James Packer – 'Fundamentalism and the Word of God'

“... may be summarized as follows:

1. God's character is one of pure benevolence, that is, without standards. All men are His children, and sin separates no one from His love. The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are alike universal.

2. There is a divine spark in everyone. All people are good at heart, and need nothing more than encouragement to allow their natural goodness to express itself.

3. Jesus Christ is our Saviour only in the sense that He is our perfect Teacher and Example. We should regard Him simply as the first Christian, our elder brother in the world-wide family of God. He was not divine in any unique sense. He was God only in the sense that He was a perfectly God-conscious and God-guided man. He was not born of a virgin; He did not work miracles, in the sense of 'mighty works' of divine creative power; and He did not rise from the dead.

4. Just as Christ differs from us only comparatively, not absolutely, so Christianity differs from other religions not generically, but merely as the best and highest type of religion that has yet appeared. All religions are forms of the same religion, just as all men are members of the same divine family. It follows, of course, that Foreign Missions should not aim to convert from one faith to another, but rather to promote a cross-fertilizing interchange whereby each religion may be enriched through the contribution of all others.

5. The Bible is not a divine record of revelation, but a human testament of religion; and Christian doctrine is not the God-given word which must create and control Christian experience. The truth is the opposite. Christian experience is directly infectious within the Christian community it is "caught", like mumps; and this experience creates and controls Christian doctrine, which is merely an attempt to give it verbal expression. Poetry, according to Wordsworth, consists of emotion recollected in tranquillity. Doctrine, according to Liberalism, has a precisely similar character. It is nothing more than an endeavour to put into words the content of religious feelings, impressions and intuitions. The only facts to which doctrinal statements give expression are the feelings of those who produce them. Doctrine is simply a by-product of religion. The New Testament contains the earliest attempts to express the Christian experience in words; its value lies in the fact that it is a first-hand witness to that experience. Other generations, however, must express the same experience in different words. Doctrinal formulae, like poetry, will vary from age to age and place to place, according to the variation of cultural backgrounds. The first-century theology of the New Testament cannot be normative for twentieth-century men. But this is no cause for concern, and means no loss. Doctrine is not basic or essential to any form of religion; no doctrinal statements or credal forms, therefore, are basic or essential to Christianity. In so far as there is a permanent and unchanging Christian message, it is not doctrinal, but ethical - the moral teaching of Jesus.”
The Jerusalem Declaration

In the name of God the Father, God the Son & God the Holy Spirit: We, the participants in the Global Anglican Future Conference, have met in the land of Jesus’ birth. We express our loyalty as disciples to the King of kings, the Lord Jesus. We joyfully embrace his command to proclaim the reality of his kingdom which he first announced in this land. The gospel of the kingdom is the good news of salvation, liberation & transformation for all. In light of the above, we agree to chart a way forward together that promotes & protects the biblical gospel & mission to the world, solemnly declaring the following tenets of orthodoxy which underpin our Anglican identity.

1. We rejoice in the gospel of God through which we have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Because God first loved us, we love him & as believers bring forth fruits of love, ongoing repentance, lively hope & thanksgiving to God in all things.

2. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the OT & NT to be the Word of God written & to contain all things necessary for salvation. The Bible is to be translated, read, preached, taught & obeyed in its plain & canonical sense, respectful of the church’s historic & consensual reading.

3. We uphold the four Ecumenical Councils & the three historic Creeds as expressing the rule of faith of the one holy catholic & apostolic Church.

4. We uphold the Thirty-nine Articles as containing the true doctrine of the Church agreeing with God’s Word & as authoritative for Anglicans today.

5. We gladly proclaim & submit to the unique & universal Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, humanity’s only Saviour from sin, judgement & hell, who lived the life we could not live & died the death that we deserve. By his atoning death & glorious resurrection, he secured the redemption of all who come to him in repentance & faith.

6. We rejoice in our Anglican sacramental & liturgical heritage as an expression of the gospel, & we uphold the 1662 Book of Common Prayer as a true & authoritative standard of worship & prayer, to be translated & locally adapted for each culture.

7. We recognise that God has called & gifted bishops, priests & deacons in historic succession to equip all the people of God for their ministry in the world. We uphold the classic Anglican Ordinal as an authoritative standard of clerical orders.

8. We acknowledge God’s creation of humankind as male & female & the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between 1 man & 1 woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy & the basis of the family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard & call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage & abstinence for those who are not married.

9. We gladly accept the Great Commission of the risen Lord to make disciples of all nations, to seek those who do not know Christ & to baptise, teach & bring new believers to maturity.

10. We are mindful of our responsibility to be good stewards of God’s creation, to uphold & advocate justice in society, & to seek relief & empowerment of the poor & needy.

11. We are committed to the unity of all those who know & love Christ & to building authentic ecumenical relationships. We recognise the orders & jurisdiction of those Anglicans who uphold orthodox faith & practice, & we encourage them to join us in this declaration.

12. We celebrate the God-given diversity among us which enriches our global fellowship, & we acknowledge freedom in secondary matters. We pledge to work together to seek the mind of Christ on issues that divide us.

13. We reject the authority of those churches & leaders who have denied the orthodox faith in word or deed. We pray for them & call on them to repent & return to the Lord.

14. We rejoice at the prospect of Jesus’ coming again in glory, & while we await this final event of history, we praise him for the way he builds up his church through his Spirit by miraculously changing lives.