of 'hatred'. Only if criticism is defined as hatred am I open to the charge. Believing that Islam is a false and dangerous religion, I consider it my duty as a Christian pastor to say so. The intention of my text is certainly not to 'stir up religious hatred' but accurately to inform and warn the reader in these confusing times. If other people had used it as an excuse to attack Muslims (which hasn't happened to date), I would rebuke them for abusing it. Over the centuries, so-called Christians have abused Christian teaching for their own ends. That is no reason to suppress the teaching. Guilt is in the abuse not a proper use of the original source. So I intend to continue distributing my leaflet both to clarify genuine Christianity and to warn against the dangers of Islam. As a Christian I am to love Muslims that they might be saved. However, no stretch of the imagination permits me to love dark and cruel Islam. While I have no political agenda, I consider it my duty to warn against the growing Muslim menace in Europe, the UK, North America and elsewhere.

I insisted that my leaflet is consistent with the right of freedom of speech and is within the law, to which I made reference as follows:

The ECtHR, in *Handyside v UK* (1976), made it clear that freedom of expression embraces not only information and ideas that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive, but also, '... those that

offend, shock or disturb the state or any sector of the population. Such are the demands of that pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness without which there is no democratic society’.

Lord Justice Sedley, in *Redmond Bate v DPP* (2000), famously said that, ‘Free speech includes not only the inoffensive, but the irritating, the contentious, the eccentric, the heretical, the unwelcome and provocative provided that it does not tend to violence. Freedom only to speak inoffensively is not worth having’.

The Government has accepted that Section 5 of the Public Order Act should be amended by the removal of the word ‘insulting’ from its provisions. This was in response to a Lords’ amendment following a number of cases where police officers had misused the legislation to arrest ordinary members of the public for exercising their right of free speech. It will no longer be an offence for a person to use insulting words or behaviour within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress.

PC Taylor was satisfied with my answers. While he could not speak for his superior officers, as far as he was concerned there was no case to answer. In short ‘NFA’ (no further action). However, it remains to be seen whether that’s the end of the episode. Charges might yet be made and the case referred to the CPS. I am to be informed of the outcome in due course.

The entire interview being recorded, I was given an ‘old-tech’ cassette copy. Once the technical matters have been resolved, I hope to make a digital recording available to those wishing for more information.

### **CONCLUSION**

I wish to express warm gratitude for the supportive e-mails and ‘phone messages received. I am able to testify to God’s help and presence in this matter. Before leaving home, I read Psalm 46 “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (v. 1), I was thus well-prepared for any eventuality.

### **REFLECTION**

As one e-mailer rightly said: “Such doubtless trumped-up charges of “hate crime” – that catch-all phrase that Leftists use when they are angry about the truth and don’t know how else to express themselves.”

Indeed, if ‘criticism’ is to be defined as ‘hatred’, then is not Norwich City Council guilty of a ‘hate crime’? Instead of running to the Police, why didn’t they attempt to present a rational critique of my views?

I would only add that atheistic hostility to my Christian convictions is at the root of Norwich City Council’s complaint. One is reminded of the words of Professor Stephen Hawking of Cambridge University (an atheist): “Christianity is a fairy story for those afraid of the dark.” However, retired Oxford Professor John Lennox (a Christian), rightly replied: “Atheism is a fairy story for those afraid of the Light.”

Dr Alan C. Clifford

PS: for an earlier video version of the offending text, click on the following links:

ISLAM Part 1: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_WD-A20H0I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_WD-A20H0I)

ISLAM Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Hj7sbU792Q>

## **Exhibit A: the offending e-mail**

From: Alan Clifford

Sent: Saturday, January 28, 2017 10:24 PM

To: various (including Norwich City Council)

Subject: **CRISIS IN THE WEST - Muhammad, Marx, Mary or the Messiah?**

The following message endorses the faithful courage of the recently-resigned royal chaplain, the Revd Dr Gavin Ashenden, who rightly protested against the outrageous blasphemy at Glasgow Cathedral. Indeed, if anyone should resign besides the guilty Scottish Episcopal clergy and their Anglican sympathizers, it ought to be Her Majesty the Queen as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, whose duty was to support her faithful chaplain.

Believing that (under the sovereign providence of Almighty God), bad men sometimes do good things, I also endorse some aspects of President Donald Trump's policy to protect the world from the Muslim menace. While the pernicious liberalism of the West is more concerned about the 'water boarding' of jihadist butchers than the beheading of Christians, it is further outrageous for Prime Minister Theresa May to be making arms deals with Islamic Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

From an authentic Christian (Protestant not Roman Catholic) perspective, there are enough problems with the West's aggressive secular, hedonistic and anti-Christian Marxist agenda without having to deal with Islam's blasphemous, barbaric and backward ideology. Christians need to be clear, forthright and uncompromising in their Faith. The following message is a clear, brief and simple attempt to explode the claims of Islam to possess any integrity at all. It highlights what may be regarded as the core of 'British Christian values'. May God have mercy upon us!

Dr Alan C. Clifford

# CHRIST NOT MUHAMMAD

With a continuing and growing assault on our Christian heritage, never was there a greater need to get to grips with the truth of the Bible text: “No man ever spoke like this man” (John 7: 46). This was the response of amazed men who heard Christ. What truths explain their astonishment?

## **1. NO MAN EVER SPOKE LIKE JESUS CHRIST**

And why? He was no ordinary man. He was perfect and sinless. He is the ‘God-man’ (Matthew 1: 23); ‘God manifest in the flesh’ (1 Timothy 3: 16); the Eternal ‘Word made flesh’ (John 1: 14), ever to be worshipped in the unity of the Triune God, Father Son and Holy Spirit.

Thus, He spoke words of truth, purity, love, kindness and compassion. He spoke with divine unction, grace and authority. No one else, before or since, ever spoke like Him. He is Creator, King, and Lord of the Universe.

On the other hand, Muhammad was an ordinary man. He was imperfect and sinful. He spoke words of error, impurity, hate and cruelty.

## **2. NO MAN EVER LIVED LIKE JESUS CHRIST**

His life backed up His words. In lip and life, He was perfectly consistent. He brought blessing, healing, comfort and joy to people. His many miracles confirmed His deity.

His tender touch declared the compassion of God. He liberated women from the abusive treatment of selfish men. He rejected violence as a method of spreading His message. No life has ever been lived to match the life of Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, Muhammad's life contradicted many of his more noble sayings. His life is not a good example for ‘private character’. His claims cannot compare with Christ’s. Spreading his message by the sword, he brought violence and bloodshed to those who refused to submit to his ‘Allah’. He humiliated women. His tenderness was reserved chiefly for his own sexual indulgence, and his stomach (according to wife, A’isha).

## **3. NO MAN EVER DIED LIKE JESUS CHRIST**

While His life and preaching angered the religious establishment of His day, nothing could justify the hatred directed at Him. He was guilty of no sin. Expressing God’s mercy to us hell-deserving sinners, Jesus, Saviour of the world, died for our sins.

He died, ‘the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God’ (1 Peter 3: 18). In His agonizing crucifixion, He breathed nothing but love and

kindness to His enemies. Such dying! Such love!

On the other hand, Muhammad died, burdened by his own guilt. Sadly and tragically, his death did not terminate his cruel conquests. Others perpetuated his vicious legacy. They still are.

**4. NO MAN EVER BLESSED  
THE HUMAN RACE  
LIKE JESUS CHRIST**

His impact on history is not just the effect of a perpetuation of His memory. Jesus rose from the dead! He lives! The Gospel is the greatest blessing the world has ever known! It has brought forgiveness, love, joy and peace. Christ has mended broken hearts and lives. He has given hope to those in despair. Through Him, the light of heaven has dispelled the darkness of death.

He has liberated individuals and nations. The Gospel has delivered people from ignorance, slavery, poverty and degradation. All that is truly good, noble, pure and beautiful comes from Him (even if apostate believers - Roman Catholics and deity-denying Protestant Liberals - have corrupted His truth). Christ's resurrection influence continues still where He is accepted, trusted and served.

On the other hand, Muhammad died, to rise no more, except to be judged by Christ when He returns. His tomb is not empty. His legacy is ignorance, cruelty, fear and oppression. The continued influence of his teachings is a threat to all that Christ represents.

In conclusion, the case for Christ and against Muhammad is compelling in every respect. Assessed by every test that may be devised, there is simply no competition. So let us all respond as did the men in our text! May we all acknowledge, believe, trust, love and surrender to the incomparable Christ. May we all rejoice in Him, and seek to make Him known throughout the world.

I am well aware that many in the secular West desire Christ no more than they desire Muhammad. Therefore, I must warn them. Even if they never suffer from some jihadic atrocity, they will stand before the judgement seat of Christ, when He returns to judge the world in righteousness (see 2 Corinthians 5: 10).

While opportunity remains, come to Christ! If you are a Muslim, renounce Muhammad, and come to Christ! Then, everything I have tried to express will become wonderfully and experientially true. For my part, I will never serve the Islam-sympathizing Pope or Muhammad. I serve only our Lord Jesus Christ.

I invite you all to trust and serve Him with me. Amen!

Dr Alan C. Clifford

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