

HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY: 'Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation'

Back on 23rd March the following article was posted to the 'Take Heed' Ministries web site –

'Pastor' STEVE AMES: 'Progressive Dishonesty'

Steve Ames is the 'pastor' of **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** (in Carrickfergus) and in the article I responded to how he had used a 'selective' clip from the video of a talk I gave on so-called '**Progressive Christianity.**' His dishonesty was that he stopped the clip immediately after I had used a particular phrase and did not allow the video to continue which shows my biblical explanation of what I had just said.

The phrase in question that he repeatedly highlighted several times (for effect) was when I said - "**We are not all beloved children of God.**" To see the full details of my response the article can be accessed on this link –

<https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2023/March/pastor-steve-ames-progressive-dishonesty.pdf>

On 2nd October 2023 **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** posted this on Facebook –

The Gospel message is not that you need to "get saved" by believing the correct things about God, it is that salvation is already given - whether we realise it or not.

You are already a beloved and 'saved' child of God - completely, objectively and forever. The only differences are the extent to which you know it, you draw upon it and you consciously believe it.

It's not about "getting saved" so much as becoming awakened to the reality of your salvation.

This kind of awakening is so profound and all encompassing, that Jesus likened it to being "born again" - as you begin to experience reality in completely new ways.

"With a truly tragic delusion, theologians fail to see that it is not a matter of proving the existence of the light, but of blind people who do not know that their eyes could see." ~ Carl Jung

Let there be light.

In the excerpts that I have underlined the words **'we'** and **'you'** are used and it appears to me that the application is not just for those who attend **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** but for **EVERYONE** in the world. This post seems to openly promote what I have dubbed **'Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation'** on the basis that to them **EVERYONE** is a **'beloved and "saved" child of God'** and all that is needed is an **'awakening'** to this reality and this experience is likened to being **"born again."**

What an absolute inversion of God's truth as recorded in His Word. When someone is truly **"born again"** it is not an **'awakening'** to what they have always been – it is spiritual transformation, away from what and whose they have been, into something completely new and different. We read the following in God's word –

"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath TRANSLATED us into the kingdom of his dear Son (removed us from Satan's kingdom into Christ's kingdom): In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1: 3 & 13-14).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a NEW creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new ... we pray you in Christ's name BE YE RECONCILED to God" (2 Corinthian 5: 17 & 20).

"they cast them into prison charging the jailer to keep them safely ... And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God ... And suddenly there was a great earthquake ... and everyone's bands were loosed ... And the keeper of the prison ... said 'sirs, what must I do to be SAVED' and they said BELIEVE ON the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be SAVED" (Acts 16: 23, 25-31).

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be SAVED" ... if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus ... thou shalt be SAVED ... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be SAVED" Romans 10: 1, 9 & 13).

"Neither is there SALVATION in any other" (Acts 4: 12)

According to **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** the good news of the gospel is not about **"getting saved"** about **"being reconciled to God"** about **"being translated from Satan's kingdom into Christ's kingdom"** but **'awakening'** to their good news that it's already a **'done deal'** with, one can only assume, no future adverse or bad consequences for **ANYONE**.

It seems to me that this post has possibly been motivated once again by my declaration that **"We are not all beloved children of God."** For them, **EVERYONE** is.

How then can we, as Christians, respond to this brazen proclamation of **'Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation?'**

God's Word, the Bible, makes it perfectly clear that there are two 'kinds' of people living in this world – there are those who are “**natural**” (“**in Adam**” **1st Corinthians 15: 22**) and there are those who I would refer to as “**supernatural**” (“**in Christ**” **1st Corinthians 15: 22**). This is what the Apostle Paul wrote in **1st Corinthians 2: 14**

“But the NATURAL man 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.”

Here are some very relevant observations on this verse by **Matthew Henry** –

‘The man under the power of corruption, and never yet illuminated by the Spirit of God, such as Jude calls sensual, not having the Spirit, v. 19. Men unsanctified receive not the things of God. The understanding, through the corruption of nature by the fall, and through the confirmation of this disorder by customary sin, is utterly unapt to receive the rays of divine light; it is prejudiced against them. The truths of God are foolishness to such a mind. The man looks on them as trifling and impertinent (irrelevant) things, not worth his minding ... It is the quickening beams of the Spirit of truth and holiness that must help the mind to discern their excellency, and to so thorough a conviction of their truth as heartily to receive and embrace them. Thus the natural man, the man destitute of the Spirit of God, cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned ...

The natural man, that is, the wise man of the world (chapter 1:19, 20), the wise man after the flesh, or according to the flesh (v. 26), one who hath the wisdom of the world, man's wisdom (chapter. 2:4-6), a man ... that would learn all truth by his own ratiocinations (reasoning processes), receives nothing by faith, nor owns any need of supernatural assistance ... he can have no knowledge of things revealed, because they are only spiritually discerned, or made known by the revelation of the Spirit, which is a principle of science or knowledge that he will not admit.’

I have underlined and highlighted four portions and would comment as follows. I am fully persuaded that **Steve Ames** and his **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** are totally devoid of God's Spirit and are “**sensual**” as mentioned in **Jude 19** because of their emphasis on and promotion of ‘morality’ that is utterly condemned in no uncertain terms by God's Word. Vine's Dictionary says of “**sensual**” – ‘**describes the man in Adam ... relating especially to the mind, a wisdom in accordance with or springing from the corrupt desires and affections.**’

In contrast to these ‘**natural/sensual**’ people, devoid of the Spirit of God, **there are those who have experienced ‘the quickening beams of the Spirit of truth and holiness.’** These are those who have been genuinely “**born again**” – a ‘**supernatural**’ experience where someone who is physically alive but spiritually dead is ‘**spiritually resurrected.**’ Paul explains this in **Ephesians 1: 14 & 5** when he writes “**And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins ... But God, who is rich in mercy ... even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are SAVED.**”

Matthew Henry identifies people who are ‘**the wise of the world**’ and who do not refer to God’s truth (The Bible) in their search for ‘truth’ but turn to their ‘**own ratiocinations**’ (reasoning processes). This is precisely what **Steve Ames** and a ‘theologian-friend’ of his called **Andrew Cuning** do. Back in 2021 **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** hosted a series of 4 talks given by **Andrew Cuning** on the subject of ‘theology’. I wrote about this in an article located on <https://www.takeheed.info/pdf/2022/March/Andrew-Cuning-Progressive-Theologian.pdf>

On pages 19-20 I give details of the four talks and I comment particularly on talk 2. This is part of what I wrote –

Wednesday 20 October ~ Session 2: The Sources of Theology
In this session we go back to basics. What are we talking about when we talk about theology? What is someone ‘doing’ when they ‘do theology’? How might we do it too? **Through exploring the four sources of theology (Reason, Experience, Scripture and Tradition) and examining their relationship, this session sets us up to ‘do theology’ in our own way.**

relating to **Session 2** – part of the description reads - **Through exploring the four sources of theology (Reason, Experience, Scripture and Tradition)**. For **ANDREW**, ‘**Scripture Alone**’ is not sufficient to be able to understand ‘**theology**’. On page 2 of this article, I quoted Dictionary Definitions of ‘**theologian**’ and ‘**theology**’. In relation to ‘**theology**’ this is how it is more-fully defined by the late **Dr Alan Cairns** in his ‘**Dictionary of Theological Terms**’ and I quoted this earlier in my observations on Question 1 -

‘Greek *theos*, ‘God’ and *logos*, ‘word’; the systematic study of the being, attributes, purposes and works of God, and of the world, man and history in relation to Him. It is usually referred to as a science, because **it should be conducted by the investigation of the objective data of divine revelation which has its full expression in the written and incarnate word** – i.e., in the Bible and its Christ-centred message. Indeed, **theology** used to be called the queen of the sciences. This basis in an objective, divine revelation is what marks the difference between theology and philosophy or metaphysical speculation. However, **with the spread of subjectivism and the decline into more and more man-centred methods, much of what passes for theology grows increasingly like speculative philosophy**’.

Because ‘**Scripture**’ is for **ANDREW** only 1 of 4 ‘**sources of theology**’ I view his ‘**theology**’ as fitting perfectly the description of ‘**speculative philosophy**’ given by **Dr Alan Cairns** because his other 3 ‘**sources – Reason, Experience and Tradition**’ are all ‘**man-centred**’. ... The position of ‘**SOLA SCRIPTURA**’ is clearly ‘anathema’ to **ANDREW** – his view of scripture is obviously ‘low.’

Andrew Cuning, like Steve Ames and HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY are clearly ‘NATURAL people that receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto them, neither can they know them because they are spiritually discerned.’

Matthew Henry identifies that such people do not acknowledge **'any need of supernatural assistance'** and the reason is simple – they are, as I mentioned at the top of page 3, **'natural'** people and not **'supernatural'** people, those who have been genuinely **"born again"** as I mention further down page 3.

Earlier I quoted **1st Corinthians 2: 14**

"But the NATURAL man 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."

Earlier in the chapter Paul wrote, beginning at **verse 10** through to **verse 13**

"But God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit ... even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now WE have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that WE might know the things that are freely given to US of God. Which things also WE speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth (Cecil - like Andrew Cuning's Session 2) but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (Cecil - no human reasoning, experience or tradition).

All of these factors, identified by **Matthew Henry** and clearly present in **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY**, **Steve Ames** and others account for their 'brazen proclamation of **'Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation'** as I termed it at the foot of page 2.

Do they seriously expect true Christians to believe that the **'we'** and **'you'** of their Facebook post applies **UNIVERSALLY** to multitudes detailed in the Bible upon whom God's deadly judgment fell, to despots that have appeared in the modern era and carried out monumental crimes against humanity, and even to terrorists who in recent days have carried out horrendous murders and other crimes in the Middle East?

'Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation' is a lie from the devil himself – the Lord pulled no punches when speaking to the erroneous spiritual leaders of His day – **"Ye are of your father the devil... he abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie** (Cecil – today, through false 'Christian' leaders today who masquerade as 'ministers of righteousness, like **Steve Ames** – see **2nd Corinthians 11: 13-15**) **he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it'**.

There is no **'Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation'** – the Lord Jesus Christ came to **"SAVE HIS people from their sins"** (**Matthew 1: 21**). As the good shepherd He said **"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life FOR THE SHEEP"** (**John 10: 11**) (Cecil – He did not give His life for "the goats" – see **Matthew 25: 32, 33, 41**). As a great High Priest He prays for, died for, rose for and intercedes for those whom His Father gave to him – **"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world ... I pray for them, I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine ... neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on me through their word"** (**John 17: 6, 9, 20**).

The Lord Jesus Christ gave this command to His disciples in **Mark 16: 15** “**Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**” Now, why would He do that? Well the Apostle Paul wrote in **Romans 1: 16** “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto SALVATION to everyone that believeth**” and in his first letter to the **Corinthians, chapter one verse 21**, in what could be viewed almost as a direct rebuke to **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** and **Steve Ames**, he wrote “**For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of PREACHING to SAVE them that believe.**”

I could personally write much more on this subject but let me just conclude with brief excerpts from two articles by others that address this lie of ‘**UNIVERSALISM.**’

‘Universalism is the belief that everyone will be saved. There are many people today who hold to universal salvation and believe that all people eventually end up in heaven ... First of all, the Bible is clear that unredeemed men will dwell forever in hell. Jesus’ own words confirm that the time spent in heaven for the redeemed will last as long as that of the unredeemed in hell. **Matthew 25: 46** says, “Then they [the unsaved] will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” ... Universalism directly contradicts what Scripture teaches ... To say that those who reject God’s provision of salvation through His Son will be saved is to belittle the holiness and justice of God and negate the need of Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf.’

Full article located on <https://www.gotquestions.org/universalism.html>

‘Today we are seeing the Church become seeker friendly, so much so that a universalist view on salvation is becoming accepted ... Universalism affirms that all people will be saved. Within this belief system the concepts of hell and punishment are rejected as inconsistent with a loving God ... Researcher and apologist **Al Dager** writes, *Traditional universalism has long been regarded as a major heresy that has inserted itself into the modern Christian consciousness as a result of liberal theological adherents. “Christian universalism” seeks a middle ground between biblical salvation through conscious surrender to Christ, and traditional universalism. In other words God will save those who believe in Christ as well as those who do not. We may have different positions in the end but all will be saved.* ... Universalism teaches that all people will eventually be saved through the atonement of Christ because of grace yet they ignore any conditions of being a recipient of the atonement. John the apostle writes in his gospel 1:11-12 “*but as many as receive him, to them he gave the right (power) to become children of God, to those who believe on his name.*” If one does not receive him they are not children of God. The idea that salvation is by grace without faith is their fatal misunderstanding - it is through faith.’

Full article located on <http://www.letusreason.org/Curren31.htm>

Australian hard rock band **AC/DC**, released, on 27 July 1979, an album called ‘**Highway to Hell**’ – every ‘theological pronouncement’ by **Steve Ames** and his **HARBOUR FAITH COMMUNITY** is likewise constructing a ‘faith’ ‘**Highway to Hell**’.

A helpful little book that outlines what the Bible teaches about eternal punishment was written by **Eryl Davies** and is called '**Condemned For Ever.**' Used copies appear to be available to purchase on these links - <https://christianbookshopossett.co.uk/product/condemned-for-ever/> and <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Condemned-Ever-Teaches-Eternal-Punishment/dp/0852342411> and I would highly recommend it.

May God in His love, grace and mercy be willing and pleased to rescue many from such diabolical '**Progressive UNIVERSAL Salvation**' deceptions, and, as a result, may many be genuinely "**born again**" "**saved**" and "**adopted**" into God's true family of redeemed "**children.**"

Cecil Andress – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 10th October 2023