

234 On the front line

We reflect this time, with Bible in hand and seeking as always the guidance of the Holy Spirit, upon three further events that have come upon us in this past week, each differing in scale, but each highly significant in its way.

First is the horrific fire at Grenfell Tower in London. Pictures of the fire itself, and now of the awful blackened tower block, have gone around the world, and these, coming on top of the political and economic uncertainties arising from “Brexit” and the General Election, seem to symbolise the current deep crisis enveloping this country. The pictures evoke vivid memories of the World Trade Centre attacks in New York in September 2001, and they stand in awful rebuke against the boastful, “just look at us!” Shard building a few miles away. In the midst of the now all-too-familiar media extravaganza, we note how the game of Pass the Parcel, with the parcel labelled “BLAME”, is now gathering pace. “Lord, have mercy” is our heartfelt prayer for all involved in the fire and its aftermath.

Next we hear the foul tide of vitriol flowing against the Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland, the “DUP”, whose 10 MPs are due to support the Conservative Government. Loud and constant have been the shrieks of horror from “the liberal elite” against a party which could hold such “outrageous” social views. So, headed up by the BBC, we have a steady diet of, “Fancy these DUP dinosaurs holding to a “traditional” view of marriage! And as for their anti-abortion views!”. We must thank the Lord for the DUP politicians taking their stand for biblical truth – they are made out to be dangerous freaks when they are nothing of the sort - and pray for His protection upon them, for clearly the enemy detests them and wants them gone.

An interesting participant in this criticism of the DUP is Ruth Davidson, the popular leader of the Scottish Conservatives, a Christian we are told, who is in a homosexual partnership herself. This lady has been insistent that “LGBT interests” and “women’s rights” (a euphemism in this case for abortion-on-demand) – interests and rights still wickedly suppressed in Northern Ireland in her opinion – must not be put at risk in any deal with the DUP.

Thirdly we come to the resignation from the leadership of the Liberal Democrat Party of Tim Farron, a committed Christian. He explained he was stepping down from leading the party he loves for two reasons: first, because of the endless, sniggery questions from media people about his Christian faith; and second, because of the incompatibility he found between his Christian faith on the one hand and the values of the Liberal Democrat party on the other - that is quite an admission for the rest of us to take in. While it has to be said that Tim Farron’s Christian faith was hard to detect during and after the election campaign, (we are reminded of poor Peter denying His Lord (Matthew 26.69-75, and parallels), after much struggle he has now put the Lord first – a brave and costly decision. He too needs our prayers for, with his fellow-Christians at Westminster, on the path ahead he will be no stranger to “the

way of the cross” (eg., Mark 8.34-38 / I Corinthians 1.17-24 / Galatians 6.12b, 14 / ...).

From the treatment meted out to Tim Farron and the DUP (and they are only the most recent examples of many more besides), we are confronted once again with the well-honed liberal juggernaut fighting hard in our society, with its watchword “progressive”, its shock troops under the LGBT banner, and its ready access to the media.

The Holy Spirit tells us through Paul, “For though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ...” (2 Cor 10 3-5, KJV).

So despite the fierce battles raging we can be of good cheer as we serve the Lord on the front line, for these times are really only “business as usual”, with Satan and his cronies waging their long war against the living God and His Christ-redeemed people.

We pray, earnestly. We applaud and uphold Right and we expose and protest against Wrong, (preferably by letter - the extra effort is worth it). We proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, the only Lord, setting forth with courtesy and clarity the “many infallible proofs” underlying this wonderful truth (Acts 1.3).

Our brother Paul spoke, “I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the words of truth and soberness” (Acts 26.25). Nor are we mad, as we speak forth those same words – words of truth and soberness.

Psalm 34.1-3.

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