

TIM KELLER and CHRISTIANITY

Those familiar with the ministry of 'Take Heed' will know that I have already shared many concerns about the teachings of TIM KELLER – one of my previous articles concerning him is located on

<http://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2015/March/Tim-Keller-fleshing-out-concerns.pdf>

On 25 December 2016, the current principal of Union Theological College, where those being prepared for ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland are trained, posted the following to his Facebook Timeline –

Stafford Carson

25 December at 08:51

Great article for all who have doubts about Christianity.

[Am I a Christian, Pastor Timothy Keller?](#)

A prominent evangelical considers a skeptical journalist's doubts.

NYTIMES.COM|BY NICHOLAS KRISTOF

This post then linked to the following

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/23/opinion/sunday/pastor-am-i-a-christian.html?mwrsm=Facebook>

With great sorrow of heart I was moved to post the following on 31st December

Sorry Stafford but you'll not be surprised to know that I don't share your enthusiasm for this piece. In relation to the 'Virgin Birth' Mr Keller omits to point out its necessity to keep the Lord free from the curse and condemnation upon all naturally procreated humanity incurred by the sin of Adam at 'the fall' (problematical of course for a 'theistic evolutionist' like Mr Keller). Then in relation to the 'Resurrection' he omits to identify that it confirms 'our justification' (Romans 4:25) through the Father's obvious acceptance of the finished sacrifice of the Lord at Calvary. (Cecil – an 'after-thought' – this too would be problematical for Mr Keller who has a liking for Jesuit founder, Ignatius Loyola)

As a self-admitted 'theistic evolutionist' the terminology used in this portion by Mr Keller strikes me as being somewhat disingenuous – 'There is nothing illogical about miracles if a Creator God exists. If a God exists who is big enough to create the universe in all its complexity and vastness, why should a mere miracle be such a mental stretch?'

Finally, Mr Keller once more introduces doubt about salvation being exclusively in a 'known Christ' when he states 'The Bible is clear about two things — that salvation must be through grace and faith in Christ, and that God is always fair and just in all his dealings. What it doesn't directly tell us is exactly how both of those things can be true together. I don't think it is insurmountable. Just because I can't see a way doesn't prove there cannot be any such way. If we have a God big enough to deserve being called God, then we have a God big enough to reconcile both justice and love.'

Salvation is "BY grace" and that being the case the question of being 'fair' doesn't enter the equation. Mr Keller maybe 'can't see a way' – perhaps he needs afresh to study in-depth Romans 10:1-17. In contrast to Mr Keller, John MacArthur writes 'Salvation comes to those who hear and believe the facts of the gospel'.

Finally, by quoting (amongst others) N T Wright, this demonstrates a lack of discernment on Mr Keller's part in the light of Mr Wright's doctrinal 'track record' – Mr Wright may be helpful where the 'historicity' of the Lord is concerned but not where 'soteriology' is concerned – readers will find a helpful talk on this on

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRCAXC0Jm4Q>

Finally, my own modest efforts on Mr Wright and his NPP can be read on

<http://www.takeheed.info/news-from-the-front-september-2007/>

Grieved at having to pen this Stafford but "pleasing men" is not part of my brief (1 Thessalonians 2:4)

Within two hours of me posting my comments to Mr Carson's Timeline they had 'mysteriously' disappeared. I sent a message to Mr Carson asking if he had deleted them and although my message was seen by Mr Carson within 40 minutes of me sending it to date I have not received a response. If the answer had been 'no' it would have been a simple matter for Mr Carson to send it. However, in the absence of any response to date I can really only draw one conclusion.

It is a matter of great sadness for me that Stafford Carson (the college principal and a former Presbyterian Moderator) is directing people to the questionable 'musings' of Tim Keller. The thoughts and views of Mr Keller may 'tick boxes' for those who inhabit the corridors and halls of academia but I doubt if they would resonate much with people in the pews.

In my very first article written about Mr Keller and which is located on

http://www.takeheed.info/pdf/current-concerns-2013/Tim_Keller.pdf

I wrote this - **‘Jesuitry has not gone away and history has shown that one of the means favoured by The Jesuits to achieve reversal and destruction of The Reformation has been through ‘infiltration’ of Protestant denominations.’**

So, let me just once again draw attention to Jesuitical language used by Mr Keller - we read these comments by Mr Keller in the article – **‘The Bible makes categorical statements that you can’t be saved except through faith in Jesus ... If you don’t come to God through faith in what Christ has done, you would be approaching on the basis of your own goodness... If access to God is through the grace of Jesus, then anyone can receive eternal life instantly... The Bible is clear about two things — that salvation must be through grace and faith in Christ...’** Any Roman Catholic theologian could say ‘Amen’ to these statements for the simple reason that the vital word **‘ALONE’** is nowhere to be seen.

In conclusion, one final comment about Stafford Carson. I have been increasingly concerned about his ‘evangelical’ position ever since he participated in a conference held in St Patrick’s RC College, Maynooth back in 2010 that sought to forge links between John Calvin and Ignatius Loyola. Trevor Morrow was a co-host and Ken Newell was one of the conference organisers. In my opinion their involvement and participation should have been enough to keep any true and faithful 'evangelical' well away as you can read in an article I wrote (link given below).

Details of the conference and speakers can be viewed on

<http://www.catholicbishops.ie/2010/10/05/calvin-and-loyola-conference-in-maynooth-on-8-and-9-october-2010/>

I phoned Stafford in advance of the conference and he sought to assure me that for him it was just an academic exercise and that he would just present a historical talk that would not compromise his position as an 'evangelical'. In the light of that I did not mention his participation but now, with hindsight, I feel I was perhaps being overly accepting of his assurance.

My article on that event is located on

http://www.takeheed.info/Assorted_Articles/Ecumenism/maynooth-conference-on-calvin-and-loyola.pdf

Cecil Andrews – ‘Take Heed’ Ministries – 10 January 2017

APPENDIX

In my message to Stafford Carson I wrote **Finally, Mr Keller once more introduces doubt about salvation being exclusively in a ‘known Christ’** – by way of contrast and instruction John MacArthur expresses no such doubts in his excellent radio broadcasts of 24th and 25th January 2017 which can be heard on these links –

<http://www.gty.org.uk/MediaPlayer/archive/7792>

<http://www.gty.org.uk/MediaPlayer/archive/7793>

Paul wrote in 1st Corinthians 14:8 **“For if the trumpet shall give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle”** and by his expressed uncertainty about Christ being the only and exclusive way to the Father, Tim Keller is certainly trumpeting an **“uncertain sound”**.

In his radio messages, John MacArthur hits all the right ‘biblical notes’ and lays bare the false and unfounded doubts expressed by Mr Keller (and also rejects false hopes of salvation for unconverted Jews such as those expressed by John Hagee and false hopes of salvation for unconverted Muslims as heralded by The Vatican).

Cecil Andrews – ‘Take Heed’ Ministries – 25 January 2017