

# LOOK TO YOUR MORALITY, MANKIND

Christians recently celebrated Christmas. Shortly, they will be celebrating Easter - Christ's triumph over death by his resurrection on Easter Sunday. This festival changes from year to year in the calendar - from dates in March through to April. This is at variance with the fixing of an erroneous date (25th December) for his birth. Why should one be a variable/movable feast, the other a fixed event, especially in view of the fact that Christ's actual birth was some time in March? (Scholars will argue as to the exact date.) The answer is, when Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire (see below), it presented him and the Church leaders with a problem .... how to overcome the attachment of the Romans to the hugely popular Winter Solstice Festival on 24/25th December which, by marking the end of the decline in daylight hours, gave hope to the people - a forthcoming springtime ... a new beginning.

As a member of the cult of Southern Vectis, Constantine was aware of the importance to his peoples of this feature in the calendar. So, in order to give major significance to the adoption of Christianity as the official religion, what better answer than to substitute the birth of Christ for that pagan event ..... indeed, a new beginning! As a result, most modern Christians have accepted, in good faith, a doctrine of which many will not know the full history and, more importantly, how it changed the 'NATURE' of Christianity.

If any of you reading this are Christians in the orthodox sense, and find this difficult to believe, I suggest you either check out what I am saying with your local clergy (they know but don't easily reveal) or open your hearts and know that Jesus would not accept either the manner in which his birth is celebrated today (with its mass slaughter of animals) or, in my opinion, the morality of the Church which has lost sight of his true teachings.

For the first 300 years after the death of Christ, his birth was not an important date, nor event, in the Church calendar. Indeed, the 'Church' itself was a very different thing to what we now know. Churches per se did not exist and Christianity was mainly confined to the poor and oppressed. Meetings were held in homes and undercover, for this was the time of oppression by the Romans.

The big turning point, as mentioned and in all senses of the world, was the Conversion of Constantine. Constantine was born in AD274 and proclaimed 'Emperor' by the army at York (UK) in AD306. He then spent much of his time fighting off other claimants to the title. In AD312, on the night prior to yet another battle, he had a blazing vision of a cross and regarded this as a divine sign. He was duly victorious and, as a result, in AD313, issued the Edict of Milan. Under this, Christians were no longer persecuted. Indeed, in the ensuing years, Christianity was embraced. It was easier to deal with the 'monistic' or single God concept than the older multi-God or 'pantheistic' concepts of Roman culture and presented lesser issues – but it completely changed the 'nature' of Christianity.

As a result of this endorsement, Christianity moved from being the religion of the poor and oppressed to that of the ruling classes. The position of Christ himself was also moved from "gentle Jesus, meek and mild" to that of a Battling Warrior. The Cross was adopted by Constantine as his emblem.



Christianity also became more visible in other ways. Constantine and his mother, St Helena, built many temples to his 'saving sign' and in particular two great shrines were created which are revered to this day. The first, to his birth, is the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The second, to his death, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Both have needed re-building at times due to various desecrations by opponents but are major centres of the Christian faith.

However, there were theological problems to overcome in adapting

Christianity to fit into Roman culture. In AD325, Constantine ordered the Church leaders to come together in Council and sort these out. This was done at Nicaea in Bithynia, when two issues were determined, namely the Arian controversy (on the subject of Christ's divinity) and, through the definitive 'creed', THE ACCOMMODATION OF VIOLENCE into the Church – very necessary for any 'Rulers of Empire' such as the Romans (and, of course, more recently, the British (Christian) Empire). Hence, we see the most extraordinary conversion of the cross, as a symbol of torture and death, into a 'membership logo' of a Church prepared to turn the 'blind eye' to rule by force and

violence. The Church then became fully complicit in all the activities and atrocities of the Roman Empire.

The resulting creed of the Christian Church, known as the Nicene Creed, just deals with Christ's birth and death ("..... born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried.") THERE IS NO MENTION OF HIS TEACHINGS, HIS NATURE, HIS LOVE AND HIS COMPASSION FOR ALL THINGS – CHRIST IS, IN FACT, 'GAGGED' BY THIS SAME CREED!

His mission was to change the hearts and minds of men, to fill the "hungry [for knowledge] with good things," not control them. He sought 'Peace and Justice' but the Church and its association with 'rule' in fact looks for 'Peace and Quiet', especially among its membership.

A major problem for me at the end of my divinity studies in 1968 was I could not reconcile that by 'accepting Christ' (as the Church would put it), all my 'sins' would be forgiven. Individual responsibility for one's actions and deeds, and the resulting Karmic consequences as described in the Vedas, make far more sense. It seems that you can, in the Roman Catholic branch especially, do almost as you please and, upon confession of these 'sins', pay the prescribed penance and all is well ..... seems quite a 'cop-out' to me! However, I have never been a member of the Roman Catholic Church and I am sure there will be many queuing up to correct and chastise me for my 'naïve' view. However, the Roman Catholic Church is already 'on the back foot' for child welfare issues so, for myself, I will stick with 'individual responsibility' and make my own peace with my SOUL for the thoughts, words and deeds I express in each incarnation. I believe Christ's death was not because he came to atone for our sins but because the controlling humans of the time would not accept his doctrine and teachings. He was causing problems, so they got rid of him – thus it has always been and still is.

I have no trouble in accepting Christ and his actual true teachings. My problem is with



the doctrines of the Church and the limited and corrupted 'New Testament' upon which Christianity is based. Many 'books' were omitted from the 'approved' collection at the Council of Carthage AD397 and vital words were deliberately mistranslated. Were these books to have been included and truer translation made (e.g. the Aramaic word 'food' was made 'meat'), Christianity, like Hinduism and

Buddhism would preach Vegetarianism and Reincarnation. Consequently, the daily mass murder of millions of living creatures to provide the wrong 'food' to most of the Western world, would not be happening. However, as explained earlier, the nature of

Christianity and the Church leaders who expressed that doctrine, were now 'in bed' with the Romans.

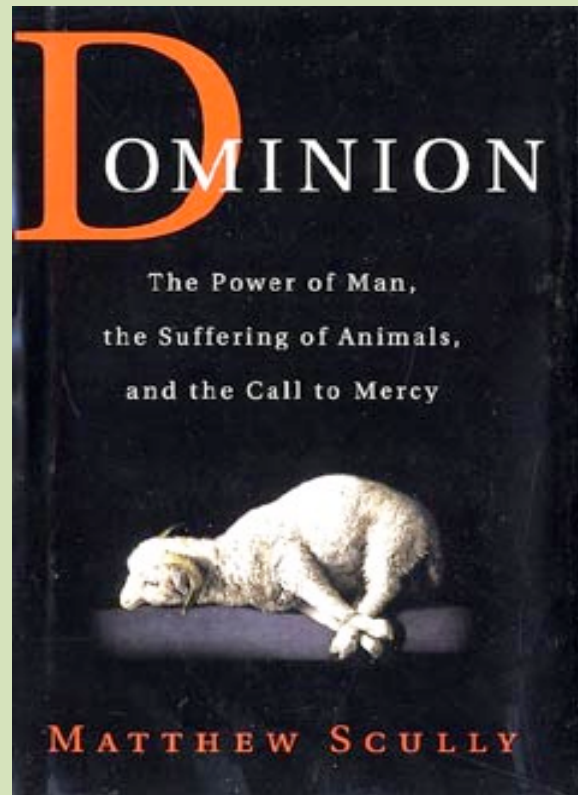
On becoming a vegan, I made the decision and statement no longer to be involved in this mass murder. Sadly, that does not stop me from being aware of what is happening and, therefore, whenever possible, drawing it to the attention of those who do not realise what crimes they are complicit in. Without their demand for meat, the slaughterhouses would be forced to close. Another interesting concept is that most people couldn't conceive of eating their pets ..... What is the difference between eating the family pet when it dies and a baby lamb, for instance?

Stop and think. When you die and 'go to YOUR heaven', are you expecting slaughterhouses?! If they aren't there, will you yourself be prepared to kill your own meat (other living creatures)?! Incidentally, if slaughterhouses ARE there, you might like to consider just WHERE you are!

I belong to several vegan organisations. One of these, the Movement for Compassionate Living, publishes a quarterly magazine 'New Leaves'. In the winter edition (2011) was a wonderful article by Ireene-Sointu entitled 'Animal Rights – Human Wrongs' and I have received permission to quote from this. Ireene-Sointu is also describing her life journey to becoming a vegan and experiencing a change of consciousness. She refers to several teachers she has heard speak or whose books she's read.

When reading her article, I was struck by her quotes from a book entitled 'Dominion: The Power of Man, The Suffering of Animals and the Call to Mercy' written by Matthew Scully (published by Souvenir Press UK in 2011, and 2001 in USA by New York

City: St. Martin's Griffin). This is a surprising book from a conservative Republican – former speech writer for George W Bush! I now quote as follows:



"Factory farming isn't just killing: It is negation, a complete denial of the animal as a living being with his or her own needs and nature ..... It confronts us with the animal equivalent of Abraham Lincoln's condemnation of human slavery: "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong"" ..... (Page 289). Also, earlier, on page 121, Scully does not shy away from calling things what they are "When a man's love of finery clouds his moral judgement, that is vanity. When he lets a demanding palate make his moral



choices, that is GLUTTONY. When he ascribes the divine will to his own whims, that is PRIDE and when he gets ANGRY at being reminded of animal suffering that his own daily choices might help avoid, that is moral cowardice.”.....so far, pretty damning for those who fall into this level of morality, i.e. three down and four to go for a ‘full house’ of the Seven Deadly Sins! Incidentally, for the ‘curious’, the other four are LUST/SLOTH/ENVY/AVARICE. How are your ‘cards’ looking now?

Interestingly, my Concise Oxford Dictionary 1976 definition of ‘sin’ is “transgression against divine law or principles of MORALITY.”

At the end of her sincere and excellent article, Ireenne-Sointu gives the last word again to Scully, quoting this time from Page 398. “How we treat our fellow creatures is only one more way in which each one of us, everyday, writes our own epitaph – bearing into the world a message of light and life or just more darkness and death, adding to the world’s joy or to its despair.” To use the translated wise words of Cicero “as you do your sowing, so shall you reap” and, to return us again to ‘organised religion’, a quote from St Matthew’s Gospel, Chapter 7, Verse 13 (King James’ version): “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction”, is also most appropriate (and IS textually/literally and historically correct, to the best of my knowledge!)



Modern civilisation (and I use that term cautiously) seems to have very rapidly increased its ability to produce material comfort, shelter, foodstuff and endless ‘entertainment’. We have risen from a hunter-gatherer existence to having become mindless mass murderers. Our morals and independence of thought seem to have diminished with equal rapidity. No concern is given to teaching in schools to our children WHERE their ‘food’ comes from and HOW it arrives in the ‘sanitized’ packaging on the

supermarket shelves. Were this so, most young children would be appalled and horrified since, at that stage in life, they have better moral insight than adults. Would any school dare take its pupils on a visit to the local battery hen factory or even more eye-opening – the slaughterhouse?! Pity – it may bring the ‘civilised’ world to its senses. Instead, the ‘Christmas image’ continues to cloud our children’s judgement until most also accept the ‘stuffed turkey’ and ‘presents on the tree’ falsehoods (both Victorian imports to Britain under Prince Albert from ‘German’ traditions), along with the timing of the birth of Christ. What hypocrisy we endorse, and hand down to our future generations.

When in 1984 Bob Geldoff organised Band Aid to record “Do they know it’s Christmas?” in response to the Ethiopian Famine, there seemed to be a glimmer of hope for us. This ex-punk band singer seemed to have a charisma and drive which drew attention to the

real spirit of hope/generosity of giving – not gluttony. This work and other ‘events’ like ‘Run the World’, etc., which Christ himself would have truly endorsed, showed what we were capable of turning towards ..... But that was yesterday and now history. Nothing much has really changed.

Before we really do see the 2012 Mayan ‘end of civilisation’, people with power and influence, be it the ‘pop’ stars, Royalty, politicians or moral/Church leaders, should stand up and cry out. From the pulpits, we should hear the true, deep meaning of “thou shalt not kill” ANYTHING ..... for all is part of God – we are harming ourselves. This is not to belittle the efforts of some organisations within the Christian community, such as the ‘Catholic Study Circle for Animal Welfare’, ‘Christians Helping Animals and People Inc’ (CHAP) and the ‘Christian Vegetarian Association’...



There is also the work of many outstanding individuals with the same aim such as Rev. V A Holmes-Gore (Those We Have Not Loved – C.W. Daniel Co. London 1946), Rev. James Thompson (The Animals’ Padre) and Rev. J. Todd Ferrier of the ‘Order of the Cross’. However, until the ‘big boys’ at the top change their views and endorse veganism at a synod, or Council, nothing major will change ..... And the chances of that happening are NIL – it would be such a loss of ‘PRIDE’ and pride comes before morality, it seems!

When I was studying Divinity (1965 – 1968), I heard a story, which whilst not about the death of fellow creatures, encapsulates the moral dilemma, which seems to afflict our leaders:

A reverend gentleman used a bicycle to visit his parishioners. This made him feel very righteous since it kept him fit, did not pollute the atmosphere nor harm the environment, did not use up finite resources of the planet and enabled him to communicate with those he pedalled past in a friendly and jocular manner. Life was grand for him.

However, imagine his dismay and indeed even anger, upon discovering one morning, just before Easter, that his bike was not in his shed! He was so dismayed that one of his own parishioners could stoop so low as to steal from him – a fountain of righteousness!

Knowing that the Easter Sunday service would ensure a ‘full house’ (vanity does this to parishioners) he resolved to embarrass the offender into returning his bike by, in his sermon, working through the Ten Commandments till he could illustrate “Thou shalt not steal” with the loss of his bicycle. Easter Sunday came and, with great aplomb, he climbed into the pulpit, opened the huge bible at Exodus 20 and began to address the congregation, starting at Verse 7. With ever-growing crescendo, he was working through these commandments, when suddenly, at Verse 14, (“Thou shalt not commit adultery”), he remembered where he’d left his bike!

Nothing will change nationally until our leadership comes to grips with the decline in the moral nature of mankind – until then, we can only change ourselves as individuals .....  
And use the bus!

Mike Wright

*Educated to 'A' level, followed by 3 years' teacher training in Divinity and Education. Married, one daughter, 2 grandchildren. Became vegetarian in 1988 (vegan 1990) and began giving talks on these subjects, using the acronym HELP (Health, Environment, Love and Progress (of the Soul)). As a result of the 'Progress' element, also began giving associated Spiritual Talks including to the World Spiritualist Conference in 1994 and to the American Federation of Spiritualist Churches in Boston, Mass. in 1996. Retired from the Tick-tock world in 1996 to further develop studies in the occult/spiritual area and also to care for my ageing mother. Upon her death in 2009 (on my father's birthday) we moved to the English mainland to be nearer our daughter and her family.*

**"DOMINION, The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals and The Call to Mercy"**  
**\_by Matthew Scully.**

Matthew Scully served until August 2004 as special assistant to the president and deputy director of presidential speechwriting. He worked for President George W. Bush a total of five years, including 18 months in the 2000 campaign, and was part of the team that drafted the President's post-September 11th addresses and every major speech of the first term. Scully has also written for vice presidents Dick Cheney and Dan Quayle, presidential candidate Robert Dole, Arizona Governor Fife Symington, and the late Pennsylvania Gov. Robert P. Casey. A former literary editor of *National Review*, his work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The National Post of Canada*, among other newspapers and magazines. He is the author of *Dominion: The Power of Man, The Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy* (St. Martin's Press), named by *The Atlantic Monthly* as one of the ten best non-fiction works of 2002, and still available in paperback. He lives with his wife Emmanuelle in Los Angeles.