

CRISIS UK

the root of the rot

A LAMENTATION

Are we surprised at the looting louts of London (and elsewhere)?

Since there is criminality among politicians, the press, the police, the private investigators, the priests, etc, do we imagine the looters remain 'uninspired' by such public role models?

How then do we make sense of all the mayhem? First, away with the excuses - the Mark Duggan killing, tuition fees resentment, unemployment, summer holidays, etc. Yes, don't cut police resources during a

recession, then blame them when they're overstretched, etc.

So what is the root of the rot?

We are reaping what we have sown. Our secular, Evolution-based culture, driven by the prophets Darwin and Dawkins *et al* has abolished God, the Ten Commandments and our law-abiding Christian heritage. We are witnessing the horrors of humanism.

Secularism has poisoned the churches as well as society.

Clergy have caved in to materialism and perverted values. With pornography and promiscuity no longer frowned upon, infidelity, marital breakdown and rising divorce have devastated families.

*Parental failure surely lies
behind the current criminality
of our rampaging kids.*
**But parents are not helped when
corrupt entertainment and
relativistic education pervert
their offspring.**

**Is there any hope? Not with
those in power or with so-called
democratic values shorn of their
Christian origins. Humanism
leads to hell, so vividly presaged
by the fires of London. The
following message sets out the
only hope for crisis-hit UK.**

May God have mercy upon us!

**Your deeply-concerned fellow
citizen,**

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STEALING! GOD'S WORD AND THE UK CRISIS

“YOU SHALL NOT STEAL”

(Exodus 20: 15)

God's Law - summed up in the Ten Commandments - protects all concerned from injustice. It is a rule of righteousness in our dealings with God and our fellow human beings. The theme of protection is sharply focused in the Eighth Commandment. It highlights what is relevant to every commandment. It protects all that is sacred: God's honour and glory (1-4), and our neighbour's person (5, 6), marriage (7), possessions (8) and reputation (9). The commandment clearly implies that everyone has rights of possession which should never be violated.

STEALING PRESUPPOSES LAWFUL POSSESSION

If no one owns anything, stealing has no meaning. Thus nationalisation of private assets without compensation is stealing by the Government. However, a secular or humanistic view of private ownership is very different from the Judeo-Christian concept. Where the humanist insists 'X is mine absolutely, forever and in all circumstances', the Christian affirms 'X is mine by divine donation, held on trust from God'. Unlike atheistic-secularism, Christianity holds that we are stewards who are ultimately accountable to God. God gives us strength to earn and own (*Deut.8:17-18*) and we are responsible to Him in the management of His provision (see *Matt. 25: 14-30* - the parable of the talents; *1 Cor.4:1-2*)

STEALING IS SELFISHNESS

The thought and act of stealing is selfishly sinful. It is the 'ME FIRST' syndrome. It is a form of personal fascism: 'I have an exclusive, absolute right to your X, you do not'. Both deed and thought are driven by discontent, a state specified by the tenth commandment - 'You shall not covet'. The Bible gives numerous examples of this, notably Rebekah's and Jacob's conspiracy to obtain Esau's blessing

from Isaac (*Gen. 27: 1-29*), and King Ahab's acquisition of Naboth's vineyard (*1 Kings 21: 1-16*). Robbery and violence (and more!) often go together as Ahab's actions show. In fact, eight of the Ten Commandments were broken: **1-2** (Ahab was an idolater, *v. 26*), **3** (God's name was taken in vain, *v. 10*), **5** (Naboth was denied the possibility of honouring his parents, *v. 3*), **6** (Naboth was murdered, *v. 13*), **8** (his vineyard was stolen, *v. 16*), **9** (he was falsely accused, *v. 13*) and **10** (Ahab coveted what belonged to Naboth) were all violated by Ahab. Covetousness 'which is idolatry' (*Col. 3: 5*) also violates commandments **1** and **2**. It is the source of every related evil (*Jas. 4: 1-4, 1 Tim. 6: 10*) and the very denial of trust in God (*Jas. 4: 2, 7-10*).

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Many people would condemn blatant robbery. Even then, businesses increasingly have to budget for stealing these days. Petty-pilfering and shop-lifting are more and more common. However, the 'theme' of stealing comes in various forms in many real-life situations:

1. Time is stolen by lack of punctuality, excessive tea and lunch breaks.
2. Tax evasion, dubious stock market trading, fraudulent social benefit and expenses claims are stealing.
3. Failing to give value for money in goods and services is stealing.
4. Delayed payment of bills is stealing.
5. Late payment of wages and salaries is stealing.
6. Failure in honouring promises (to God and others) is stealing.
7. Failure to return borrowed books and other items is stealing.
8. 'Character assassination' is stealing a person's reputation. 'Who steals my purse, steals trash, but he that filches from me my good name makes me poor indeed' (*William Shakespeare*).

For Scriptural examples, see *Deut. 25: 13-16; Ps. 15: 5; Prov. 11: 1; Ezek. 45: 9-12; Lk. 6: 35; Mic. 6: 9-11; Lk. 3: 14; Jas. 5: 1-6*.

THE ULTIMATE ROBBERY

One of the biblical definitions of sin is the 'robbing of God' (*Mal. 3:8*). Failing to give Him our worship, gratitude and obedience are all stealing what is His due. Hence the need to pray 'Forgive us our

debts' (*Matt. 6: 12*). We are always debtors, worthy of hell - the debtor's eternal prison.

THE ULTIMATE REMISSION

A world of guilty debtors would have no hope unless another paid our debts for us. With all the resources of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ came to rescue guilty debtors: 'it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name...' (*Lk. 24: 46-7*).

Through his sacrifice for our sins, the Lord Jesus Christ has provided sufficient merit to pay the 'debts' of all the world (*1 Jn. 2: 2*).

REPENTANCE AND REMISSION

As with Zacchaeus (*Lk. 19: 8*), restitution goes with remission. We should make amends where possible. Not to do so is to perpetuate stealing.

Not to show our faith by love and care to the needy is to 'rob' them. 'Owe no one anything except to love one another' (*Rom. 13: 8*). Our worst robbery of others is to withhold the Gospel from them (*Rom. 1: 14-15*). May the generous grace of God make us generous to all the world for Christ's sake!

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