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A common but costly mistake

A look at the recent election results and its aftermath
by Rev Ivan Foster

"But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God," Psalm 50:16-23, KJV.

The mistake I wish to highlight is that referred to by the Lord in verse 21 of Psalm 50. **"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself."**

The Democratic Unionist Party is awash with self-congratulations and jubilation in the wake of the recent elections. An example of that jubilation may be seen in the reported victory speech by Mr. Paul Frew, MLA for North Antrim. Mr. Frew said: "I would like to dedicate this victory to the real power, that being God for he (sic) has the glory. Many of our opponents and the media highlighted the fact that we were praying for victory, that is very true." "The DUP works hard but we pray harder and we have a strong Christian ethos in the party which is needed because when people lean on us we lean on the Lord." Ballymena Times, 10th May 2011.

It is a most solemn thing to claim that God has endorsed the actions of a political party. It cannot be made lightly for if we are mistaken we align God with that with which He must be displeased. Men have all too often presumptuously claimed God's support for their cause when in truth, He was opposed to all they stood for.

It is one thing for a man to strive to be on the Lord's side by obeying His Word and submitting to His will.

It is quite another thing to claim that the Lord is on our side, endorsing all we do and granting us victory in an endorsing of our policies. It is the latter that Mr. Frew appears to be foolishly doing.

To claim that we are on the Lord's side we must be able to show why we feel that to be the case. Before such a claim was made by men of God in the Bible they stated why it was that they believed that their path was pleasing to God.

"My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more



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than my necessary food," Job 23:11-12, KJV.

Job was responding to those who claimed that the disasters that had befallen him were the result of his departure from the Lord. He was claiming that he had been in obedience to God before his afflictions began. He was a good man who might have expected the blessing of God to fall upon him, but God in His infinite wisdom decreed otherwise for a season.

The point is that the life that one might expect God to honour and bless is one in which the ways and commands of God are kept. So said David in Psalm 37:23 KJV. "The steps of a good man are ordered (or directed) by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." God delights in such a walk.

QUESTION ???

Has the course that the DUP has been following in recent days been directed or "ordered" by the Lord? I would tremble for any man who dares to say that they have.

Just what have been the "steps" of the DUP in the last few years.

1. They have stepped out in union with the unrepentant murderers of the IRA.
2. They have followed a way by which sodomites have been funded through one of the offices that a DUP politician has held.
3. They have endorsed attendance at the Mass through the presence of DUP leader, Peter Robinson at the funeral Mass for the murdered Omagh policeman, Ronan Kerr, in the month of April past.

Is Mr. Frew saying that God gave victory to the DUP because these events - union with murderers, funding of sodomy and attendance at the Mass - were pleasing to God? It appears to be so!

Mr. Frew, and all who think like him, are making a very grave mistake.

NO ENDORSEMENT WHATEVER

The success of the DUP in the recent Northern Ireland Assembly election is no evidence of God's endorsement of that party's policies or philosophy.

Short-term success follows the endeavours of wicked men far more often than it does the labours of righteous men. The Bible is filled with examples of this.

Hear what David had to say. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree," Psalm 37:35, KJV. David, the man after God's own heart, suffered many setbacks and apparent defeats before he came to the throne of Israel. While he was hunted as "a partridge in the mountains" he was hardly enjoying the manifestations of success. On the other hand his opponents were "spreading . . . like a green bay tree."



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How wrong it would have been of David to consider his cause lost or the wicked to consider himself as one enjoying divine approval because of his flourishing advances.

So often is this truth forgotten that David was inspired of the Holy Ghost to write for the sake of doubting and fretful believers: "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass," Psalm 37: 1-5.

No! it is not the endorsement and approval of the world that assures us of success but rather the morality of our cause, the uprightness of our policy and philosophy and the path that we are following. That will assure good success in the end. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success," Joshua 1:8, KJV.

The policies which have brought the DUP the world's approval of late are those which are based upon a repudiation of all that they stood for in the years prior to their conversion to a coalition arrangement with the unrepentant murderous organisation, Sinn Fein/IRA.

I believe that their policies are fairly represented in the verses 17-20 of Psalm 50. "Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son."

Parallel

There is a parallel in these words of Psalm to the DUP's embracing of the robbers of the IRA as coalition partners and the endorsing of a scheme to fund sodomites facilitated by the office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

Furthermore, I believe that deceptions were used to persuade, indeed to panic, the electorate in 2007, and ever since, into supporting the policy of coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA. If Mr. Frew's claim is correct then the Lord has entered a coalition arrangement with the political partners of the DUP as well. Surely such an idea is abhorrent to any who fear the Lord and tremble at His Word!

Mr. Frew is treading on dangerous ground indeed.

Silence

In the Psalm 50, the Lord says that those who embraced the wicked policies there outlined



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mistook the “silence” of God, His long-suffering and withholding of judgment against such wickedness, as an endorsement of their lies and deceit.
How wrong they were!

The Lord goes on to say: “. . . but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes,” verse 21, KJV.

God will yet have His say on recent events in Ulster and set the record straight and it will be seen then that success at the polls is no endorsement by Heaven of policies which are dishonest and devious and supportive of that which the Lord calls abominable. His reproof will come and that publicly in response to such notions and claims.

“Scum”

The scene at one of the counts, that in Omagh, became the centre of another controversy. The response of many critics of Mr. Tom Elliott, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, to his comments directed toward a rowdy and disruptive crowd of Sinn Fein supporters in Omagh Leisure Centre at the Assembly election count, has been universal condemnation.

Mr. Elliott’s statement has been reported on widely. Here is one example. “The UUP leader caused a storm of controversy on Saturday when he lashed out at people waving Irish flags at Omagh Leisure Centre calling them the “scum of Sinn Fein”, Belfast Telegraph, 9th May 2011.

Those unionists that were pressed by the media for a response to Mr. Elliott’s comments invariably replied with the ecumenically-inspired mantras: “We have moved on”; “Progressive unionists no longer employ such terms” etc; etc. A short time later, Mr Elliott offered an apology to offended nationalists for his words!

In truth, Protestant Ulster has not moved on. Rather, it has “moved away” from the principles of which it was once unashamed.

Calling supporters of a party which promoted murder and used the blood of hundreds and hundreds of innocent victims to ease its way into political power “SCUM,” is hardly employing an inappropriate term.

Mr David McClarty, a former Ulster Unionist who has been elected as an independent MLA, reacted to the reported comments of Mr. Elliott by saying: “These comments were not the progressive kind of unionism I espouse.”

There can be no progress for any unionist who sticks his head in the sand and refuses to recognise that the Sinn Fein/IRA organisation of the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, the pre-ceasefire organisation which shocked the world with its callous murders, is just the same organisation as the present Sinn Fein/IRA structure which the DUP has embraced as partners in the Stormont coalition.



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Sinn Fein/IRA has gloried in its terrorist past. It has shown no remorse whatsoever for the hundreds that were murdered. Indeed, its pushing to the fore those within its ranks who were convicted of terrorist crimes clearly shows this to be so. That Sinn Fein/IRA can put convicted Old Bailey Bomber, Gerry Kelly, and twice convicted Pat Sheehan, who thinks the IRA's campaign was 'quite civilised', and Caitriona Ruane, a prominent member of the "Bring Them Home" campaign which sought the safe return from Columbia of three IRA men who were later convicted in their absence of training FARC insurgents, on the Policing Board without any protest from the DUP is testimony in itself to the point of degradation to which DUP/Sinn Fein rule has brought us.

What an insult to the victims of the murderous IRA! What daring effrontery to say that God endorses and honours such actions!

In repudiating proper descriptions of terrorist supporters, so-called unionists are but demonstrating that they have succumbed to the ecumenical propaganda machine of church and state which has long laboured to pressurise the Protestant people into being ashamed of their heritage and rejecting the principles of our fathers.

A letter from a member of the Church of Ireland in the "Belfast Telegraph" stated: "It is unacceptable to call other people 'scum', however much we may dislike them. Like me, Tom Elliott is a member of the Church of Ireland. The church teaches that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God. Each of us is a human being, capable of hurting and being hurt, able to forgive and be forgiven."

It matters little what the writer's "church" may teach, especially when that teaching is erroneous. What is important is what the Bible teaches.

On one occasion the Saviour described, in very strong terms indeed, those who were His opponents and who were, as was their habit, heckling Him. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it," John 8: 44, KJV.

Spawn of the devil, murderers and liars - that is how the Saviour classified those who were His enemies. That is significantly stronger terminology than "scum"!

Sinn Fein/IRA may not be employing the guns and bombs that once they did, but the philosophy which justified the use of those weapons of terrorism is still embraced, as the ongoing annual eulogising, by leading Sinn Fein/IRA MLAs and MPs, of those who died actively engaged in the campaign of terrorism demonstrates.

Since Sinn Fein/IRA has not changed or altered, just what else would an honest person call murderers and eulogisers of murder other than SCUM?

The personnel of the IRA has not gone away. They could be seen out campaigning for Sinn Fein in the election. Indeed, many of them were candidates in that election and they will



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be present in the Stormont team which will be led by former senior IRA member, Martin McGuinness, into the new government coalition with Peter Robinson's DUP.

Progress . . . I think not! It is more a case of Unionist blind obtuseness.

All too many Christians have turned their back upon the teaching of God's Word which they professed but a few years ago and have now embraced what they formerly rejected. Some DUP MLAs and MPs may, occasionally, use terms which are reminiscent of the days of forthright denunciation of Popery and Irish Republicanism but such outbursts are a sham as long as they remain in a coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA and approve (as did the DUP councillors in Ballymena Council just prior to the recent election, when they allowed a vote of congratulations to Robinson on his Mass-going to be approved unopposed) of the attendance at the Mass by Peter Robinson.

They add further to their wrong-doing when they foolishly claim that victory at the polls is an endorsement from the Lord.

Just how does Mr. Frew explain Sinn Fein's political successes? Would Martin McGuinness be justified in saying that God had granted Sinn Fein success because their ways pleased Him?

I think not!!

Whatever the future holds for our Province, one thing is certain - God's view of the wickedness of cruel men will not alter irrespective of political expediency.

Let all remember the words of the Saviour to those who were deriding Him: "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God," Luke 16:15, KJV.

Highly esteemed the DUP-Sinn Fein/IRA coalition may be but in the light of the Saviour's Words there are grounds for fear not gloating, for doubt not jubilation.