

## What Should Be the Christian View of Asylum Seekers and Refugees?

### Asylum Seekers

Nothing is more important, at the moment, than thinking deeply about a Christian response to the fraught question of asylum seekers. These people, fleeing (in most cases) the Middle East or north Africa, are often finding their way to the southern/eastern parts of Europe, or Calais, where many try to come to Britain.

Many of us feel an overwhelming compassion for ordinary people in a bad situation, who it is our Christian duty to help in any way we can. One approach I often have is that of possibly having a very different attitude to the actual, individual people involved, and the overall issue or cause; thus, I am happy to buy the *Big Issue* (a magazine sold by homeless people) from a young woman from eastern Europe who stands in my local shopping centre, while not exactly being a supporter of the policy of immigration and population movement that has brought her here. It is, if you like, similar to the old Christian idea of loving the sinner and hating the sin.

Asylum seekers and refugees (such as those in Greece), that I have seen interviewed on television, are often in a very bad situation; the thought that such things could happen to me, or my family, is horrifying. But – we are behaving wrongly if we do not insert a *but*, and question this, or any, fact – we have to consider the possibility that such large influxes of alien people might readily change our society for the worse, indeed, that what might be created in western Europe, eventually, might be as bad as anything that the refugees have fled. We cannot allow ourselves to assume that because the refugees have fled tyranny that they are *necessarily* believers in such things as Western Democracy, free thought and free expression; most will be those peaceful Muslims we hear of – they may well abjure violence, but that does not mean that they do not believe in sharia law, and its eventual implementation in Europe.

Many, of course, are Christians facing persecution in large parts of the world (and facing much discrimination, before very long, right here); if we do not know we have a duty to them, then we live in a truly horrific society ourselves. And a few – mercifully small, but nonetheless deadly for all that – are coming here to spread jihadism. We do not have a duty, Christian or otherwise, to absorb those who would complete the transformation of our world (already begun, of course) into ‘Eurasia’ or the European caliphate. The great problem, of course, is that we have no way of knowing who is who, and thus no way of protecting ourselves without behaving harshly towards very many people; above all, perhaps, we do not have a *will* to protect traditional Christian Western society.

Jesus said that good and bad currently have to exist together, until such things are separated properly, completely, and finally, after the end of this age; in our present situation, I’m not sure we can afford to exactly do that, but vigilance and caution are not enough if we have not first fully acknowledged what it is we are trying to protect.

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