



Christian Values in Education

Newsletter Issue 55 | Summer 2023

Welcome to the latest
CViE newsletter. In this
issue:

Page 1:

- ✓ Editorial - God is Still in Control

Page 2:

- ✓ RSE - A Time for Prayerful Action
- ✓ Setting up a Mums' Prayer Group

Page 3:

- ✓ Book Review - *God Made Boys and Girls*
- ✓ Geoff Thomas - *To Whom do our Children Belong?*
- ✓ Preparing for Pride Month

Page 4:

- ✓ CViE Conference 2023

God is Still in Control

Due to the nature of CViE's work, our communications can often be quite negative. Whether dealing with the latest developments in education, or tackling the challenges faced by our children in a secular society that has rejected the Bible's message, it seems there is rarely much good news.

It is very encouraging therefore in this newsletter to be able to reflect on some developments that are more positive.

The Pendulum Swinging

Over the last few years, groups promoting unbiblical ideologies (most recently the trans agenda) and grossly unsuitable resources (generally in RSE) have had a huge influence across educational settings and especially in schools. Generally this has been under the radar, however, through the first part of 2023, the courageous efforts of a small number of MPs such as Miriam Cates have highlighted the great extent to which these ideologies and resources have permeated schools. As a result we are seeing some significant pushback from various quarters - in government, in the media, and at the local level from parents. As a result it seems the pendulum may be starting to swing back. This is a reason for thankfulness and reminds us that whilst we live in a fallen world, God is still in control.

Lessons from Job

In Job 38 God tells us that it is He that created the world - **'laid the foundations of the earth'** (v.4) - and now rules over it. He goes on to use the picture of the sea, which to us is such a powerful, overwhelming force, but which is fully under God's control and cannot go any further than He allows. God says to the sea **'Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here**

shall thy proud waves be stayed' (v.11).

It is the same with the Devil and with the works of evil men - they can go no further than God permits. The march of secular, unbiblical teaching into our schools and universities has been rapid, extensive and almost irresistible over recent years. Now it seems that God has given the opportunity for this march to be slowed and, as we highlight later in this newsletter, now is surely a time for prayerful action.

Also in this newsletter...

As well as more on the RSE topic, you can read:

- ✓ About preparations for the CViE Conference 2023, including the planned keynote speakers and topics.
- ✓ A review of a book about God's gift of gender, suitable for Key Stage 1 level.
- ✓ An reminder about the ongoing serialisation on our website of a booklet by Geoff Thomas *To Whom Do our Children Belong?*
- ✓ A short contributed article about setting up a mums' prayer group at a local primary school.

We trust this newsletter will be informative and useful - it has been a year since we last published one. We give thanks to the Lord for providing for the needs of CViE during that time, enabling us to continue **equipping and encouraging Christians to stand fast on the Word of God in education today**. We would also thank you our supporters, for your prayers and financial gifts in support of the work of CViE. Without these we simply could not continue. Our need remains very great and on the back page you can find some key prayer points as well as details of how to donate towards the ongoing work of the charity.

RSE - Now is a Time for Prayerful Action

Today, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in schools is a major battleground for the hearts and minds of our children. With society's ever increasing rejection of a Christian worldview and Biblical morality it's unsurprising that children are being exposed to inappropriate teaching materials and damaging ideologies. CViE often emphasises that parents should be alert to the dangers and actively finding out what is being taught. Don't assume things are not too bad!

Even though it is the right thing to do, we are under no illusions that standing for Biblical truth is easy. Resisting the spread of secular teaching into schools can seem almost impossible, especially when it is so easy for accusations of hatred and bigotry to be made. School staff who have questioned things (even privately) have been subject to disciplinary action, some losing their jobs. Schools can also be reluctant, even hostile, to giving parents access to information and resources.

This year however, we are very thankful that the pendulum is starting to swing back in the other direction.

Across society more and more people are waking up to the dangers posed, especially to children, by radical transgender ideology. The

closure of London's Tavistock Clinic and the fallout in Scottish politics are two examples.

In February this year CViE published a blog^[1] highlighting an encouraging parliamentary Q&A which made it clear that:

- a) Parents had a right to see RSE materials being used in their children's schools.
- b) Schools should engage positively with such requests.



Miriam Cates in the Commons

Soon after this, thanks to the bold and persistent efforts of MP Miriam Cates the topic became one of national news. Her organisation, the New Social Covenant Unit, published a report^[2] presenting evidence of materials being used quite widely in schools that are undeniably inappropriate and in some cases even pornographic. The report also highlighted that extreme ideologies (e.g. that there are >100 genders)

are being taught. Speaking in the House of Commons Miriam Cates said: *"Across the country, children are being subjected to lessons that are age inappropriate, extreme, sexualising and inaccurate, often using resources from unregulated organisations that are actively campaigning to undermine parents. This is not a victory for equality. It is a catastrophe for childhood."*

This report received a lot of media coverage, with widespread criticism at both a governmental and local level, that such resources and ideologies have been allowed in schools. Following its publication PM Rishi Sunak was reported to be so 'alarmed'^[3], he has requested the Department for Education to launch a review into RSE teaching and resources.

We are thankful to God for these various encouragements. Now, especially whilst public opinion is with us, it is a time for action. We again encourage parents to take up the challenge to contact their schools – always prayerfully and in a calm, non-confrontational and constructive way – to ask about RSE resources and to find out the details about what is being taught. This has the twofold benefit of informing you

(Continued on page 4)

Setting up a Mums' Primary School Prayer Group



We share this contributed piece with the desire that others may be encouraged to start similar groups.

I already knew one Christian school mum through church connections prior to our children starting at the local primary school. When talking one day, we shared the idea of starting a prayer group to pray specifically for the school. She knew a couple of other mums who are Christians, so we started up a WhatsApp group and began meeting approximately once a month – we aim for twice per half term – in

one or another's home. There are now eight of us in total and we continue to pray that other mums who are Christians will be shown to us so that we can invite them to join the group. Typically we will go to someone's house immediately after the morning school run and spend 30-45 minutes together. We take it in turns to lead, reading some verses from the Bible and perhaps making a few comments on the verses read. We talk about a few key prayer points for that occasion and then have a time of open prayer. Younger siblings, who are not yet at school or nursery come with us and play while we pray.

We do not have an official status at the school; it is not a faith school and sadly our request to have a prayer box there was denied on the grounds that the council will not

permit an expression of faith like this in a maintained school.

Since September, when the group started running, we have seen some direct answers to prayers, which is very encouraging, especially with others joining the group and also concerning a recent Ofsted inspection. Many of us are active in school life, for example, being on the governing body, reading with classes or going on school trips, so we pray together that we may be a witness to those in the school and the community.

The mums in the group are from a range of church backgrounds, but we all share a common desire that there might be a Christian influence in the school. It is a blessing to meet with likeminded mums, to share concerns and encouragements, and to bring these to our God in prayer.

Book Review: *God Made Boys and Girls*

As parents, navigating our way through the major battleground issues our children are exposed to today can be a real challenge. When we have to face a complex topic such as gender ideology, how do we balance teaching children what is biblically right, whilst also preparing them for the wrong ideas they may encounter, all the while seeking to ensure they behave in a kind and loving way?

God made Boys and Girls by Marty Machowski is a book that can be of real assistance when approaching the subject of gender with younger children (broadly key stage 1/ early key stage 2). It tells the story of a girl Maya who likes to play football with the boys (as an aside this is an American book where football means American football, and a few other words such as recess - breaktime - may need 'translating'!). One of the boys teases Maya and tells her that if she keep playing with the boys, she will turn into a boy. This then leads to a school lesson and discussion on what the Bible teaches about gender.

The book keeps things simple, explaining Biblical facts without muddying the waters with complex ideology. For example, there is no attempt made to distinguish between gender and biological sex (one of the key areas of confusion with this topic in wider society) referring to our gender as what God chose for us each - either male or female, boy or girl - and something that cannot be changed. Indeed, our gender is referred to as a 'gift'. There is some simple science about cells and the XY/XX code our cells contain that decides our gender. The creation of the first man and first woman (Adam and Eve) is faithfully recounted along with the fall as the reason why there is

so much confusion in the world these day - people chose to go their own way rather than God's way. The solution to this confusion and to the sin we all have is explained through the gospel, the coming to earth of the Lord Jesus as both almighty God and a real man, and then ultimately the cross as the place where he took away the sins of all who trust in him. Also clear is the fact that everyone is different, with varied interests and talents, but that it is not this that determines whether we are a boy or a girl.

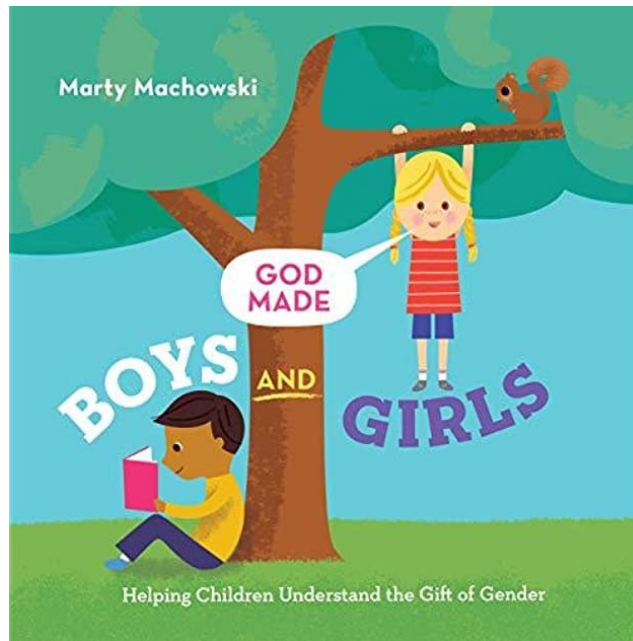
Finally, the important point is made that we should treat everyone with love and kindness, even those with whom we disagree and especially those who may be confused about these things.

The book is bright, colourful and attractively illustrated in a way that appealed to our children (ages 7 and 5). The text is simple and clear, but not dumbed down. There are a good number of Bible quotes (mainly ESV). At the back are a couple of pages of notes for parents with more details and suggestions for how to talk to children about this topic.

This is a really helpful book. It lays a clear Biblical foundation

regarding gender in an accessible way, whilst also giving practical teaching about how to interact with others. It does not introduce those ideas, even from a Christian perspective, that ultimately we want to protect our young children from—for example, there are no transgender characters.

God Made Boys and Girls - Helping Children Understand the Gift of Gender, Marty Machowski. Hardback. Published by New Growth Press.



"Remember, it is not what we do or like or think that makes us a boy or a girl. God gave us our gender as a special gift, and God never makes mistakes. His ways are perfect."

To Whom Do Our Children Belong? - Geoff Thomas

CViE are delighted to be serialising on our website this important booklet from Geoff Thomas, formerly pastor at Alfred Place Baptist Church in Aberystwyth, Wales.

In this booklet, Rev Thomas considers who our children **do not** belong to, who they **do** belong to and what this teaches us concerning their ongoing nurture and development.

The conclusions perfectly align with one of the key principles un-

derpinning the work of CViE - that the **education of children is the God given responsibility of their parents.**

The first parts are already available at www.cvie.org.uk/resources/to-whom-do-our-children-belong

and further instalments will be posted in the coming weeks. It is also hoped to print the full booklet later this year.

We would express our gratitude to Geoff Thomas for sharing his booklet with us.



Preparing for Pride Month

We are fast approaching Pride month which takes place in June each year. The widespread focus across society on LGBTQ+ topics can make this a hard time for Christians, especially at school, university or in the workplace.

In preparation CViE have put together a page on our website with a range of resources which we pray will be both encouraging and of practical use as you navigate this difficult period.

Visit: www.cvie.org.uk/preparing-for-pride-month



We are thankful that plans for the **CViE National Conference 2023** are progressing well. If the Lord will, this is due to be held on Saturday 23rd September at the *The King's Centre, Coppard Gardens, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2GZ*. This is the same venue as used in the previous 2 years, with plenty of space and excellent facilities.

This year we welcome two keynote speakers:

- ✓ Roger Kiska (Christian Legal Centre) will be speaking on **"A practical Guide to Your Legal Rights in Education"** with the aim of equipping parents regardless of the educational setting.
- ✓ Steve Pearce will be speaking on **"Weapons of mass Distraction: How Independent is Your Thinking"**, with a focus on technology, its impacts, both good and bad, and the subtle but powerful influences it has on the way we think.

There will be the usual programme of activities for the various children and teen age groups throughout the day. Following feedback we plan to re-structure how the recreational activities are managed, separating out each age group. This year we also hope to have a dedicated session for the 18-25 age group.

Once again this year there will be a wide range of exhibitors and stalls covering different educational choices, resources and organisations.

Our popular **Cultivate a Reading Habit** voucher scheme will return. All those attending of school age will be entitled to receive a voucher, up to the value of £10, that can be used at the various bookstalls present at the event. We look to the Lord for the continued funding of this venture.

Further information about the conference can be found on the **Events** page on the CViE website which will be updated with full details as these become available in the coming months.

We look forward to welcoming you all to the conference in September.

Support CViE - Prayer & Donations

We value your prayers for CViE. Some specific points:

- 1) Pray for the ongoing planning for the CViE Conference 2023.
- 2) Pray for the Trustees as they seek to direct the work of the charity.
- 3) Pray for Tim Wills as he works for CViE week by week.
- 4) Pray that the financial needs of CViE will be provided, enabling the work to continue and develop.
- 5) Pray that our children would be kept safe from wrong influences, especially during the upcoming Pride month.

CViE relies on the generous donations of our supporters to enable the work of the charity to continue.

If you would like to support CViE financially, you can make a one-off or regular donation via our website www.cvie.org.uk/donate.



You can also use this QR code to give simply and securely via your mobile banking app.

Thank you for your support!

RSE - Prayer & Action

(Continued from page 2)

about any materials that may be unsuitable, and of showing schools that parents are engaged, and willing to hold them to account.

We would also encourage much prayer about this topic. There have been positive developments, but there is still a very long way to go.

1) Whilst we welcome the planned review of RSE teaching and resources, we are aware that it is being done by the same government who, despite many warnings, introduced the RSE reforms which have led to the present situation. **Pray that the review will lead to real change.**

2) No doubt organisations such as Stonewall will not give up the influence they have in schools without a fight. It is also clear that the main education unions have bought into the LGBTQ+ agenda and push those ideologies strongly. **Pray that God will overturn these influences.**

3) Give thanks to God for raising up those in positions of influence to challenge these matters on our behalf – **pray for them that they will continue to be able to stand firm despite strong opposition.**

Finally, as mentioned earlier in this newsletter, God is almighty and remains on the throne. We should never forget that however hard the battle seems, with God 'nothing shall be impossible', and that with his help, he expects us to put on our Christian armour and fight in these battles.

[1] www.cvie.org.uk/mp-rse-materials

[2] www.newsocialcovenant.co.uk

[3] The Daily Telegraph - <https://tinyurl.com/yc82st72>



Website:

www.cvie.org.uk

Email:

enquiries@cvie.org.uk

Postal Address:

**P.O. Box 273, Oakington,
Cambridgeshire, CB24 3FW**

Registered Charity No.:

1076173