

‘PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY’:

Is anything but ‘PROGRESSIVE’.

APPENDIX added 12th June 2021:

Second APPENDIX added 21st June 2021:

Third APPENDIX added 29th October 2021:

Just recently I received an email from a friend who had been distressed by some exchanges he had with a member of the family circle – the exchanges concerned their views on how professing Christians should view the question of things **‘Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender etc.’** My friend would hold to what you might term **Orthodox, Biblical** views on these issues and, as a result, the other family member accused him of being **‘unloving’** and, in addition, another family member who referred to what the Scriptures clearly teach on these matters was then labelled as being a **‘pharisaical witch’**.

The professing Christian family member who was using these ‘descriptive’ terms then informed my friend that she identifies as a **‘Progressive Christian’**. Included in the email sent to me was the link to a short 6+ minute video and to quote his words to me – **‘If you decide to watch it, please watch the whole thing, lest you misunderstand what he is saying’**. This is the link to the video -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oi9iCW3TdzE>

The reason I highlighted **‘unloving’** in red in my opening paragraph was to highlight an important point brought out in the short video, namely, that misguidedly **‘Progressive Christians’** view themselves as much more **‘loving’** than **‘Orthodox Biblical Christians’**.

The next point of research for me on this subject was to visit a **‘Progressive Christianity’** web site to uncover what they officially believe and that information can be found on this link –

<https://progressivechristianity.org/the-8-points/>

As you will see they have **8 points** listed for this purpose in their own words – **‘By calling ourselves progressive Christians, we mean we are Christians who ...’**

I now plan to include here those **8 points** (Those quoted are from a version produced by a ‘United Church of The Valley’ in California and they include some slight variations and additions – they are located on <https://ucvchurch.org/the-8-points-of-progressive-christianity/>) and I respond to them by comments shown **in red**.

Point 1: (We) Believe that following the path of the teacher Jesus can lead to healing and wholeness, a mystical connection to “God,” as well as an awareness and experience of not only the Sacred, but the Oneness and Unity of all life;

This statement has much more in common with Hinduism and Eastern Mysticism than with Biblical Christianity. In the glossary of Ray Yungen's book 'A Time of Departing' he defines PANTHEISM (Cecil – a central Hindu tenet) as follows – 'God is all things. The universe and all life are CONNECTED (Cecil – emphasis mine) in a sum. This sum is the total reality of God. Thus, man, animals, plants, and all physical matter are seen as equal. The assumption – all is one, therefore all is deity'. Their use of the phrase 'the teacher Jesus' also reflects a worrying trend within professing Christendom as you can read in the article on this link

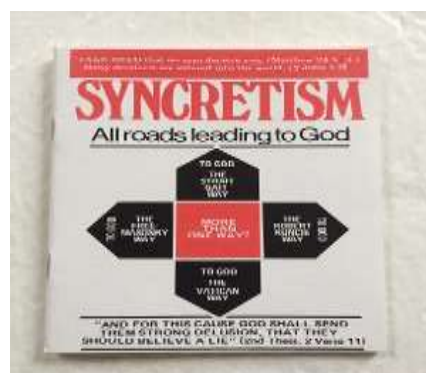
<https://christiantoday.com/article/nearly.a.third.of.evangelicals.think.jesus.was.only.a.great.teacher/135457.htm>

As you will see in this article, NOWHERE in the '8 points' is the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ referred to or affirmed. So, the 'Jesus' of 'Progressive Christianity' is a "false Christ" such as the Lord Himself gave advance notice of (Matthew 24:24-25).

Point 2: (We) Affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience "God," the Sacredness, Oneness and Unity of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom, including Earth, in our spiritual journey;

Whether 'Progressive Christians' care to admit it or not this statement has elements of both 'Mysticism' and 'Syncretism'. In his book 'The Mystical Maze' Pat Means wrote this on page 86 'But in our generation, Satan has very cleverly reversed his entire strategy. His attacks are no longer focussed on the truthfulness of Christ's claims, but on their uniqueness. Satan is using eastern mysticism today to exert a great levelling influence on Jesus' role and identity'. This is clearly seen in the words 'the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience "God,".

Their claim that 'Jesus provide(s) but one of many ways to experience "God," and that 'that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom, including Earth, in our spiritual journey;' shows their openness to SYNCRETISM. So, what is 'Syncretism'? In his 'Dictionary of Theological terms', the late Dr Alan Cairns wrote this – 'From the Greek verb *sunkretizein* "to combine"; the movement to unite, not merely the churches of Christendom, but all these with all other religions; the movement for a one-world religion'. SYNCRETISM was actually the title of the very first small booklet I ever had published as you can see –



The text of that booklet, SYNCRETISM, is included in my article located on

<https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2016/February/Pope-Francis-Syncretism.pdf>

In short, Point 2 is an outright denial of the Lord's own words in John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me".

One 'way, one 'truth' and one source of spiritual 'life' – the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Point 3: (We) Seek and create community that is inclusive of ALL people, including but not limited to:

Conventional Christians and questioning skeptics,
Believers and agnostics,
Those of all races, cultures, and nationalities
Those of all sexual orientations and all gender identities,
Those of all classes and abilities,
Those historically marginalized,
All creatures and plant life;

When God looks at this world, he sees only 2 'communities' – the first 'community' is made up of His true church, the 'ekklesia', the 'called-out ones', those who have been "born again" of His Spirit, those who are "saved" by 'grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone' (Ephesians 2:8).

The second community consists of all other human beings, those who are still "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) and upon whom His wrath still rests (John 3:36).

God instructs His people, His Church, not to enter into any form of alliance with "unbelievers" (2nd Corinthians 6:14-16) and commands them to "come out from among them and be ye separate" and if they do that He says "I will receive you" (2nd Corinthians 6:17).

Only the members of God's community, His true Church are counted as "righteous" in His sight (Romans 3:21-22; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2nd Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:8-9; Isaiah 61:10).

All others, including some of the designations mentioned such as 'skeptics', 'agnostics' and questionable 'sexual orientations' and 'gender identities' which God in His Word clearly views as sinful are not "righteous" in His sight but are viewed by Him as "unrighteous" and His Word clearly states "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?" (1st Corinthians 6:9).

Point 4: (We) Know that the way we behave towards one another and Earth is the fullest expression of what we believe, therefore we vow to walk as Jesus might have walked in this world with radical compassion, inclusion, and bravery to confront and positively change the injustices we experience as well as those we see others experiencing;

There is an element of 'general truth' in this statement but God's Word is more 'specific' concerning His true church as we read in 1st John 5:2 "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not grievous"; John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another".

True loving behaviour must be rooted in love for Christ and will manifest itself in obedience to God's commandments as we read in John 14:15 where Christ says "If ye love me keep my commandments".

That being the case, our behaviour towards unbelievers must always be willing, in love, to alert them to and to confront them with aspects of their life-styles that God clearly identifies as sin – this of course is something that 'Progressive Christians' would not accept as right behaviour when we revisit **Point 3** that details their 'all-inclusive' community.

Is it unloving for Christians to challenge people with God's truth on these matters? – not according to His Word – "henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive (Cecil – this certainly applies to so-called 'Progressive Christianity') **But, speaking the truth in love"** (Ephesians 4:14-15)?

As Christians, we are being genuinely loving friends in our behaviour to those we challenge, rather like Paul when he challenged the false beliefs of those swayed into error and false beliefs by the Judaisers and he wrote to them **"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth"?** (Galatians 4:16.) The only belief that counts in the sight of God and has eternal blessings is summed up in firstly John 3:36 **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son"** (Cecil - such as a number of those identified by the 'Progressive' community in point 3) **shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"** and then secondly in Acts 16:31 **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"**.

Point 5: (We) Find grace in the search for understanding and believe there is more value in questioning with an open mind and open heart, than in absolutes or dogma

The search for 'understanding' is totally fulfilled in two ABSOLUTE TRUTHS. The first is The Incarnate Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who said concerning Himself "I am the way, THE TRUTH and the life" (John 14:6). The second is again found in what Christ said in John 17:17 to His heavenly Father "Thy word is TRUTH".

God has not left us in the dark in the search for 'understanding' – we read in Psalm 119:105 "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path". Psalm 19:7 is even more explicit "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple".

Unsaved people such as those evidently found within 'Progressive Christianity', appear to believe that ABSOLUTE TRUTHS are to be rejected in favour perhaps of a consensus between divine revelation mixed with human wisdom. Such likely unsaved 'Progressives' evidence what Paul wrote in 1st Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man (Cecil – an unsaved person) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned".

In the previous chapter Paul also wrote these relevant inspired words "For the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the UNDERSTANDING of the prudent" (1st Corinthians 1:18-19). The closing phrase "the understanding of the prudent" has also been reliably translated as 'the cleverness of the clever' and even described as 'tricky scheming'.

Embedded in God's TRUTH is "sound doctrine" and we are clearly seeing in 'Progressive Christianity' a fulfilment of what Paul wrote in 2nd Timothy 4:3-4 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (Cecil – i.e., biblical ABSOLUTE TRUTH) but, after their own LUSTS, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the TRUTH and shall be turned unto fables". Speaking of the Greek word *Muthos*, translated as 'fable', Vines Dictionary says that 'it is to be contrasted with *aletheia* "TRUTH".

'Progressive Christians' elevate 'questioning' divinely-revealed TRUTH over 'accepting' divinely-revealed TRUTH. The Lord Jesus squashes that notion in these words "Verily, verily (Cecil – double emphasis) I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). That is an ABSOLUTE TRUTH to securely build one's eternity upon.

Point 6: (We) Work toward peace and justice among all people and all life on Earth;

This sounds very like the popular social, political 'gospel' to be found in various forms around the world. A helpful summary of this 'gospel' is to be found on – <https://www.gotquestions.org/social-gospel.html> I particularly noted these words 'Those who adhered to a social gospel sought to apply Christian ethics to social problems such as poverty, slums, poor nutrition and education, alcoholism, crime, and war. These things were emphasized while the doctrines of sin, salvation, heaven and hell, and the future kingdom of God were downplayed.'

I also think these words are very relevant 'Jesus never issued any call for political change, not even by peaceful means. He did not come to earth to be a political or social reformer. The gospel Jesus preached did not have to do with social reform or social justice or political change. Rather than attempt to change governments and institutions, which are made up of people, Jesus came to change people's hearts and point them to God's kingdom. He preached the saving power of the gospel and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.'

The over-arching mission of the true church is encapsulated in these words of the Lord Jesus – "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The Apostle Paul echoed that truth when he wrote "woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel" (1st Corinthians 9:16) and earlier in that letter he reminded the Christians in Corinth "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1st Corinthians 2:2).

Point 7: (We) Protect and restore the integrity of our Earth and all of Creation;

This sounds very much like a re-run of 'Emergent Church' teachings advocated by the likes of the heretical Brian McLaren. Some years ago, a 'Green bible' was published and one of those who contributed an essay in it was Mr McLaren. A helpful article on this is once more found on the 'Got Questions' web site and on this link - <https://www.gotquestions.org/Green-Bible.html> Although I was absolutely no fan of Eugene Peterson and his personal paraphrase of the bible called 'The Message' I think he summed up very astutely the 'short-comings' of the 'Green Bible' in these words from that article -

"The Green Bible sets out an urgent agenda for the Christian community." It seems clear that the main goal and purpose is to promote the "green" agenda and implies that God in His Word confirms this as a primary theme. However, the "urgent agenda" for the Christian community is not the reclamation of the earth, but the reclamation of souls destined for an eternity in hell. Anything that distracts Christians from this most basic reason for our existence is antithetical to God's plan for His people. Interestingly, the *Green Bible* does not seem to be prominently used as a tool by those who support today's "green" movement, no doubt because there are too many other truths in God's Word that contradict the basic philosophies of the "green" agenda. The *Green Bible* in reality is a perfect example of what the Apostle Paul speaks about in Romans: "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen" (Romans 1:25).

One final point to note – in Point 7 they refer to ‘our Earth’ – I have news for them, the earth is not ‘ours’ as we learn from Psalm 24:1 **“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein”**. A very basic but **ABSOLUTE TRUTH**.

Point 8: (We) Commit to a path of life-long learning, compassion, and selfless love on this journey toward a personally authentic and meaningful faith.

‘authentic and meaningful faith’ is not something we ‘journey toward’ – rather it is God’s gracious (Cecil – unmerited and unearned) gift to those whom in mercy He saves “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that NOT of yourselves, it is THE GIFT of God, NOT of works lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Believers must always be “Looking unto Jesus, the author (Vines – ‘Cause’) and finisher (Vines – ‘Perfecter’) of our faith”. From the moment they are truly “born again” believers possess ‘a personally authentic and meaningful faith’ and FROM that should spring “good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10B) because “we are HIS workmanship created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:10A).

The path of a true believer is not a journey into the unknown, it is a “walk” with a loving Saviour to a settled destination **“For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ... Therefore, we are ALWAYS confident, knowing that, whilst we are home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: For we walk by FAITH, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”** (2nd Corinthians 5:1 & 6-8).

I hope you will see that each of these 8 points have a common theme – each represent a direct challenge to or contradiction of the TRUTH of God’s Word. The warning penned under divine inspiration by the Apostle Paul to the believers in Colossae has application to ‘Progressive Christianity’ – namely – **“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ”** (Colossians 2:8)

Pastor John MacArthur’s comments on this verse in his Study Bible reinforce its application where ‘Progressive Christianity’ is concerned – he wrote – **‘False teachers who are successful in getting people to believe lies, rob them of truth, salvation and blessing. “Philosophy” (literally ‘love of wisdom’) appears only here in the New Testament. The word referred to more than merely academic discipline, but described any theory about God, the world, or the meaning of life ... Paul however equates the false teachers’ philosophy with ‘empty’ or worthless ‘deception’ (“vain deceit”). Far from being advanced (Cecil – ‘Progressive’) profound knowledge, the false teachers’ beliefs were simplistic and immature like all the rest of the speculations, ideologies, philosophies and psychologies the fallen satanic and human system invents’.**

One of the driving forces behind ‘**Progressive Christianity**’ was an **Episcopal Bishop** called **John Shelby Spong**. You can glean information about him on this link

<https://progressivechristianity.org/bishop-spong-newsletter/>

The article on the following link is a good lead-in to understanding just how unbiblical this man is and the other articles referred to ‘flesh-out’ his gross heresies –

<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/735-john-shelby-spong-anglican-nightmare>

In this article you will read this concerning **Mr. Spong** – ‘Spong is saturated with Darwinism.’ **Answers in Genesis** picked up on this in their short article on –

<https://answersingenesis.org/theistic-evolution/spong-is-wrong/>

Just as an aside, the **Episcopal Church** that **Mr. Spong** is a Bishop of is the same ‘church’ that **Bishop Michael Curry** is connected to – remember him? – he was the ‘charismatic’ preacher at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meaghan Markle back in May 2018. Clearly, he is ‘tarred’ with some of the same ‘**Progressive**’ (Cecil – bible challenging and contradicting views) “**philosophy and vain deceit**” as **Mr. Spong** – see

<https://www.christiantoday.com/article/a-trial-that-should-shame-all-anglicans/134377.htm>

Another ‘driving force’, although he may not have realized at the time what his views would lead to in this day and age, was yet another **Episcopal Bishop**, this time in Scotland, called **Richard Holloway**. Helpful information on him can be found on these links –

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Holloway

This excerpt is enlightening

‘He was Bishop of Edinburgh from 1986 and was elected Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church in 1992. He resigned from these positions in 2000 and is now regarded as one of the most outspoken and controversial figures in the church, having taken an agnostic worldview and commenting widely on issues concerning religious belief in the modern world.

His own theological position has become increasingly radical and he has described himself as an "after-religionist", with strong faith in humanity’.

The article on this link by a ‘supporter’ of **Mr. Holloway** gives additional information

<https://johnian.wordpress.com/2012/02/21/believing-bishops/>

An interesting excerpt from it reads

‘A favourite writer of mine is that turbulent priest **Richard Holloway**, ‘controversial’ former Bishop of Edinburgh, so I am glad to see that he has published his autobiography, recently sympathetically reviewed by Andrew Motion. I look forward to reading it ...

I remember reading a passage in a book by **John Shelby Spong**, another firebrand in the episcopal church, in which he described the incredulity and hostility with which parishioners greeted his attempts to explain the origins of the Nativity story ...

Richard Holloway has moved away from the church but he has also thereby liberated himself to think the unthinkable, propose the unimaginable ... I look forward to reading his book’

Finally, the article on this link, which was centered on problems linked to ‘**Operation Mobilisation**’ having distributed pro-Roman Catholic booklets supportive of Mel Gibson’s movie, ‘**The Passion**’ has a relevant portion on page 3 –

<https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2019/February/operation-mobilisation-purge-mv-doulos-of-passion-books-promoting-roman-catholicism.pdf>

‘Other ‘Christian’ authors listed in the STL catalogue include the late ‘Cardinal’ Basil Hume, the late ‘Mother’ Teresa, USA ‘convert’ to Roman Catholicism Scott Hahn, the heretic Benny Hinn, **Richard Holloway** who according to The Guardian [G2 supplement of 18 August 1999 published during his tenure as Scottish Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh] reportedly ‘**didn’t have any hang-ups about young people experimenting with casual sex or soft drugs**’, stated in relation to the Bible that ‘**obviously it is not meant to be taken literally**’ and gave his view on Jesus as follows – ‘**He was a sacred person. He had an encounter with the transcendent meaning we call God...My own preaching of the resurrection is evolving. I preach it as symbol, not necessarily as a brute physical fact. I’m agnostic on that**’

Whilst the **Episcopal Church** might in some ways equate to ‘**WUHAN**’ as regards the location-source of the ‘**pandemic**’ of ‘**Progressive Christianity**’, in many ways, to use an expression that has come into vogue in the past year, these individuals loom large if we use ‘**track and trace**’ to identify influential individuals involved in the emergence of this co-called ‘**Progressive Christianity**’.

However, that ‘spiritual virus’ has not confined itself to affecting just the **Episcopal Church**, as can be seen by going to this link on the web site of the **Progressive Christianity Network** in the United Kingdom – it has ‘invaded’ many denominations -

<https://www.pcnbritain.org.uk/locations/churches>

There you can see mention of **Unitarian, Quaker, Church of Scotland, United Reformed, Baptist, Methodist, Metropolitan Community Church** (openly LGBT) and **Anglican** 'churches.'

On their web site they also have a 'blog' page which gives assorted authors an opportunity to express their views – you'll never guess who is quoted – **JOE BIDEN** – what a BIG surprise!!

<https://www.pcnbritain.org.uk/blog/post/the-greatest-commandment-has-guided-my-politics-by-joe-biden-the-christian-post>

Listen to this extract –

'My Catholic faith drilled into me a core truth – that every person on earth is equal in rights and dignity, because we are all beloved children of God. We are all created "imago Dei" – beautifully, uniquely, in the image of God, with inherent worth. It is the same creed that is at the core of our American experiment and written into our founding documents – that we are all created equal and endowed by our creator with inalienable rights.'

However, for **Joe Biden**, being 'equal in rights and dignity' and 'endowed by our creator with inalienable rights' does not extend to the unborn. This quote, attributed to **Pastor Mike Riccardi of Grace Community Church** 'nails it' -

"A person who believes anyone has a 'right to choose' to tear a baby apart limb from limb, or to burn a baby to death with a chemical solution, is a barbarian, and doesn't belong in polite company, let alone political office."

In contrast, another blog-contributor came as no surprise at all – **GILES FRASER** –

[https://unherd.com/2021/03/when-conversion-is-abusive/?tl_inbound=1&tl_groups\[0\]=18743&tl_period_type=3&mc_cid=0228aa8537&mc_eid=fa4457c82e](https://unherd.com/2021/03/when-conversion-is-abusive/?tl_inbound=1&tl_groups[0]=18743&tl_period_type=3&mc_cid=0228aa8537&mc_eid=fa4457c82e)

If you're not familiar with **Giles Fraser** then let me direct you to my article on –

<https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2009/July/enemies-of-the-cross-of-christ.pdf>

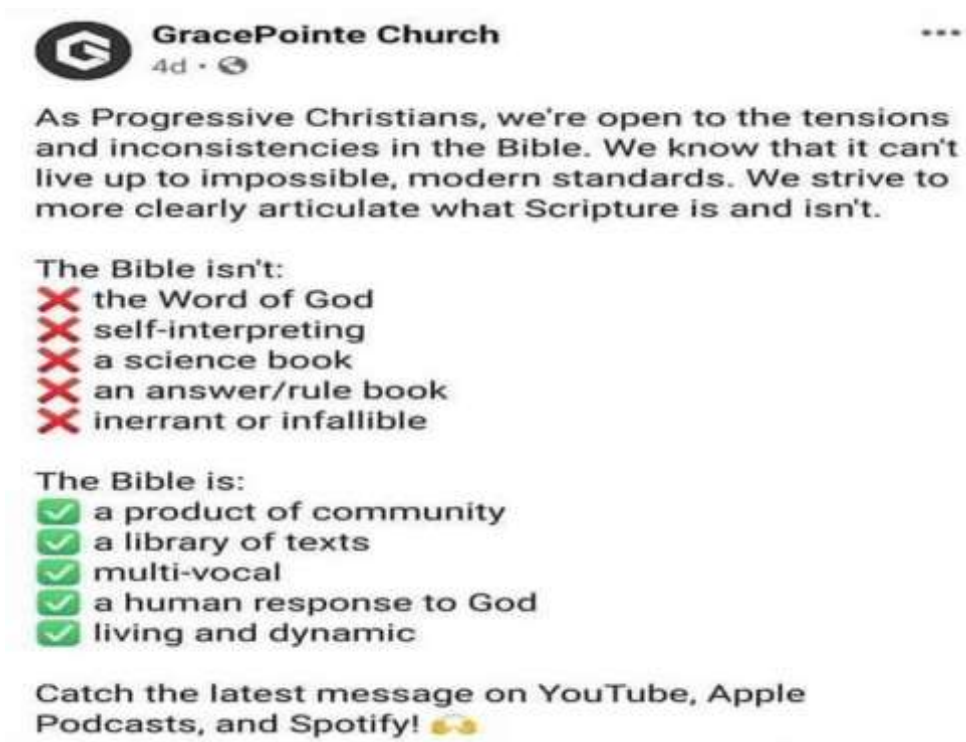
and what you read there under the heading '**Giles Fraser**' from page 12 to the top of page 17 will demonstrate why he is a 'perfect fit' for so-called **Progressive Christianity**.

Moving on from individuals let me now illustrate how so-called **Progressive Christianity** 'plays out' in a number of 'churches.' One in America and one here locally in Northern Ireland.

My introduction to the American ‘**Progressive Christian**’ ‘church’ happened on 12th February 2021 when a Facebook friend posted the following –

This is the same bunch of wicked folks that march in the Pride parades each year and tell sodomites that it’s ok to stay gay. They blocked me on their church page because I was preaching the gospel to them. Anybody to them that hates sin are haters. They told me that’s not the kind of God they serve. I agreed with them. My reply was, no you serve the god of your own imaginations and wicked desires. Boom! I was blocked. They are a wicked bunch. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” II Corinthians 11:13-15 NKJV

That comment was then followed by this image



I then did a search for the web site of this ‘**GracePointe Church**’ and located it on –

<https://www.gracepointe.net/about-us>

On that page we learn the following –

OUR BELIEFS

At our core, GracePointe holds to these principles with open hands and humility:

1. God is a mystery to be explored, **not a doctrine to be espoused.**
2. Life is a gift to be enjoyed.

3. Love is a responsibility to be shared.

4. The Good News is that you are inherently united with God.

OUR VALUES

5. As a community, GracePointe places an emphasis on these values that define our culture and the way go about our lives, both individually and collectively.

6. COURAGE

7. We stand for what we believe.

8. CURIOSITY

9. We keep asking questions.

10. GRATITUDE

11. We don't take what we have for granted.

12. HONESTY

13. We believe in and express our authentic selves.

14. HUMILITY

15. We hold gracious space for differences.

16. LOVE

17. We see the Divine in one another.

I have highlighted **in red** several of the very obvious unbiblical compromises and errors but in the light of my analysis earlier of the **8 points** of **Progressive Christianity** I'm sure you will hopefully also recognise the double-speak compromises and contradictions contained in other parts of what they have posted on their web site.

The following is also posted on their web site page –

PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

The GracePointe community is leading the theological development and practice of progressive Christianity. This is at the core of what makes us distinct, and is far from a simple label change for a modern repackaging of traditional beliefs. **Although Progressive Christianity defies specific doctrines**, here is a helpful explanation from ProgressiveChristianity.org. **By calling ourselves progressive Christians, we mean we are Christians who:**

1. Believe that following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life.
2. Affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom in our spiritual journey.
3. Seek community that is inclusive of ALL people, including but not limited to: Conventional Christians and questioning skeptics, believers and agnostics, women and men, those of all sexual orientations and gender identities, those of all classes and abilities.

4. Know that the way we behave towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe.
5. Find grace in the search for understanding and believe there is more value in questioning than in absolutes.
6. Strive for peace and justice among all people.
7. Strive to protect and restore the integrity of our Earth.
8. Commit to a path of life-long learning, compassion, and selfless love.

On the web page giving details on 'The Team' at the church – located on

<https://www.gracepointe.net/our-team>

we learn the following about one of 'The Team' –

**NATHANIAL GREEN
COMMUNICATIONS & OPERATIONS SPECIALIST**

A degree-required internship brought Nathaniel (he/him) to **GracePointe** in the summer of 2018 where he served in a role on the Creative Arts Team. That September, prior to the community's move to a new location, Nathaniel joined the team as the Communications & Operations Specialist. The following year, he joined the staff of **Q Christian Fellowship** full time as their Communications Manager. **Nathaniel lives in Nashville with his husband Elliot** and dogs Oliver and Winston.

Details of **Nathaniel's** role with **Q Christian Fellowship** can be seen on

<https://www.qchristian.org/team>

Then on this page –

<https://www.qchristian.org/about>

we read

Q Christian Fellowship is cultivating radical belonging for LGBTQ+ Christians and allies.

and when I initially did a google search for **Q Christian Fellowship** I noted this summary –

The **Q Christian Fellowship** is an **ecumenical Christian ministry** focused on **serving lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer, and straight ally Christians**. It was founded in 2001 as the **Gay Christian Network** by Justin Lee and is currently administered from Denver, Colorado. – **Wikipedia**

Moving on then from this 'GracePointe Church' located in Nashville, TN I want to look at a local 'church' based here in Northern Ireland.

It is known as **Harbour Faith Community** and is located in Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim. This is the web site address

<https://harbourfaith.com/>

Proudly on their Homepage they declare –

The home of **Progressive Christianity** in Carrickfergus

The minister of **Harbour Faith Community**, **Steve Ames**, was widely reported in the Belfast Telegraph of 21st January 2020 as being totally in favour of so-called 'Same-Sex-Marriage' being conducted with all 'the trappings' of religion and, according to the article, 'In an open letter to the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and other government agencies, **Mr Ames** said, while he would be delighted to perform same-sex marriages in a religious context, he cannot do so until the conclusion of the upcoming consultation.' You can read that article on this link –

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-pastor-demands-right-for-same-sex-couples-to-hold-religious-weddings-38880122.html>

As regards any rules they have for engaging in **Communion**, it is certainly an **unbiblical** 'Open Table' as we can read on this link –

<https://harbourfaith.com/#/communal/>

The words 'Through this single sacramental act we leave behind the individualised identities that culture so readily fashions for us' are somewhat disingenuous for on this page –

<https://harbourfaith.com/lgbt>

Harbour Faith Community state – '*We declare ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation, welcoming into the full life and ministry of the church persons of every race, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and economic status.*'

That's not 'culture fashioning individualised identities' but rather **Harbour Faith Community** doing it. Their declaration also flies totally in the face of **1st Corinthians 6:9-10** "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? **Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God**".

It also ignores the clear warning given in 1st Corinthians 11:28-29 **“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (judgment) to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body”**. In his commentary on these verses Geoffrey B Wilson writes – ‘Paul says, “Let a man examine himself”. This means he must not come to this table in a spirit that is unworthy of it ... Such self-examination is necessary because the man who fails to discern the sacred character of this meal, so far from furthering his salvation actually eats and drinks to his own condemnation’.

Commenting on the previous **verse 27** which reads **“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord”** John MacArthur in his Study Bible writes ‘To come to the Lord’s Table clinging to one’s sin does not only dishonour the ceremony, but it also dishonours His body and blood, treating lightly the gracious sacrifice of Christ for us. It is **necessary** to set all sin before the Lord (**v 28**) then partake, so as not to **mock** the sacrifice for sin, by holding on to it’.

A further article in the Belfast Telegraph on 10th December 2020 once more charted the ‘Progression’ of **Steve Ames** in this whole area of so-called ‘**Same-Sex-Marriage**’ as you can read on this link –

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-irelands-first-religious-same-sex-wedding-taking-place-today-39853875.html>

In the article we read ‘**Northern Ireland’s first ever religious same-sex marriage will take place in Co Antrim today, following legislation introduced in July ... Pastor Steve Ames from Harbour Faith Community will be officiating today’s first same-sex religious ceremony ...** “Not a lot of people realise that there are a number of ministers and faith communities who do support the rights of LGBT folk to marry,” he explained ... **“Our own scriptures tell us that, ‘Anyone who loves has been born of God and knows God’”, 1 John 4:7.’**

It seems to me that in quoting **1st John 4:7 Mr Ames** believes that he has played a biblical **‘trump card’** to silence any who would dare to object to a ‘loving’ so-called **‘Same-Sex-Marriage’**.

Commenting on this verse and **verse 8** in his Study Bible, **John MacArthur** writes ‘**Those who are born again receive God’s nature** (cf. 2nd Peter 1:4). **Since God’s nature exhibits love as a chief characteristic** (Cecil – ‘chief’ but not ‘supreme’) (see also **verse 8**), God’s children will also reflect that love. **Someone may profess to be a Christian** but only those who display **love like their heavenly Father** actually possess His divine nature and are truly born again’.

So, does **‘divine love’** manifest itself in so-called **‘Same-Sex-Marriage’**? There are many scriptures that make clear what God thinks of perverse sexual-union between those of the same sex –

I could refer to a number but in **Romans 1:26-28** we read **“For this cause** (Cecil – dishonouring the God of creation) **God gave them up unto vile affections** (Vines – ‘passions of dishonour’): **for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise, also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And, even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient** (Vines – ‘befitting’).

Those who indulge in such sexual activity, **God gives them up, God gives them over** – God basically hands them over to the desires emanating from their own **“reprobate mind”** – a depraved, useless worthless mind as far as God is concerned – basically they are, as an expression goes, **‘beyond the pale’** (To be **'beyond the pale'** is to be unacceptable; outside agreed standards of decency – see <https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/beyond-the-pale.html>)

So, going back to my question – does **‘divine love’** manifest itself in so-called **‘Same-Sex-Marriage’**? as **Mr Ames** clearly thinks it does, the testimony of Scripture is totally opposed to his opinion and he would do well to ponder this truth from the **‘great love chapter’** – **1st Corinthians 13** where we read concerning **“love”** in **verse 6** that it **“Rejoiceth NOT in iniquity”**. According to **Vines**, this use of **“iniquity”** literally means **‘unrighteousness’** so God clearly does not look upon so-called **‘Same-Sex-Marriage’** with a divine smile of approval for we read in **Habakkuk 1:13** concerning God **“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on iniquity”**.

Earlier I agreed that **God’s ‘love’** was a **‘chief characteristic’** but not His **‘supreme characteristic’**. God's greatest and supreme characteristic/attribute is **HOLINESS** (Isaiah 6:3) and not ‘love’. Indeed, His love in Christ (Romans 5:8) cannot be rightly understood until a person understands the **perfection of His holiness** and **our complete unrighteousness** as Paul wrote in Romans 3:10.

The **‘Progressive Christianity’** of both **‘GracePointe Church’** and **Harbour Faith Community** proclaims a **false God** and a **false Christ** and extends a **false assurance** of salvation to those who believe in their message. In reality, there is nothing **‘Progressive’** about their views, they are in effect **‘Regressive’** – **regressing** all the way back to the **Garden of Eden** and once more parroting Satan by saying **“Yea, hath God said”?** (Genesis 3:1)

By way of conclusion here are a few links that make for interesting reading on this topic of **‘Progressive Christianity’**. The first relates to supposed ‘Christian’ reaction to the death in 2020 of an American Supreme Court Judge, **Ruth Bader Ginsburg** – clearly no friend of the Lord Jesus Christ or The Bible but that didn’t stop some ‘Christians’ posting tributes to her – note in particular the one by **Jim Wallis** of **Sojourners**.

https://disrn.com/opinion/opinion-progressive-christians-canonization-of-rbq?fbclid=IwAR36asoEBnQJRqZt-FWeMQtLw6DU-ZdLHVknoEInMDK8XqWHcXzEhYy_SA0

Earlier in this article (top of page 10) I drew attention to the surprising inclusion of an article by **Joe Biden** on the **Progressive Christianity Network** web site. Well, these links will show clear thinking and connections between **Jim Wallis** and **Joe Biden** –

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2018/04/06/jim-wallis-leading-way-evangelicals/>

https://www.mobilize.us/joebiden/event/328689/?fbclid=IwAR1Z4sLVZYS_T98ICJt_sKWWm8aMZSBogo5imi9W6XrhMYuJdqA2znRxdqS8

Further helpful information about **Jim Wallis** can be found on

<https://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=4545>

Then, on the following link, there is a short blog drawing attention to what sounds like a helpful book analysing this whole subject of '**Progressive Christianity**'. I have to confess that I am only now getting round to ordering a copy of the book in question '**Another Gospel**' by **Alisa Childers** so obviously at this stage I can't give it carte blanche approval but if it turns out to be problematical, I shall update this article accordingly. (See **UPDATE** included in **MAJOR CAVEAT** on page 18)

https://breakpoint.org/why-progressive-christianity-is-another-gospel/?fbclid=IwAR316WvvFVz_GZGZrLeIS5tcV5sLw3pr2sX59NEbeKa4wQmIj9lw0PiCq0U

Incidentally, I did not order the book through the blog as it would have involved giving a donation to the '**Colson Centre**' (named after Charles Colson, the arch ecumenist) so instead I ordered my copy via this link –

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Another-Gospel-Christian-Progressive-Christianity/dp/1496441737/ref=sr_1_1?adqrpid=112184058144&dchild=1&qclid=Cj0KCQjw9YWDBhDyARIsADt6sGbPdiyekExRJmNbDK1z4gb0GUeF9gdyrXK9VnOZgKKcEMW-atoyg8aAqmUEALw_wcB&hvadid=452266834799&hvdev=c&hvlocphy=1007274&hvnetw=q&hvqmt=e&hvrnd=13728419319627395505&hvtargid=kwd-898707777803&hydadcr=24436_1816130&keywords=another+gospel+alisa+childers&qid=1617031886&sr=8-1

For readers living in North America, it can be purchased via this link

https://www.amazon.com/Another-Gospel-Christian-Progressive-Christianity/dp/1496441737/ref=sr_1_1?crid=39D9PL4X5O22J&dchild=1&keywords=another+gospel+alisa+childers&qid=1617032353&s=books&prefix=another+gospel+alisa+childers%2Caps%2C240&sr=1-1

Having just mentioned **Alisa Childers**, this short 14-minute video where she interacts with a **Mike Winger** on a 'tenet' of 'Progressive Christianity' is helpful and informative. As I said, I am not overly familiar with the views of **Alisa Childers**, or for that matter, **Mike Winger**, but what they shared on this video sounded helpful –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zMPOUFxvPc>

MAJOR CAVEAT

(Subsequently updated 26th April 2021 -see next page)

On this link

<https://www.alisachilders.com/books.html>

Alisa Childers details various books that she feels might be helpful to people to increase their understanding of Christianity – sadly, for me, there would be a number of serious **red flags** such as – 'Mere Christianity' by **C S Lewis**; Several books involving **Norman Geisler**; 'The Reason for God' by **Tim Keller**; 'The Resurrection of the Son of God' by **N T Wright**; 'Why does God care who I sleep with?' by **Sam Allberry**; 'Orthodoxy' by **G K Chesterton**

The upshot of this **MAJOR CAVEAT** is that I think **Alisa Childers** would benefit from seriously researching critiques of the 'red flag' names I have mentioned – she does appear to have a 'teachable spirit' and a good grasp of biblical issues where strands of 'apologetics' are concerned but I think that interaction with perhaps the likes of **John MacArthur** and **Phil Johnson** of **Grace Community Church** would help her greatly to sift-out some **literary chaff** from amongst what she thinks are **literary wheat**.

I went to the contact page of her 'blog' located on <https://www.alisachilders.com/contact-me.html> and I sent the following message on 29th March 2021 -

Dear Alisa, for 30+ years I have served the Lord with an apologetics ministry based in Northern Ireland called 'Take Heed' Ministries. In the course of researching and writing an article on so-called 'Progressive Christianity' I have included near the end a section that mentions your book 'Another Gospel' (which I have just ordered) and gives a link to a short video you did with Mike Winger. I have explained that you are 'new' to me and with further research I have included in my article a MAJOR CAVEAT relating to some book resources you have mentioned.

I would like to ask you to look over what I have written (it's short) and let me have your feedback. If you are willing, probably the easiest way to send what I have written would be by email so for that I would need your email. Sent to you in the love of Christ and His truth, Cecil Andrews

This was the automated response I received –

Thank you for writing. Due to the high volume of messages received, I apologize that I'm not able to respond to each inquiry personally. Please see my resource page for specific theological or apologetics questions, and feel free to join the conversation on Twitter (@alisachilders), and Facebook (@alisachildersblog).

UPDATE – 26th April 2021

Two days ago, I finished reading Alisa's book 'ANOTHER GOSPEL' – it is excellent and will be a valuable resource in combatting the serious challenge posed to genuine Christian belief and practice by so-called **Progressive Christianity**. Yes, some folks that I do have reservations about are quoted favourably, but those do not detract from the excellent rebuttal made by Alisa.

By way of final conclusion, at the bottom of page 9 I listed various church denomination's that had some affiliation with the **Progressive Christianity Network** in the United Kingdom and one such grouping mentioned was **Unitarian**. Here in Northern Ireland, we have a denomination called the **Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church** and many of their congregations are in fact **Unitarian**.

Just recently I wrote an article prompted by a Radio Broadcast service that featured one of their congregations. This is the link to that article and I think you will see that they sit comfortably with what is now known as **Progressive Christianity** –

<https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2021/March/simon-henning-and-richard-yarr.pdf>

I personally think that this so-called '**Progressive Christianity**' poses one of the greatest threats to **Biblical Christianity** that has ever emerged during my lifetime – for this reason – it appeals to the liberal, counter-authoritarian (particularly correctly understood biblical authority) culture that pervades much of society today. As ever, the warning concerning so-called '**Progressive Christianity**' is "take heed that no man deceive you" (Matthew 24:4)

Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 29th March 2021

APPENDIX

On 12th June 2021 the Belfast Telegraph published an article with this heading –

Presbyterian Church minister Ian Carton steps down over same-sex marriage policy

The article can be viewed on this link

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/presbyterian-churchministerian-carton-steps-down-over-same-sex-marriage-policy-40490211.html>

In the article reference is made to the influence of Mr Carton's wife, **June**, when we read the following –

'Referring to his wife June, Rev Carton said she decided in October she "didn't feel comfortable coming to a Presbyterian Church anymore" over their policy.

"Many of you will know June and I have been far from comfortable with the current direction that the Presbyterian Church seems to be going in" he added. "We have found it painful and hard. It seems to be in our view and to our mind, it seems to be excluding people that we would like to welcome. "Over the last couple of years, we have tried to the best of our ability to continue to minister.

"But the time has come when we are going to have to leave. "You've seen how I have been; you know how June has been. June took the decision last October that she didn't feel comfortable coming to a Presbyterian Church anymore. "She felt if it was a church that was saying to anybody that 'you are not welcome, you are not invited' on the basis of gender on the basis of your sexual orientation, that that wasn't a place she could be'.

On 28th April 2021 I gave a talk on '**Progressive Christianity**' in Moira Presbyterian Church – that talk was based very much on this article. However, I did also include reference to a local group here in Northern Ireland called '**Left Side Up**'. Video of that whole talk can be seen on this link –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lawfq1TLMk&t=3338s>

My reference to '**Left Side Up**' can be heard in a portion that mentions other matters relevant to this **APPENDIX** – it runs from 49.15 – 53.36.

'**Left Side Up** have a web site located on <https://www.leftsideupni.com/> and as you scroll down the Homepage you come to a section headed **ABOUT LEFT SIDE UP** which includes the following –



JUNE CARTON

June Carton is a full time Maths Tutor with a special interest in young people living with ASD. She is a worship leader, avid crafter and passionate advocate for the spiritual and mental well-being of people from the LGBT+ community and their families.

In the light of this, perhaps it comes as no surprise that Mr Carton has taken the action that he has in resigning from his position as a minister in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

At his ordination he would have avowed that the Bible was his Supreme Standard of Faith and that the Westminster Confession of Faith was his Subordinate Standard of faith – one can really only assume that he has now disavowed those views. I wrote earlier –

My reference to '**Left Side Up**' can be heard in a portion that mentions **other matters** relevant to this **APPENDIX** – it runs from 49.15 – 53.36.

The '**other matters**' include two things relevant to items on the web site of '**Left Side Up**'. On the Homepage the following can be seen –

RECONSTRUCTIONS COURSE - ONLINE!

At the end of February, Left Side Up took the popular Reconstructions Course online and have spent Tuesday evenings with the latest reconstructors exploring Sin, Heaven, Gospel and Bible.

The Reconstructions Course is an open space for genuine conversation. As we say in the course itself, participants are free to treat it as their 'theological changing room' - a place to try on new ideas to see if they fit!

Whilst 'Left Side Up' have used the term 'Reconstruction' it appears to me that this equates to what Alisa Childers referred to in her book as 'Deconstruction' as I explain in the portion of video (@ 50.07) that I have made reference to and I cite their views on HELL (@ 51.56).

Evidence that 'Left Side Up' are following the 'Deconstruction' path is found in the mention I make in the video (@ 52.36) to **Andrew Cunning** (whose photo and bio is also posted on their web site under ABOUT LEFT SIDE UP) about his views on HELL (see <https://www.leftsideupni.com/post/we-need-to-rethink-hell>) and also in the report of their 'Reconstruction' discussion on HELL that you can read on –

<https://www.leftsideupni.com/post/the-reconstructions-course-week-three-reflection>

What does the future hold for **Ian Carton**? Well, I'm certainly no 'prophet' but it would not surprise me if in the probably near future he finds some 'role' in so-called 'Progressive Christian' circles.

Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries - 12th June 2021

APPENDIX (2)

On the Homepage of 'Left Side Up' located on <https://www.leftsideupni.com/> another person whose photo and brief bio can be seen is **LINDSAY ROBINSON**, wife of East Belfast MP, **GAVIN ROBINSON** (DUP) – her 'PROGRESSIVE' views and opinions on the main roles of 'the church' are the subject of an email issued today by **Rev Ivan Foster**, and I am reproducing it here (with an occasional 'tweak') as it certainly fits in well with my article.

Dear Friends,

It is ever necessary for Christians to be on their guard against error, no matter from what source it comes!

Trouble and distress may often cause deviation from the truth of God. That is what I seek to deal with in this article as plainly and honestly and yet as kindly as I can.

Please pray for the woman in question.

Sincerely in Christ,

Ivan Foster.

“GOD IS STILL SPEAKING ... ”

A consideration of an article by Mrs Lindsay Robinson, recently given publicity in a number of media outlets which have given the article a favourable reception.

What a person thinks is not always seen in direct, forthright and bold declarations of their views but is found in an incidental manner. Such is the case in the article under consideration. Mrs Robinson reveals fortuitously just what it is she believes.

I will illustrate that by examining some statements she makes taken from her published article. I think it is true that Mrs Robinson has in the past gone through a trying time of mental stress. We have sympathy for her in that battle. However, it is no answer to such trials to abandon the Word of God and seek answers from extraneous sources.

1. “I don’t have all the answers as to why (church attendance is falling) and I want to clearly acknowledge that in many areas and on many issues the church does good, hopeful and helpful work - supporting foodbanks, community initiatives, holiday schemes and children/youth activities to name a few.”

That is an interesting summary of what Mrs Robinson considers the ‘good, hopeful and helpful work’ done by churches. **I find it interesting because of what she makes no mention of — the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

When the Saviour sent forth the apostles, He did so with these words. **“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen,”** Matthew 28:18-20.

There is not a mention of ‘foodbanks, community initiatives, holiday schemes and children/youth activities’ by the Saviour. **Mrs Robinson and the Saviour very obviously have differing views as to what ‘good, hopeful and helpful work’ entails.**

What Mrs Robinson lists are chiefly the affairs of the physical and social aspects of human activity whereas the Lord Jesus laid His entire emphasis on the spiritual needs of men (I use that term as does the Bible, meaning all of mankind).

Hear His own definition of the purpose of His coming. **“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,”** Luke 5:32. His was a spiritual work. What the Saviour commanded His apostles to do provides ALL THE ANSWERS TO OUR NEEDS, whereas what Mrs Robinson considers a **‘good, hopeful and helpful work’** will provide, at best a very temporary relief with no benefits at all for the eternal souls of mankind.

It must be stated that where there is a teaching of men to observe all things that Christ taught His disciples, this will not only provide them with the eternal comforts of the gospel of saving grace, but it will also result in a very much improved moral, physical and social environment.

The sinner converted to new life in Christ, through faith in His atoning death at the cross, is a better son, daughter, husband, wife, employee and employer, overall a better neighbour and citizen. The change the gospel brings to sinners trusting in Christ is seen in the life of **Zacchaeus**. Before conversion he was a greedy, grasping, ruthless tax-collector, who frequently exacted from citizens more than was his due.

All this changed at his conversion. Listen to the narrative of his conversion.

“And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that [way]. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw [it], they all murmured, saying, that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore [him] fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, this day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham,” Luke 19:3-9.

In these verses (after his conversion) we have his free acknowledgment of his former wickedness and his readiness to make more than generous restitution to any he had wronged. He also was immediately in the **‘foodbank etc’** businesses for he gave away half of his goods to the poor. I have never heard of any Members of Parliament doing that and I am sure I would have for such stories invariably hit the headlines!

Making restitution and giving generously to the poor would not have brought Zacchaeus to heaven. It was his faith in Christ, whereby he had come to possess, as the Saviour assured him, God’s salvation. **“This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham.”**

The saving grace of God, which is what the apostles were charged to preach, brings salvation to the souls of sinners and as a result they become new and good persons. **“Therefore, if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,”** 2 Corinthians 5:17.

That wonderful change has brought into this world the innumerable earthly blessings which have sprung from the preaching and receiving of the gospel.

Paul the apostle said of himself that he was **“before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief”**. From such wickedness the gospel made him into one of the chief human benefactors of mankind, to this very day.

The problem with the churches today, which Mrs Robinson does not seem to have noted, is that they have left off preaching the gospel that Christ gave His disciples to preach and instead have taken up the gospel of ‘foodbanks, community initiatives, holiday schemes and children/youth activities’.

Such activities may well offer a little aid to the belly and some provisional comfort to the body but it will leave the souls of men lost in darkness and on the road to eternal hell!



Mrs Lindsay Robinson

2. However, for many people, I have become increasingly aware the Church feels 'out of touch' with life in today's modern world including attitudes towards our LGBT+ community, women, difference, disability and diversity.

That doesn't even begin to take into account the damage the legacy of mother and baby homes and impact of abuse has had on individuals, families and communities — much of which has yet to be properly acknowledged or addressed.

I grew up in traditional conservative evangelical church context however **these days my faith is probably best described 'progressive'**. Last year, I joined the team of **Left Side Up — a progressive faith organisation based in Belfast** in which I lead the Faith and Mental Health Project.

Mrs Robinson claims to be **'progressing'** in her faith. That term suggests a leaving of one place and a moving toward another. Just what she is **'progressing'** from and what it is she has **'progressed'** to may be found in the words I have just reproduced from her article.

I do not think I do her an injustice by saying she appears to be saying she has **'progressed'** from a **'traditional conservative evangelical church context'** to **'a progressive faith organisation'** defined by the very 'trendy' title of the organisation she is now associated with: **'Left Side Up'**.

This organisation takes its philosophy from some words they quote from one of the early Church Fathers, Irenaeus of Lyon. I do not find it surprising that this organisation is NOT inspired by a quotation from the One Who is far above a second century believer, the Lord of lords and King of kings. It might be noted that Romanism looks to the same man for justification for its claim to be the 'Mother Church'.

The **'only rule of faith and practice'** is the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments - **Shorter Catechism question/answer 3**. The quotation that this group have made their 'inspiration', their motivating force, is **'The glory of God is the human being fully alive.'** That they should take as their inspiration a quotation from Irenaeus, which is rather obscure and indeterminate, except to those who would declare their interpretation as being infallible, is indicative of what they think about the Bible. **It is significant that Mrs Robinson makes no mention of the Bible at all in her article!**

Now you can sail your vessel in many directions using this chart but I prefer such words as are found in 1 Corinthians 10:31. **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."** The Shorter Catechism gives us a like direction in its first question and answer. **"Question 1: What is the chief end of man? Answer: Mans chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever."** **Such words as these provide us with a Scriptural charter and code for finding and enjoying the full purpose of God amongst men.**

It is clear that Mrs Robinson has **'progressed'** to a place where she has developed a new attitude toward many things, including what she calls **'our LGBT+ community.'**

Such terminology indicates that she has cast over the Bible's view of the wicked perversions embraced and gloried in by those termed the **'LGBT+ community'**. The initials stand for those who claim to be lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender in their moral proclivity. The plus sign indicates that such terminology is more than a little fluid and other perversions are to be included with those represented by the initials LGBT.

The Lord uses only one word for those lumped together under these initials – ABOMINATION.

“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it [is] abomination,”
Leviticus 18:22

“The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so [are] abomination unto the LORD thy God,” Deuteronomy 22:5.

'Foodbanks, community initiatives, holiday schemes and children/youth activities will not bring any eternal benefits to such as these. Nor will embracing them and calling them **'our LGBT+ community'**. **There is only one thing that can grant true and lasting help** to such as abide under the curse and judgment of God. **It is not the 'progressive' 'mollycoddling gospel'** of Mrs Robinson **but the gospel of Christ.**

Heed these words which I have often quoted when dealing with the follies of those who would try to rationalise sodomy and its allied deviations. They are words that should resonate with Christians –

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,” 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

Paul clearly states that there will be an entrance to heaven for those in Corinth Mrs Robinson terms **'our LGBT+ community'**. Such are referred to by the Holy Ghost under the terms — **“adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind.”**

Those **were** the **'LGBT+'** sinners residing in Corinth in Paul's day. **But** what **'foodbanks, community initiatives, holiday schemes and children/youth activities'** could never have done for them, **the gospel** the apostles were sent out to preach did. **They were saved by the grace of God. They were pardoned and delivered from their evil lifestyle and are in heaven even now.**

Whatever Mrs Robinson will offer to these poor benighted souls it is not the Word of God. It would seem that all she will perhaps provide is what little comfort comes her from siding with them and calling them **'our LGBT+ community'**. What will that achieve other than to encourage them on in their sin, down the road to hell!

3. Our eternal destination **is not more important**, or significant, than our lives lived here, right now, in community, loving those around us. That, after all, is what Jesus explained to be the most important Commandment: love God, love your neighbour, love yourself.

Being passionate about mental health and wellbeing for all, we have spent the last 7 months researching Faith and Mental Health, listening and learning to the experiences of those connected to church and faith.

Nothing could be more evil and wrong and contradictory to the teaching of the Lord Jesus than these words. To say, as does Mrs Robinson, that “Our eternal destination is not more important, or significant, than our lives lived here, right now . . .” **is to set forth the lie of the devil.** What did the Saviour say to His disciples?

“Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, [shall he] not much more [clothe] you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day [is] the evil thereof,” Matthew 6:25-34.

Please note what verse 33 of this passage states. “**But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.**” Mrs Robinson says: “Our eternal destination is not more important, or significant, than our lives.” **The Lord Jesus says she is utterly wrong.**

Lazarus the beggar had very little in this world but he is now in heaven with the redeemed. It is said of him by the Lord Jesus: “**And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores,**” Luke 16:20-21.

However, when he died “**he was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom,**” a term for the place of the redeemed. He had sought first the kingdom of God rather than money, food and clothing and a cure for his ills. In doing so, he was most correct.

The rich man, at whose gate he lay, obviously did pursue after the things of this world and obtained them and ended in HELL! **“And it came to pass ... the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom,”** Luke 16:22-23.

Being **‘passionate’** about earthly wellbeing did nothing for this man’s eternal soul. Nor will the agenda that Mrs Robinson and her friends follow bring any lasting, eternal relief to those whose earthly wellbeing is all they show concern for.

Mrs Robinson’s philosophy entails the abandonment of the gospel and an embracing of a ‘theology’ that runs directly contrary to the teaching of Christ. What good can come of that.

Yes, the first commandment is that we **‘love our neighbour as ourselves’**. **But to love ourselves is to “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.”** To neglect our souls’ salvation is self-murder! To **‘love our neighbour as ourselves’** is to press upon them **the need of obtaining God’s pardon ABOVE ALL ELSE!** Listen again to the words of the Saviour.

“Blessed [are] they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled,” Matthew 5:6. **“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed,”** John 6:27.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it,” Matthew 13:44-46.

4. For those who look at the Church and wonder does God have any relevance today, we say loudly and boldly, yes! God is still speaking, and we often hear that best from the margins of society. The question for those within churches and faith communities is are we willing to listen?

Yes, indeed, **God is still speaking but it is in the Bible** that we will find what it is He is saying, not in the fanciful and heretical nonsense uttered by Mrs Robinson. We have no desire to be rude or discourteous but when it comes to eternal matters one cannot be mealy-mouthed. These things are too important to be dealt with ‘genteelly’ and referred to in polite speech.

Mrs Robinson is spreading error, error that will turn people away from God’s truth and His salvation to a modernistic, ‘progressive’ departure from the gospel and God’s salvation. Against such we must ‘earnestly contend’, Jude 3.

In an interview with Claire Simpson, reported in the ‘Irish News’ on 7th June 2021, **Mrs Robinson said “Bible teaching is ‘only one source of theology’ and has to be interpreted.”**

In essence, that is a denial of the authority of the Word God gave of old and enthrones man's interpretation or explanation of it as the final theological authority!

Although Mrs Robinson is not a DUP member, her views are to be considered part of the thinking of 'mainstream DUP'. She is reported also as saying, in that Claire Simpson article, that **her 'views on conversion therapy and abortion are in direct opposition to those held by conservatives in her husband's party' and that 'her husband is hugely supportive of her work'**. Surely you cannot be supportive without being in agreement with!

She thus reveals the moral malaise that has taken root within the DUP and which helps explain the complete confusion and fragmentation presently exhibited within it.

For Christians to remain within the DUP is for them to be stained by its corruptions and dragged down with it. Doubtless, Lot pondered getting out of Sodom for he was '**vexed**' with the '**unlawful deeds**' (2 Peter 2:8) of its citizens. But aware as he must have been of its offensiveness in the eyes of God, he still loved what the city offered by way of earthly riches (Genesis 13:10-11) and was most reluctant to leave. Indeed, he had to be dragged out of Sodom by the angels the Lord sent to rescue him (Genesis 19:16).

I repeat, it is in the Bible ALONE that we will find God's truth and the way of life and what it is we must do by way of pleasing the Lord and also loving our neighbour.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them," Isaiah 8:20.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," Revelation 22:18.

It is with these solemn words of warning, with which the Saviour ended His Word to the Churches of Asia, that we would end our warning to those caught up in this sad system of error and folly.

Rev Ivan Foster (Retired)

21st June 2021.

I am indebted to Rev Foster for compiling this helpful and informative assessment of **Lindsay Robinson's 'PROGRESSIVE'** views on matters that impact the true mission of **Christ's Church**.

Cecil Andrews - 'Take Heed' Ministries – 21st June 2021

APPENDIX (3)

What you may not know about Grace Pointe Church;

Recently I purchased the book **'A GRAND ILLUSION: How Progressive Christianity Undermines Biblical Faith'** written by **David Young**. As I write this APPENIDIX I have to date only read the first chapter – however – I did skim through parts of the book and came across a most interesting piece of historical information located on the penultimate page (p 156). The information relates to the **GracePointe Church** that I made reference to on pages 12-14 of my article. On those pages I gave the web site address of the **GracePointe Church** and on the **'About Us'** section of their web site you will find these details -

In early 2017, GracePointe **moved on** from Franklin as it **transitioned into** the metro Nashville region. After calling this area its home, GracePointe **moved into** West Nashville in October of 2018 for our weekly gatherings. It was around this time that Founding Pastor Stan Mitchell announced the church was **entering a new phase** of its life. As **Stan began the process of transitioning off the GracePointe staff**, a search began by the Leadership Council. In April of 2019, after several months of a formal pastoral search, **Pastor Josh Scott**, former lead pastor for Morgantown Community Church and board member for IMAGINARIUM, **became the new Lead Pastor of GracePointe.**

The portions that I have highlighted in red all sound quite 'matter of fact' – no hints given anywhere that there might have been any serious problems or reasons for the location change and the pastoral change.

This is why my eyes took particular note of the 'historical information' detailed on page 156 of **'A GRAND ILLUSION'**. There is more to the story of the location and pastoral changes as you will read on the next page.

If your church has obviously begun to lean toward progressivism, I recommend you state your position to the church leaders gently and in love. If they are not interested in moving back toward Scripture, I would leave. Life is short. Why spend your time in constant anxiety about what they're going to do next? Besides, progressive churches typically die slow deaths. If they are going to stay the progressive course, you're likely sailing on the Titanic.

Case in point. In 2015, the senior pastor of GracePointe Church in the upscale, Nashville suburb of Franklin announced that the church was going progressive, particularly on matters of sexuality. The move was celebrated by progressives everywhere—it was treated as though it were a turning point in evangelicalism. *Time* magazine even got in on the act, identifying GracePointe as something of a role model for other evangelical churches.

But things didn't go so well for the church. Soon after the announcement, attendance at GracePointe began to drop sharply. When GracePointe announced their change, they were running nearly one thousand people on Sundays. Within a few months, they had lost half their membership. One visitor two years later said he couldn't count two hundred and fifty people who were left.¹²⁰ Contributions also dropped sharply as members left in search for more biblical expressions of the faith. Soon, GracePointe was laying off staff. Then, a little over a year ago, the church was forced to put its building on the market due to lack of funds. They moved to Nashville, where they now share a building with another progressive congregation. Then, in late 2018, the senior pastor who brought the changes to GracePointe announced his own departure. It's unclear what the future of GracePointe will be, but progressive churches like this rarely grow—and sometimes crash like this one did.

Remember this: typically, when a congregation begins to go progressive, it also begins a long, slow death. You don't have to stay at such a church. But if you do decide to leave, I would do so in such a way as to avoid splitting the church. There has been enough division in Christian history. Leave lovingly and humbly. Don't leave grumbling and gossiping. Then, find a church where apostolic Christianity is held in high esteem.

