



into the Melting Pot

the question is more important than the answer

Sunday 10 February 2019

Progressive Christianity and Saving Jesus From The Church Part 2

We started this 2019 season watching a video of the inaugural Progressive Christianity Lecture at Pitt Street Uniting Church in Sydney Australia 2016 given by Rev Dr Robin Meyer based on his most recent book.

It can be found at <https://www.youtube/watch?v=cnfJcZkZ2OU&t=56s>, or by searching for 'Robin Meyers – Saving Jesus from the Church' in the YouTube app.

Timings (part 2)

33:30	start part 2 to give context
37:45	the state of American Christianity the Church three Seminary lies Biblical quotes Jesus and the Creeds Progressive Christianity
63:45	the end

Notes from the session

These were written up as an article in the April 2019 edition of the Christchurch magazine 'Wider Horizons'

Rev Dr Robin Meyer said so much that resonated with me in this second part of his lecture, that I've collected many of them together.

- There was no standardised theology, no pattern of governance, no commonly accepted scripture in the 'Early Church'; 'Jesus is Lord' was neither a creed nor a doctrine but a statement of loyalty to a way of Jesus.
- Early Christianity was not a belief system but a way of being. In Matthew's collection of Jesus sayings, his manifesto known as the 'sermon on the Mount' (Matthew 5:1-11), there is not a single word about beliefs - it's all about what to do, how to be. When Constantine brought together the quarrelling bishops in 325CE at Nicea, the result was the Nicene Creed in which not a single word is about what to do, but instead what to believe. We need to recognise this and reverse this reversal.
- How did Jesus get supernatural? In Mark's first Gospel, he is self effacing - "Why do you call me good? . . . No one is good except God alone." (Mark 10:18) but fifty or so years later in John's Gospel - "I am the Way . . . no one goes to the Father except by me" (John 14:6).
- Paul records Jesus as the 'Son of God' at his resurrection (Romans 1:4); Mark at his baptism (Mark 1:11); Matthew and Luke at his conception (Mathew 1:18 & Luke 1:35); but by John's Gospel it is at the beginning of time (John 1:1). Bultman is quoted: "Jesus came preaching God; the Church came preaching Jesus".

- The Church has paved paradise: it cares more about being right than being loving - we need to become dangerous.
- God will not save us without our help.

Progressive Christians have their own problems - religion can be in our heads and not our hearts - we need to 'do'. Try these:

- Act graciously
- Respect everyone
- Grow a garden and get in touch with our planet
- Violence is the scourge of humanity
- Be humble - walk lightly through your day
- Leave places, people and things better than you found them
- Don't litter
- Don't cheat
- No-one is self-made, however appealing an idea that is
- Give everyone the benefit of the doubt
- Don't let atheists bother you - I don't believe in the God they don't believe in either
- Believe in the 'transrational' - the 'more' that can be known
- We all need a beloved community and sacred space
- Preaching must be biblically responsive, intellectually honest, emotionally satisfying and socially significant.

I hope there is something in the above that challenges you, as it does me, to 'be' more like Jesus every day.

Steve Amos