

Religious Difference, Not Ideology, Will Fuel This Century's Epic Battles

Posted by Tony Blair on Sun, 26/01/2014 - 1:34pm

Note from Pastor Kevin Lea follows this article. I have also underlined and bolded some of Blair's comments below for emphasis.

The last weeks have seen a ghastly roll call of terror attacks in the obvious places: Syria, Libya, Iraq and Lebanon, as well as Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia and Pakistan. Also suffering are places where we have only in recent years seen such violence: Nigeria, and in many parts of central Africa, in Russia and across central Asia, and in Burma, Thailand and the Philippines. We can either see all of these acts of killing as separate – produced by various political contexts – or we can start to see the clear common theme and start to produce a genuine global strategy to deal with it.

The fact is that, though of course there are individual grievances or reasons for the violence in each country, there is one thing self-evidently in common: the acts of terrorism are perpetrated by people motivated by an abuse of religion. It is a perversion of faith. But there is no doubt that those who commit the violence often do so by reference to their faith and the sectarian nature of the conflict is a sectarianism based on religion. There is no doubt either that this phenomenon is growing, not abating.

We have to be prepared to take the security measures necessary for our immediate protection. Since 9/11, the cost of those measures, and their burden, has been huge. However, security action alone, even military action, will not deal with the root cause. This extremism comes from a source. It is not innate. It is taught. It is taught sometimes in the formal education system; sometimes in the informal religious schools; sometimes in places of worship and it is promoted by a vast network of internet communications.

Technology, so much the harbinger of opportunity, can also be used by those who want to disseminate lessons of hate and division. Today's world is connected as never before. This has seen enormous advances. It means there is a kind of global conversation being conducted. This is exciting and often liberating. But it comes with the inevitable ability for those who want to get across a message that is extreme to do so. This has to be countered...

At present, our screens are dominated by the hideous slaughter in Syria. We have to hope that the peace negotiations succeed. But with more than 130,000 dead – and, on some accounts, the total is nearer 200,000 – millions displaced and the country in a state of disintegration, it is hard to see how there can be a lasting agreement for peace unless it is based on a clear recognition that the Syria arising from this has to be one in which all people are treated equally, regardless of which faith they practice or which part within a faith they belong to. That will never work while either a minority religious group rules the country whose majority has a different adherence, or where those fighting the regime have powerful elements that also want to rule on the basis of religious difference – and are prepared to use terrorism to get their way...

But this issue of extremism is not limited to Islam. There are also many examples the world over where Muslims are the victims of religiously motivated violence from those of other religious faiths...

The answer is to promote views that are open-minded and tolerant towards those who are different, and to fight the formal, informal and internet propagation of closed-minded intolerance. In the 21st century, education is a security issue.

For that reason, when I left office, and in part based on my experience post-9/11 of how countries whose people were freed from dictatorship have then had democratic aspirations thwarted by religious extremism, I established a foundation whose aim is to promote greater knowledge and understanding between people of different faiths...

There is a university program, which we are building into a minor degree course, that began at Yale but is now in more than 20 universities, including in China and Latin America, **where students study faith and globalization – essentially the place of religion in modern society.** And an action program, pioneered in Sierra Leone but now being extended, where we help deliver the anti-malaria campaign of the UN by using the faith infrastructure of the churches and the mosques...

Evidently, we can reach only parts of the world and be a small part of fighting a huge problem. But the purpose is to change the policy of governments: to start to treat this issue of religious extremism as an issue that is about religion as well as politics, to go to the roots of where a false view of religion is being promulgated, **and to make it a major item on the agenda of world leaders to combine effectively to combat it. This is a struggle that is only just beginning.**

This article was originally published in the [Observer](#).

To read this article in its entirety, go to:

<http://www.tonyblairfaithfoundationus.org/blogpost/religious-difference-not-ideology-will-fuel-centurys-epic-battles>

***Note from Pastor Kevin Lea:** I have underlined and bolded statements by Tony Blair that should be a warning to biblical Christians. The globalists are planning to mandate that all people must be open-minded and tolerant of other religions. Christians have a history of loving people that are of other persuasions, but what Blair means is that no one will be allowed to say that their religion is the **only right** religion.*

The day is approaching when, for the sake of world peace, Christian missionaries (at home or abroad) will not be able to tell someone that they must repent of their sin and false religion so that they can put their faith and trust in Jesus, who alone is able to save them from hell. To do so may be offensive to the hearer and create conflict which must be forbidden in Blair's envisioned future utopia of tolerance and peace.

The globalists say they will have to shut down the ability for people to communicate their narrow-minded views. This likely means that they intend to shut down web sites, facebook, twitter, etc., if these communication tools are being used by "fundamentalists" to spread their divisive message.

Blair also says, "That in the 21st century, education is a security issue." Does this mean that Christians will be declared a security threat to the world if they teach their children that Jesus is the only way to be saved from sin? I believe this is exactly the approach they will use to forcibly remove children from Christian homes in the not too distant future.

It appears that persecution is coming to America, I pray that the true remnant church prepares their hearts to stand firm in the faith when it does come.

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. John 15:18-21 (NKJV)