

What is it with So Many Church Leaders and Christian Truth?

Dissembling

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has, according to an article published in *Christian Today* <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/justin.welby.i.am.constantly.consumed.with.horror.at.the.way.the.church.has.treated.gay.people/94077.htm>, said (to an audience at the Greenbelt festival) 'I am constantly consumed with horror at the way the Church has treated gay people'. Well, that's as may be but – don't worry, I'm not going to write about homosexuality, or the Archbishop of Canterbury (clearly a man much given to doubt and self-questioning, which definitely has its place, and can do good) – but rather about the fact that I myself am constantly consumed with horror at the way Church leaders and clergy seem to think that they have the authority (and, above all, the *ability*) to simply wipe away, at a stroke, doctrines about many things (including sins) which the Church has believed from its origins, and are explicitly enshrined in the Bible and the creeds.

I am constantly horrified (but mainly shocked) to learn, that on some occasions (thankfully not all) when clergy have been saying things in church, using phrases taken from the liturgy and scriptures, that they don't actually *really* believe them. I am also quite horrified by the fact that when you enter many churches (and not just Anglican ones) you can't actually assume, take for granted, that the leaders, or indeed members, of that church, are going to really believe the Christian faith as you have always understood it to be. Most of them may well do, but many, you find out (often much later on) only believe such words/ideas "symbolically", or find them to be "spiritually helpful" (whatever that is – personally, the only thing I could find in any way "helpful" is Truth, objective reality; things, like Jesus's resurrection, can only have spiritual significance/value, if they actually took place, as Nancy Pearcey reminds us).

Of course, "real" Christians (in my view) have always believed that the Christian Church necessarily taught Truth, owned it, and directly, honestly, proclaimed it – all others are dissemblers.

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