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THE SAD AND SINFUL UTTERANCES OF A FOOL OR A KNAVE!



Alf McCreery

In keeping with his anti-Bible predilection, 'Belfast Telegraph' scribbler and Irish Presbyterian Church elder, Alf McCreery, launched an attack upon the Free Presbyterian Church in response to those within our ranks who voiced opposition to the Pope's proposed visit to Northern Ireland.

Under the headline: "How news of Papal visit to Northern Ireland sees rise of religious intolerance again" he criticised the stand and witness of the Free Presbyterian Church. His article may be read **here**.

He makes two statements within his article which I particularly wish to comment on briefly.

1. "NEITHER DO I BELIEVE THAT THE MAIN CHURCHES HERE HAVE BEEN 'COURTING THE CHURCH OF ROME'. ON THE CONTRARY, ANYONE WHO STUDIES THE REFORMED CHURCHES WILL KNOW THAT THEY KEEP STRICTLY TO THEIR TEACHINGS".

This is his response to an assertion by Rev John Gray of Bethel Free Presbyterian Church in a letter to the 'Belfast Telegraph' some little time ago.

Now Alf McCreery is either a fool or an unmitigated liar!

He may be so foolish and blind as not to have noticed the whole philosophy and purport of the ecumenical movement of which the main churches here in Ulster have been a part since the formation of the World Council of Churches back in 1948. At its formation and in subsequent years, its objective has been clearly stated by a variety of ecumenical spokesmen, both abroad and here at home. I will give one example of just what the purpose and plan of Ecumenism is all about.

Dr. S. G. Poyntz, former Bishop of Connor, in a booklet entitled 'Journey Towards Union', said, "Ecumenism can be defined as the process of discussing and recovering by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, the wholeness of the body of Christ. In that sense it is a unity movement," page 10. He goes on to say, "True spiritual unity must be expressed in history through the Church's institutional life and the ultimate aim of the Tripartite Conversations is that they will lead to organic unity of our three Churches in God's good time and in our time as well," page 14. He asks the question: "Are you prepared for a death to your own Church which will permit the resurrection of a much greater church?" page 25. The tripartite talks, to which he referred, involve the **Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist churches** in Ireland. Bishop Poyntz would have Protestants to be ready for a dying to their church in order to see the dream of a great united church brought about. He is but echoing the sentiments of many within the Protestant churches involved in ecumenism. Going back as far as 1954, an ecumenist, Stephen Neill, wrote in his 'History of the Ecumenical Movement': "The final and terrible difficulty is that Churches cannot unite, unless they are willing to die. In a truly united church, there would be no more Anglicans or Lutherans or Presbyterians or Methodists.

This spirit of ecclesiastical suicide must be encouraged by ecumenists if church unity is to progress. But it must be noted who they are who are expected to commit suicide. They are the Protestants! Popery does not plan to die!"

So much for McCreery's denial of the Ecumenical Churches 'courting Rome'!

Far from the main churches keeping 'strictly to their teachings', as McCreery would claim, it is clear that there is a spirit amongst them whereby they are working toward the utter abandoning of what the creeds of these churches state.

CHALLENGE



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I challenge him to state which part of "The 39 Articles", "The Westminster Confession of Faith" and John Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament", where reference is made to Popery and its doctrines, do the three main churches here in Ulster still adhere to, as he claims.

On the other hand, McCreary may be an unmitigated liar, stating what he knows is utterly untrue in order to deceive. He has been an elder in the Presbyterian Church for many years. He cannot be ignorant of the decision taken by the General Assembly back in 1988 regarding his Church's view of the Pope.

DR PAISLEY

Here is Dr Paisley's comment on that decision.

"Hence in Ecumenical Presbyterianism, the Church of Scotland led the way in jettisoning Paragraph IV of Chapter 25 of the Historic Westminster Confession of Faith which reads as follows:

'There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ: nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God.

In June 1988 the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church sought to follow." - European Institute of Protestant Studies, 8th March 2000.

In consequence of the decision, Irish Presbyterian ministers and elders are no longer required to confess the faith to which previous generations of office-bearers had to confess allegiance.

Is that keeping "strictly to their teachings"?

I do not think so.

McCreary makes another grandiose pontification.

2. "HOWEVER I ALSO BELIEVE THAT IF PEOPLE ARE SECURE IN THEIR FAITH, THEY DON'T NEED TO PROTEST ABOUT THE BELIEFS OF OTHERS. ACCORDINGLY, ANY PROTESTS ABOUT THE POPE'S VISIT ARE NOT A SIGN OF STRENGTH, BUT RATHER ONE OF WEAKNESS AND OF A THEOLOGICALLY CLOSED MIND."

Poor McCreary is simply ignorant of his Bible, which is not surprising for an elder in an ecumenical church.

Protests against the beliefs of others is a sign of insecurity in their own faith, he claims.

What saith the Word of God?

"For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice," Jeremiah 11:7.

"I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me," Jeremiah 35:15.

Does this arrogant journalist dare say that the Lord, Who is speaking in these verses, is insecure in His faith?

Is it not true that the Bible is full of God's protests against the wicked views of men? Did not our Saviour protest against the false beliefs and practices of His day again and again and that with a whip of cords on at least one occasion?



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In the New Testament, we have Jude, the brother of the Lord Jesus, by the inspiration and command of the Holy Spirit enjoining upon the people of God generally to: "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," Jude 1:3.

The tenor of these words of Jude can be found repeated on innumerable occasions throughout the New Testament epistles.

Protesting against error is an essential element of maintaining the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

'Protest' is a means used by many groups to preserve their causes, their views and philosophy and the 'Belfast Telegraph' has promoted and extolled numerous such groups, many of which were advocating that which was unscriptural and wicked.

But, according to McCreary, 'protesting' against ungodly teaching and evil compromise and deception on the part of Christians is a sign of 'weakness' and 'insecurity'!

When I think of the years this man has invested in employing his pen in opposing Biblical Christianity and denigrating those who would try to uphold it, I can but pity him.

Ivan Foster.

13th December 2016.