



Tribute to Colin Hart 1963-2024

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On 13 March, the founder and Director of The Christian Institute, Colin Hart, died unexpectedly aged 60.

Mr Hart had devoted his life to encouraging Christians to grasp that following Jesus transforms all aspects of our lives. He wanted to equip believers to live out their faith publicly as well as privately. As a result he helped shape the UK's legal, political and cultural landscape over the last 35 years.

The Supreme Court victories in the famous Ashers 'gay cake' case and over the Scottish Government's infamous 'Named Person' scheme have become embedded in the public consciousness as well as legal textbooks. But they are only two of many milestones.

These days it is taken for granted that a church can employ only youth workers and other staff who actually adhere to the Christian faith. But this is only the case because of work Colin led to oppose the overreach of equality laws.

In 2006 he helped engineer a rare Blair Government defeat over plans for a religious hatred law which could have been used to clamp down on gospel preaching. The final win, by just one vote, was an important reminder of the sovereignty of God. His unflinching trust in that sovereignty was his source of comfort for those battles which were lost. 'Win or lose', he would say, 'it's important to stand up for the truth'.

But he always placed greatest value on his role in teaching other Christians to 'think Christianly'. This priority was set out in the Institute's first 'mission statement': 'The Christian Institute exists to affirm the universal Lordship of Christ, to challenge humanism, pluralism, and other ideologies, to proclaim biblical truth as relevant to every area of life, and to equip Christians for action.' It is a priority to which, under God, the Institute remains committed today.

To find out more about the work of the Christian Institute, visit christian.org.uk.



PRAYER FOCUS

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE: A recognition of the dangers posed by a complete ban on conversion therapy and the 'no loopholes risk'; Protection of children and teenagers from sexual distortions, at least until they are old enough to understand the implications; for the Cass review to be up held; the rights of Christian parents to teach Biblical truth; the reigning in of the excesses of gambolling; For God to reign supreme over all legislation. (Romans 12:2; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

CHURCH ISSUES: MET: David Hull as he prepares to step down and Chris Briggs as he prepares to take over as chair in November; David as he moves into the new role as MET's Ambassador in the new year, reaching out to grass roots Methodism; the trustees and executive; wisdom and discernment for the future work God is calling us to. (Colossians 1:9-11; Hebrews 13:20-21).

NATIONAL ISSUES: Government: the newly elected Prime Minister, Sir Kier Starmer and all members of Parliament; the formulation of godly policies; a return of integrity and trust amongst all

politicians; courage for Christian MP's to speak out against any injustices and to stand up for Christian values; a return to our Christian roots. (Deuteronomy 28:1-2; Philippians 2:1-5).

NHS & SOCIAL CARE: Adequate funding to deal with the back log of those awaiting treatment and operations, acerbated by strikes; fair pay and working conditions for all who work in the organisation; understanding and patience on the part of the public towards doctors and nurses; better communication between the various departments - children's services, social services & mental health; care packages for the vulnerable. (2 Samuel 22: 31-33; Isaiah 40:31).

WORLD ISSUES: Persecuted church: Islamic controlled countries; dictatorships and oppressive regimes; justice and upholding of basic human rights; exposure of discrimination and inequalities; strength and resilience for those suffering; protection for church families and for their needs to be met; persecutors to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 5: 6-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5).