

What does it mean to be British? 2

What is Britain? Multiple European ethnic types made up the original basis of British stock, which remained stable for 1,000 years. It is not true that constant waves of immigration continued in this time.

But Britishness is not based on ethnicity; Celt, Norse, Roman, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Saxon, Teuton, Indian, people are all British because they subscribe to shared values and culture and they freely mixed in marriage. Until recently, immigrants mostly integrated into society even if they kept certain home customs. The basis of society is what built society. What is this?

The basis of society is the fundamental forces that developed all that society is and values. From the beginning this was Christianity. Alfred introduced Christian laws based on the Bible and established schools and published Biblical books. The Celts had a powerful Christian church that for a while was more influential than the Papacy. The Saxons, and even many Vikings (such as Guthrum), converted to Christianity. Kings openly espoused Christian belief, such as Edward the Confessor. The Normans were already Christian (though Roman Catholic) when they arrived.

Over time rules began to be developed to order society beginning with Saxon moots and laws set by monarchs. Magna Carta [1215] enshrined many of our basic freedoms, such as trial by a jury of peers and habeas corpus. Parliamentary democracy was enhanced by Christian Oliver Cromwell after its captivation by the Stuarts. The Bill of Rights was ratified by Protestants William III and Mary II. After Henry VIII all monarchs are committed to defend the Protestant Christian faith and after William and Mary they swear to this in the Coronation Oath, affirming the priority of Common Law. Several monarchs were genuine evangelical Christians, like Edward VI.

The laws that developed from Alfred the Great onwards were based upon Biblical principles and considered to be Natural Law. Over time these were refined into the legal system we have now which is thoroughly Christian in disposition. At the height of British imperialism and power, Queen Victoria told a visiting Indian Maharajah that the basis of her rule was the Bible. The essential substance of Common Law is the Ten Commandments and British law is fundamentally different to the Napoleonic Code (not least in the presumption of innocence). British parliamentary democracy has been widely copied in free countries.

Alongside Christian laws and the judiciary were social developments that led to our current social system, virtually all of which were initiated by Christians. These include universities, schools, orphanages, hospitals, care homes, prison reforms, child reforms, social work, poor laws, social toleration, freedom to assemble and the abolition of slavery. Even technology and science were fostered overwhelmingly by theists if not Christians. To this the Protestant work ethic enabled national prosperity from 1517 onwards.

Even many pioneering business leaders were devout Christians who promoted philanthropic enterprises, such as Joseph Rowntree, the Cadbury brothers and the Lever Brothers. Lever's aims were 'to socialise and Christianise business relations and get back to close family brotherhood'. Port Sunlight in the Wirral became a model village. The Cadbury brothers were Quakers who established the Bournville Village Trust building a model estate in Birmingham where workers got excellent houses, gardens with fruit trees, social provisions and education classes. Rowntree was also a Quaker, building a model village (New Earswick) in York for workers on low incomes. There were many other leading Christian businessmen such as Guinness and McAlpine. Britain led the way in developing social housing based on Christian principles. Other entrepreneurs followed this model because it was successful, producing healthy, happy workers.

The Labour Party was largely initiated by a Christian, Keir Hardie. Historically, Tories gave ostensible loyalty to the Church of England. The House of Lords always had bishops represented. The Queen swears to defend Christianity. MPs swear to obey God's laws. Until recently you had to swear on a Bible in court. The BBC was originally designed to uphold Christian principles. Until recently all schools taught Christianity and had prayers in the assembly. Childrens' works, such as the Scouts or the Boys' Brigade, were based on Christian principles and patriotism. BBC's 'Songs of Praise' gets 9 million viewers, far more than many liberal shows.

In short, the basis of Britain's history is Christianity. The basis of British culture is Christian. The discoveries and inventions that developed our infrastructure were predominantly made by Christians. Christian ethics and values were promoted in education until very recently. What is under attack in Britain today is Christianity as the bedrock of society. Diversity is a smokescreen to hide an attack on Christian principles.