

# **Raising Christian Children for Life in a Secular World**

Ridley College

Professor Trevor Cooling

19<sup>th</sup> June 2018



# Tim Farron

Former leader – Liberal Democrats

- To be a political leader... and to live as a committed Christian, to hold faithfully to the Bible's teaching, has felt impossible.



# The Pressures on Our Children

# Characteristics of a Secular Age

- Science as the ultimate route to knowledge

# Clash of Worldview

- 50%+ believe “science makes it hard to believe in God”.
- Under 25% agree “science is compatible with the view that God created humans”.



# Characteristics of a Secular Age

- Science as the ultimate route to knowledge
- Values relativism and values non-negotiables
- Decreasing loyalty to institutional religion
- Increasing proportions of “nones”
- Esoteric spirituality
- Fear of extremism
- Secular or secularist public space?

# Cognitive Dissonance



## Cognitive Dissonance

"Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong.

When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted.

It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance.

And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn't fit in with the core belief."

-Frantz Fanon

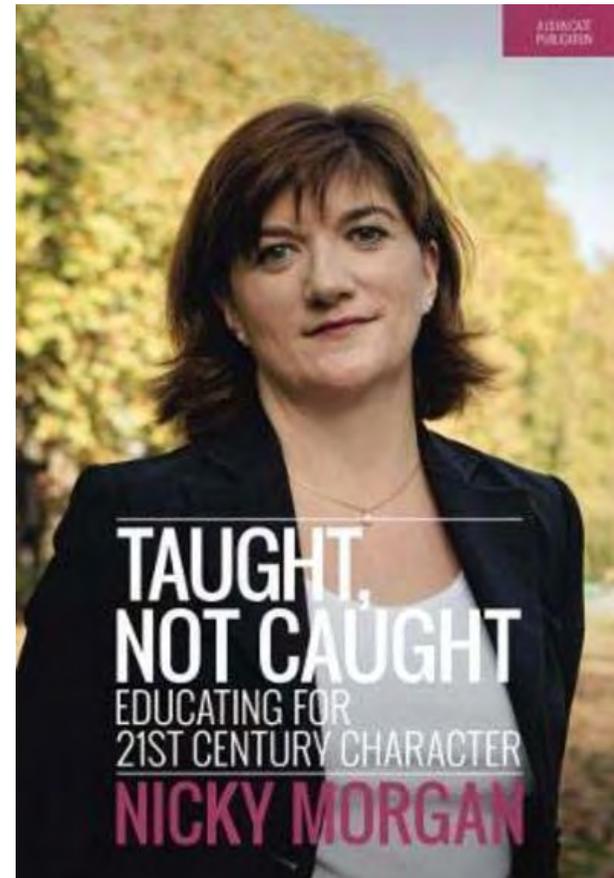
By: Ligi Foke

# Moral Therapeutic Deism

- A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
- God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
- The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
- God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
- Good people go to heaven when they die.

# The Pressure to Achieve

- 'a global leader in teaching character and resilience...ensuring that young people not only grow academically, but also build character, resilience and grit.'

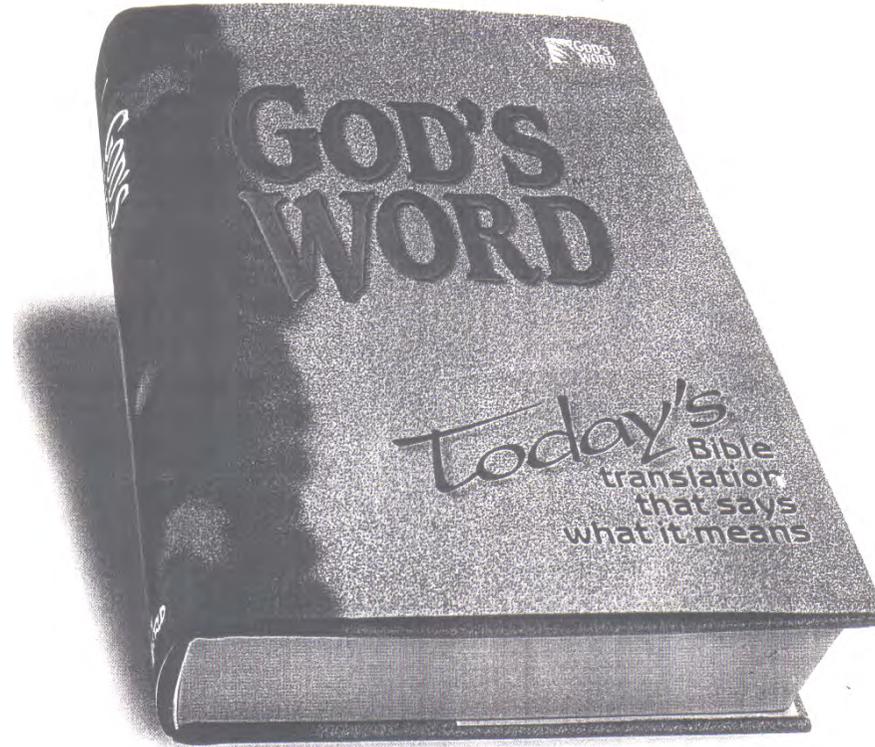


# Grit



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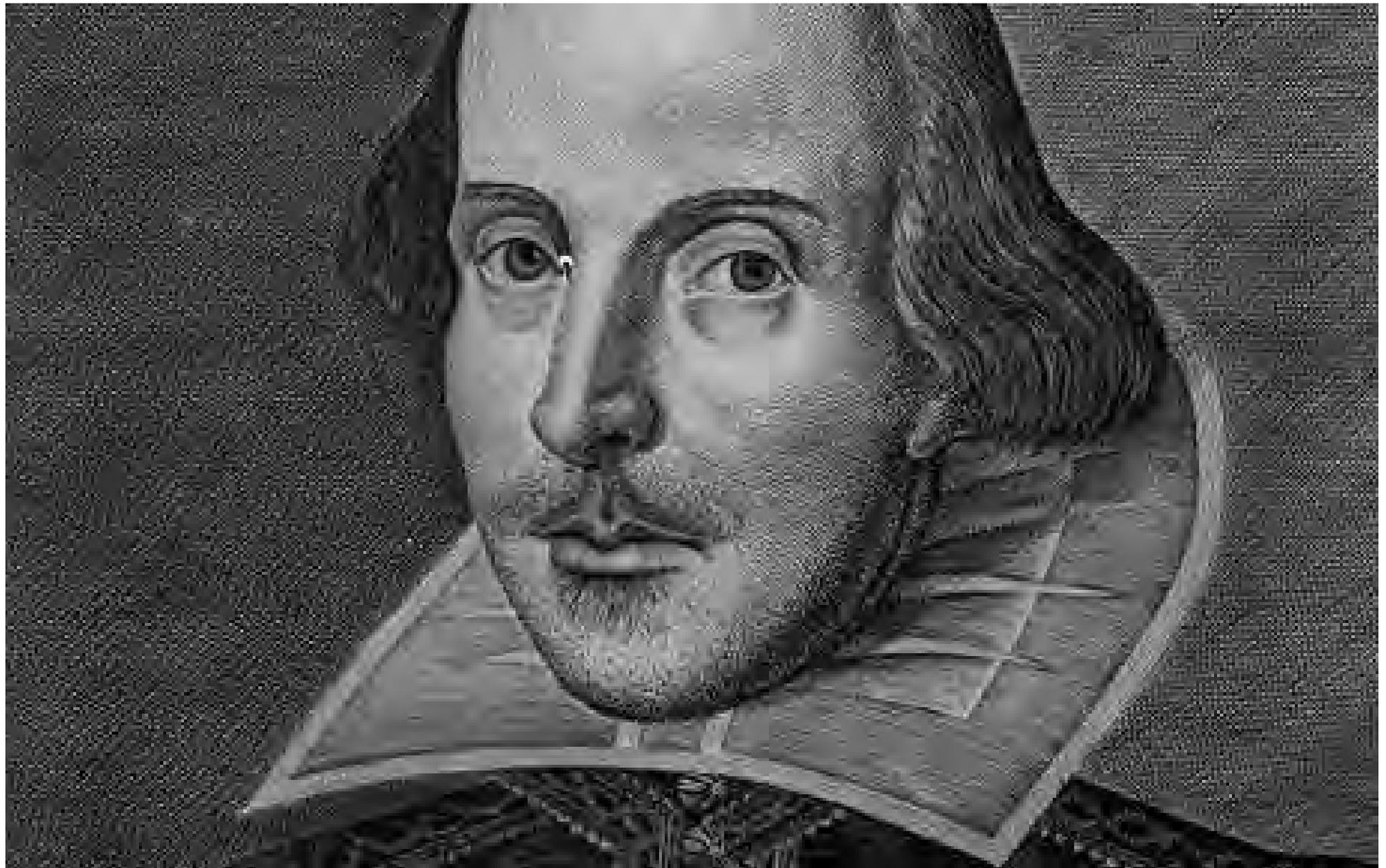
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# How Do We view Those We Disagree With?

# A Christian Response

The Bear and  
the Hunter

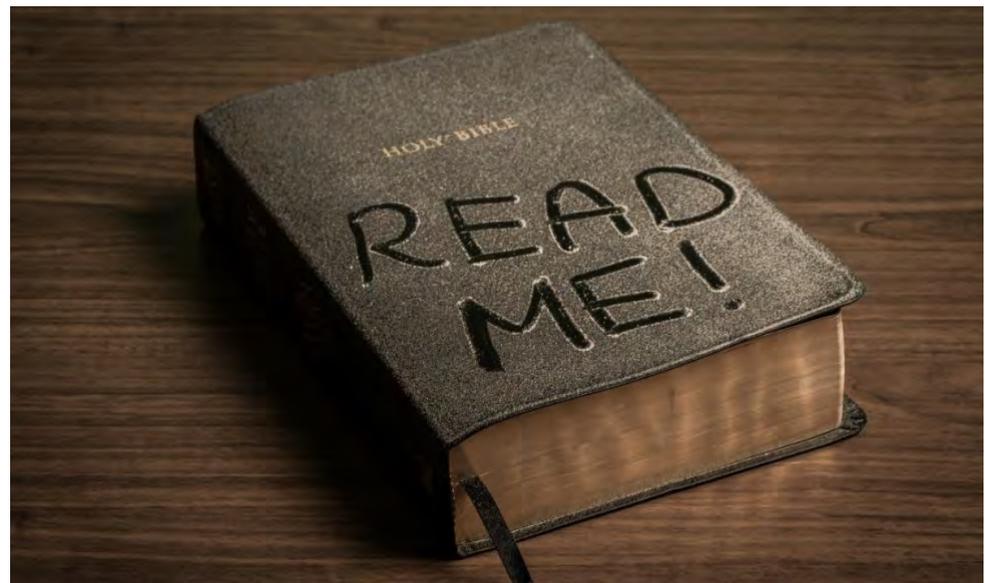


# Christian Responses to Controversy

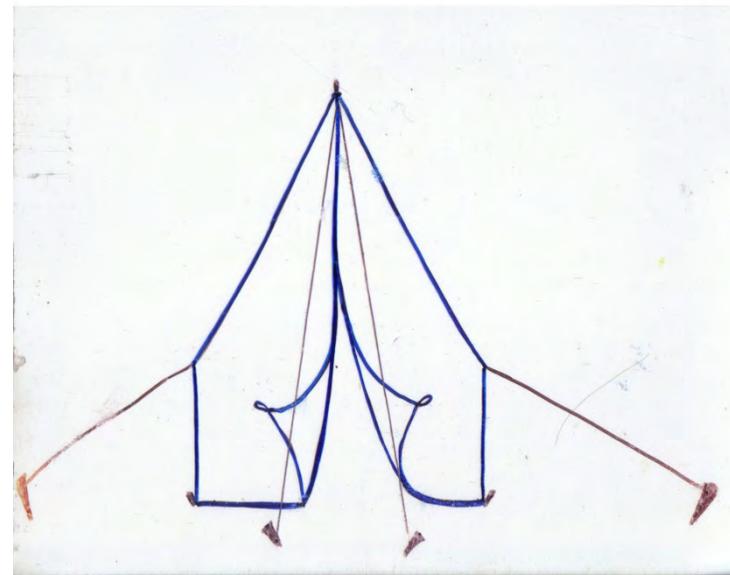
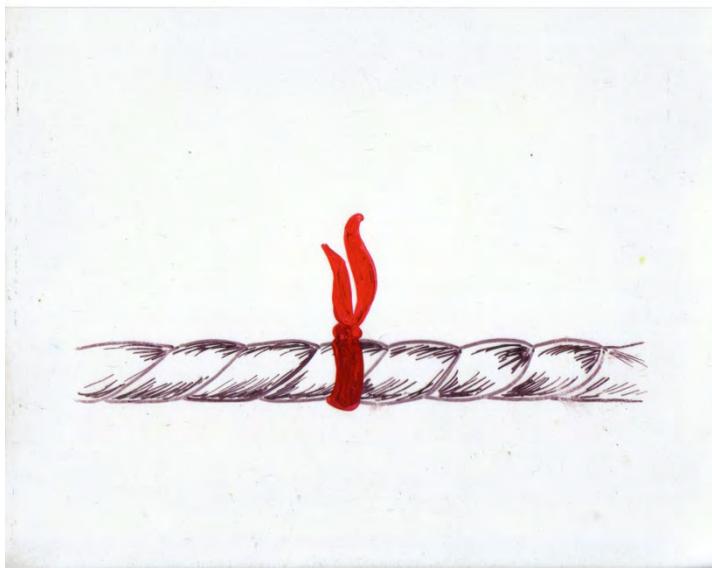
**Maximise Market Share**



**Be the Bible People Read**



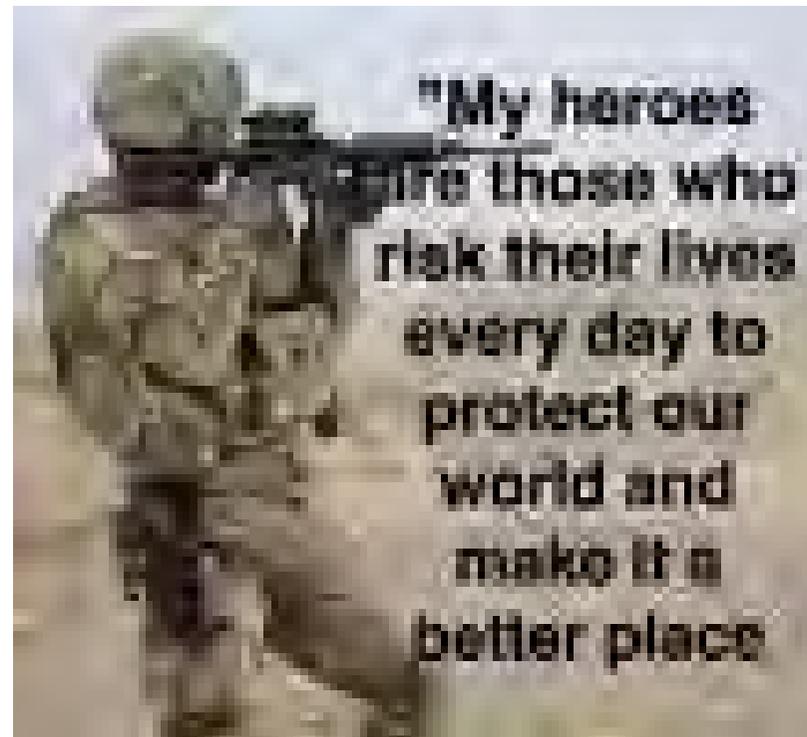
# What's Your Metaphor?



# Focus on Character Development not Compliance

# What Character?

When all is  
said and  
done, all I  
will have left  
is my  
character



# Hope and Grit

## **Aristotelian Grit**

- Individual self-determination
- Personal legacy
- Lonely hero
- Performance is king

## **Christian Hope**

- Part of a community of God's grace
- Contributing to a shared vision
- Faithful disciple
- Love is king

# Building Christian Character



# Building Christian Character



- One way of looking at this might be that for 42 years, I've been making small regular deposits in this bank of experience, education and training. And on January 15<sup>th</sup> the balance was sufficient so that I could make a very large withdrawal.

# Habit Forming!



# Preparation for Adult Life

## CAREER



## VOCATION



# The Art of Parenting

- Authoritative

NOT

- Authoritarian

OR

- Permissive

## Passing on Faith

Olwyn Mark

# Teaching End of Life Issues

- Three arguments for and three arguments against assisted suicide
- Fixed positions
- The Bible as a source of proof texts
- Christian ethics is all about winning arguments.



# Teaching End of Life Issues

