

Dear Mr. _____,

I watched as much as I could take of the rambling video titled "Bethel Bridge-Builders & Hillsong Hypocrisy" that you linked from the YouTube pundit who calls himself "Servus Christi" (a misnomer if there ever was one). I'll refer to him as "SC" hereafter.

You said you would forever consider me an apostate and totally untrustworthy if I failed to answer his charges. But more than 30 minutes in, he still hadn't got around to mentioning what specific sin he is accusing me of. For that whole half hour, the rant he was on seemed to have something to do with Trip Lee, whom I have never met; whom I have never listened to; whom I have never even referred to (much less recommended); and whom I have never shared a platform with. The only way SC had of tying me to whatever complaint he has about Trip Lee was a totally far-fetched guilt-by-association argument.

SC grouches about his critics, who frequently (and correctly) point out that his fall-back argument *always* involves a version of the "Six Degrees of Separation" theory. His critics are absolutely right about how easily and frequently he abuses and misuses the guilt-by-association argument. He also relies heavily on equivocation in the way he employs key terms: *endorsement, affirmation, partnership, friend, heresy, apostasy, etc.* He gives those words very elastic meanings.

For example, he criticizes John MacArthur for speaking at T4G in years past when Trip Lee led a breakout session. And SC works very hard to portray MacArthur as "partnering with" and "affirming" every other speaker at the "Sing" Conference. I do of course understand how someone might be in disagreement with John MacArthur's decision to speak at this or that conference, but it is a malicious slander to cast doubt on MacArthur's character or relentlessly try to impugn his 51 years of faithful ministry by claiming that he has a nefarious agenda; that he "shared the platform with" heretics; or that he "is friends with" every person who sent a video greeting or led a breakout session at the Sing conference.

Anyway, I forced myself to listen to SC's rant long enough to hear him mention my name—and then almost immediately lie about me. Specifically, he claimed I've said I believe Michael Brown is unregenerate. Not true. I have consistently declined to make any dogmatic judgment about the state or the destiny of Dr. Brown's eternal soul. I *have* criticized Dr. Brown for his active promotion of (and aggressive defense of) extreme charismaticism's long record of false teaching and false teachers. My complaint is *not* merely that Dr. Brown is friends with someone who once gave an endorsement to another individual who said he likes Bethel's music ministry, or that he spoke at a broadcasting convention or mega-conference where there was also a breakout session led by someone who once said something positive about Christine Caine, or whatever. Dr. Brown has literally guested on Benny Hinn's TV program; spoken at Bethel; defended the likes of Bill Johnson and Kenneth Copeland; and pretended the NAR movement is a myth.

To suggest that friends of Paul Washer are as guilty as Michael Brown unless they publicly denounce Washer for a years-old Tweet he made affirming Trip Lee (who later said something positive about Hillsong music) is to lose all sense of proportion.

In short, if you don't see a significant difference between John MacArthur and Michael Brown, I'm afraid I can't help you.

As I've said before, I'm concerned about the lack of basic common sense in people who are willing to take advice on discernment from a guy who doesn't attend any church or submit to any real spiritual accountability—and who sports a massive prison-style neck-tattoo of the Calvary Chapel logo.

I'm not inclined to listen to any more from SC. ***He has not shown himself to be a wise, honest, godly, or biblically-minded man.*** Virtually every video he has put on YouTube is an attempt to discredit someone who has faithfully taught the Word of God or proclaimed the gospel—*something I have never once heard SC do.* I've frankly never heard him declare or defend *any* vital doctrinal principle with actual biblical clarity. I've never heard anything truly edifying from him. He seems to aspire only to be an attack dog.

Meanwhile, SC feels perfectly free to impugn other men's motives. I'm referring, for example, to his false assumption that John MacArthur faked an illness to avoid speaking at the 2019 NRB worship service. Also, there's his ridiculous insinuation that I actually know more about Ravi Zacharias than I claimed in a podcast with Todd Friel—and because SC portrays MacArthur as a close partner of Zacharias's (he isn't), SC assures his listeners that I needed to go soft on Zacharias for political reasons. Again, that is a total lie, and it ignores what I actually ***did*** say. SC's stuff is chock full of false judgments like those.

Meanwhile, SC has monetized his videos so he can make money off them, thus giving YouTube permission to run trashy snake-oil-style ads and promos for institutions that specialize in false teaching—such as the ad I got when I first checked the link you sent. It was an ad for a self-described "ecumenical" seminary. ***According to the scales SC uses in dealing out judgments, we can say he has "partnered" with this liberal seminary for filthy lucre:***



One other thing: At 1:08:11 in that video, SC voices profanity in an unwholesome and unholy way, putting this expression in the mouths of his hypothetical critics: "Oh, hell..."

In short, SC is just as vile as he tries to portray the people he is so keen to criticize. Perhaps he isn't the best one to deliver a diatribe about hypocrisy.

Finally, here's a response to that style of "discernment."

<https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/anchor-podcasts/the-reformed-rant/e/62827737>

My own criticism of SC has always been that he is nothing more than an ecclesiastical Ishmael—a wild donkey of a man whose hand is against everyone (cf. Genesis 16:12). He is such a hyper-critic that he has literally cut himself off from involvement in any local church. Anyone who thinks he deserves to be taken seriously hasn't any biblical understanding of what discernment entails. But for those who remain genuinely confused, here is some more background information:

<https://reasonfiles.weebly.com/blog/regarding-servus-christi-part-one>

<https://reasonfiles.weebly.com/blog/regarding-servus-christi-part-two>

<https://reasonfiles.weebly.com/blog/regarding-servus-christi-part-three>

<https://reasonfiles.weebly.com/blog/servus-christi-updated>

One final suggestion for you: ask SC to name someone whose teaching ministry he *does* support, and then do some research on the track record of the one person he typically names as a mentor. If you then still think SC is a fair-minded judge with sufficient grounds to accuse others of hypocrisy, let me know.

Phil Johnson

Grace to You

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