

## Submission to the Federal Productivity Commission Draft Report

To Whom It May Concern:

It's wonderful that you are here to think about productivity and how philanthropy builds, supports and enables it. As a teacher, this is a topic dear to my heart. Every day I go to school, I get to encourage, support and -hopefully- inspire young minds to think about how they can share their individual gift(s) with the world. Where the world around them tells them that to be happy they have to buy the right toys/clothes, talk/act/dress the right way etc. to be worthwhile, I get to tell them 'You are special/unique/valuable *just as you are!*' I get to show them that joy comes from giving; from living the truth: that we are each a priceless, never-to-be-repeated miracle. I get to guide their learning about this amazing universe we live in together; how we can learn from both the failures and successes of the past.

How do I have such a positive outlook? All around us there are wars/strife/brokenness; leaders are being seduced into corruption; police, nurses & teachers are quitting - tired of the abuse from those they are trying to help.

The answer is simple: Jesus.

Jesus is the one who told us (in Luke 4:18, ESV):

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

He also said (in Matthew 5:3-9, ESV):

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

Of course, I could give many more examples of where Jesus' teaching and that of His followers radically redefined philanthropy. Even non-Christians like Gandhi recognise Jesus as "one of the great teachers of mankind."

But it's not just philosophical / theoretical. These teachings and their followers have made countless, tangible, positive, lasting impacts in almost every field of our whole society. Western science stems from the rational belief that the universe is ordered and obeys certain laws. Indeed:

Harvard was named after a Christian minister. Yale was started by clergymen, and Princeton's first year of class was taught by Reverend Jonathan Dickinson. Princeton's crest still says "*Dei sub numine viget,*" which is Latin for "Under **God** she flourishes."

In the United Kingdom, the earliest university-type establishment was probably the College, established by the Celtic preacher St. Illtyd in about AD 500. Oxford University was established by various religious orders. Likewise, Cambridge University was established in 1209 by Christian leaders. Saint Andrews, Scotland's oldest university, was founded principally for the teaching and study of theology. The commitment of these religious founders might be suspect, but many of the later colleges were founded by Bible-believing Christians. The University of Edinburgh had a thoroughly evangelical beginning, being founded under Presbyterian auspices. - Bodie Hodge, Featured in Answers Magazine

Some of the most iconic art depicts the beauty of God's handiwork and His desire to share it with us. The Hallelujah! Chorus from Handel's Messiah shines as a testament to His majesty and its uplifting strains echo down through the centuries stirring the souls of countless revellers. St. Patrick's Cathedral, Notre Dame, St. Vitus Cathedral, and dozens like them draw our eyes heavenward asking us to consider 'how beautiful are the works of God and how might we respond to His generosity?'

Who was Mother Teresa? A Christian who took the teachings of Jesus to care for the poor seriously enough to spend her life in the slums of India.

Who was at the forefront of abolishing slavery? Christians.

St. Vincent de Paul Society? Christian.

World Vision International? Christian.

Compassion International? Christian.

Salvation Army? Christian.

And it goes on.

And on.

And on.

Even today, as the West seems to be largely cutting off its roots, people all over the world gladly come here to experience freedom and opportunity that countries without the judeo-Christian foundation are typically still struggling with.

So, why

Oh why

is this productivity commission proposing to make it harder for people to give to Christian organisations &/or organisations that support the teaching of the Bible?

Sincerely,

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