

Vicar calls for disestablishment

Posted: Tue, 26th Feb 2013 by [Terry Sanderson](#)

A Church of England vicar is advocating disestablishment. In a letter in the latest issue of the *Church of England Newspaper*, the Rev Paul Carr of Billericay writes:

Having reflected on the momentous decision of Parliament to pass the Bill to redefine marriage, with some despondency I might add, I have come to the conclusion that there is a much deeper, much more fundamental issue at stake: and that is the rejection, by Parliament, of a Christian lifestyle – which is symptomatic of the post-Christian society in which we live, where people give little credence to the teaching of the Bible and can't be expected to follow its teaching. If people choose to live a life that is outside of God's best for them, then we must allow them to make that choice and, following the example of the early Church, show them an alternative and vibrant way to live.

One thing that strikes me very strongly, in the midst of the intense debate and discussion, is that we can no longer, as the state Church, impose Christian morals and ethics on a Parliament who vote so favourably for something which we, as an institution, opposed.

Furthermore, I want to suggest that serious consideration should be given, once again, to the disestablishment of the Church of England so that we can be released to focus our energies on spreading the Gospel of the Good News of Jesus without the hindrances of political activism which, undoubtedly, weakens our position.

I have to admit that, for many years, I opposed disestablishment on the grounds that 'being' Anglican provided many opportunities for mission through the occasional offices and the acceptability which we enjoyed in the eyes of many in our communities. However, and unfortunately, I'm not convinced that is true today.

Like many others, I am acutely aware that the Church of England is not currently looked upon favourably by many members of our society.

The dilemma, frustration, and reality, is that our mission fields are being taken away from us because we are increasingly seen to be inconsistent and hypocritical and are known for being anti-women and anti-gay, and not known to be pro-Jesus and believe in a God of love and compassion and forgiveness and healing and wholeness, who can transform our lives through faith and trust in him in Jesus.

Terry Sanderson

Terry Sanderson was the former president of the National Secular Society. The views expressed in our blogs are those of the author and may not necessarily represent the views of the NSS.

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