

We Want Our Church Back

Do You Sometimes Get The Feeling That The Anglican Church Has Been Hijacked?

Of course, in the mainstream media accounts of the recent Anglican primates' meeting at Canterbury, it's all been "about homosexuality"; but this is a distortion, most likely intentional. In truth, it's about "What kind of a Church are we?". Is ours a church which simply follows the mainstream (ie. materialist) culture, and cringingly complies with whatever the Establishment-directed mores tells us has to be kow-towed to, or is it an authentic Christian church, which ignores purely-this-worldly values and holds, instead, to the original, real, teachings of Jesus Christ, found in the Bible and the ancient traditions of the Christian Church?

In his article *Twelve Reasons Why Progressive Christianity Will Die Out*, (<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/standingonmyhead/2016/01/twelve-reasons-why-progressive-christianity-will-die-out.html>) Fr. Dwight Longenecker describes two kinds of Christianity which he labels Progressive and Historic. Member of the former, he says, in effect believe "their religion is a historical accident of circumstances and people, that Jesus Christ is, at best, a divinely inspired teacher, that the Scriptures are flawed human documents influenced by paganism and that the church is a body of spiritually minded people who wish to bring peace and justice to all and make the world a better place." Conversely, the Historic Christians believe that "their religion is revealed by God in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, and that the Scriptures are the primary witness of that revelation. They believe the church is the embodiment of the risen Lord Jesus in the world and that his mission to seek and to save that which is lost is still valid and vital. Historic Christians believe in the supernatural life of the Church and expect God to be at work in the world and in their lives." The author acknowledges that he 'paints' with "broad strokes". Personally, I use different terms. The second of these kinds I call orthodox, or authentic Christians, the latter, revisionist or culture-compliant Christians. What Longenecker calls Progressive Christianity is, clearly, one in which God is purely a subjective concept; it hints at materialism in its rejection of the idea of anything (historically, or in the present) coming from any possible 'beyond'; religion is a purely psychological phenomenon. So very accurately, Longenecker than goes on to say: "The real divide in Christianity is no longer Protestant and Catholic, but progressive and historic." The old days are indeed over.

The *real* struggle or divide, in the Church of England and Anglicanism (which does seem to have been simply patched up or glossed over, at the recent Canterbury meeting), is between these two kinds of Christianity (whatever labels we use; 'Progressives' - who probably call themselves 'Liberal' - call the others 'Conservative, a subtly derogatory term). But of course, the Church of England, and all of Anglicanism (and every other Christian denomination) *used to be, and always was* of the Historic or orthodox variety; and those of us who still are, want the whole of Christianity to be with us, to 'get real', and realise that Progressive Christianity will surely (for the twelve reasons given by Longenecker) die. Above all, we don't want our Church (hi-jacked from the top, as it is, by Progressives or reductionists) to die with it (nor the reductionists themselves).