

279 *Spiritual schizophrenia in our DNA?*

Are my articles of any use to anyone? I hope so, and some of you do say so, but what am I trying to achieve? Most of all, it's to challenge 'what we've always been taught', to go back to the Scriptures and check it out. But it's difficult, especially for those of us who are older.

Why are we sometimes so unwilling to change, to metanoia, to repent?^[271] Maybe we feel we're 'holding the line' against forces that are threatening the church – a worthy reason.

But maybe we *do* need to change in some areas because the church *does* get it wrong, historically, and Christians in 2023 do inherit some of those wrong attitudes – it's in our DNA.

I've already looked at the 'General Confession',^[215] which I can still recite, from my Christian infancy in the late 1960s. It's from the 1662 Communion Service and refers to '*our manifold sins and wickedness*,' it adds that we're '*provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us*'.

When I looked it up just now, I also read a dire warning in that service – I guess referring to Paul about being '*guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord*'^{1 Cor 11:17} – saying '*We eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's body; we kindle God's wrath against us; we provoke him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death.*' **What?!**

'Yes, but we're not even in the CofE!' Maybe not, but this wrong idea of what God is like is still in our DNA: I guess that most UK Christians are descended from that view of God (and/or the Catholic branch of DNA).

But then again, also in our DNA is the General Thanksgiving in that same service; this too I can recite. Talk about schizophrenia! This is chock full of *good* attitudes, Jesus-like attitudes:

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

That expresses well how I feel these days about God.

Maybe I'm *not* entirely wrong about 'the Roman trap',^[272,6] maybe we are a little bit un-Jesus-like and are wanting 'those evil people' to be punished. God's passion is **restoration**, not retribution.

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