

## **Psa 123 WE HAVE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH**

Xnity used to be the **bedrock** of our society. It was the **basis** and **foundation** of all our thinking. It was the **standard** by which all things were judged. When something new came on the market, people used to go to Church in order to **learn** whether it was a good thing or not. When some new movement took place, people went to Church to find out if it was right or wrong! What the Church said was Truth! Whatever the Church said, was the '**grid**' against which everything was determined!

The whole concept of the Church being the arbiter/authority for the people, would be considered today, as sheer **arrogance** on behalf of the Church. Many would say 'What right have the Church to tell us what is right or wrong? We can make up our own minds, thank you'! **Humanism, rationalism** has replaced the Church as the arbiter/authority of all things. And now, in post-modern times, even **individualism** triumphs as an authority. The Church/Xns are **mocked/ridiculed!** Example...

In an article in 'The Times' on 16 September 08, Jamie Whyte said about the Xn faith "How can anyone who attended High School believe that...the world was created by an invisible deity; That He later impregnated a virgin who then bore a Son who was His own Father; That we have immortal souls that will live for ever in Heaven if we are good and love Jesus?" He argued that it is simply **not possible** for people who know as much as **modern** Westerners do, to believe in the central tenets of Christianity! Many feel like the Psalmist here "*Our soul has had **more than enough** of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud*" [Psa 123:4]

But Jamie Whyte says **more** in the article. He tells **why** he himself is not a believer – and here is where it hurts and we Xns have a great challenge. He says: 'the **real test** of genuine belief is, not what people **say**, but what people **do**'. He says 'I don't believe that believers **really** believe' otherwise they would

be **living differently**'. If Christians **believed** eternal bliss was on offer in the gospel - surely, if they **really** believed, it would **dominate their lives**? If Christians really believe in an impending Day of Judgment, how can they possibly have such a **blaze attitude** to evil and **live almost indistinguishable lives** from the rest of us? 'How can so many people accept pre-Enlightenment gobbledegook? Actually **they don't**'! Whyte says we Xns do not believe what we say we believe, **because** we **don't live** in accordance with that belief!

What an **indictment** against the Xn Church? In other words Jamie Whyte is saying that he, and others like him, do not believe in Xnity, **because** Xns are **not living** what they believe! I believe he has a **valid point**! Xnity, when lived as it should, **stands out** amongst the rest of society! Just as Jesus stood out amongst the people of His age and every age, so should Xns! Xnity's principles are **unique** and so **virtuous** they stand out!

**A REPLY** to Jamie Whyte: Some professing Xns **are** not Xns! They may indeed believe, but they do not **trust** God for everything! A real Xn is a person who has **surrendered** himself to God, not just accepted teaching about Him. Xnity is not simply belief in a collection of **propositions**. It is receiving **spiritual life** which makes us **new creatures**. Many people follow Jesus, who are not His true disciples. There are those who may follow the Lord but do **not accept** the propositions, in Jesus' own day: "*After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him*" [John 6:66] + those: "*This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?*" [J 6:60]

And there are many who follow Jesus, and accept the propositions, **but** do **not** have spiritual life in them, such as: "*Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you'*" [John 6:53] John wrote his gospel so "*that by believing you may have life in His name*" [John 20:31]

When many disciples turned back from following Jesus, because of hatred to His **doctrine**, He turned round and looked at His faithful ones, and said “‘Do **you** want to **go away as well?**’ Simon Peter answered him, ‘**Lord, to whom shall we go? **You** have the words of **eternal life**’**” [John 6:67] **APP**  
Where do **you/I** ‘fit-in’ here. Do you believe the **doctrines** **and** do you have **spiritual life** within you?

Jamie is determining ‘truth’ by the **wrong standard**. Jamie should make a judgment about Jesus Christ Himself, **not** His **disciples!** Why judge ‘truth’ by the ability believers have of maintaining its high standards the Master taught them? It is a **dogma** of the Xn faith that **perfection** is the **goal** of the Xn life, and not the experience of it! It **is impossible** for anyone to reach it – that is all part of Xn teaching.

It is **because** we **cannot** attain to the ‘**Ideal**’, that we must **have faith** in Christ’s life/death/resurrection! It is through **faith** that we are redeemed/accepted by God, not by perfect behaviour. Xnity readily accepts the impossibility of perfection in man.

The **solemn** matter for **you/I**, is the fact that many people refuse to believe the gospel because Xns do not live as Xns! You/I are the only ‘Christ’ that many people see.

### **The PSALMIST’S RESOLVE**

We must never be ‘**put-off**’ by the arguments of those who do not know the Lord. Because those who ridicule the Xn faith, **have faith themselves** in something – something **unverifiable**. Everyone is going to the grave ‘hoping’ their ‘belief’ is right! They are **depending** on some ‘belief’ about the afterlife.

How did the Psalmist resolve his distress when he felt he had more than enough of the contempt of the wicked? “...*so our eyes **look to the Lord our God***”[2] There may indeed be **just cause** why the wicked can insult us for our inconsistency, but

they, as well as us, have to deal with the Lord God of the universe. God is “enthroned in the heavens”[1]

**APP** Xns must look **beyond earthly boundaries**. The problem with atheists is that they only deal with the visible, tangible, observable, knowable. They cannot engage with the invisible or anything ‘beyond human understanding’! Unless something is comprehensible to **their** finite minds, atheists dismiss it. What **arrogance**? Because **we** finite creatures cannot understand something, then it is not true!! Yet we can believe in ‘**aliens**’!!

All Xns have wrestled with this matter of the existence of God, and have settled the issue that “*God is*”, that He does exist. The Bible says “*whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him*”[Heb 11:6] So the Psalmist looks up to God in the heavens as The Controller, the One in whose hands lies the whole world!

The Psalmist also trusts and depends in a promise that this God has made to him. “*till He has mercy upon us*”[2c] The **very source** that reveals God, also reveals His promise of mercy to those who fear Him, to those who truly believe in Him. The Xn believes God has mercy – and has promised mercy, thus the “*till*”! It is **because** God has promised mercy to those who trust Him, that he **prays** for it. God has **promised** the vindication of the righteous – we need faith to wait!

The Bible again and again remind us of the cry of the righteous who have faith – who **wait** for **justice** and say to God. Hab: “*O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear?*”

Xns believe God will vindicate the righteous because he has had **experience** of God. It is not a vain hope based on **speculation**. **Michael Faraday**, the great scientist, when seen on his deathbed, was asked, ‘And what are you speculating on now?’ replied, ‘I am not speculating but resting on the solid foundation of God’s promises’! **APP** What are you resting on?