



Andrews Memorial



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This issue draws attention to the likelihood that climate change concerns may be a prelude to enacting a universal Sunday Law. It also highlights the difficulties associated with LGBT issues and human rights.

COULD CLIMATE CHANGE CONCERNS USHER IN THE MARK OF THE BEAST?



Many Seventh-Day Adventists have wondered for decades just how a Universal Sunday Law – the mark of the Beast – would be enforced. It seems highly unlikely that the world - with so many different religions and the Western World with such respect for religious liberty - would force persons to worship on a Sunday. However, the world is quickly falling into a crisis that makes this more of a possibility. This crisis is called Climate Change.

In the Pope's Encyclical, he indicated the importance of tackling the issue of climate change with a Sunday day of rest:

“On Sunday, our participation in the Eucharist has special importance. **Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world.**” Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, the “first day” of the new creation, whose first fruits are the Lord’s risen humanity, the pledge of the final transfiguration of all created reality. It also proclaims “man’s eternal rest in God”. In this way, Christian spirituality incorporates the value of “relaxation and festivity.”

- **Laudato Si**, (2015) paragraph 237

Because of this link between climate change and a Sunday day of rest, it must be considered that the greater the issue of climate change becomes then the more likely that the Pope's recommendations will be implemented. Indeed, the issue of climate change is getting bigger every day, e.g. fires in the Amazon rain forest which are called the "lungs of the planet" and the impact of hurricane Dorian on the Bahamas in September 2019, causing catastrophic damage and death. Thus more and more people are awakening to this issue on a worldwide scale.

During 2019, millions of students around the world have been skipping school to participate in climate strikes on Friday March 15, May 24, September 20 and September 27, to protest what they consider is inaction by authorities on the issue of climate change. In the United States there was also a call for congress to pass the 'Green New Deal' which would implement measures to reduce carbon emissions in the air.

Already therefore the stage is being set for the Governments around the world to implement policies to counteract Climate Change. This is exactly what the Pope is calling for. He urged finance Ministers that *"Time is of the essence. We await your decisive action for the sake of all humanity," and stated that, "Today's global interdependence obliges us to think in terms of one world with a common plan."*

- Alicia Jones

Join us on **Sabbath, October 19** during AY for a discussion entitled **"Embracing Sunday - a response to Climate Change"**

POPE CHANGES THE LORD'S PRAYER

In June 2019, Pope Francis reportedly changed a phrase in the Lord's prayer indicating that *"Lead us not into temptation,"* must be a faulty translation as God does not lead people into temptation. Insisting that we are the ones who fall into temptation due to our own weakness, the new phrase reads *"Do not let us fall into temptation."*

Even if one agrees with his rationale, one would also have to ask what gives the Pope the authority to change the Lord's Prayer? This is just one in a long line of significant changes that have been perpetrated by the office of the papacy. The propensity to make such changes suggests that he truly believes himself to be in the place of the one who created the prayer.

- Alicia Jones

TRANSGENDER AND EQUAL RIGHTS

In the UK, Mr Freddy McConnell, formerly a woman, now functions as a transgender male. He is now legally a man and has had his birth certificate changed to reflect his new, legal gender. He wants to be recognized by all as a man. However, by using a sperm donor he became pregnant and gave birth in 2018. Consistent with his current image as a male he wants to be treated as the father of the child to whom he has given birth.

Freddy wants his baby's birth certificate to state that he is the child's father and not its mother but his request was denied. This denial caused him to commence proceedings in court to challenge the state's action. In the ensuing court case, Freddy's lawyer, Karen Holden, argued that, if a man has the right to change his gender on his own birth certificate, then why should he not have the right to change it on his child's? She also argued that "if you are going to move with modern times, the law has to finish the journey it has started." Her further argument was that the denial has resulted in a failure by the courts to help "this family set out its actual family structure correctly in terms of its legal status."

These cases are many times argued on the platform of equality of human beings and on human rights, and not on Christian or religious principles. When Jesus commanded all his followers, to "Go ye therefore, and teach (Christian principles to) **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" it was wise counsel from a wise God.

- Rose Cameron

Changing Values ON HOMOSEXUALITY?

Maurice Tomlinson, Jamaican attorney-at-law and gay rights activist, reportedly had to flee to Canada in 2012 after his homosexual marriage was discovered. Since then he has brought several challenges in the Jamaican courts on behalf of the LGBT community.

When he fled Jamaica, he argued that the culture here such as violent anti-gay dancehall lyrics, makes it dangerous for homosexuals. However, he did not end there in his criticism, attacking the church as well.

According to the *Daily Beast*, a liberal American opinion website, Mr. Tomlinson is reported to have said that: *"Religion is the second toxic ingredient. Most Jamaicans are religious and belong to fundamentalist Christian denominations.. These extremist groups and their Global North allies engage in aggressive vilification of same-gender relationships. They claim that homosexuals are an abomination."*

Is Mr. Tomlinson's attack on the church well founded?

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 says:

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

The same scripture then goes on to say: *"And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."*

As such the stance of the church is that homosexuality is a lifestyle of sin, just like any other sin, and that homosexuals should be reached out to in love like any other sinner in need of cleansing and sanctification.

Just this week, Tomlinson won the first round in a court battle clearing the way for the gay-rights group Montego Bay Pride to rent the Montego Bay Cultural Centre. The Mayor had recently revoked permission for the group to use the public facility. Public sentiment has been divided; with some including churches expressing support for the Mayor's actions in blocking what they say would be a desecration of the civic centre. On the other hand, there is a growing number of sympathizers who say that the public centre, which is not a sacred or religious site, is for the use of all Jamaicans, and it is a breach of constitutional rights to be denied on the basis of sexual orientation.

Should the church change its stance against homosexual lifestyle in light of changing societal values? Many think it should and many churches have already made changes allowing openly gay persons to hold prominent positions within Church leadership. Homosexuality is no longer viewed by some denominations as something that needs to be changed and healed, as to take that stance is considered as being intolerant. A group calling themselves "Seventh-Gay Adventists", has created a Facebook page, the profile picture of which features two men holding hands with the light of the cross of Christ behind them. Society may change its outlook, but the Word of God, the very pillar of Christianity, well that still remains the same.

- Alicia Jones