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Are Christians Extremists?

Even this month (May 2019) a politician has said that Christians can be extremists. This is in direct contrast to the major surveys of a number of Western countries (UK included) that clearly shows that it is NOT Christian extremists that people worry about at all, indeed Christians are seen as peaceful people.

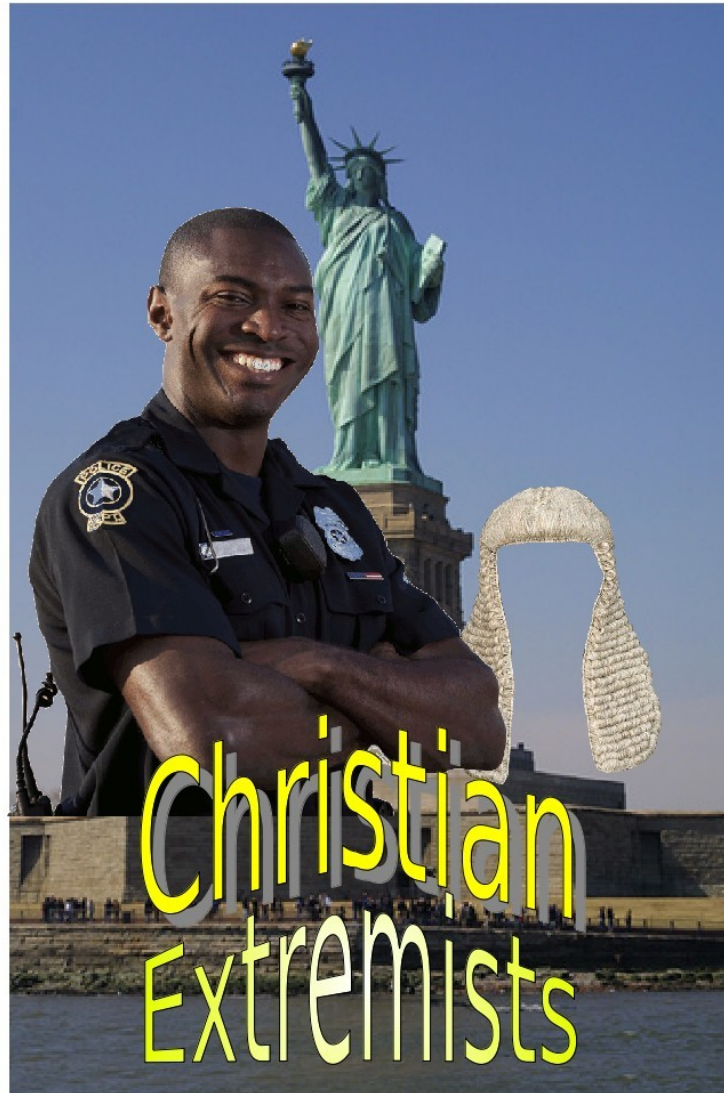
Now even in June 2019 Mats Löfving, head of the National Operational Department (NOA) in Sweden, responded to a question on whether or not Islamic extremism was specifically an issue in the “vulnerable areas” that are often referred to as no-go areas.

In response Löfving suggested that the problem was not with Islamic extremism in particular but with extremists of all religions. When asked if that included Christians, Buddhists, and others, Löfving said: “Yes exactly. Together with the security police, we see that different forms of recruitment, different forms of bringing young people towards extremist views are stronger in vulnerable areas than generally in society.” So Mats Löfving said this was the view of the Police in Sweden.

This claim was then asked of the Swedish Police themselves, and a Police spokesperson on 12th June, Katarina Friskman replied saying: “There is no direct Christian extremism to speak of.”

It is not typically a British characteristic to be an extremist at all. However, let us consider the Christian position.

In the book of Exodus we find the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill”. This is an absolute



commandment to all Christians and Jews alike which is found at Exodus chapter 20 and is in the Bible (NIV translation in modern English) stated as:

¹³ *“You shall not murder.”*

It is really as straight-forward and simple as that.

Jesus Christ not only keeps these commandments for us all he additionally adds that we should LOVE our enemies. In the Gospel of Matthew chapter 5 Jesus says to us:

“...But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

So this is going even further by saying to Christians that we are not only commanded not to murder but we are also commanded to LOVE our enemies.

Love in this case, as in most of the New Testament, means to care for them.

In Romans chapter 13 St Paul talks of the law (i.e. the Judaeo-Christian law) and says the law is summed up in this sentence,

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

However we are different as Christians and we do not agree with everything the secular world dreams up!

St Paul writes in Romans at chapter 12:

² *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

So Christians do not conform to everything secular and Christians are distinctive, but they are NOT extremist at all.

Even in the first letter of John at chapter 2 we are told:

¹⁵ *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.* ¹⁶ *For everything in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – comes not from the Father but from the world.* ¹⁷ *The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives for ever.*

The “Father” in this case is God and it emphasizes again that Christians are different to worldly values, but they are not extremists when they are commanded not to murder and to love (i.e. care for) their enemies.

As Jesus Christ says to us in the Gospel of John at chapter 15:

¹⁸ “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

So Jesus Christ directly tells Christians that they do NOT belong to the world. To be Christian is NOT to be secular or worldly when it comes to many things. Christians are different from secular societies but they are NOT extremists. Christians are commanded NOT to ever murder and to love (i.e. care for) their enemies.

So it is exactly as the Swedish Police spokesperson, Katarina Friskman said: “There is no direct Christian extremism to speak of.”

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