AN OUTLINE OF AN ANGLICAN LIFE

Lessons in the Faith and Practice of the Anglican Church

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INTRODUCTION

What follows is a "survey course" on the general Faith and Practice of the Anglican Church that began as a series of questions and answers for use in preparing and conducting Confirmation and Inquirers' Classes in Anglican churches—a purpose I have by no means abandoned.

No written outline can replace the personal contributions of the pastors and teachers charged with educating the people of God. They must teach the classes, and they must select what portions of these lessons are appropriate to the ages and educational levels of their students. All I have attempted to do is to make their important job easier: to give them a place to begin. Anyone who has tried to teach others for any amount of time will know exactly what I mean.

I have used my notes and earlier versions of this course for a number of years, and so I have included here articles based on questions my students have actually asked, as well as those things I am convinced a Christian ought to know (whether he asks or not). I have found that providing a written, as well as an oral, lesson stimulates questions and conversation in the long run, since it gives students a chance to review what was taught in their spare time, and to write down their specific questions. I have also discovered that sending a lesson home with children, to be reviewed with their parents, does them, their families, and their parents' knowledge of the Faith no harm.

My historical and theological method in these pages has been based on this belief: that the Anglican Church is a living example of the Scriptural Church. Anglicanism is not a pastiche of private or borrowed customs. Our Faith is not a compromise among religious traditions. Our Faith is the effort of the members of this branch of Jesus Christ's Church, by the power of the Holy Ghost, to walk the path mapped-out in the Holy Scriptures that leads through and around the obstacles of life to mankind s full communion with God in his Christ. This is the original and only true meaning of the Anglican via media. The "middle way" is not "the middle of the road"; it is the one sure highway our King has provided for our salvation, for the pilgrimage that all must make who would come to him

(see Appendix II).

The Anglican Church does not "own" the Middle Way to Christ; but we maintain it for his honor and for the sake of salvation. We are a mission, not only to the world, but to the rest of the Church: not that all men should imitate us and be ours, but that all mankind should imitate Christ and be his. We can take no pride in this, since all we offer, all we stand for, is the catholic Faith of the Bible, the Apostles, and the Undivided Church, and the evangelical zeal of the Great Commission to teach all nations. These are God's gifts, and not our own.

I certainly have no right to speak for the rest of Anglicanism, nor do I intend or claim to. What follows is simply one Anglican priest's understanding of the outline of our Anglican heritage. I have included a number of Biblical warrants and backgrounds for our teaching and practice, in the hope that "our own" will understand the Scriptural basis of what we do and believe, and that the "stranger" who may read these pages, however devoted to his own branch of Christ's Church, will recognize us as his brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Then, there will be no strangers.

A Note on Educational Method

I have usually covered this material in ten or twelve sessions, scheduled once a week, due to time considerations and conflicts in schedules. I heartily recommend that no fewer than ten weeks be given to this study. It is more or less indispensable that every student have a Bible and a copy of our Church's Prayer Book, the Book of Common Prayer (BCP). I have always explained to my students, whether young people or adults, that this course is meant to supplement the Church's requirement that they know before Confirmation the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and be instructed in the contents of the Offices of Instruction or the Church Catechism (see BCP 283-295 and 577-583).

Appendix V is a sample final examination, which I distribute on the first day of class, including the references to the places in the Prayer Book where the answers may be found. I always require that children pass this exam, either in writing or orally, before Confirmation. I find that it is enough with adults to provide them with a copy, discussing the matter privately, if necessary, in a final interview to determine if they are ready to be confirmed.

The individual lessons are more or less self-contained, so that they can be used for a one time class, or as a handy reference, on their topics.

LESSON ONE

THE CHURCH

What is the Church?

"The Church is the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head, and all baptized people are the members" (BCP 290).'

I am a member of the Church because I was called by the grace of God, in the power of the Holy Ghost, to faith in Jesus Christ and baptized in water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. See John 3:1-8; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Ephesians 2:8-10; and Romans 6:3-12, especially:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3-4).[2]

Why is the Church called the Body of Christ?

All human beings are members ("organs," "cells," "integral parts") of one of two bodies of humanity. The first body, the body of the first man Adam, is dead because of Adam's sin. The second body, the Body of Jesus Christ, is resurrected from death by the power of God and is alive forever.[3]

The word "church" (perhaps originating as a Germanic corruption of the Greek for "the Lord's House": Oxford English Dictionary) is used in English to translate the Greek word in the original of the New Testament that means "those who have been called out" (ekklesia) .[4] The Church is made up of all those people who have been called out of the dead body of Adam, by the grace of God, and have been transplanted into the Living Body of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul explains in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 12, that because the Church is the living, breathing Body of Christ, each one of us who is baptized into Christ

is a member of that Body with his own particular job to do for the welfare of the rest of the Body.

Don't make the mistake of thinking of "membership" in political or institutional terms. "Member" is a physical term, as well. Insurance policies still speak of the loss of an eye or a leg as "dismemberment." The members of the Church are the "flesh and bones" of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:30).

What is the Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church is the Church of the Holy Scriptures (promised in the Old Testament and established in the New), the only Church founded by Jesus Christ himself to be his Body.[5]

The Catholic Church is the Church of the Gospels: the historic Church announced by Christ in his preaching; instituted by the Last Supper, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension; and confirmed by the anointing of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost.

One working definition of the Catholic Church is found in the XlXth Article of Religion (BCP 606):

The visible Church of Christ [that is, on earth] is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance [commandment], in all those things that of necessity are requisite [required] to the same.[6]

Another working definition is found in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds (BCP 15). It is called "The Four Notes of the Church."[7] The Four Notes agree exactly with our previous definition because they state that the Church is "one," "holy," "catholic," and "apostolic" (see the Second Office of Instruction, BCP 291).

The Church is one because there is only one Body under one Head, namely Jesus Christ. Christ only started one Church. We are members of it, or we are not (see Ephesians 4:4-6).

The Church is holy because it is Christ's Body and the Holy Ghost dwells in it, making its members holy by the grace of God (see Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; and Ephesians 5:25-27).

The Church is catholic (from the Greek for "with, by, in, and through the whole") because it holds the entire Faith, containing all things necessary for salvation as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, for all people in all times and in all places. Another word for catholic is "universal," not because everyone in the world is automatically a member of the Church, but because all those who are saved belong to the Church, and because the Church is the one means of salvation that God has provided for his human creatures (see Genesis 22:18; Luke 2:10-11; Acts 17:24-31; and Hebrews 13:8).

The Church is apostolic because it continues in the Apostles' teaching, fellowship, and ministry, as they were delivered to the Apostles by Christ and the Holy Ghost (see John 20:21-23; and Acts 2:42).

What is the Christian Religion?

The Christian religion is the following of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 16:24-25; and John 14:15). The disciples of Jesus Christ were first called "Christians" (Christ-followers) in Antioch (Acts 11:26). The name Christians was likely a term of derision at first, since the disciples persisted in imitating someone who was by the wisdom of this fallen world an executed carpenter.

When you are asked your religion, the correct answer is "Christian," rather than the name of our particular branch of Christ's Church. Other "religions" are, for example, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Taoism, and Humanism.

The word "religion" comes from the Latin religare, "to tie together," "to bind up." We get our English word "rely" from the same Latin word. Every human being has a set of beliefs that he relies on to hold his life together, even if it is only a belief in himself.[8] A Christian relies on Jesus Christ to make sense out of his life and to preserve it forever.

Are all Christians members of the Catholic Church?

As we saw at the beginning of this lesson, all baptized people are the members of Christ's Church, and the Catholic Church is the only Church there is.

But what about the various "denominations"?

This question is rather harder to answer, not because God has made his Church very complicated, but because the sins of the Church's members have complicated the life of the

Church. Remember: Christ alone is without sin (Romans 3:23-25; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:21-24). The members of his Body are redeemed sinners, but imperfect nevertheless, and it is by Christ's Name alone that we are saved, and not by the name ("denomination" comes from the Latin for "name") of our particular Church.[9]

First, we must distinguish between "differences" and "divisions." All differences among Christians are not the result of sin, and they do not need to divide the Church, any more than the differences between one household of a family and another have to divide the family or set its members at odds.[10]

For example, the Old Israel, sometimes called "the Old Testament Church," was made up of twelve distinct tribes or extended households of the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, named after the sons of Jacob (Israel). When the tribes fought among themselves, it wasn't their descent from different brothers that caused the strife, but their own sins against the unity of their one family.

Another way of describing God's Israel (his Church) is to call it a vine (Psalm 80:8). The New Israel, the Church of the New Testament, is founded, not in a human family, but in the Body of the Son of God: "I am the vine, and ye are the branches" (John 15:5).[11]

That there are branches of the Catholic Church, and families of faith within it, cannot be a sin in and of itself because of God's use of families and Christ's teaching of the vine. A difference between one branch of the Church and another is not a sin, any more than it is a sin for three parishes in the same branch of the Church to schedule their Sunday services at different times.

Sin comes in when one family of faith, or one branch, attempts to dominate all the others, or to exclude the others from the Body of Christ. In effect, such an attempt is a claim by that branch that its human founders were the founders of the Church, and not Jesus Christ. It is the sin of presumption, and anti-catholic, for a branch to insist that it is the entire vine.[12]

The sin of division amongst the branches of the Vine of Christ is called "schism" (from the Greek for "cleft" or "division"). Sadly, the great branches of the Catholic Church, the Roman Church, the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Anglican Churches, and the Old

Catholic Churches are in a state of general schism today. Another name for this tragedy is "an internal schism," because all these branches are undoubtedly "within" the Church, within the Body of Christ, even if they lack earthly unity.

But there is an even worse disaster called "an external schism" or "apostasy" (from the Greek "to stand apart"). Apostasy is a decision by an individual or an entire branch of the Church to reject some basic truth of the Christian religion: to separate completely from the Vine of Christ. Those who ignore the pleas of the rest of the Church and enter into apostasy cut themselves off from the Body of Christ and eternal life (Hebrews 11:6).[13]

The final complication is the fallenness of the world. Every household of faith forms an "institution" or a "corporation" (from the Latin for "body"), as a sort of "artificial" body to do its work on earth. But just as our God-created bodies can war against themselves in disease, humanly manufactured "bodies" can become sick. Some people who claim to be Christians simply are not, regardless of their institutional membership (see Galatians 2:4-5). Some institutions that contain real Christians are not truly Christian themselves.

The only real solution to these problems is the one that God provides: "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). Does a person or a group of people profess all the Faith of Jesus Christ as contained in the Scriptures and bear the fruits of Christian living? Does a group that calls itself a "church" meet the Scriptural tests of the working definitions given earlier in this lesson? If they do, then they are Christians, and they belong to a branch of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

Can anyone be a Christian without belonging to the Church?

No, since the Church is the Body of Christ. We cannot be Christians without Christ (see John 15:5).

Can people who are not members of the Church be saved?

No, because only the members of the Body of Christ share eternal life with him. Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Moreover, St. Peter, "filled with the Holy Ghost," proclaims: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:8,12).

Jesus Christ has commanded us to be members of his Body if we wish to be saved. We cannot say that we believe and obey Jesus Christ if we deny his word and refuse to obey his commandment that all people be baptized and become members of his Body.

Precisely because we are Christians, we do not take any pleasure in the danger of damnation of others. Our own salvation, after all, is not something we do, but a gift of God's mercy, so we can't have any pride in our membership in the Church. We can hope that God will have mercy on those who do not profess Christ, but there is little or no Scriptural basis for this hope, and its sentimentality may get in the way of our accepting our duty to pray and work to bring others to Christ. God has already provided the Church for the salvation of all mankind. It is unfair to God for us to blame him for our own failures to do our Christian duty.

Two ancient heresies (false teachings) that have been revived in modern times suggest that some or all will be given a "second chance" to profess Christ, either by reincarnation or by being given a chance to believe the Gospel after death. But we know these beliefs are impossible, since we read in the Bible: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).[14]

How could the divided branches of the Christian Church be brought together?

The Church would be visibly united on earth if we all adopted the standards used in heaven. A short summary of these standards was produced by the Anglican Communion in the 1880s, named for the places where the meetings were held to discuss it: "The Chicago/Lambeth Quadrilateral."[15] A "quadrilateral" is a four-sided figure, in this case an effort to describe the spiritual boundaries of the Kingdom of God, something like the edges of a map.

The four sides of the Quadrilateral are the truth that the Bible contains all things necessary for salvation, and that the Church must not teach or require anything not warranted by the Bible; that the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds are true and sufficient summaries of what the Bible teaches and the Church must believe; that the two sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion have been instituted by Christ and commanded for everyone who will be saved; and that the true ministry of the Church is that ministry

founded in the Apostles by Christ as a safeguard against merely human invention and teaching.

What is my bounden duty as a member of the Church?

"My bounden duty is to follow Christ, to worship God every Sunday in his Church; and to work and pray and give for the spread of his kingdom" (BCP 291).16

What is our branch of the Church?

Churches that had their beginning in the missionary work of the Church of England, whose own beginnings are traceable back to the first century Christian mission to the British Islands. The word Anglican simply means "English," in the same way that we speak of the English language. It is a historical term, rather than an ethnic one. There are about 65 million Anglicans in the world today.[17]

What is "the Continuing Church Movement"?

Until the War of Independence (1776-1783), Anglicans in what became the United States of America were simply members of the Church of England. After the Treaty of Paris of 1783 formalized American independence, the Anglican Church in the United States reorganized as the Protestant Episcopal Church. "Protestant" meant that this branch of the Church was not under the authority of the Bishop of Rome; and "Episcopal" (from the Greek word for "bishops": episkopoi) indicated that this American Church intended to remain a faithful branch of the historic Catholic Church.[18]

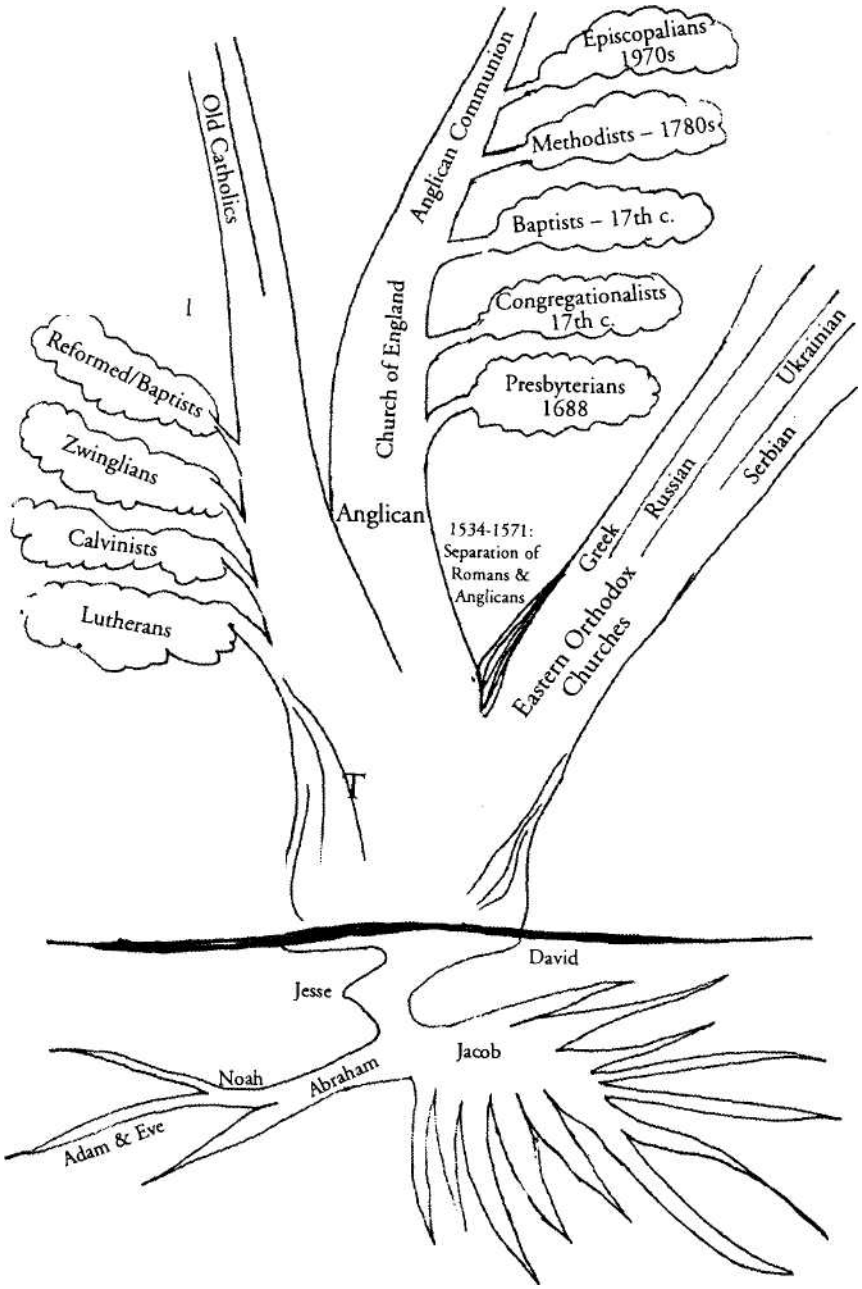
Until the 1970s, most Anglicans in our country were members of "the Episcopal Church." There was, however, an Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America, as well as the Reformed Episcopal Church, which was begun in the 1870s and continues today. But, as we learned above, the human institutions that are meant to serve a branch of Christ's Church can sometimes become diseased. This was the case with the institution called "the Episcopal Church." The leaders of that institution began to attack the teaching of the Bible itself. They introduced unbiblical practices into "the Episcopal Church" and demanded that all "Episcopalians" take part in them.

FIGURE ONE is a very simplified chart of Church history, showing the roots of the New Testament Church in the creation of Adam and Eve, Noah and his descendants, the call of

Abraham, the sons of Jacob (Israel), and Christ's descent from Jesse through David (see Isaiah 11:1).

The general history of the Church of Christ is shown as three main branches diverging after the undivided Church of the first thousand years. The sub-branches represent the movements and churches that have claimed a separate identity since the time of the 16th century Reformation. The dates given for the sub-branches stemming from the Anglican branch indicate the time of their institutional separation from Anglican churches.[19] The theological differences involved are serious and complex, and require respectful study. Also remember that this is a chart of historical relationships, rather than ecclesiastical validity.

Figure One: The Church's History illustrated as a tree



It became necessary, in order to preserve the Anglican branch of the Catholic

Church in the United States, to form new institutions to serve the faithful members of Christ's Body. These have been called "the Continuing Church" because their purpose is not to do or to teach anything new, but to continue the faith and practice required by God of all members of his Church.

The outcome of this ministry to faithful Anglicans in the United States is not yet clear, because God is giving us new opportunities to serve him every day, not just in ministering to those who are already Anglicans, abandoned or rejected by their former institution, but in calling new people to Christ.[20]

We do know that now there are Continuing Churches in other countries as well (Canada, Australia, India, Ireland, etc.), wherever human institutions have failed to keep the Faith and to serve the Anglican Branch of Christ's one Church. We can say, in all honesty, that we are part of a world-wide Anglican revival: a renewal of faith, a renewal of our mission to worship Christ and to preach his Gospel.

FIGURE TWO is a generalized church plan, including furnishings common in Anglican churches.

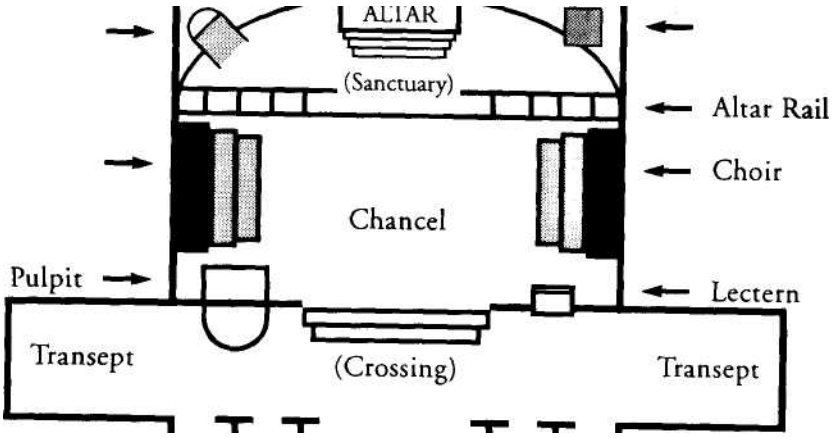
The general form of the building is based on the Roman basilica (from the Greek word for "king"), a type of public building that served as the model for later churches, law courts, theatres, and classrooms.[21] The extensions called "transepts" make the building cross-shaped ("cruciform") in honor of the cross of Christ.

The structure of this sort of church attempts to do two things. The first is a recreation of the order of the ancient Temple. Thus, for example, the sanctuary corresponds to the Holy of Holies. The second, and obviously related to the first, is the visual representation of Christian worship as service in a king's court, in this case the King of Heaven.

This sort of architectural use of space should be understood as the Church's reclaiming in Christ, for the purpose of giving glory to his Father, the dominion over the material world that mankind lost through sin (see Genesis 1:28). The church building becomes, in effect, an embassy of heaven, set apart to help the faithful meditate on the throne of God's glory and the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb (see, for example, Revelation 4 and 19:6-9).

Given the fallenness of human nature, however, it is unreasonable to expect this use of

symbolism to function on its own. Christians should study the usages of their branch of the Church, recalling constantly that their purpose is to honor God. They must not allow any Church practice to become an end in itself, for that would be idolatry.[22]



LESSON TWO

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

What is "doctrine"?

"Doctrine" is the formal teaching of the Church, from the Latin word docere, "to teach." The Anglican Church has no special or private doctrine. The teaching of our Church is the teaching of the ancient undivided Church of Jesus Christ, as found in the Holy Scriptures.[1]

Is doctrine important?

Yes, because doctrine is the expression of the Church's Faith in teaching, just as her services are the expression of her Faith in worship. And Faith is necessary for salvation:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Church's doctrine is not of human devising, but it is the human expression of the divine revelation given perfectly and once-for-all-time in the inspired Holy Scriptures and in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord (see 2 Peter 1:16; Jude 3-4). The Holy Scriptures remain the one absolute test of all doctrine because the Holy Scriptures are the work of God himself, and not just of the inspired human writers (Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21).

Furthermore, the Bible itself lays down this rule: "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). The human element can fail or err in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, but God cannot. God abides in his Church; and in the context of the Church's life, which is the life of the Body of his Son, God leads his Church by the Holy Spirit into the fullness of the Truth he has revealed about himself (see John 16:13-15).

The Anglican Church, as did all the undivided Church, has committed itself to Scriptural doctrine only. See especially the VIth Article of Religion, "On the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation" (BCP 603); and Article XX, "Of the Authority of the Church," where we read that "the Church [is] a witness and keeper of Holy Writ" (BCP 607).[2]

What is "dogma"?

"Dogma" is the most basic or fundamental set of principles (doctrines) taught by the authority of the Church, as the necessary beliefs for salvation.[3] The Nicene Creed is an example of dogma. "Dogma" is a Greek word that means "decree, ordinance, decision, command." It comes from another Greek word (dokein) that means "think, believe, or consider." "Creed" comes from the Latin equivalent of this word (credo: "I believe").

A faithful Christian may have honest difficulty understanding or explaining a dogma of

the Church, just as an honest physics student might have difficulties with the periodic table of elements. But just as our physics student would cease to be a student of physics the moment he dismissed the periodic table out of hand, a person who dismisses the dogma of the Church can no longer claim to be studying or trying to understand the Christian Faith.

One of the classic attacks on Christianity is called "relativism": the false belief that there are no absolute truths, even if God himself provides them. Relativism is, of course, an attack on God himself.[4] Relativists have given dogma a bad name, but if it is wrong to be dogmatic when one does not have the truth, it is far worse to refuse to be dogmatic when one does possess the truth. Christians are only entitled to be humble about themselves, and not about God.[5]

What is the doctrine of God and where do we find it?

The doctrine of God is the Church's teaching about God himself. The source of the Church's teaching about God is the Bible, where God reveals himself to us by his Word and by the record of his actions in history (Deuteronomy 29:29; Romans 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2).

If God did not reveal himself to us, we would know nothing about him with any degree of certainty (Isaiah 55:6-9; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16). Our knowledge is limited to our experience in this world, but God exists outside of this world. Our intellect and imagination are limited by our human frailties and sins, but God is not bound by our weaknesses or sin. God made the world around us, but we cannot work backwards from the world to God, since the world cannot contain God and the world itself is fallen.[6]

At best, we are like people staring up into the sky who see an airplane flying overhead. We think it's a 747. We're fairly certain that someone made the plane, or even a group of someones. We ask ourselves if the dents and bumps on the plane were there from the beginning, or if they were added later. And then we begin to speculate on the character and personality of the maker (or makers) of the plane.

Some people have used this difficulty in knowing about God on our own as an excuse for saying that revelation and religion are irrational: not of the intellect at all, but only of

the emotions. But what if the builder of the airplane took the time to introduce himself to us and to explain his work and his design? Once he provided the information that we couldn't get on our own, we could know a great deal about him intellectually (in terms of analyzing the information) and

emotionally (as we decided how much we trust him in his self-testimony).

Revelation is God's introduction of himself and his design for the world to the human race. God provides the information we could not get on our own, for us to study with our reason and to evaluate with our hearts. Thus, Faith is a cooperative effort between the intellect and the emotions, between God and man. Faith is a gift (as we saw in the quotation from Ephesians above) because what we need to know and believe had to be given to us by God in the first place.[7]

How do we summarize the doctrine of God?

The Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds summarize the teaching of the Scriptures about God (BCP 15). These Creeds were agreed to by the undivided Church as teaching exactly what the Bible teaches.

The Anglican Church also teaches us about God through the Catechism, ; the Offices of Instruction, and the Articles of Religion, to be found in the Book ;| of Common Prayer along with the Creeds. Everything taught in the Prayer Book : is based on the Bible and the Creeds, and all other preaching and teaching are : held up to this same standard by the Church as a whole (see the question the bishop asks a priest at his ordination, at the top of page 542 in the Prayer Book).[8]

What is the Apostles' Creed?

The Apostles' Creed is the summary of faith recited at baptisms by the early Church. This Creed is so old that pious tradition says it was written by the Apostles themselves. Whether the Apostles wrote the Apostles' Creed themselves or not, however, we are sure that this Creed teaches what the Apostles taught.

What is the Nicene Creed?

The Nicene Creed is the product of the first four Ecumenical ("of the whole household

of Faith") or General Councils of the Christian Church. The Nicene Creed is the response of the early Church to questions about what the Church believes.

The Church prepared the Nicene Creed at and between the Councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), and Chalcedon (451). We do not believe that the Creed is true simply because it was agreed to at these Councils by bishops and scholars from all parts of the Church, but because the Nicene Creed agrees with the Scriptures, with the even older Apostles' Creed, and with the Faith of the entire Church before it was divided (see Article VIII, BCP 604).

While the Church believed what is taught in the Creeds from the beginning, stating that belief more precisely was a difficult task. It took more than a century of the work of the best minds in the ancient Church to produce the Nicene Creed.[9]

Can we understand everything that is taught in the Creeds?

We might as well ask first, can we understand everything about another human being? Can we understand our husbands or wives, our parents, or our brothers and sisters completely?

It turns out that there are at least two kinds of knowledge: knowledge of things that are alive and knowledge of things that are dead. This is the difference, for example, between a history course and a chemistry course in school.

We can understand a machine or algebra, neither of which has been alive, in a way that we can never understand another person, or even our pet dog. We can dissect a corpse, but we can't take apart a living human being (at least not without killing him in the process and ending up studying a corpse after all).

Living beings are a "mystery" to us, from a technical Greek word that means "a truth that can only be known by revelation." The detective in a "mystery story" reveals the truth at the end, so that anyone can know it. We only know human beings as they reveal themselves to us in their actions and communications. When a wife says to her husband, "I love you," he can't prove her love like an algebraic theorem. He must trust her word and evaluate it on the basis of her behavior. If she stabs him with a knife, he might be inclined not to believe her.

When we say the Creeds, we are really saying that we believe that God is truthful and full of good will for us when he tells us about himself in revelation (see Exodus 34:6-7). We are saying that we trust God, and that our experience of him and the experience of the whole Church confirm our trust. We could study the Creeds all our lives and never understand everything in them, but our faith is in God, and not in our own intelligence or understanding.

So, what is the first doctrine of God?

The first fact we must know about God is that God is alive: "My soul longeth for, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Psalm 84:2; see also Jeremiah 10:10; Daniel 6:26; Matthew 16:16; Acts 14:15; Hebrews 10:31). Knowledge of God can only be gotten among the living, and not among the dead (Matthew 22:31-32). God can only be known as the Living God, and not as an idea or concept or philosophy. God's life, because it was not created, has no beginning or end (Isaiah 44:6).[10]

What is the second doctrine?

The second fact that we must know is that God is personal. There are no general persons," but only persons in particular. This particularity begins with God himself, who tells Moses from the burning bush, "I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shah thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you (Exodus 3:14). If we do not deal with God on a personal level, we are not dealing with God at all (see Exodus 6:1-2; Isaiah 52:6).

What is the third doctrine?

The third fact we must know is that God is unique. He alone is God: "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (Deuteronomy 10:17; see also Psalm 86:10; Isaiah 37:16). God has no God over him: no one to create him; no one to judge him; no one to command him:

O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth (Isaiah

37:16). (See also, Psalm 50:6 and Psalm 75:7, for God as the source of judgment and righteousness.)

Everything that exists, except for God himself, exists solely at God's creative command (see Psalm 102:25-28; Isaiah 42:5; Acts 17:24-28). God is not limited to any place or time, because space and time are his creatures (see Deuteronomy 4:39; Psalm 139:1-16; Jeremiah 23:23-24). God is not limited by a body because God is pure Spirit (see John 4:21-24). God alone is perfect in and of himself (see Deuteronomy 32:4; 2 Samuel 22:31; Matthew 5:48; James 1:17-18). God alone knows all things because he knows himself and he knows his creation (see Psalm 44:21; Isaiah 40:28; Luke 16:15; Acts 15:18; 1 John 3:20).

The Living Person of God himself is the sole test of goodness, mercy, kindness, or justice. No other standard is possible: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11; see also Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 7:9; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Matthew 19:17; Romans 12:2).

What is the fourth doctrine?

The fourth fact we must know is that God is sovereign. God has made all things, as we saw above, and he is both their Creator and Ruler. God is all-powerful ("almighty"). God is the source of all life and existence, and nothing exists without his permission (see Psalm 95, 96, 99, 100).

What is the fifth doctrine?

The fifth fact we must know is that God is free. God is not bound by anyone or anything but himself and his own free will. God's faithfulness to himself, and to his promises made to his human creatures, is an act of his free will (see Deuteronomy 7:6-11; 1 Corinthians 1:9). God cannot be forced or coerced to do anything.

The entirety of the Scriptures "adds up" to the summary given above (and more), but a convenient passage that gives us God's testimony about himself is Deuteronomy 32:39-40:

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive;

I wound and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever.

But couldn't such a God be a tyrant?

Yes, he could indeed, but God also reveals that he is anything but a tyrant.

What is the sixth doctrine?

The sixth fact we must know is that God is One: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4). God doesn't have any parts or passions (see Article I, BCP 603). God is not at war with himself, so he can call us to unity in our lives: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

What is the seventh doctrine?

The seventh fact we must know is that God is changeless: "I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi 3:6); and "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Because God is one and changeless, his will never changes. Whatever he is and whatever he promises are totally dependable.

What is the eighth doctrine?

The eighth fact we must know is that the Godhead ("god-hood," "the being or life of God") is made up of three Persons, called the Blessed Trinity. Jesus Christ commands that we baptize "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19; see also the Anglican rite for Baptism, BCP 275, 279). St. Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, blesses the Corinthians in these words: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14).[11]

It's an interesting question whether it is harder for us to understand how One God can be Three Persons or how Three Persons can be one united God, based on our experience of human personality. We know there aren't three Gods, since God tells us he is one. We know that the Three Persons aren't three parts of God, also because God is one. We know that the Three Persons can't simply be three ways of talking about God because One Person talks to another (for example, Jesus Christ prays) and because our Lord's commandment on baptism includes action by all three Persons. The closest we can come to an answer in this world, prior to the face-to-face knowledge we will have of God later on (see

1 Corinthians 13:12) is the ninth doctrine.

What is the ninth doctrine?

The ninth fact that we must know is found in 1 John 4:16: "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."[12]

God's life, what God is as God, what God does to be God, is to love. Before God created anything, God was a perfect unity in love of die Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. God is love for the pure sake of loving. The Blessed Trinity isn't a theological concept; the Blessed Trinity is a life: God's own life.

We know about love from our experience and from revelation: see 1 Corinthians 13. We know the power of love because love is the key gift we receive in our creation in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26): the power to love and to be loved. Even in this created world, love is so powerful that love can make a man and a woman one flesh (Genesis 2:24).

The perfection of God's love preserves totally and eternally die personhood of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as it perfectly unites them beyond any seam or separation. It is God's love that calls man to himself, to unity with our Creator, so that what we call that reunion is "atonement" (at-one-ment; see Romans 5:8-11). Sin is the rejection of love and unity, so God's perfect love makes him sinless and morally perfect (beyond sin).

Thus, we can trust this God Who Is Love, because he is changeless in his loving, and his entire will is engaged in love. God cannot be a tyrant because true love is not tyrannical. To deny this One True God is to deny love and to embrace hate as a way of life. Sin is mankind's choice of hate over love, in imitation of that other fallen creature, the Devil (see Revelation 12:7-12).

The only cure for hate is to replace hate with love. This replacement is the work of God in the world since the fall of man into hate and sin. The perfect love and obedience of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the undoing of the Fall. The inspiration to love is the special work of the Holy Ghost (or Holy Spirit). The forgiveness of love is the special work of the Father. We'll speak more of the work of God in the next lesson, when we will discuss

sin, salvation, and grace.

LESSON THREE

SIN, SALVATION & GRACE

What is sin?

Sin is disobeying God. As St. John tells us, "All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17). Sin is the violation of any commandment of God: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Sin is the rejection of God and of all the good things that come from him. If this sounds too strong, consider these words of our Lord: "Ifye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Sin is the opposite of love; therefore, sin is hatred for God, the rejection of the world as God made it, and the attempt to be our own gods. In die book of Genesis (see Chapter 3, especially verse 5), we read that the devil tempted Adam and Eve by telling them that they could become gods themselves by disobeying the One True God.[1]

What is "original righteousness"?

"Original righteousness" is the created state of the human race: that is, man as God created man to be, in God's own image and likeness (Genesis 1:27). Man and the universe (the world, or created nature) were made good by God, and they only became subject to death, decay, and evil later, in the fall of man. God tells us the truth in Genesis, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (1:31).[2]

God is spirit, that is, eternal life without a body or any other limit (John 4:24), so the

image and likeness of God is spiritual, not primarily physical (although the incarnation of Jesus Christ indicates that even man's physical nature can be conformed to the image and likeness of God (see Hebrews 1:1-4). Man in God's image is united to God, united within himself, morally good, intelligent, capable of moral choice (the true meaning of "free will"), capable of love, and immortal.

It is important to note that man is by creation an indivisible union of body, soul, and spirit (see 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12). God forms Adam from the dust of the earth, breathes his Spirit/Life into his nostrils, and makes him "a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). Body, soul, and spirit are not parts, in the sense of a machine that can properly be taken apart. When Christ "gives up the ghost' (the spirit of life) on the cross, he dies (John 19:30). Death is the division of man's created unity.[3]

Man is the prime example of "the sacramental principle": the use of an outward, physical sign to show the spiritual life, goodness, and grace of God.[4] The creation of the physical world is, in and of itself, a sacramental sign of God's goodness and love. Mankind, as first created, is the sacramental expression of God's person (image and likeness). In the division of sacramental labor among the members of the human race, man is the sacrament of God and woman is the sacrament of creation (see Ephesians 5:20-33).[5]

In other words, we learn about what mankind is supposed to be by studying God's revelation of himself (of which created humanity is a major part). Unfortunately, because man is now fallen, we cannot study mankind to learn about God at this time, with the exception of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What is "original sin"?

Original sin is the sin of Adam and the effects of Adam's sin as inherited by all of his descendants: that is, the human race. Original sin is the perversion of mankind's created nature, the corruption of original righteousness, the inborn weakness of the human character that predisposes all men and women to sin (see Article IX, BCP 604, where original sin is also called "birth sin").[6]

Another name for this weakness is "fallenness," because Adam "fell ini sin," falling away from the created goodness he had received from God. The of the human race affected

not only Adam, Eve, and all of their descendants, b the whole of created nature (see Romans 8:19-23, for the fall of nature wit! man; see Psalm 51:5, for the fallenness of the entire human race, so that we an conceived in human sinfulness).[7]

How could the sin of two people affect the whole world?

Actually, it was the sin of one man that changed mankind, and the world with it. Adam's sin was the real fall, not Eve's (see Romans 5:12). Until he sinne himself, Adam still had the option of throwing himself on God's mercy and offering himself as a sacrifice for Eve's sin, just as the only other totally innocent man who has ever lived, our Lord Jesus Christ, actually did for us all.

But let's begin at the beginning. Who was Adam's father? The answer! according to the Scriptures, is God (Luke 3:38). Man is not an animal. God created man separately from the rest of nature, forming him from the dust of the earth, breathing the Spirit of life into him, making him in His own image and likeness (see Genesis 1:25-28; 2:7). God made man to have dominion over the earth, not merely to be a part of nature. Mankind is the purpose of creation (se Psalm 8). The earth was created as a training ground, a kind of "Sunday School"! to prepare created beings made in God's image and likeness for eternal fellowship with Him.

Note also, the entire human race is derived from Adam, including Eve, who! was not a separate creation but made from Adam's rib (Genesis 2:22; 1 Timothy 2:13).

The body and physical nature are the means that God has provided for the spiritual life of mankind. This principle is easier to grasp if we remember that the most spiritual act in history was the death of one man on a cross. This is the same fact that permits bread and wine to be the outward and visible sign of Christ's Body and Blood in the Holy Communion, (I would suggest for consideration the idea that Christ is "attached" to the bread and wine in the same way that Christ is "attached" to the body born in Bethlehem, in the same way that Adam, you, and I are "attached" to our bodies: namely, God's fiat or spiritual commandment.)

The sin in the Garden was the sacramental sin of disobeying physically the spiritual commandment of God not to eat of the fruit of a particular tree, the penalty for which was

death (Genesis 2:16-17). "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil" and "the tree of life" (Genesis 3:22) were not magic trees: they were sacramental trees (outward and visible signs).

Although Eve ate of the forbidden fruit first, it was Adam that God held responsible for the first sin (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-23). It was Adam who was created to be a son of God (remember: Christ alone is the uncreated, eternal, only-begotten Son of God); Adam who was given headship over the human race and physical creation to imitate God's good rulership over all. Adam dragged all humanity and all creation down with him.

What is most frightening about Adam's sin is how totally unnecessary it was. Adam already had everything, including eternal life, freedom, and personal fellowship with God. Adam chose death and depravity for himself and for mankind. An analogy would be a President of the United States who pushed the button starting a nuclear war, simply because he felt like abusing his authority. All his people would suffer, and any survivors would always have to live with the results of his action, both in terms of environmental and genetic damage.

If Adam had everything, what is evil?

Evil is not a thing. There is no created evil. God repeatedly tells us that everything he created is good (see Genesis 1). In the theological language of the Church, evil is called "a privation of good," meaning the perversion or spoiling or some good thing that God has made. Evil has no existence of its own, so there « no "self-existing" (substantial) evil.[8]

Evil is a way of acting, the chosen rejection of God by some creature endowed with a free will. Thus, sin is the perversion of freedom; lust, hate, and apathy are the perversions of love; gluttony is the perversion of enjoyment; idolatry is the perversion of worship; cancer is the perversion of growth; and so forth, endlessly to our shame and destruction. The devil is not a god, and he has [n]° power to create "evil things."[9]

we need to see, then, that evil and sin are fundamentally identical. The evil and other fallen angels were the first to commit evil by rebelling against

God before the creation of the world (see Ezekiel 28:14-19; Revelation 12:7-! The devil insinuates himself into the Garden to spread the contagion of sin to mankind, and mankind willingly, voluntarily begins to sin. The devil's against God is pointless, of

course, as is all evil. Evil is not able to overcome the devil cannot create or even destroy: he can only spoil and ruin.

Why does a good God tolerate evil?

God tolerates evil, first of all, because he loves all his creatures, even thost who are most rebellious. His creation is a kind of covenant, a promise that hi will not take away the life he has given, even from those who do wrong (set Malachi 3:6). God has also made a covenant of free will with angels (created spirits without bodies) and mankind (created spirits with bodies). If we are to more than pets and puppets, we must be able to disobey as well as obey, and t« experience freely the consequences of both (see, for example, God's covenant with his people, including the blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience, in Deuteronomy 28). God does, however, intervene in the lives of his free creatures, both to protect the freedom of his own sovereign will for theii good, and in response to prayer (an act of his creatures' free will).

How do we know what evil (sin) is?

People have known throughout history that something is terribly wror with mankind and the world. Things fall apart. Men and women harm or another, and they are incapable of doing all the good things they intend. It is if mankind has some terrible disease. We hurt even the people we love the most.

God's revelation in the Bible, made to his first chosen people and to Church, teaches us what the disease is: disobedience to his will, or sin (sc Romans 7:14-25).

How do we learn the will of God?

The Bible reveals to us the will of God, not only from the perspective of this world, but from God's own perspective (see Deuteronomy 4:10; Matthew 4:4). The entire Bible is tiie explanation of God's will in creation and in redemption (see Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; as well as Articles VI and VII, BCP 603-604). Christians are bound today by the entirety of the Scriptures, with the exception of the specifically civil and ritual law of the ancient Israel, now superseded by the fulfillments and ordinances of the New Testament Israel, the Church.[10]

We learn especially about God's will in the Old Testament in the Ten Commandments

(Exodus 20:1-17). In the New Testament, our Lord explains the will and law of God in the Summary of the Law (Matthew 22:37-40), when he teaches us to love God with our whole hearts, our whole souls, and our whole minds; and to love our neighbor as ourselves. This Summary of the Law, of course, is no new teaching. Our Lord is quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19-18 The moral teaching of the Old and New Testaments is one, as God is one.

Where can I learn what the Church teaches about the Ten Commandments and the Summary of the Law?

The First Office of Instruction (BCP 285-289) provides a simple, but thorough, discussion of the Commandments and the Summary.

What are the consequences of sin?

The consequences of sin are separation from God (see Ephesians 4:17-19); war with my neighbor (see Genesis 4:6-8, 23-24); the weakening of my will and the destruction of my own integrity (Romans 7:19-25); and death (Romans 6:20-23).

What is separation from God?

Separation from God is hell (see Matthew 25:31-46 and Revelation 20:11-15). Since God is the Creator and Source of all goodness and life (James 1:17), separation from God is separation from all good things and life itself. There is nothing more terrible than this separation. The "place" we call "Hell" is the permanent state of separation from God, but we experience hell any time we are separated from God by sin. We also call Hell "eternal death," because permanent separation from God is permanent separation from life (see Revelation 20:14-15).

In addition, since God made my neighbor, separation from God makes me my neighbor's enemy. We see these effects of sin in the Garden, immediately after mankind's fall. Adam blamed both God and Eve for his own sinfulness (Genesis 3:12).

Is there any remedy for sin?

Since all of mankind has fallen into both "original sin" (the fallenness and moral weakness of the human race through Adam) and "actual sin" (our own individual acts of disobedience against God), on our own we can do nothing about sin (see Romans 3:23 and

Psalm 49:7-9). We gave up our freedom to sin, making ourselves slaves to sin, so we are not free to help ourselves (see Romans 6:16,20-23; and see Article X, "Of Free Will," BCP 605).[11]

Jesus Christ is the only salvation from sin because Jesus Christ alone is both God and a sinless human being (see Matthew 16:16-17; Hebrews 4:14-15; see also Article XV, "Of Christ Alone without Sin," BCP 605). Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Son of man. He is the "Christ," the "Messiah," the anointed one whom God has chosen to be the Savior of mankind and of the world (see Romans 8:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23,51-58; see also Article II, "Of the Word of Son of God, which was made very Man," BCP 603, and Article XVII, "Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ," BCP 606).

How does Jesus Christ save us?

Jesus Christ saves us by offering his life as a sacrifice for sin, in place of our own. This action is sometimes called "the substitutionary atonement," meaning that by his dying in our place for sin Christ has made us "at one" with his Father again. But whatever this fundamental truth of Christianity is called, it is the essence of the Gospel message, which must be believed for the sake of any human being's salvation (see, for example: Isaiah 53:12; John 1:29; Romans 5:12-21; Romans 6:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:28; and see Article XI, "Of the Justification of Man," BCP 605).[12]

Instead of condemning all men for sin eternally, God the Father chose to accept the voluntary sacrifice of his Son on our behalf, and on behalf of all the redeemed. God's created son, Adam, had rejected life. God's uncreated, only-begotten Son would give life back (1 Corinthians 15:22).

God used his dealings with the people of the Old Testament to teach them about sacrifice. He taught them that the only price of human life is human life itself (see Genesis 9:6), so that we would learn that sin is a matter of life and death. He taught them that the outward and visible sign of life is the blood (see Deuteronomy 12:23). He taught them to offer animals as sacrifices for their sins (Exodus 29:36, 30:10; Hebrews 9:22), as signs of their repentance, because! without repentance there can be no forgiveness (see Luke 13:3). (Note the interesting fact that "bloodshed" and "blessed" are etymologically versions of the

same word in English.)

But animals were not human beings, and they were not willing sacrifices for; sins. Only the sacrifice of a willing, sinless human being could be a true offering for the sin of mankind (Hebrews 9:7-12). So God provided a sacrifice (see! Genesis 22:8), his own Son, who voluntarily became a human being ("incarnate," "in the flesh") by the Holy Ghost, of the human flesh of the Virgin Mary, in Bethlehem (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).

The purpose of the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the way, was not the mere display of God's power (or some sort of denial of the holiness of marriage under God). The Virgin Birth was the preparation of a victim who; would be by actual inheritance both God and man, without inheriting the fallen, sinful will of Adam (which we all inherit through our fallen, human fathers).[13] Not only as God, but as a human being, Jesus Christ has the same Father that Adam had: God. Jesus Christ is the second Adam who gives his life for the redemption ("the buying back") of the children of the first Adam, so that by incorporation into the resurrected body of Christ (the Church) fallen men; can be new creatures, a new human race freed from sin to live with God forever (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; and see Lesson One).

In fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ was taken outside the city of Jerusalem and killed on a cross. Since Christ's life belonged to Christ alone, only Christ could offer his life to the Father. He was raised from the dead by the power of God on the third day to become our Great High Priest, and he ascended into heaven to offer himself to the Father once for all and eternally for the remission of our sins (see Hebrews 10:1-23).

If Jesus Christ died for the sins of the whole world, why do I still sin?

Jesus Christ did not die to make it impossible for us to be bad; he died to make it possible for us to be good. We are redeemed sinners, but we are sinners nevertheless. Jesus Christ's death did not take away our moral weakness as descendants of Adam: it gave us a new way of being good (see Article XVI, "Of Sin after Baptism," BCP 605).

What is this new way?

The new way of being good that Christ gave us is the joining of our imperfect lives with his perfect life by God's grace. Christ gave us the possibility of a new relationship with God,

as his adopted children by grace, to replace the relationship we had thrown away forever by sinning (see Romans 8:12-17; Galatians 4:4-7). We do not deserve this new relationship, but God in his love chooses us for it (see John 15:16; Ephesians 1:3-6). Jesus Christ calls this relationship the new testament in his own blood, which is shed for the remission of sin (cancellation of, pardon of, release from sin) (see Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25).[14]

We cannot enter into this relationship on our own, or in any way but God's way (see John 3:3,5-8). God is absolutely in charge of our salvation, and we are powerless to live without him. Just as Lazarus could not leave the tomb and live until Jesus Christ called him (see John 11:43-44), we cannot live eternally until God calls us and makes us alive. The dead can do nothing, and we are dead in sin, until God quickens us (regenerates us, makes us born again) by his grace (see John 3:3,5-8 again; and Romans 4:17; Romans 6:3-5; Ephesians 2:4-6; Colossians 2:13-14).

A true Christian life must begin with God's regeneration of our lives by grace. The character of our new lives in God's grace is the character of Jesus Christ himself, for by the power of God's grace and by baptism we are made the Body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 13:13,27; Ephesians 5:30). In Jesus Christ, as the members of his Body, by Christ's merits and Christ's alone, we are justified (accepted as righteous) before God the Father (see Romans 5:18-21; Titus 3:3-7). Our justification by God's grace in our Lord Jesus Christ does not mean that we become instantly perfect, as Christ is now, was, and ever will be perfect. But our justification does mean that when God the Father looks at us he does not see our sins and weakness but the strength and goodness of his Son Jesus Christ.

We are in Christ a new humanity, redeemed from sin (see Ephesians 4:17-24). We are new creatures, with a new life and a new purpose (see 2 Corinthians 5:17-21). Moreover, what we could not do on our own as weak persons (our old sinful selves), we can now do by the power of God, joined to the perfectly good and perfectly strong person of Christ. When we are united with Christ in faith by baptism, he makes up for our weaknesses. When we fall into sin, we are not destroyed because we belong to Christ and not to sin. Christ gives us gifts of repentance and the forgiveness of our sins. Christ gives us grace to grow better, to

grow up into his own image and likeness, which is the image and likeness of God and what we were created to be in the first place (see Ephesians 4:7-16).

Jesus Christ is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (1 Peter 2:25). He preserves us unto eternal life, and he sanctifies us (makes us holy) by the gift of new life in him and the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 26-31; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17).

What is grace?

Grace is, first of all, God's pleasure in doing good, in being faithful to himself (see Ephesians 1:3-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 4:11). Grace is God's loving power, and we experience it in our lives as the free gift of participation in God's own life (see Ephesians 2:4-10). We experience grace as God's favor, as God's kindness, as God's help, as God's forgiveness, as the power to be good, as the authority to act in God's Name (see Ephesians 4:7-16; Hebrews 4:16). Grace enables us to do what we ought to do, and to be what we ought to be (see 1 Corinthians 1:4-9; 15:9-11).

What is faith?

Faith is trust in God and his promises, the dedication of all that we are to loving and obeying God simply because he is God and deserving of all our love (see Luke 17:5-6; Romans 4:13-25).[15] Faith is "the substance of things hoped for" (the "surety," the spiritual "bond" of our dependence on the reality of God's promises) and "the evidence of things unseen" (the spiritual "proof" that we act upon when we obey God) (see Hebrews 11:1, and see the rest of that chapter as the power and effects of faith are listed).

Faith is a gift of grace, and the necessary means of salvation: "For by grace; are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). We cannot please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6). We can not do good works without faith (see Article XII, "Of Good Works," and Articl XIII, "Of Works before Justification," BCP 605).[I6] And that faith must be faith in Jesus Christ in particular. No other faith will do. As St. Paul tells us, "If all man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema [accursed, appointed! for destruction]" (1 Corinthians 16:22). Only faith in Christ gives life:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and

gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

How do I get grace?

We receive grace as God's gift, through faith in Jesus Christ, and through God's action in the sacraments which Christ has provided for us, especially through Baptism and the Holy Communion (see Romans 5:15-17; 2 Corinthians 9:12-15; Ephesians 3:7; Ephesians 4:7).

We do not earn grace or deserve it. The good works that we do are the result of the grace that God gives us (1 Corinthians 12:6,11). We deserve nothing from God when we do good works in his Name because doing good is our created duty (Luke 17:7-10).

What is salvation?

Salvation is God's forgiveness of our sins, our restoration to fellowship with him, and eternal life (see 1 Peter 3-9). Salvation is the end of our separation from God and the complete restoration of God's will for us in our lives. On the Last Day, we will be raised from the dead ourselves to be what the resurrected Christ is now (1 Corinthians 15:20-22; and see also Acts 24:14-16).

When we discuss salvation, we speak of our "election": our calling by Christ to new life in him (see 1 Peter 1:1-2). We speak of our "sanctification,' which is our "being made holy" as God is holy, in the Body of his Son Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). We speak of our "justification," which is our being restored to a full relationship with God in Christ whose own justice (or righteousness) is accepted by the Father in place of our corruption (see Romans 5:16-19). We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, by grace through faith, and not for our own good works or deservings (see Articles X through XV, beginning BCP 605). Faith is the essential precondition of justification (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Romans 5:1-2).

Can I earn salvation?

No. Salvation is the work of God: the Father forgiving; the Son propitiating and teaching; and the Holy Ghost inspiring and sanctifying. We receive salvation as a gift of love from the Father, by the Son, and through the Holy Ghost; and we are made saints by that love.[17]

Is salvation possible apart from Christ?

No, because Jesus Christ is God, and salvation is the work of God, not man. No human being has the power to save himself or anyone else (see Psalm 49:7-9, especially in the Prayer Book translation). There is no salvation apart from Christ and his Church because Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and no one goes to the Father in heaven except by him (John 14:6).

What is the purpose of human existence?

The purpose of human existence is to be what Jesus Christ is. In the lovely words of die answer to the first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." Those who do no confess Christ will spend eternity in hell with the devil, separated from God an the saints.

LESSON FOUR

THE DOMINICAL SACRAMENTS

What is the "sacramental principle"?

As we saw in the previous lesson, the sacramental principle is Gods use of some created, visible thing (or an action involving it) as the "sign" or indicator of the gift of his grace. For example, the created universe is itself the physical sign of God's creative love. The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ is the physical sign (the physical expression) of God's redemptive love (see Hebrews 1-3).[1]

So, what is a sacrament?

The "formal" (official) doctrinal definition of a sacrament is:

. . . an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us; ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive this grace, and a pledge to assure us thereof(Second

Office of Instruction, BCP 292).

In Latin, the word "sacrament" means "an oath." A soldier's oath, when he joined a regiment, was his sacramentum. The word "sacrament" was also applied to a soldiers "blooding": that is, to his first battle with his regiment, when he made good on his oath to fight beside his comrades. Thus, the pre-Christian background of the word sacrament was very similar to its Christian use: first of I a«. an oath or promise; second of all, the visible performance of what was promised.

What are the basic parts of a sacrament?

The basic parts of a sacrament are the inward and spiritual grace promised and given by God, and the outward and visible sign used by God to demonstrate his graceful action on our behalf in the physical world (Second Office of I Instruction, BCP 292).

How many sacraments are there?

The number of sacraments is one of those things that theologians argue about with the best of intentions, but to die confusion of many people in the Church (see 2 Timothy 2:14). This is unfortunate, because God is a God of order and peace, and not of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

The word "sacrament" is a word used to describe God's work, and not to limit it. St. Paul tells us that the ministers of Christ are "the stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1). The Eastern branches of Christ's Church, whose basic theological language is Greek, still mostly use St. Paul's Greek word "mystery," in the old sense of "the revelation of some truth that is unknowable until it is revealed" (in this case, God's loving care for us). The Western Churches, whose ancient theological language was Latin, by and large adopted the use of the word "sacrament" to avoid confusion, since in Latin die Greek loan-word "mystery" tends to mean only "the unknown." The Anglican Church, which is both ancient and reformed, uses both words as the equivalent of the other, as we can see in the First Exhortation to the Holy Communion (BCP 85-86).

But whether we call God's gifts of grace "sacraments" or "mysteries," we receive these gifts by the will of the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Ghost. The sacraments are God's fulfillment in time and space of his promise to care for the faithful. Since God created

human beings as a unity of body, soul, and spirit; we receive God's grace as a unified action performed by God that affects us in body, soul, and spirit.

So, how do we number God's blessings? On the one hand, we can't count all the good things that God does for us. On the other, we have a human need to try to count God's blessings, in order to organize our thoughts about his goodness, and in order to fulfill our duty to worship and thank him for his graces. Lists of sacraments are human instruments for thinking about God's grace, just as "theology" is the human study of God in general. Thus a pattern develops in the Church's human terminology for talking about the grace of God.

In our terms, we differentiate between "general" and "specific" promises made to us by God, putting the greatest emphasis on those specific promises made to us by Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate. We also recognize that, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, the Church is called upon to minister to the faithful at certain times in their lives when all human beings are most needful of the grace of God (see, for example, James 5:14-15). From a combination of the inspired revelation of God's promises in the Scriptures and the Church's Spirit-guided experience of life in Christ comes the traditional list of seven sacraments used by the Western branches of the Church.

The list of seven sacraments is very useful for studying both the mercy of God and the needs of mankind. We must be very careful, however, not to treat the number "seven" (or any other number) as a magical number that limits God's grace. Numerology (the superstitious belief that numbers have a power their own), as well as all other forms of divination, is prohibited by the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 18:10-12). Fights among Christians over the num of sacraments are unseemly and divisive, and perhaps worst of all, unnecessary. All faithful Christians believe that God works in the world for the sake of Church, so our accounting of God's graciousness should never take preceded over our unity under God's sovereignty or our gratitude to him.[2]

What are the "seven" sacraments?

The "seven" sacraments consist of the two "Dominical" (or "major") sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion; and die five "minor" (or "lesser") sacraments of

Confirmation, Penance (Absolution, Confession), Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Anointing of the Sick (Extreme Unction, Laying-on-of Hands).

What are the "Dominical Sacraments"?

The sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion are called "dominical" (from the Latin word dominus, for "Lord") because our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded these sacraments as "Sacraments of the Gospel," necessary for the salvation of all mankind (see Article XXV, "Of the Sacraments," BCP 607-8). Because our Lord specifically commanded that the Church administer these two sacraments, they are called "the major" (or "greater") sacraments, taking precedence over all other spiritual administrations that have as their warrant the application of more general promises of God's grace. Jesus Christ specifically determined the outward signs of die dominical sacraments, and clearly described the inward and spiritual grace of them (see for Baptism: John 3:3-8 and Matthew 28:19; see for the Holy Communion: Matthew 26:26-28 and John 6:48-58).

You may have noticed that the portion of the Second Office of Instruction quoted above in regards to the definition of a sacrament stresses that sacraments are "ordained by Christ himself" (BCP 292). You will also notice that Article XXV, "Of the Sacraments," stresses the personal, incarnate action of our Lord in the appointing of the dominical sacraments (BCP 607-8). It is possible that someone without a knowledge of Church history might misunderstand the present discussion of the sacraments as in conflict with the authoritative teaching of our Church. But this is not so.

Baptism and Holy Communion are central and necessary parts of new life in Jesus Christ. There is no substitute for them, nor any sacramental administration of the Church on a par with them. Thus, the Second Office of Instruction is quite right when it says, "Christ hath ordained two Sacraments only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord" (BCP 292).

The texts of the statements in the Second Office of Instruction and in Article XXV come from the time of the Reformation, when the Reformers were attempting to bring the Church back to a full appreciation of the unique Biblical significance of Baptism and Holy Communion. The Reformers were not trying to do away with the other five sacramental

administrations that fill out the traditional list of seven, but only to put them into proper perspective and to respond to the excessive claims made for them (and for the authority of church hierarchies to declare what is necessary for salvation) by some medieval theologians. This historical fact is proved by the English Reformers' inclusion of specific forms for the administration of the "five commonly called Sacraments* (BCP 607) in the Book of Common Prayer.[3]

Put another way, to claim that the Reformers' zeal for the careful use of the word "sacrament," and for the unique dignity of Baptism and the Holy Communion, was mere opposition to other sacramental administrations is to claim that the Reformers were opposed to the application of the Scriptures and Apostolic practice in the daily life of the Church. It is also to claim that the Reformers did not believe that the Church today hears the same Christ speaking in God's Word Written as the Apostles heard during Christ's earthly ministry. Such claims are partisan nonsense.

What the Reformers believed, along with the undivided Church and the Anglican Church today, is that Christ has ordained two sacraments for ali human beings at all times and everywhere; and that there are other sacrament administered by Christ's Body, the Church, as they apply to the needs of the individual lives of the people of God.

What are the "minor" (or "lesser") sacraments?

Confirmation; Penance (Absolution, Confession); Matrimony; Holy Orders; and the Anointing of the Sick (Laying on of hands, Extreme Unction] are called "minor" or "lesser" sacraments because they were not specifically commanded in a particular form by Jesus Christ for all men, everywhere. The minor sacraments are not required of all Christians for salvation, because they are based on the authority of the Scriptures in general, and on the application of Scriptural teaching by the Apostles. A human being may be saved, for exam pie, without being ordained or married; while a human being who has the opportunity to be baptized (some of the saints, for example, were martyred before they could be baptized in the normal way) or to receive the Holy Communion, and chooses not to do so, is not a Christian and is not saved (see Acts 2:41-42; Hebrews 10:19-25).

If you will glance at Article XXV again (BCP 607), you will see that it says, " [these] are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly as states of life allowed in the Scriptures. . . ." This section demonstrates the historic fact that the Articles were not written as "neutral definitions," but to deal with the controversies of the time.

For example, it was common at the time of the Reformation for some unreformed churchmen to teach that sin could only be forgiven by a priest, after a private confession. God, of course, did not give up his power to forgive sit I when his Son bestowed upon his Apostles the authority to forgive the sins penitent Christians in his Name (see St. John 20:22-23; see also the Absolution BCP 7). Nor did our Lord insist on a particular form of confession or a particular sign of absolution. It was an error to teach that the various forms used by the Church in obedience to Christ's grant of delegated authority were, without Christ's specific commandment, as necessary as the bread and the wine, the

"This is my Body" and "This is my Blood" in the Holy Communion. But the English Reformers were definitely not denying the efficacy of absolution pronounced by an Apostolic minister in Christ's Name upon a repentant person.

They were, instead, correcting certain of the clergy's false claims of raw ecclesitical power. In other words, the position of the English Reformers, found in the Prayer Book, was a return to Biblical and Apostolic standards (see the final paragraph of the Second Exhortation, BCP 87-88).

Who performs the work in a sacrament?

This is an important point that escapes many well-meaning people: that God performs all the work in a sacrament. God is the giver of grace, and faithful human beings are the receivers of grace.

Sacraments are objective acts of grace performed by God for our benefit. While God uses the physical instruments of outward signs and ministers in the sacraments, it is God alone who bestows grace, and God's promises alone that are fulfilled.

We must avoid the heresies of subjectivism (grouped under the name "receptionism") that teach that the faith (or the emotions) of the receiver of a sacrament is the power that

bestows grace. We do God no favors when we receive the sacraments, nor do we make any contribution to the life of God. Faith itself is not a gift that we give to God, but a gift to us by God's grace (Ephesians 2:8). We do not choose God; God chooses us (John 15:16). The sacraments are the specific visible continuation of God's saving grace in our lives, after we have received the saving gift of faith.

Here is an analogy. The effectiveness of a tetanus shot that a person receives in a doctor's office does not depend on the person's faith in the doctor, a knowledge of medicine, or a lack of fear of injections. The tetanus shot is an objective means of preventing disease. At the same time, the person is there in the doctor's office because the doctor has reached out to him, taught him to trust his judgment and good will in medical matters, and helped him to overcome his fear of injections. The doctor has done all the work. The patient has contributed nothing to medicine by receiving its benefits. Where this analogy breaks down, of course, is that a doctor can err, his knowledge is limited, and his medicine can fail. God cannot err, his knowledge is infinite, and his grace cannot fail.

How do we know if a sacrament is valid (if it is being administered properly)?

Since God has given his Church the responsibility for administering the sacraments, the Church has given a great deal of thought to developing a Method of guaranteeing to her members that the sacraments are being administered according to God's will as revealed in the Scriptures: that is, that they are valid" (from the Latin for "strong," "having power").[4]

To be valid, a sacrament must have the following elements:

The Proper Minister. The person who administers a sacrament must be authorized by the Church to do so, according to Christ's commandments. For example, in an emergency, any Christian can baptize (see the rubric in The Ministration of Holy Baptism, BCP 281).[5] In contrast, under any circumstances, only a priest or bishop may celebrate the Holy Communion (see the rubrics of The Order for Holy Communion, BCP 67-84, and the section on the offices of the ministry in the Second Office of Instruction, BCP 294).[6] Even if bread, wine, and the form in the Prayer Book are used, if a priest or bishop does not celebrate the Holy Communion service, there is no real sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood. The service is invalid (see Article XXIII, "Of Ministering in the Congregation," BCP 607).

The Proper Object. Here the word "object" (better than the more confusing word "subject" as used by some theologians) refers to the person receiving the sacrament. Only human beings can receive sacraments (you can't baptize your dog). Only someone who is baptized can receive any of the other sacraments. Only an unmarried man and an unmarried woman can receive the sacrament of Matrimony. Only a man can receive Holy Orders.

The Proper Form. A sacrament must be given in a particular way, authorized by the Church in obedience to Christ. The form of a sacrament should express the teaching of the Bible and the Church's intention to obey God in her actions. The forms of Baptism and the Holy Communion must be in imitation of the words and actions of Christ when he instituted (established and commanded) them. The form of the other, lesser sacraments must be according to the use of the Apostles and the undivided Church. The proper forms of the sacraments as they have been received by the Anglican Branch of Christ's Church are found in the Book of Common Prayer.

The Proper Matter. The visible things used in administering a sacrament must be what Christ commanded (Dominical Sacraments) or what the Church has authorized (based on the work and teaching of the Apostles). Water must be used in Baptism. Only bread and wine can be used in the Holy Communion: cookies and grape soda cannot be used in a valid Communion service (diey cannot be the "outward and visible sign" of the Body and Blood of Christ). The laying on of hands must be used in Confirmation (see Acts 8:14-17).

The Proper Intention. The minister administering the sacrament and the person receiving it must have the right intention: that is, they must intend to obey God and to do what God's Church does and means by that sacrament. Fortunately, this requirement does not mean that we must read the minds of our fellow Christians. It means that, according to the discipline of the Church, the minister and the receiver must publicly declare their intention to do what the Church teaches and believes. God will read their hearts. It is also this discipline of a proper public intention that protects the faithful from the unworthiness of ministers (see Article XXVI, "Of the Unworthiness of Ministers, which hinders not in the effect of the Sacraments," BCP 608)7

What is Holy Baptism?

Holy Baptism is the dominical sacrament, commanded by Jesus Christ, required of all human beings for salvation, that makes us members of Christ's Body (the Church) and heirs of eternal life (see Matthew 28:19-20; John 3:5; Acts 2:37-38; The Ministration of Holy Baptism, BCP 273-282, especially 273-274; see also Article XXVII, "Of Baptism," BCP 608).[8] The premature death (before the opportunity for Baptism) of someone called by the grace of God to new life in Jesus Christ is the sole exception to this universal requirement. Thus, the Church sometimes speaks of "Baptism of blood" (for martyrs), "Baptism of desire," or "Baptism of intention": meaning that she believes that by the sovereign mercy of God the inward and spiritual grace of Baptism was received without the outward and visible sign of water.

The outward and visible sign of Baptism is a washing in water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (BCP 292). The inward and spiritual grace is a rebirth in water and the Holy Ghost (John 3:3-8): "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; whereby we are made children of grace" (BCP 292). In Baptism, we are buried with Christ in his death, so that we may also be partakers of his resurrection and inheritors of God's everlasting kingdom (BCP 280-281; Romans 6:4-11).

The Proper Minister is a bishop or priest, when available. A deacon may baptize in the absence of a bishop or priest. In a life or death emergency, a layman may baptize, but all such emergency baptisms must be reported immediately to a parish priest to be recorded and to connect them to the total life and work of Christ's Church (BCP 281).

The Proper Object is an unbaptized person called by the grace of God to faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism can be received only once. We are born after the flesh once; so we can only be born again of the Spirit in Baptism once. Remember: Baptism is a genuine, objective rebirth by the power of the Holy Ghost, but it is only the beginning of our lives in Christ. We must live the new lives God gives us in obedience to him, by his grace. If we fall into sin, we do not need to be rebaptized, but to repent our sins: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9; and see Article XVI, "Of Sin after Baptism," BCP 605).

The Proper Form is washing an unbaptized person in water by immersion (dunking), dipping, or affusion (the pouring of water), in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (see Matthew 28:19; see BCP 273-^82, especially 279). The Church recognizes any Baptism that is performed using water in the Name of the Trinity in obedience to Christ.[9]

The Proper Matter is water.

The Proper Intention is to obey Jesus Christ and to do what the Church teaches and believes about Baptism: that is, to make the receiver dead to sin and alive to God.

What is required of someone to be baptized?

The Prayer Book teaches these requirements, based on the Holy Scriptures: "Repentance, whereby he forsakes sin; and Faith, whereby he steadfastly believes the promises of God to him in the Sacrament" (BCP 292).

Why are babies and children baptized?

The Church baptizes babies and young children in obedience to Christ, who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14), and "Except a man [the original Greek says "anyone"] be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).[10]

Just as circumcision was the sacrament of membership in the Old Testament (covenant), Baptism is die sacrament of membership in the New Testament (covenant) of Christ. Remember, God does the work in all sacraments, so children were circumcised under his commandment in the Old Testament, including his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ (Luke 2:21). It is pure arrogance for human beings to declare that children are not called by God to new life in him. Samuel belonged to the Lord before his birth (1 Samuel 1:11), as did the Prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:5). Isaiah tells us that the Servant of God (and perhaps he himself) is called from the womb (Isaiah 49:1). The Psalmist taught by divine inspiration that God knows and possesses all his people in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16). John the Baptist leapt in the womb when Mary, pregnant with our Lord, visited his mother Elisabeth (Luke 1:40-45)-Thus, following the commandment of our Lord and the consistent Scriptural witness of God's good will towards children, the Apostles baptized

entire households, including the children, from the first days of the Church (Acts 10:48; Acts 16:15; Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:16).

Note that the so-called "age of accountability" is not found in the Scriptures, but is derived from the teachings of various pagan philosophers, persons are born into sin and in need of redemption, no matter what their (see Psalm 51:5). Thus, the "age of accountability" has no bearing on the sacramental practice of the Church.

What is the sacrament of Holy Communion?

The Holy Communion is the dominical sacrament of the reception by the power of the Holy Ghost of Christ's Body and Blood, instituted by Christ himself at the Last Supper, for a perpetual remembrance of his one sacrifice of himself once offered as a full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction for the sins of the whole world (see Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; The Order for the Holy Communion, BCP 67-84, especially BCP 80; Article XXVII, "Of the Lord's Supper," BCP 608).[u]

Words cannot contain the meaning of this Sacrament because it is the Sacrament of the Son of God, and human words cannot contain the meaning of

Creator. Yet that same Christ, who is the incarnate Word of God (John 1:1), gives us words by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to speak of his blessings.[12]

We call this Sacrament "the Holy Communion" (from the Greek for "fellowship, " "relationship," "sharing") because it is the sacred sharing of God's own life (and of the lives of the faithful in God) by God's own grace and power. We call it "the Eucharist" from the Greek word for "thanksgiving," since the Holy Eucharist is the greatest single act of thanksgiving for our lives and salvation that God has given us the power to perform. We call it "the Lord's Supper" because it is the fulfillment of our Lord's promises and teaching at the Last Supper: his Testament declared the night before his crucifixion. We even sometimes call it "the Mass" (as once did all Latin speaking Christians, Martin Luther, and the First English Prayer Book) from the Latin word missa (meaning "sent forth"), because at the conclusion of the old Latin service the Church was "sent forth" into the world to serve Christ and to live his Gospel.

Another word we must consider is "memory" or "remembrance," as in "Do this in

remembrance of me."[13] This word has greater meaning in the context of the entirety of the Holy Scriptures than mere psychological or emotional recollection. There is, first of all, the idea of the memorial sacrifice: sacrificial obedience in memory of (in response to) the mercy of God toward his people (see Leviticus 24:5-9; Numbers 10:10). Thus, St. Paul can write of our living sacrifices of ourselves (a mystery of grace, since the word for "sacrifice" that he uses means "a slaughter": Christ has been slaughtered, so that we can offer God our lives in him) (Romans 12:1). And Paul writes of our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving (Hebrews 13:15), warning us not to fail "to communicate," "for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Hebrews 13:16). (These passages are summarized in the last section of the Prayer of Consecration, "the oblation of the Church," BCP 81.)

These "memorial sacrifices," of course, are not a re-offering of Christ's sacrifice of himself, which was offered once for ever, in the presence of the Father, in the holy of holies not made with hands (Hebrews 9:24-28). These sacrifices are the effect of Christ's one sacrifice, the grace of God at work in the life of the Church, and the life of Christ as work in the members of his Body (compare Matthew 16:24-25).

But "memory" in the Bible goes even deeper: even to the present, life-changing experience of what has gone before. When her son becomes ill, the widow of Zarephath asks Elijah, "Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" (1 Kings 17:18). In the inspired terms of the Bible, the "remembrance" of sin by God can make past sins present and deadly. Thus, God's "remembrance" of his Son's holy sacrifice, does not repeat it, but does makes that sacrifice present and life-giving in the Holy Communion for faithful members of the Church. "Memory," in the modern sense of simple recollection, is therefore the least important part of "Do this in remembrance of me," since it is only the result of the faith that God gives, of the memorial sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving that he commands and enables, and of his own communion with the one sacrifice of his Son.

Lastly, in this regard, we ought not to limit our thinking to past events. The Holy Communion is also a foretaste of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, which is heaven (see John 1:29 and Revelation 19:6-9).

What is the outward and visible sign of the Holy Communion?

The Second Office of Instruction teaches, "The outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper is, Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received" (BCP 293).

What is the inward and spiritual grace?

The Second Office of Instruction teaches, "The inward part, or thing signified, is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper" (BCP 293). The Prayer Book continues, "The benefits whereof we are partakers in the Lord's Supper are the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are strengthened and refreshed by the Bread and Wine" (BCP 293).

The Proper Object is a baptized person admitted to the Holy Communion by the Church, who has prepared himself to discern the Body of the Lord by repentance of his sins (see 1 Corinthians 11:26-32; see also the Exhortations, BCP 85-89; and Article XXIX, "Of the Wicked, which eat not the Body of Christ in the use of the Lords Supper," BCP 609).

The Proper Ministers a bishop or priest. No one else is authorized by Christ and his Church to offer the Holy Communion. A deacon may be sent by the bishop or priest to administer the consecrated bread and wine from the Church's common service of Holy Communion to someone who is unable to be present with the rest of the Church at the service as an extension of the Church's communion with God.[14]

The Proper Form is found in the Book of Common Prayer, 67-84. The form consists of taking the bread and wine, saying the prayers (including at least our Lord's own Words of Institution from the Last Supper), breaking the bread, and eating the bread and drinking the wine. (See Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25.)

The Proper Matter is bread and wine. Nothing else may be substituted.

The Proper Intention is to obey Jesus Christ's commandment to "do this in memory of me," as taught and practiced by the Church.

Do we really receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion?

Yes, since Christ clearly said, "This is my Body" and "This is my Blood.

TV teaching of die Church in imitation of our Lord is sometimes called "the doctrine

of the real presence."[15] Consider this. Jesus Christ said:

Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat [food] indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him (John 6:53-56).

Jesus Christ commands us to do must be possible for us to do, with his help. The Holy Communion is the means that Christ provides us to obey him and to have eternal life.

How is Christ received in the Holy Communion?

In one sense, we don't know. What we do know is that Christ said that we receive his Body and Blood in the Holy Communion. This is all we need to know, although our curiosity makes us want to know more. Queen Elisabeth I is supposed to have said, in response to the theological arguments of her time:

His was the Word that spake it:

He took the bread and brake it;

And what that Word did make it,

I do believe and take it.[16]

But, using the Scriptures, we can probably do better than this. The real question isn't, "How is Jesus in the Holy Communion?"; but how is personality attached or connected to matter?" A corpse has everything a living person has, except his life and personality. Yet, it isn't a person.

If we look to the first chapter of Genesis, we see that God created the world from nothing, by his will, by the Word of his commandment, and by the power of the Holy Ghost. When God created Adam, he formed him from the dust and breathed the Holy Ghost into him, to make him a living soul: a living person in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:7). It is the will of the Father, his Word of commandment, and the power of the Holy Ghost that makes a collection of dirt (or chemicals) a human being. It is the same will, the same Word, and the same Holy Ghost that graciously permit us to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion.

Discussions of transformations are beside the point, and grow out of a misguided attempt to make God and the Scriptures conform to the theories of pagan philosophy (see Colossians 2:8-10). A thing is, because God says it is. A thing is what it is, and means what it means, because God makes it so. This truth is all that the Prayer Book intends when it says that the Body and Blood of Christ are "spiritually taken and received" (293). The order of this physical world is set by the spiritual reality of God. The boundaries between one and the other are wherever God establishes them. Reality is always determined by God alone.

Does a Christian need to receive the Holy Communion?

Yes, and regularly, because the Holy Communion is the spiritual food that feeds the Body of Christ. We would not starve our physical bodies, and expect them to be healthy. So, we do not starve our spiritual Body. Obedience to our Lord, and love for him and our fellow Christians, requires us to make it our discipline to receive the Holy Communion as often as we are spiritually prepared to do so.

Note that a perfectly reasonable argument can be made that "give us this day our daily bread" in the Lord's Prayer refers to the Holy Communion, as well as to our ordinary food.[17]

In any case, the Biblical pattern for the life of the Church, from the day of Pentecost, can be described in this way: "They continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 3:41-42).

LESSON FIVE

THE MINOR SACRAMENTS

What are the minor sacraments?

The minor sacraments are: Confirmation; Penance; Matrimony; Holy Orders; and the Anointing of the Sick (see Article XXV, "Of the Sacraments," BCP 607, and the

preceding lesson).

Why do we call them "minor sacraments"?

We call them "minor" or "lesser," not because they are unimportant, but because they are not required of all mankind for the sake of salvation, as are Baptism and the Holy Communion (the dominical sacraments).

What is the basis of the minor sacraments?

The basis of the minor sacraments is God's good will towards mankind as revealed in the Scriptures (see, for example, Psalm 65; Luke 12:6-7); the teaching and church discipline of the Apostles; the practice of the undivided Church; and the Church, today, as the Body of Christ and a Scripturally mandated instrumentality of God to administer grace to his people (see 1 Corinthians 12, especially 4-11 and 28). It denies nothing of God's absolute sovereignty or his independence of mankind to act (see Isaiah 55:8-9), to affirm as well that the Church lives under Christ's commandment to feed his lambs and to feed his sheep (John 21:15-17).

It may be helpful to consider that the dominical sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion are the outward and visible signs of the ultimate restoration of the members of die Church to the state of unfallen man (see Romans 8 :18-23; Revelation 21:1-5; Revelation 22:1-5; and the collect "O merciful God," in the Order for the Burial of the Dead, BCP 334-335). In the dominical sacraments we are restored to eternal life and fellowship with our Creator. Life and fellowship were the gifts that God intended in our creation. Sin took them away. Christ makes it possible, by our incorporation into his own life as members of his Body, for us to have them again. The dominical sacraments are a foretaste" of what we shall be and possess when Christ's redemptive work is completed in us, in the resurrection of the dead. In a very real sense the mission or the Church is to provide mankind with the opportunity to "taste, and see, how gracious the Lord is" (Psalm 34:8) in this world, so that we may know him and enjoy him forever in the life of the world to come.

The minor sacraments, on the other hand, are merciful provisions for out life in a fallen world (see Psalm 23). The perfection of the work of the dominical sacraments will do away with our need for the minor sacraments. Now we need the sacramental gift of the anointing of the Holy Ghost in Confirmation, so that we may grow up in Christ and come

to his eternal kingdom. Then we will have face to face, eternal fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (see 1 Corinthians 13:10-12).

Now we need a sacrament of forgiveness, but in the fullness of Christ we will be cured of sin and have no more sin to repent (see 1 Corinthians 15:51-57). Even though the first marriage occurred in Eden before the Fall, when Adam and Eve were joined together in fellowship with their Creator, now we need an outward and visible sign of matrimony to remind us of what marriage was meant to be, and to be the sacrament of the mystical union between Christ and his Church (Ephesians 5:22-33; the Exhortation of the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony, BCP 300). Now we must make promises because we are still capable of breaking them; then we will be beyond vows and promises because the unity of the redeemed and God will be consummated forever in the wedding feast of the Lamb (Matthew 22:30; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:1-7).

In this world we still have need of the outward sign of a representative ministry called to do the work of Christ on earth. Then we will live in the presence of our great High Priest before the throne of the Father, completely restored to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:8-10; 10:19-25; 1 Peter 2:25). In this world, our bodies become ill, and we need the sacrament of Christ's healing. In the world to come, our resurrected bodies will be beyond sickness and beyond death (1 Corinthians 15:20-26; Revelation 21:4).

What is the purpose of the minor sacraments?

The purpose of the lesser sacraments is to lead us to Christ, as the visible word of his mercy: to aid us in living better Christian lives (Confirmation, Penance, Matrimony); to aid us in our Christian callings and states of lift (Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders); and to aid us in the crises of this mortal life (Penance and the Anointing of the Sick).

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is the sacrament of our anointing with the Holy Ghost, gives us grace and strength to follow Christ, to grow up into the image and likeness of our Lord, and to persevere in whatever calling it pleases God to give us (see John 14:15-17,26). The word "confirmation" comes from the Latin 'to make firm." It also means "to sign" or "to seal." The English phrase "signed

sealed, and delivered," used to describe the completion of a contract, express the sense of "confirmation" very well.

God always works in the unity of the Blessed Trinity. For example, at our Lord's baptism in the Jordan by John the Baptist, the heavens were opened; and is our Lord went up out of the water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:21-22; Matthew 3:16-17). This outward and visible sign of Christ's unity with the Father and the Holy Ghost did not make him the Son of God and the Messiah. The voice and the anointing with the Holy Ghost were the confirmation, the sacrament, the outward and visible sign, that Jesus Christ is the uncreated, eternal Son of God and the promised Messiah. Note that die names "Messiah" (Hebrew) and "Christ" (Greek) mean "the anointed one," "the chosen one."

Similarly, after Christ ascended to the Father, the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles on Pentecost to confirm them as Christ's: as the outward and visible sign that the Apostles and those who would follow them were those whom Christ had chosen to be his Body (Acts 2:1-4, 14-21).

In the Church today, Confirmation is the outward and visible sign that those who have been baptized into Christ, in the Name of the Trinity, truly are new creatures who belong to God alone. The Holy Ghost confirms and seals this new covenant, this new relationship of grace; and provides the power to fulfill the promises made in Baptism.

Thus, the Second Office of Instruction teaches that our duty as members of Christ's Church, based on our promises in Baptism, may be summarized as: "My bounden duty is to follow Christ, to worship God every Sunday in his Church; and to work and pray and give for the spread of his kingdom." The Office further explains that the Church provides "a special means" to help us do all these things:

The Church provides the Laying on of Hands, or Confirmation, wherein, after renewing the promises and vows of my Baptism, and declaring my loyalty and devotion to Christ as my Master, I receive the strengthening gifts of the Holy Spirit (BCP 291).

Unfortunately, some commentators have tried to limit Confirmation to the renewal or

reaffirmation of baptismal vows by the person being confirmed. While we have seen above that renewal is part of true Confirmation, if this were all there were to Confirmation it would not be a sacrament in any sense of the word. Sacraments are blessings that God gives us: not things that we do for God. Holy Ghost does the work in Confirmation, through the Son and his Body the Church, by the commandment of the Father. In Confirmation, we are definitely asking God to do something for us, and so the bishop prays over each Person to be confirmed: "Defend, O Lord, this thy Child with thy heavenly grace that he may continue thine for ever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto thy everlasting kingdom. Amen" (The Order of Confirmation, BCP 297. Whenever pronouns are highlighted in the Prater Book. as here, it indicates that they should be changed to agree with the person referred to by them; see also, Jude 24, and Colossians 1:8-11).

Some Christians have called Confirmation "the ordination of the laity" ("laity" meaning "the people of the Church").[2] If ordination is understood in its true sense, the granting of a specific state of life in which divine authority is given to perform work in God's Name, then Confirmation is the ordination of a Christian to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8).

The outward and visible sign of Confirmation is the laying on of hands by a bishop (accompanied is some jurisdictions of the Church by an anointing with chrism or "holy oil"). In some branches (jurisdictions) of the Church, the bishop may delegate the authority to confirm to a priest, but the authority resides with the bishop as a successor in the fullness of the ministry of the Apostles.

The inward and spiritual grace of Confirmation is the strengthening presence of the Holy Ghost, empowering Christian living and witness.

The Proper Minister is a bishop (or a priest to whom he has delegated this authority, under the canons and discipline of that branch of the Church). Note that Philip, a deacon (Acts 6:5), did not lay hands on those he had baptized in Samaria (Acts 8:12-17).[3]

The Proper Object is a baptized, but unconfirmed, person. There was only one Pentecost for the Church; there is only one Confirmation for the individual Christian. Remember,

however, that this sacrament does not limit the work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost may come upon those he chooses in any way that he chooses (see Acts 10:44-48; also, John 3:8, where "wind" is a pun on the Greek word for "Spirit"). We are speaking here of a specific, sacramental administration of the Church, practiced by the Apostles, ratified by the Holy Ghost, and recorded in the Bible (Acts 8:14-20). Therefore, if a person has been valid-ly confirmed in another branch of Christ's Catholic Church, but wishes to join the Anglican branch, he is not re-confirmed, but received in this branch in the full standing of a confirmed Christian.

The Proper Form is the laying on of hands by a bishop, accompanied b' prayer that the person to be confirmed will receive the strengthening gifts of tl Holy Ghost. The ancient list of the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit is based on the Septuagint (Greek) text of Isaiah 11:2. These gifts are: wisdom; understanding; counsel; ghostly strength (spiritual strength, fortitude); knowledge; true godliness (piety); and holy fear (the fear of the Lord) (The Order of Confirmation, BCP 297). The naming of these gifts should be included in the form.[4]

The Proper Matter is the laying on of hands by a bishop.

The Proper Intention is to do what the Apostles did and the Church still teaches as her intention: to impart the strengthening gifts of the Holy Ghost to the person being confirmed.

What is Penance?

Penance is the sacrament of the forgiveness of sins, from the Latin word I "regret" or "sorrow." Another name, "Confession," stresses the admission an acknowledgment of sin by the sinner himself. The name "Absolution" stresses h power of God's grace in forgiveness. It comes from the Latin word for "loosing or removing from imperfection." We get our English word "absolute," meaning "perfect," "freed from all imperfection," from the same Latin root. Thus, a penitent person who is absolved (who receives absolution) receives the authoritative assurance that he is perfectly, completely, and absolutely freed from his sins by the grace of God (see Psalm 32:1-2 and Romans 4:5-8; see also, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

The outward and visible sign of Penance is the confession of sin by a penitent sinner and

the pronouncement of absolution by a priest or bishop. The inward and spiritual grace is God's forgiveness of sins and the grace to grow better.

How is the sacrament of penance received?

The sacrament of Penance is received either corporately (that is, with the whole Body of the Church in some place) through the General Confession and Absolution (BCP 6-7, 23-24, 75); or through a private confession made by an individual Christian to a bishop or priest, followed by godly counsel and his pronouncement of the form of absolution.

Whether received corporately or individually, the sacrament of Penance is the Church's administration of the authority granted to her through the Apostles, by Christ himself, when he said to them on the evening of the day of Resurrection:

As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained (John 20:21-23).

It is worth remembering here that the word "apostle" means in Greek "one who is sent." The force of the word is that an "apostle" is a deputy, an ambassador, a delegate who is dispatched by a king to act with his authority. The Apostles of Christ were charged with preaching and administering the work of forgiveness that the Father had sent the Son into the world to perform on his behalf. See also, Matthew 9:2-8; 2 Corinthians 2:9-10; James 5:14-15; 1 John 1:9; and the promise in Psalm 51:17.

We may, of course, always appeal to our Father in heaven, through his Son, °Y the Holy Ghost, for the forgiveness of our sins. Any Christian who repents his sins and prays to God for forgiveness is forgiven his sins (again, see Psalm 32; see also, Job 42:1-6; 1 John 1:9; the Comfortable Words in the Holy Communion, BCP 76; and the petition for repentance and forgiveness in the Litany, BCP 57). The sacrament of Penance is an outward and visible sign of that forgiveness, and an assurance of it within the life of the Church.

Is there any advantage to a private confession of sins?

Yes, because private confession provides the opportunity for a penitent (one who is truly sorry for his sins because they offend God) to discuss his problems in detail with a pastor of souls, and to seek his spiritual advice. Private confession also gives a Christian with a

troubled conscience an opportunity to explore! the reasons for his difficulties with his confessor (the bishop or priest to whom he confesses, as to God's minister), and to receive his confessor's reassurance that i God really forgives his sins and wants him to be better (compare David and Nathan, 2 Samuel 2:13).[5]

It is a venerable custom for a confessor to set a penitent a task as part of his absolution, called "a penance." A penance is an act of regret for sin, not a price paid for its forgiveness. Jesus Christ paid the entire price for the forgiveness of all sins on the cross (1 Peter 3:18). This penance may be an act of devotion, intended to' strengthen the spiritual life of die penitent and his ability to resist future sins. Or this penance may be an act of restitution to the person or persons who were harmed by the penitent's sin: an apology to someone offended; repayment for something stolen; an attempt to restore the reputation of someone hurt by false witness. (See the example of Zacheus, Luke 19:1-10, when Christ forgives his sins and Zacheus responds in love. See the Second Exhortation to the Holy Communion, BCP 87. See Exodus 22:1, for the principle of restitution.)

Is private confession required of all members of the Anglican branch of the Church?

The discipline (the way of life that makes a disciple) of the Anglican Church does not require that all her members make private confessions. But the Anglican Church does encourage all her members to do so, if there is a need. For example, the Prayer Book clearly recommends a private confession when problems of conscience are preventing a member of the Church from receiving the Holy Communion (the Second Exhortation, BCP 88), and in times of sickness and troubled conscience (the Visitation of the Sick, BCP 313).

The Anglican Church, of course, also puts great value on the united, corporate confession of sins by the whole Church. Thus, a form of General Confession and Absolution is provided in all three of the Church's regular, daily services: Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and the Holy Communion. Not< too, that "general" does not mean "a confession of our sins in general," but united confession by, and in the presence of, the General Church.

Is a private confession truly secret?

It has been a rule without exception since the beginning of the Church that no bishop or priest discuss what he hears from a penitent in a private confession with anyone, ever (including with the person who made the confession, unless that person chooses to bring up the matter himself)- Many bishops and priest died martyrs' deaths, even under torture, rather than reveal what they heard in a private

The Proper Matter is a bishop or a priest (see the Second Office of Instruction, BCP 294, for the offices of die ministry; and see the rubrics before the absolutions, BCP 7, 24, and 75).[7]

The Proper Object is a penitent, baptized person. An unbaptized person, brought to repentance by God's grace, would seek instead the Dominical Sacrament of Baptism (review Article XXVII, "Of Baptism," and Article XVI, "Of Sin after Baptism," BCP 608, 605-606).

The Proper Form is a spoken confession of sins and the pronouncement of one of the forms of Absolution appointed by the Church, as in the Book of Common Prayer.

The Proper Matter is the physical actions of confessing the sin and pronouncing the absolution.

The Proper Intention is sorrow for sin; a desire to be forgiven by God; a will to obey Christ; and die desire to do and receive what the Church teaches as her intention: to administer and receive forgiveness of sins. A good place to begin in considering our sins is the collect for Ash Wednesday, BCP 124.

What is the sacrament of Matrimony?

Matrimony is Christian marriage: a life-long union of husband and wife, established by a covenant between them, and with God.[8]

There are many kinds of relationships in the world, both civil and religious, that are called "marriage," because die union of husband and wife is the most basic human relationship, established by God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:18-25). The family is, by creation and God's appointment, the basis of all human societies and social structures (including nations and governments).

There can be no healthy human society that does not yield priority of place to the family. All earthly happiness (and thus all unhappiness) begins in the home (the place where a husband and wife live out their covenant of love with each other, under God's sovereignty). Sin, however, has obscured the perfection of this God-given relationship; and sin is the reason for any confusion about the nature or purpose of marriage.[9]

God intends marriage as an outward and visible sign of his loving relationship with his creation (see the Song of Solomon, where a love poem is used by analogy to express God's intimate love for his people; and see Ephesians 5:22-33, where marriage is described as the sacramental sign of Christ's relationship with his Church). Further, within the unfallen relationship of Eden (and with-in the Christian restoration of it, by God's grace, in Matrimony), the husband is the outward sign of the Creator; and the wife is the outward and visible sign [of] creation (see Revelation 19:7-9).

Sin is a rebellion by creatures against their Creator, so sin is the "opposite" rnarriage: the denial of what marriage is, and of what marriage stands for.[10]

Christian marriage (Matrimony) is a Christ-commanded effort by a man and a woman to establish a life (a family) and a place (a home) where God's rule prevails even in this fallen world, so that they will recognize heaven when they go there.

Thus, we can say that the purpose of the sacrament of Matrimony is union with God; fellowship in self-sacrificing love; mutual help and comfort (strengthening); the nurture of children in God's faith and fear; and eternal salvation (see the concluding prayers and the nuptial blessing of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony, BCP 303-304). The outward and visible sign is the exchange of vows by the bride and groom. The inward and spiritual grace is the power given by God to live as man and wife in holiness and godliness, the grace to be good parents, and the salvation of the family under God's rule.

Must all Christians get married?

No, all Christians need not marry for the sake of salvation, but this answer needs some explanation. It is Gods stated intention that all people live in families, whether with their parents (as part of what sociologists over-describe as "an extended family") or with their spouses: For this reason shall a man leave his mother's and fathers house, and cleave to his

wife (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:31).

Under any ordinary circumstances, a man or woman offered the blessing of a family by God is expected to receive it joyfully and sacrificially. But the Fall has distorted the perfection of God's created order. Loving husbands and wives, for example, can find themselves physically incapable of having children.

Some people, because of sin's damage to human nature, are born incapable of marriage. Some people are prevented from marrying by the evil of their fellow fallen men; and some are so injured by the evil of others that they are rendered incapable of marriage (see Matthew 19:11-12, where "eunuch" is used to mean "a person incapable of marriage"). Imagine the difficulty to starting or maintaining a family in a concentration camp, or under the circumstances of chattel slavery. Consider the harm the perversity of our present society is doing to young people's capacity to enter into Christian marriage and God-blessed relationships.

Lastly, there are some who, like St. Paul, because of the great need of this fallen world for the work of Christ's Church, have been given a calling (vocation) from God to sacrifice the happiness of marriage for the needs of that work> and to forego marriage for Christ's sake.[11] Very often, such people take a religious vow (giving us the name "the religious" for them) to forego marriage and to live in the state of celibacy (from the Latin: "to live unmarried"). In many cases, such people form or join "religious orders," spiritual families of celibate men or women dedicated to some work for Christ (see Matthew 19:12).

In any case, all Christians, married, unmarried, or under a vow of celibacy are commanded by God to remain chaste. The proper sexual obedience of Christian to God is called "chastity" (from the Latin word for "pure"). The only sexual expression of love permitted by God is the physical and moral relationship full of love between a husband and a wife; that is, between a man and a woman,

God established the marital relationship between Adam and Eve (see Exodus 20-14, 17)- other sexual relations or actions (whether heterosexual or homosexual) are, by God's definition "sexual perversions" (a perversion or destruction of the sexual order he commands) and sins.[12]

The Proper Ministers are the bride and groom, as Adam and Eve were the human ministers of their marriage. It is the scripturally-derived rule of the Church, however, that for a marriage to be valid it must not be secret; it must not be coerced; it must not be between persons forbidden by God to marry because of their blood or family relationship; it must be free of fraud, confusion of identity, or any other impediment (barrier) that interferes with the exercise of free will by both parties; it must be performed in the presence of a bishop or priest to represent Christ's Church and to bless the marriage in God's Name; and it must be performed before at least two witnesses representing the people of the Church and society. A marriage must be recorded in the Church; and most civil jurisdictions also require a license to be issued and both civil and Church records to be kept.

The Proper Objects are a baptized, unmarried man and a baptized, unmarried woman (see Matthew 19:3-9). The canon (church) law of some branches of the Church permits a marriage when only one of the partners is a Christian, but it is much preferable for Christians to seek a husband or wife within the Body of Christ (2 Corinthians 6:14). Christianity and marriage are total commitments, and so-called "mixed marriage" introduces a danger of conflict between these commitments, since one of the spouses does not serve the Living God. St. Paul discusses the case of the conversion of husbands and wives after their marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:10-17.

The Proper Form is die exchange of vows as appointed by the Church, in the presence of a bishop or priest, and at least two witnesses. The Form for the solemnization of Matrimony begins on page 300, in the Prayer Book.

The Proper Matter is the exchange of vows and the joining of hands.

The Proper Intention is to obey God in a life-long union of body, soul, and ˢP'rit, as taught in the Scriptures and by the Church.

What is the sacrament of Holy Orders?

Holy Orders is the ordination ("the ordering") of men to serve in the three orders of ministry found in the Scriptures and taught by the undivided Church: deacons, priests (presbyters), and bishops (see the Preface to the Ordinal, BCP 529). These New Testament orders correspond to die pattern of the ministry the Old Testament Church, perfecting

them in Christ: levites, priests, and high priests.14

Under both Testaments, while the orders of ministry are distinct, specific, and defined states of life that set the ministers apart from the laity (from the "people" in general), it must be understood that these orders are representational. The men living and serving in them represent Christ, and not themselves or their order, whether to the rest of the Church or to the world. Their authority is derived completely from Christ, and not from their own personal goodness or other qualifications (see Article XXVI, "Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers, which hinders not the effect of the Sacraments," BCP 608). The efficacy of their administrations depends solely on Christ, and not on themselves.

At the same time, it must be said that it is a wonderful thing to be delegated by Christ to exercise his spiritual authority on his behalf in the service of his Church (see 1 Timothy 3:1).[15] This authority, however, always resides in Christ, and is granted through his Church, to the minister. Thus, the Church has the responsibility of examining and testing: the call of a man who presents himself for the ministry; his knowledge of the Faith; and his dedication to Christian obedience. No man may serve in the ministry without the Church's approval and commission (see Article XXIII, "Of Ministering in the Congregation," BCP 607).

Just as Christ is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls who brings Gods order to our lives (1 Peter 2:25); the ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons is to bring holy order to the life of the Church, by the authoritative preaching of the Word of God, the administration of the Sacraments, and pastoral care. The name "holy orders" for this sacrament, thus, refers both to the Church's commission to serve, and to the purpose of that service.

The orders of deacon, priest, and bishop are the means that Jesus Christ has provided for the sacramental life of his Church: the outward and visible sign of his continuing care for the members of his Body, by means of the members of his Body set aside for this purpose (see 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16).

The outward and visible sign of Holy Orders is the imposition (laying-on-of-hands) of a bishop (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 4:14, 5:22; 2 Timothy 1:6).[16] The inward and spiritual grace is the grace of the Holy Ghost to do the work of a deacon, priest, or bishop (see the Ordinal,

the forms for making, ordaining, and consecrating deacons, priests, and bishops, beginning BCP 529).

Is a man changed by his reception of this sacrament?

Yes, because ordination is the establishment by grace of a state of life, a man ordained to be a deacon, priest, or bishop remains a member of that order for life (see Mark 1:17-18; John 21:17-18; 1 Timothy 2:3-7, 4:14). A man may be ordained to a higher order, but he can never be re-ordained or un-ordained. In the case of Church discipline, the Church removes the authority of a disciplined minister to function in his office (to practice his ministry), but he remains a member of his order nevertheless. Remember, it is God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, through his Son and his Son's Church, who ordains. And God's standard is, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4).

What is a vocation?

A "vocation" is literally "a calling" to a particular state of life, given by God to every Christian (see the analysis of the Tenth Commandment, BCP 289). A Christian must fulfill his calling from God (see the Book of the Prophet Jonah). Those in the Church who do not belong to one of the clerical orders are called "the Lay Order." Every order is necessary for the completeness and welfare of the Church, as is every vocation (1 Corinthians 12:14-25).

Two common confusions should be mentioned here, First, the expression of personal opinions about religion is not preaching, even if done by a priest or bishop (Galatians 1:8-9). Preaching is an official act of the Church, and it can only be done by a priest or bishop, or by someone licensed by the bishop to preach (see 1 Corinthians 1:20-25). The Lay Order (as are the clerical orders in their private lives and communications) is called to witness (the Greek word "martyr" means "a witness") by living, working, praying, and giving for the spread of God's kingdom, not to preach.

The second confusion is that the work of the Church belongs to the clergy alone. This belief is a heresy called "clericalism." The clergy may not usurp the laity's right (and need) to work for Christ in his Church; and the laity may not yield their responsibilities to the clergy. One especially evil modern form of this heresy is the idea that only work performed

in clerical vestments is Church work.

What is the office of a bishop?

"The office of a Bishop is, to be a chief pastor in the Church; to confer Holy Orders; and to administer Confirmation" (Second Office of Instruction, BCP 294).[17]

What is the office of a priest?

"The office of a Priest is, to minister to the people committed to his care; to preach the Word of God; to baptize; to celebrate the Holy Communion; and to pronounce Absolution and Blessing in God's Name" (Second Office of Instruction, BCP 294).

What is the office of a deacon?

"The office of a Deacon is, to assist the Priest in Divine Service, and in his other ministrations, under the direction of the Bishop" (Second Office of Instruction, BCP 294). Notice that the intention of the Prayer Book in these definitions is that the authority of any lower order is included in the next higher order.

The Proper Minister for the ordination of a deacon, priest, or bishop is a bishop. In the case of the ordination of a priest, the other presbyters present join with the bishop in the laying on of hands. When a bishop is consecrated, it is customary since at least the Council of Nicaea for three or more bishops to join in the laying on of hands, as a sign and a safeguard of the Apostolic Succession (continuity) of bishops.'[8] When necessary, one bishop can certainly and validly ordain another.

The Proper Object is a baptized and confirmed man who has not been ordained to that order already, called by God, and examined by the Church. The discipline of the Church requires that a man to be consecrated a bishop have been ordained a priest first; and that a man to be ordained a priest be made a deacon first.

A woman cannot receive Holy Orders. The orders of the Church come to us through the Apostles, who were chosen from the Body of the disciples by Christ himself to serve the Church and to represent him personally, not only spiritually, but physically as well. The representative nature of the ministry requires that a man serve as the outward sign of the commandment of the Father and the service of the Son.

The male nature of the ministry is a sore point for some, but only because they do not understand that the orders are Scriptural, rather than man-made, offices. It is God's created order that the priesthood serves, and not the political theories of any age.

In the Old Testament, from Adam on, the representative priesthood is male and patriarchal (based on male heads of families as spiritual leaders). The Aaronic priesthood of the Old Testament is made up of the male members of the priestly family, without any slight to the dignity of female members. Women are forbidden by the New Testament to preach or to have spiritual authority over men (see 1 Corinthians 11:1-16, 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:9-15). The New Testament also specifically requires bishops, priests, and deacons to be men (and husbands): 1 Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:5-7. Note that the English word "priest" is a shortened form of the Greek word "presbyter," meaning "an elder," used for ministers.

Furthermore, sex does affect a sacrament. We have seen that Matrimony can only be between a man and a woman, and that any other combination of partners is sinful. It has been precisely the same anti-scriptural people who refuse to accept the patriarchal order of the priesthood who have gone on to argue that homosexuals may be "married."

There are some vocations that are given to one sex and not to the other by God. Only a woman can be a mother, or serve others as a mother can. The "office of motherhood" is, in fact, the Biblical equivalent of "priesthood" for women. In the same way, only a man can be a father, or a deacon, or a priest, or a bishop. A woman who goes through an "ordination" service does not receive that order, and all her administrations are invalid (except for what a baptized woman is permitted to do).

Finally, ordination to the ministry of the Church is not a right for anyone, male or female, seminary graduate or not.[19] None of us has any rights before God, to demand a vocation from him. Only those called by God through his Church have the authority to minister. To act otherwise is to sin. The intelligence the moral character, the sincerity, or the academic qualifications of women are not in question here: only their claim of a "right" to minister against the Word of the Scriptures. See Numbers 16, for the terrifying story of Korah and Dathan, who decided that they had a "right" to minister, regardless of

God's choice of Aaron and his male descendants. The earth opened up and swallowed them.

The Proper Matter is the laying on of hands.

The Proper Form is the laying on of hands by a bishop, accompanied by the prayers appointed by the Church to ask that God will give the Holy Ghost to the man being ordained for service in the office of deacon, priest, or bishop.

The Proper Intention is to make a deacon, priest, or bishop in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, according to the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures and taught by the Church.

What is the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

This sacrament consists of the anointing with oil and (or) laying on of hands by a bishop or priest, as the outward and visible sign of the healing power of God, both physical and spiritual, given as God determines is most expedient for the person receiving it (see Mark 6:13; James 5:14-15).[20]

Why is this sacrament sometimes called "Extreme Unction"?

Unction means "an anointing with oil." "Extreme" means "at the end." When the name was coined, it was quite common for most illnesses to have the potential to be fatal, so that this "last anointing" was the final sign of grace the Church could offer her members.

Some scholars derive the name Extreme Unction from the Latin phrase in extremis, meaning "in great pain or danger." Whether or not this is the case, this sacrament strengthens our faith in God, that he will heal us or give us the strength to bear our illness (and that our illness is being used for our benefit: see Romans 8:28). The Anointing of the Sick is also a sign of the forgiveness of our sins, since illness entered the world through sin. But the spiritual qualities of this sacrament must not be emphasized at the expense of God's physical blessings: God does cure sickness, by a variety of means, including the ministrations of the Church.

The Proper Minister is a bishop or priest; or a deacon, if he has been so "censed by the bishop.

The Proper Object is a baptized person who repents his sins and places his [tr]ust in God.

The Proper Form is the laying on of hands or anointing with oil, accompanied by the prayers appointed by the Church for the defeat of Satan and all [We]akness, for the forgiveness

of sins, and for the healing of the sick (BCP 320).

The Proper Matter is the laying on of hands, or the anointing with olive oil

that has been blessed (set aside) for that purpose.

The Proper Intention is to do what the Church Scriptures; and to heal and receive healing in Gods Name.

LESSON SIX

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

What are the Holy Scriptures?

The Holy Scriptures ("scripture" means "something written") are the written record of God's revelation of himself to mankind. The Anglican Branch of the Church attests, as do all the true branches of the Church of Christ, that:

In the name of Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church (Article VI, "Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation," BCP 603, including a list of the books).

It is an indication of how definitive the Holy Scriptures are for the Anglican Church that all of our Articles of Religion are derived from the Bible, and that three key Articles focus entirely on Scripture: Article VI, already mentioned; Article VII, "Of the Old Testament" (BCP 604); and Article XX, "Of the Authority of the Church" (BCP 607).'

Why are the Holy Scriptures called "the Bible"?

The Holy Scriptures are a collection of books begun by Moses around 1500 B.C. and concluded by the Apostles and their assistants at about the end of the first century after the birth of Christ. One of the Greek names for the Scriptures is "the books" (ta biblid). This Greek word became a singular noun (the Bible), meaning the Book of all books, because as a collection "Holy Scripture contained all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation" (Article VI).[2]

[Note that the traditional, historic, mainstream Christian approach to the Bible and its dates will be used throughout this lesson. While faithful Christians may reasonably disagree about fine points of dating (putting the events of the Bible into a historical context with the history of the rest of the world),Christians may not deny the reality of God s mighty acts in history as recorded in the Bible (e.g., Creation, the Exodus, the miracles, the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection).]

The Bible is God's record of himself for the sake of man, and "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son" (1 John 5:9).

Our contemporary attempts to read the Bible are made more difficult by the uncritical acceptance of certain errors made in the seminaries and universities of the nineteenth century. One of these errors is die "cult of scholarship," While a knowledge of history, languages, and cultures is very useful in studying the Bible, the Bible was originally written down for nomads, shepherds, farmers, fishermen, and all sorts of ordinary people. A committee of scholars is not necessary to interpret "Thou shalt not steal," or "Go, and sin no more." Any faithful person, willing to invest the time, can learn to understand God's Word in the Bible quite plainly. Too often, complaints about the Bible's "difficulty" are really only excuses for disobeying the clear commandments of God.[3]

Another important error is the so-called "historical-critical method," which rests on the premise that anything we cannot see happening around us in the world today could not have happened in the past. This approach ultimately voids the Christian religion, since the basis of Christianity is the uniqueness of all personalities (beginning with the Three Persons who created us) and the unique intervention of God's mercy into the history of man. Creation is a unique event. The parting of the Red Sea to save the Israelites fleeing Egypt happened only once, at the precise moment of their greatest need. The birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are singular events that have no comparison: otherwise there would be other "saviors" than our Lord.

There remain many practitioners of this nineteenth century method of reading the Bible (the so-called "modernists"), and they often denounce those who don't accept their opinions as "irrational" or "fundamentalists." But the religion they attack is no "ism"; it is exactly what has been known as Christianity in virtually all times and all places, especially in the Apostolic and undivided Church. And there can be nothing "irrational" about accepting God's testimony about himself, unless the very existence of God is denied beforehand, despite all of the evidence that supports him. The statement, "there cannot be miracles," does not refute them, but only expresses the non-Christian religion of the speaker.

The errors of the modernists are nothing new. Towards the end of the second century, St. Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons and one of our first theologians, wrote: "When the heretics are refuted from the Scriptures they turn to accusing the Scriptures themselves, as if there were something amiss with them" (Adversui Haereses, III).[4]

Finally, of all the branches of the catholic Church, the Anglican branch is the most dedicated to the exclusive use of the Bible for doctrine, discipline, and worship (see Articles VI and XX again). If "fundamentalism" is defined as loyalty to the God-given fundamentals of the Christian Faith as revealed in the Scriptures, then we are a "fundamentalist" Church.

Why do we say that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary for salvation?

We say this because, while the knowledge that mankind can obtain on its n is limited to what can be learned from the world around us, God is not con-f ed to this world (review Lesson Two: The Doctrine of God). God is the Creator of the world and lives without it. The only sure information we can have bout God is the information that God himself provides from outside the limits of the world. This information is called "revelation," and it is contained exclusively in the Bible, as agreed to and attested by the undivided Church (notice that Article XX teaches that the Church's authority depends on her being "a witness and keeper of Holy Writ," BCP 607). In revelation, God does not promise us all of the information about himself that we might like to possess, but he does promise us all the information that we need for salvation, and the hope of our complete knowledge of him at the time of his own choosing (see John 21:25; 1 Corinthians 13:12).[5]

What do we call the agreement and testimony of the Church to the Scriptures?

The witness of the undivided Church that certain inspired writings are the self-revelation of God in this world is called "the Canon of Scripture."

"Canon" comes from a Greek word meaning a "measuring stick" or "rule." It comes from an even older word in Hebrew that means "cane" or "stick" (compare "sugar cane"). The Hebrews used notched sticks, as other ancient peoples did, to keep tallies. They used sticks driven into the ground to mark boundaries (see Deuteronomy 27:17). The Greeks developed this practice further, using precisely measured sticks as standards of measurement. The Canon

of Scripture sets the boundaries of the Holy Scriptures: no other writings may be included or taught as necessary for salvation. The Canon of Scripture keeps precise count of how many sacred books there really are. The Canon of Scripture is the standard of teaching, provided by God and adopted by the Church, for anyone who wishes to teach the revelation of God.[6]

What is revelation?

This is the wrong question. The right one is, " Who is Revelation?" And the fight answer is, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is Revelation.

St. John's Gospel begins, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Jesus Christ is the Word of God. In the Greek, John has written that Jesus is the Logos of God. This is a difficult word to translate into English, but "Word" is a very good translation, as long as we understand that it means everything that we associate with "words": knowledge, expression, reason, understanding, will, truth, logic, commandant, and the power of God's commandment to cause things to be: "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made"

(John 1:3). Jesus Christ is God's Word of power: "And God said, Let there b light: and there was light" (Genesis 1:3).

All "words," all communication, reason, logic, thought, are the creatures of God, except for his uncreated Word: his only-begotten Son. Jesus Christ is the source of all words and all meaning. Thus, for example, lying is a sin, not simply because lies hurt others, but because lies are a rejection of the Word of Truth of God: the perversion of the image and likeness of a truthful God in the life of sinful men. Moreover, Jesus Christ is the content and fulfillment of God's expression of himself to mankind, given first, indirectly, by the power of the Holy Ghost through the prophets; given finally, directly, also by the Holy Ghost, in the Incarnation:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when

he had himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jesus Christ is "the Alpha and the Omega" (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet), the beginning and the end, the completeness of all truth (of any kind, in any area of thought, study, or endeavor), and the fullness of all knowledge of God (Revelation 22:13; see also Isaiah 41:4, 44:6). Nothing can be true that does not agree with the Word of Jesus Christ. In heaven itself, Jesus Christ's "name is called The Word of God" (Revelation 19:13). Jesus, as the Father's revelation of his good will, is the means of mankind's salvation, both in his deeds and in his teaching: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

Because Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the entirety of the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments, is the record of God the Son, as die revelation of the Father, before and after his becoming flesh (see again 1 John 5:9). No one can know God without knowing Jesus Christ: "neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matthew 11:27). The revelation of God in the Old Testament and the promises God made there were all the Gospel (meaning the "good news") of Jesus Christ: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8; and review Article VII, BCP 604). The Jews still call the Ten Commandments the "Ten Words" of God, and the entire New Testament demonstrates that Jesus Christ is the living commandment of God the Father in all things (see John 4:34).

In his public preaching and earthly ministry, Jesus Christ personally warranted the truth and authority of the Old Testament (Matthew 5:17-18, where "the law and the prophets" is the Jewish term for the Old Testament); he opened Scriptures to his disciples' understanding (Luke 24:13-35,45-48); and he anteed the preservation of the Gospel he taught in the New Testament by promise of the Holy Ghost (John 14:16-17,26; 16:13-15). [1 e] The Scriptures are truly, then, "God's Word Written": the outward and visible sign (because created words are signs or symbols), given for our learning, of 'he Truth (the Living Word) of God (see Romans 15:4). It is the same Christ we receive when we read the Holy

Scriptures in faith that we receive in the Holy Communion. It is the truth that is contained in die Holy Scriptures, the person of Jesus Christ, that is the content of the life of Christ's Body the Church. Thus, St John wrote not only for himself, but for all the human beings chosen by God to set down the Holy Scriptures:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full {1 John 1:1-4).

We can see clearly, then, that Revelation is the expression of the goodness and good will of the Father, through the Son who is his Word, by the graceful power of the Holy Ghost acting upon mankind to receive God's Truth.

What is the Old Testament?

The Old Testament is the written record of God's revelations and promises made to the Hebrew people and the Jewish Church in preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the whole world. It is called the "Old Testament" (see 2 Corinthians 3:14 for the Biblical use of the name) because its heart is the Covenant (testament, God-given relationship) between God and the Children of Israel, who were the descendants of his servant Abraham, who was chosen in his turn from among the descendants of Adam and Eve.

The Old Testament records God's creation of the world. It recounts man's first sin and mankind's need for a Savior. It contains God's promise of salvation, his promise to put away sin and its effects forever, all to be fulfilled in the New Testament of his Son. The Old Testament includes the history of Israel as a nation; the Law of God and the religious regulations given to the Jewish people; the books of the Prophets (those who "speak for" God), empowered by grace to say"Thus saith the Lord"; a hymnbook (the Psalter); wisdom literature (e.g., Proverbs); and even a love poem (the Song of Solomon).

Does a Christian need to know the Old Testament?

There is no greater error in Bible study than to assume that Christians do not need to know the Old Testament, or that we are not bound by its teaching.

The entire Bible is the Word of God, and we may not pick and choose what we will read or obey. Understanding the New Testament depends on our knowing the Old Testament. Christ repeatedly quotes from the Old Testament as the Word of God (as his own Word: e.g., the summary of the Law, Matthew 22:37. 40, combining Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18). But we must not think that what Christ does not quote does not matter. Christ constantly assumes that his hearers are familiar with the Old Testament, and if we are to be his hearers and disciples, we must know the Old Testament as well. For example, it is impossible to understand Christ's ministry as Savior and Messiah without first knowing the Old Testament account of mankind's creation and fall in Genesis (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

Sometimes the Old Testament is called "the Jewish Bible," but this name is only true if we mean by it that the Jewish people were God's chosen instrument for his revelation of himself to the whole world. The Chosen People are the means of the Old Testament revelation, and not its limit (see Genesis 22:18, and apply it to Deuteronomy 7:6-8). As Article VII (BCP 604) rightly teaches, except for the civil laws of the Kingdom of Israel, and except for the rules regarding ritual purity and temple worship (which were expressly done away with by God as no longer necessary after the sacrifice of his Son: see Matthew 27:51; Acts 10), all of the Old Testament remains binding on Christians as part of the moral law of God. As Christ himself tells us, before the New Testament was written, "the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

What is the New Testament?

The New Testament is the written record of the fulfillment of God's promises made in the Old Testament, in the person of his Son Jesus Christ (see Isaiah 53:4-5; Luke 24:25-27; Acts 10:43; 1 Corinthians 15:3). This book takes its name from Christ's own words and from the new relationship with his Father that Christ provides in his own Blood (see Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; and 2 Corinthians 3:6).

The New Testament was written in a much shorter time than the Old, because it is the eyewitness account of the life and ministry of Christ (the Gospels), and of the teaching and deeds of his Apostles (Acts). The New Testament also contains the letters (epistles) of the Apostles, written to teach, encourage, or admonish the early Church. The New Testament ends with St. John's mystic vision of the end of the world and the Kingdom of Heaven (Revelation).

Since Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises, and since he is, himself, the Word of God (the perfect and complete revelation of God); revelation is complete in this world with the closing of the Canon of the New Testament. We may learn more and more about God by studying the Holy Scriptures, gaining new insight into the gift of himself that God has given us, but no new revelation is possible according to God's own Word until after the Second Coming.

Anyone who claims a new revelation, who teaches anything other than what s Christ has revealed, is to be counted accursed (Galatians 1:8-9). Christ has warranted the Scriptures himself (see Matthew 5:17-18), so that anyone who denies the Scriptures makes Christ a liar and denies him. The Holy Ghost is the protector of the truth Christ has delivered (see John 14:26); so that no claim of "spiritual experience" can take precedence over the revealed Truth of the Scriptures. "No man speaking by die Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed" (1 Corinthians 12:3), so no one who questions anything in the Holy Scriptures ever speaks by the Spirit of God. In fact, the test of whether a "spiritual experience" is of God or of the devil is the truth of Christ in the Scriptures (1 John 4:1-6). Anyone who tries to add or subtract from the Holy Scriptures will receive the horrible punishment promised at the end of the New Testament, in the Book of Revelation (Revelation 22:18-19).

In what languages were the Holy Scriptures written?

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew. A translation of the Old Testament into Greek was made in the second and third centuries B.C. by Jewish scholars, so that dispersed Jews and interested Gentiles could read it. Jewish tradition says that seventy-two scholars worked on this translation, so that it is called the Septuagint, from the Greek word for "seventy."

The New Testament as we have it today is written in Greek, the "universal language" of the time of our Lord. Tradition and scholars tell us that parts of the New Testament were first circulated in Aramaic or Hebrew, before the text took its final form.[7]

There is a group of fourteen books, called the Apocrypha (from the Greek for "secret" or "non-canonical"), that were written between the Testaments in Hebrew or Greek. They are called "deuterocanonical" ("forming a second canon') because they are not universally accepted as part of the Bible. Roman Catholics read them as Scripture. Protestants, by and large, do not use them in Church at all. Anglicans, however, read them for instruction and historical interest, but do not use them for the proof of doctrine (see Article VI, BCP 604).

A few other items about translation may be useful. A complete translation the Scriptures from the original languages is called a "version" (e.g., the King James Version). Traditionally, a group of scholars is required for a version, rather than a single translator. Putting the Scriptures into other words in order to indicate a particular interpretation of them is called a "paraphrase." Only "versions" approved by the Church's authorities may be used in church services. Thus, the King James Version is also called "the Authorized Version," meaning that it was prepared and authorized for use in Anglican Churches.[8]

Also note that the chapter and verse divisions used in printed Bibles are not Part of the original or the manuscript (handwritten) texts. The chapter division were added in the thirteenth century by a Cardinal Hugo, in order to make it easier to refer to different sections of the text.[9] The end of one chapter and th beginning of another do not necessarily mean a change in thought by the orig- inal writer. The same is true of the verse divisions, which first appeared in the English Bible in the sixteenth century.

When was the Bible translated into English?

Parts of the Bible were translated into Old English (Anglo-Saxon) before the Norman Conquest (1066). The first complete translation was into Middle English in the fourteenth century by John Wyclif and his followers. This translation was in manuscript, and based on the Latin version known as the Vulgatt (made in the fourth century by St. Jerome, in the common or "vulgar" Latin).[1]"

In the sixteenth century, William Tyndale translated the New Testament and the first

five books of the Old Testament (the Books of Moses, or the Pentateuch) from the original Greek and Hebrew. His work formed the basis of the 1535 Coverdale Bible, which was the first complete printed Bible in English. This Bible was the basis of the Great Bible of 1539, used in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer. The Psalms printed in today's Prayer Book are substantially from this translation. The Comfortable Words in the Communion service are either adapted from this translation, or a separate liturgical translation based on it.11

The most famous and scholarly version of the English Bible is the Authorized or King James Version of 1611, commissioned by King James I of England to end disputes in the Church of England over Bible translations. The King James is a translation from the original tongues, retaining the best phrasing of earlier versions when accurate. It became the standard Bible of English speaking non-Roman Christians.

Other translations in English are available, of course. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, for example, the Revised Standard Version appeared, as an attempt to update the King James. The Jerusalem Bible of the 1960s is an English translation of a modern French version. Unfortunately, most "modern" translations, especially those since 1960, are really paraphrases: attempts to make the Bible fit certain theories of scholarship or theology. In most ways, the King James is still the best available English version of the Scriptures.[12]

How were the Scriptures produced?

Much of the material in the Bible was originally transmitted by word of mouth, before it was written down. Moses, for example, lived centuries after the events he recounts in Genesis. Moses, of course, also wrote about contemporary or recent events, using his own or others' eye-witness testimony. We also know for example, that the writer (by Jewish tradition the Prophet Jeremiah) of the Books of Kings used previously written sources in his work: he tells us so repeatedly (e.g., 1 Kings 11:41).

What complicates matters some (for us, but not for God), is the way the ancient: people wrote. As do many modern executives, ancient writers often dieted their works to secretaries or assistants. So, for example, the writings of the Prophets were just as likely to be written down by their followers, as by the prophets themselves (see Jeremiah 36:1-2,4,6).

The writing down of the New Testament began with St. Paul and his letters (epistles),

which often bear the name of his secretary at the end (see Romans 16:22, compare 1 Corinthians 16:21). The Gospels were written down towards the end of the lives of the Apostles. A written record was necessary to preserve their eye-witness testimony against their deaths from persecution or old age. St. Irenaeus, who was a disciple of St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John, tells us that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel first in the language of his own Jewish people, then in Greek. St. Mark, who was an assistant of St. Peter, wrote down Peter's preaching of the Gospel. St. Luke, an associate of St. Paul, wrote down Paul's preaching (as well as the Acts, a history of the early Church). St. John, with the help of his assistants, produced his Gospel while living in Ephesus (Adversus Haereses, IILI.i).[13]

All of the books of the New Testament rest on Apostolic authority, just as all the books of the Old Testament rest on the authority of the men chosen by God and inspired by die Holy Ghost to write his Word (2 Peter 1:21). This authority did not come from the men themselves, but from the Holy Ghost, so that our opinions about them and their religious experiences, or any lapses in time between events and their recording of them, have no real bearing on the validity or accuracy of the Scriptures. God is able to have his Word written down as he chooses, or God is not God.

The Canon of the Old Testament was closed (in the sense that the known canon was publicly attested to by the Jewish authorities) around the end of the first century. The canonical writings of the New Testament appear to have been finished by the end of the first century as well. By the end of the second century, the Church has basically agreed to the Canon of the New Testament as it is today (see the Muratorian Fragment: a list of New Testament books). Certainly by the fourth century the list was complete and final, since St. Athanasius gives the same list of New Testament books that we use today in his Easter Letter of 367.[14]

How many books are there in the Bible?

Here is any easy way to remember. There are 39 books in the Old Testament. There are 27 (3 x 9) books in the New Testament. There are 14 " x 7) books in the Apocrypha.

What is inspiration?

Inspiration is the work of the Holy Ghost: the giving of life. The word inspiration" comes from the Latin word "to breathe," "to breathe into," as does the word "spirit." Just as he breathed life into Adam's body (Genesis 2:7), the Holy Ghost breathes into ordinary human words the life of Jesus Christ, so that they can be the Living Word of God:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God [literally, is "God-breathed"], and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Only that which is perfect can make the godly perfect. The Holy Scriptures are perfect in the same way that the Holy Communion is perfect: they are the God-given means, empowered by the Holy Ghost, for the reception by grace and faith of the Perfect Word of God, Jesus Christ.

And just as the Holy Communion is received within the fellowship of the Church, so also are the Holy Scriptures:

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first that, no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:19-21).

and

I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11-12).

It is within the Body of Christ that Jesus Christ lives in this world, and that his Word lives. It is within the Church, inspired by the Holy Ghost, who came in the outward sign of Pentecost, that the Scriptures are to be understood. But the Church does not control the Scriptures: the Scriptures control the life and teaching of the Church. If the Church should stray from the Scriptures (as some parts of the Church have from time to time: Article XIX, BCP 606), she would lose the power of Christ

in her life and be liable to Christ's accusation: "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29; see also, Matthew 15:3-6).[15]

How does inspiration "work"?

Remember the Summary of the Law. Our Lord said:

Thou shah love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:37-40).

We know that "the Law and the Prophets" was a Jewish name for the Old Testament, all of the Bible in writing at the time of our Lord's earthly ministry. So the Bible hangs (depends) on loving God with all our hearts, souls, and minds. As we saw in Lesson Two ("The Doctrine of God"), love for God is itself a gift of God's grace, because God created us and loved us first (see 1 John 4:10,19). The inspiration of the Bible begins with God's reaching out by the power of the Holy Ghost to the human writer, followed by the writer's response (also in grace) with all his heart, and soul, and mind.[16]

The inspiration of the Bible is not die same thing as the dictation of a letter to a secretary. Inspiration is the relationship between God and those he chooses to be his messengers and spokesmen, just as salvation is the relationship between God and the redeemed. God's messengers are not perfect as God is perfect. They have limitations based on who they are, and where and when they lived. They do not necessarily have to understand die full meaning of what God reveals to them and inspires them to write (see Daniel 8:15, 12:8-9; Zechariah 1:7-9; 1 Peter 1:10-12). The Old Testament writers could not have imagined the glory of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection as the fulfillment of the promises God made through them (see Isaiah 53:1-5).

When Jesus Christ came in the flesh, he could teach directly, as God himself, in the perfect relationship of the Trinity, without these limitations. He could make all things as clear as they can be for our imperfect human hearts, souls, and minds. But even Jesus Christ chose human spokesmen to write down his Gospel, promising the active presence of the Holy Ghost in the lives of his humanly limited Apostles and Evangelists (John 14:26). Their

teaching, united to Christ as his Church (as the members of his Body), clarifies and completes the teaching of the Old Testament.

Is the Bible perfect or infallible?

The Bible is God's Word Written, and it is as perfect and infallible (without error) as Jesus Christ, God's Word made flesh, is perfect and infallible. God knows all things and is able to do all things; so God is able to express himself without error by any means he chooses.

Since the entire Bible is the Word of God, the Bible must be read in its entirety, as a whole. No part of the Bible may be set against another (see Article XX, BCP 607). Simply because we do not understand how all of the "parts" of the Bible go together, does not mean that God doesn't understand them. We cannot choose this sentence or that word out of the Bible, according to our own tastes or prejudices, and then claim we are teaching the Word of God.

Since most of us read the Bible in translation, we must also remember that the original text is the work of the Holy Ghost, and not every translation. We must also remember the possibilities of errors in the transmission of the text, due to mistakes by scribes (in manuscripts) or by printers. One famous early printed Bible (called "The Wicked Bible") gave the Seventh Commandment as Thou shalt commit adultery."[17] But even if that were the only copy of the Bible in the world, we could learn what God really taught and intended by studying the whole Bible. Similarly, variations in ancient manuscripts make no real difference in the Bible's doctrine.

How should we read the Bible?

We should read the Bible in the same way that it was written: with our whole hearts, whole souls, and whole minds, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and through the teaching of Jesus Christ and his Church. Before we read the Bible, we should always pray to God, whose Word it is, that his Son and the Holy Ghost will bring us to him.

We should begin our actual reading by trying to listen to God, rather than looking for ways to prove our own ideas or support our own prejudices (Psalm 46:10). We should use our minds, looking in the text for guidance about what kind of writing (genre) we are

reading, remembering that the human authors, while inspired, use language in a human way.[18]

For example, St. John tells us that the Book of Revelation is an account of a vision given to him by God (Revelation 1:9-11). Thousands of silly people have insisted that all of the Bible is strictly symbolic (including the parts that are history), except for this book whose author tells us clearly that it is symbolic. When the Psalmist uses a poetic image to tell us that Israel is die Vine that God has planted for himself (Psalm 80:8; in this case the image is a metaphor), any sensible person will understand from the context (the setting and the circumstances) that he is not saying that the Israelites were green and had leaves. On the other hand, when the Bible provides a straightforward account of an event, even a miraculous one, there is no reason to take it any other way than as a simple history of God's gracious action toward mankind.

One especially troublesome passage for many people is the account of creation in Genesis. There is simply no valid reason, verifiable by the scientific method, not to take this account of the six days of creation literally (as is). The various "theories of evolution" are scientifically untestable, and have to be taken on faith themselves: a secular faith that decides ahead of time that God either does not exist, or that God could not do what he claims to have done in Genesis. Since the whole of the Bible rests on the real-world, real-time, observable proof of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (see 1 Corinthians 15:12-19); there is fat more scientific reason to accept Genesis than any merely human theory or guess about the beginning of life.[19]

Christianity is reason, because it is the truth about reality, so there can be no conflict between faith and reason. Faith makes reason possible, since faith provides the necessary information about the world from outside the closed-sys-tern of the world. Nor can there be any conflict between "science" (which is a system of observation and description, derived from such Biblical concepts cause and effect) and "faith." Science describes the world, within the limits o> current human skill. God explains the world by revelation. When "science

shifts to explanations of the meanings of events (or the lack thereof), it ceases to be science and becomes merely another religion competing with the one true religion of

Christianity (see Paul's admonition against "science falsely so called": 1 Timothy 6:20-21).[20]

The humanly manufactured "conflict" between faith and science is a desperate attempt to avoid the moral and spiritual obligations of revealed religion. It is as old as the serpent's question in the Garden: "Yea, hath God said?" (Genesis 3:1); and Christians have been coping with it since the beginning of the Church (see 1 Timothy 6:20-21 again).

Thus, the first and most important question about any Scriptural passage isn't "What does it mean?" or "What can we do with it?" The right question is, "What does it say?"

We begin to answer this question by making certain that we understand the words used (especially in terms of how they are used in the rest of Scripture, but also in their ordinary definitions). We continue by making certain that we are reading our passage in context (in terms of the larger passage or book that surrounds it, as well as in terms of the rest of the Bible). For example, just because the Bible tells us Judas hanged himself (Matthew 27:5), we must not jump to the conclusion that the Bible encourages suicide. From the words and the context, we look for clues as to what kind of literature we are reading (e.g., a poem, a prophesy, a hymn, a parable, a vision, a history). Then we look to the whole Bible again to see how God used the different kinds of literature to express his will.[21]

When we have taken these basic steps, we will have a good idea about what the passage actually says. Some passages will be easier than others (see 2 Peter 3:15-16), but within the Church we have the advantage of two thousand years of work to answer the question, "What does God say?" And when we are reasonably certain that we know what a passage says, we will almost always have answered the question, "What does it mean?" as well. We should always begin by taking the writings of the Bible, in context, as plainly as possible, "for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Corinthians 14:33). Biblical passages take on additional meaning, not by our giving free rein to our imagination (as if responding to the inkblots of a Rorschach test), but by their interconnection with the rest of the Bible. "What does God say?" is the indispensable tool for understanding "What does God mean?"

How is Scripture cited?

We cite Scripture by giving the book, the chapter, and the verse numbers. of example, St. Matthew 22:34-40, means St. Matthew's Gospel, the 22nd chapter, verses 34 to 40.

Are Bible study groups a good idea?

Yes, if they take place in the context of the life of the Church. Both private and group study of the Bible should take place under the pastoral care of a minister of the Gospel approved by the Church. Ask your pastor about any Bible study group before you join it, and always make sure that you bring any questions about your reading of the Bible to your pastor. He is trained to help you get the most out of your Bible reading. Remember: the mere sharing of private opinions on the Bible can degenerate into what one old priest called "antiphonal ignorance." Bible study is a systematic, careful effort to understand God more clearly, and not a competition to dazzle our friends with the fruits of our imagination.

LESSON SEVEN

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

What is the full name of the Book of Common Prayer?

The full name of the Book of Common Prayer is "The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, Together with The Psalter or Psalms of David."[1]

Why is this title so long?

The title is as long as it is because every part of it means something important.

It is a "book" of common prayer because this single volume replaces a number of different kinds of worship books that had been used by the Church in the past.[2] This one, convenient volume permits every Anglican to own, know, and to hold in his own hands the basis of the public worship of his Church. While it is permissible (under the authority of the Church) for pastors to draw on occasion from other historical resources for worship, a Bible, a Prayer Book, and a hymnal (a collection of hymns and service music published or

authorized by authority of the Church) are quite adequate for performing the religious services of the Church.

The Prayer Book is "common prayer" because it directs the "common" ("belonging to the entire community") or "corporate" ("belonging to the whole body") worship of the Church, both for the clergy and the laity. The word "common" does not mean "cheap" or "unimportant," but "ordinary" in the original sense of that word: "that which brings order to a community." In this case, the community is the Body of Jesus Christ, the Church.

It may help you to understand the significance of "common prayer" if you will recall the ancient Christian system of the Three Estates ("states of life"). The rirst Estate is the clergy, charged with the spiritual defense and welfare of a nation or people. The Second Estate is the military nobility (originally those who became "knowable" through exemplary service to their people), charged with the physical defense of their community, the enforcement of civil laws, and all earthly execution of justice (see Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-16). The Third Estate is the Commons: all those engaged in the day to day work of the life of a People. Again, "common" here means "making community," and it is not an

insult against those who do the common work, since the other estates are meant to work with the Commons and serve their needs. Our Common Prayer, therefore, is what makes us a community of faith, in Christ, under the sovereignty of God.3

We saw in previous lessons that the proper forms of the Church's administration of the dominical and lesser sacraments are a necessary part of their validity. The fixed forms for the sacraments and for other rites and ceremonies (e.g., the blessing of women after childbirth, the consecration of a church building), as found in the Prayer Book, guarantee Anglican Christians the availability of the proper forms in the ministrations of their branch of the Church.

"Of the Church" in the title of the Prayer Book refers to the worship and faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. These are not the prayers of a sect or a cult; they are the prayers of Jesus' own Church. "Use," on the other hand, refers to the practical experience and history of a particular branch of the Church, in this case the Anglican Church in the United States. You will recall from Lesson One that "Protestant

Episcopal" (meaning "not Roman, but having bishops") is one of the historic names for the Anglican Church in our country. This name can be confusing today, however, because the human institution that calls itself "the Episcopal Church" (headquartered in New York City) has formally abandoned Anglican-Christian doctrine, discipline, and worship. But the Church still honors the two centuries of faithful Christians who used "Protestant Episcopal" as the local, American name for the Anglican Church. And it is Christ and those faithful Christians that we have to thank for our Prayer Book, and not the corrupt modern institution.

The Prayer Book includes the Psalter (the Book of Psalms from the Bible) because the Prayer Book is, above all else, a book of Scriptural worship. The Psalms are the hymnbook of the Old Testament Church, and they have been a fixed part of Christian worship from the beginning.[4] Along with the Holy Communion, the Anglican Church continues the rest of the daily worship of the undivided Church in the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer. The entirety of the Psalms is read on a systematic basis in the Offices.[5]

Why is the Book of Common Prayer so important to Anglicans?

As we learned earlier, the Anglican Church has no private teaching (doctrine) or practice of her own: but only the doctrine, discipline, and worship or the apostolic and undivided Church. What we find in the Book of Common Prayer is what we are committed before God to do and to be as his servants. The Prayer Book is our means for putting the faith of die Bible into practical operation in our lives. We have no other manual ("handbook") of faith and practice.

There is a Latin maxim that defines the relationship between faith and practice in the Anglican and undivided Church: Lex orandi, lex credendi. This means, "the law (rule) of our praying is the law (rule) of our believing."[7] What we pray ultimately determines what we believe, in much the same way that our hearts will go wherever we invest our treasure (see Matthew 6:19-21). Thus, the word "orthodoxy," the Greek for "right praise," also means "correct belief about God" and "the worship of God according to his commandment." True prayers and true belief are inseparable.

Because God is the source of reason, the Christian faith is reasonable. It is not only

possible, but necessary, to order our worship according to God's revelation of his will (see 1 Corinthians 14:40). Our Anglican concern for the maintenance of Biblical forms in our worship is simply our reasonable attempt to obey God. God is not only a God of beauty, but he is a God of precise beauty (see Psalm 96:6-9).[8] Some people scoff today at Anglican efforts to preserve accurate worship and teaching, but these are the same people who would drop a medical doctor immediately if they heard him say to his nurse, "Hand me that sharp thingee," instead of asking for a scalpel. Anglicans believe that the proper practice of the Christian Faith is as much a matter of life and death as the proper practice of medicine.

Can the Prayer Book be changed or replaced?

The Prayer Book cannot be changed in any matter of faith without the clear warrant of Scripture and the agreement of the undivided Church.[9] Nor may the Prayer Book be replaced in its entirety, since it represents the inherited forms of the undivided Church. The Prayer Book may, of course, be translated into other languages, as it has been dozens of time, so that worship can be conducted in a language understood by the people of the congregations (see Article XXIV, "Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the people understandeth," BCP607).[10]

There are provisions in the constitutions and canons (Church laws) of the various national churches that make up the Anglican Church allowing for periodic revisions of the Prayer Book that do not affect the faith, due to local conditions and circumstances. For example, the English Book of Common Prayer contains prayers for the King or Queen. The American Book of Common Prayer was revised in 1789 to replace those prayers with prayers for the President or the United States. The last American revision of the Prayer Book took place 'n 1928, when changes were made to shorten some services by removing unnecessary repetitions and to add a few occasional prayers, such as prayer for those who travel by air. The airplane had not been invented in 1892, the time of the previous revision. Given the importance of the Prayer Book, however, revisions should be made as infrequently as possible, to avoid the intrusion of fads or the private opinions of worship committees into the common worship of the Church.

In the 1979 "Prayer Book" of the General Convention of "the episcopal Church"

a Book of Common Prayer?

No, it is not. The General Convention of the Episcopal Church exceeded its authority by attempting to alter the content of the Christian Faith, by inventing forms of its own without reference to the rest of the Church, and by imposing its private beliefs on the people of the Episcopal Church.[11] When it became apparent (by this and other actions) that the General Convention had no intention of obeying the Bible and the constitution of the Episcopal Church, the Continuing Church Movement was begun to preserve the Faith and the freedom of the people of God to practice it.[12]

Today, the "Episcopal Church" of die General Convention is a dead issue for most American Anglicans because we are bound by the love of God to choose obedience to Christ and orthodoxy over mere institutional ties. By claiming power it did not and cannot possess, the General Convention destroyed its own authority.

What is liturgy?

"Liturgy" means in Greek "the work of the people." Its ecclesiastical sense comes from its pre-Christian use to mean "public works": work assigned to the people (members) of a community for the common good, such as road maintenance.

Liturgy is the proper work of the Christian community: the work we do together, according to our various orders and estates, to praise and honor God in obedience to his commandments (see Psalm 99:5,9; Isaiah 35:10; John 4:23-24; Revelation 7:13-15). Other common Church terms come from this idea of prayer and worship as work (see Romans 1:9; 15:30; Colossians 4:12). "Common prayer" is one way to translate "liturgy." We call our public worship "services," from the Latin for "the work of a servant," because Christians are the servants of God (see, for example, the Collect for the Third Sunday in Lent, BCP 128).

Morning and Evening Prayer are called "the Daily Offices," from the Latin word for "duty, work that must be done."

The word "prayer" itself contains the idea of work, since "to pray" comes from the Latin "to ask or to entreat."

"Worship" is a contraction of the Old English "worth-ship": the evaluation of God as greater than ourselves, as well as the respect and honor we pay him for his worthiness.

But we must also be certain that we understand that the power to perform all righteous work, including prayer and worship, comes from God. Liturgy is "the work of the people of God, with God." We can have no good thing, including prayer, without God's gift of it (John 3:27). We can do nothing without Christ (John 15:5); and Christian prayer is offered to the Father in the Name of, and through, the Son of God (John 16:23), by the power of the Holy Ghost (John 6:63; 14:26). Prayer is God's grace working in us; and our working with the grace of God (Romans 8:26-27).

What are "rites" and "ceremonies"?

When the words are used technically, "ritual" (rites) means "the words used in sacramental administrations and formal prayer"; and "ceremonial" (ceremonies) means "the physical actions that accompany the words."[13]

The forms of words found in the Prayer Book are the ritual of the Anglican Church. The gestures, motions, etc. that are used with the words are the ceremonial. Generally, ceremonial is much less fixed than the ritual forms (which ought to be followed quite carefully). Those matters of ceremonial (including the division of labor between the clergy and the laity during the services) which are of the greatest importance are covered in the rubrics.

The "rubrics" are the directions (usually in small, italic print) given in the text of the Prayer Book, describing the manner of the service and any rules of order that need to be known for the orderly performance of the Church's administrations. They are called rubrics because they were originally written or printed in red ink, so that they would stand out from the text of the rituals.[14]

Ritual is important because it guarantees the right forms and publicly stated intentions of the Church's various administrations. More so than any other branch of the Church, the ritual of Anglicanism is almost entirely taken directly from the Holy Scriptures or is a paraphrase and summary of Biblical passages.[15]

Ceremonial is important because God created our bodies and expects us to serve him with them. Our ceremonial also ties us to the Christians of other ages, making sure of the proper matter, minister, and object in the sacraments. The true sacramental ceremonial is

basically changeless. Some ceremonial, of course, does change over time because it is tied to a particular local Church. But whether the priest wears a chasuble, a gown, or a surplice and stole while celebrating the Holy Communion is not as important as whether the Communion is celebrated faithfully, in decency and order. The proper taking, praying, breaking, and giving must take place, however, in imitation of our Lord and his Apostles, for a service to be the true Communion of Jesus Christ and his undivided Church.

What are the regular services of the Church?

The Prayer Book tells us, "The Order for the Holy Communion, the Order for Morning Prayer, the Order for Evening Prayer, and the Litany, as set forth in this Book, are the regular Services appointed for Public Worship in this Church, and shall be used accordingly" (BCP vii: "Concerning the Service of the Church").

"Regular" is used in a technical sense here, from the Latin word for "a rule." These services are the fixed rule of public worship in our Church. The other services are, thus, "occasional services": that is, used on special occasions.

The calendars in the front of the Prayer Book (pages x through xlix) are designed to guide us through the regular services of the Church's annual schedule, called "the Church Year." These include the Lectionary (x and following), the daily schedule of Psalms and Lessons to be used in the Daily Offices, and the calendar of fixed holy days (xlvi-xlix). Each Anglican is obligated to observe these feast days with the rest of the Church, preferably by attending services, but privately or in family prayer if unable to be present in the Church. Also, any serious personal discipline will include the Daily Offices, since they lead a Christian through almost the entirety of the Scriptures at least once a year. At the minimum, a Christian should consider the monthly program for reading the Psalms included in the body of the Psalter (BCP 345-525).

Following the Calendars are the tables of Feasts and Fasts (BCP 1-li). An Anglican should know the information in these tables so that he can live a regular Church life: a life according to the rule of discipline of this Church, united to the other faithful members of this Church in that discipline. Following the rule of worship guarantees that, even if we are separated physically from the other members of the Church, we are always united

spiritually with them and with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally come the tables for finding holy days based on the date of Easter, the greatest feast of the Church Year (BCP lii-lvii). These mundane looking tables tie all of the Church's worship to the Feast of our Lord's Resurrection.

But why follow rules and pray from a book?

Organized worship is part of God's plan of salvation (see Malachi 1:11). Much of the first five books of the Old Testament (the Books of Moses, called Torah, the Law, by die Chosen People) is given over to God's commandments about worship. He decrees, for example, the Passover: how die sacrifice is to be made, and how the Passover Meal is to be eaten (Exodus 12:1-36). He decrees the ministry of the Old Testament Church; its activities; and its furnishings, down to the vestments of the chief priest, the recipe for incense, and the design of the lamp stands used in services (Exodus 25:1-31:18). God also decrees that all his instructions be written down, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and made a part of the Holy Scriptures. Moreover, these earthly things are the visible signs of the heavenly worship (see Hebrews 9).

Some of the difficulty that people have with formal worship ("according to a form") comes from the quaint notion that religion is primarily about abstract knowledge. But the devils in hell know all about God, and their knowledge, separate from obedience and grace, does them no good and is part of their suffering (James 2:19-20). Human beings must worship God with their bodies and all their physical resources, as well as with their minds. While knowledge is important, actions must often come first (see Matthew 6:19-21 again). This is only common sense. If we waited until we knew all about someone before loving him or her, there would be no actual love in the world. Love is the way we act: our valuing of others, their welfare, their dignity, and their honor, above ourselves. Liturgy is only an organized system for showing love for God.

Another quaint, but dangerous idea, is that worship ought to be entertaining to the individual members of a congregation. Thus, we get the sort of mixed-up religious services broadcast on television that include "a little something for everyone." Worship must focus on God, not on the congregation or on ratings. There is pleasure in work well done, but

worship is work: a form of obedience to God. Worship must please God, not ourselves; and when we stray from this standard, we get bad religion and bad television variety shows, instead of the worship of God.

Jesus Christ confirmed his Father's insistence on organized worship. He followed the law of worship throughout his ministry. For example, he attended the synagogue on the Sabbath Day, worshipping his Father and teaching his will (see Luke 4:14-21). He was circumcised (Luke 2:21), and he attended the Passover in Jerusalem with his parents (Luke 2:42). He instituted the New Testament and the Holy Communion at the Last Supper, which was also one of the Passover meals (Luke 22:15-16). Maundy Thursday night was the beginning of the Preparation Day, when the Passover Sacrifice was killed (John 18:26; 19:14,42).

Unless there is something wrong with the Bible, there can be no complaint about "prayer from a book," as long as the book conforms to the Bible. The Psalms are prayers from a book, and have been for almost three thousand years. The Lord's Prayer is a prayer from a book (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4). Oddly enough, sects that deny the need or the Scriptural warrant for a Prayer Book generally use a hymnal, as if singing prayers makes them "not from a book." Interestingly, die Note on page vii of the Prayer Book, "Concerning the Service of the Church," tells us in effect that any of the prayers appointed by the Church may be sung or said, since die singing of prayers was the more common ancient custom.

The early Church already had an organized liturgy. St. Paul tells us, as he recites the Words of Institution that we use at the Holy Communion today, that he is only repeating what he received from our Lord and his Church (1 Corinthians 11:23). St. Paul also quotes from early Christian hymns, as in Ephesians 5:14 and Philippians 2:6-11.[16] The Didache (or Teachingofthe Twelve Apostles), an early church order from around the end of the first century, describes a Sunday service much like our own. The same is true of the Apology °f Justin Martyr, around A.D. 150. The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, from around A.D. 225, contains a eucharistic canon ("canon" means here "the fixed, invariable prayer for the consecration of the Holy Communion"), including the familiar "Lift up your hearts" (sursum corda).[17]

Although there is a time and a place for extemporaneous prayer (which, done properly, usually requires a great deal of mental and spiritual preparation); toed religious rules and prayers are the pattern of the Scriptures and the Early Church, and they protect the faithful from the whims or partialities of their passions Thus, they are also God's pattern, which we are bound to follow. St. Paul tells us, by the inspiration of die Holy Ghost, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40). This is a good translation, but his original Greek reads kata taxin: "according to the accustomed form."

Why do we use special, liturgical language in public prayer?

God is our King, and our worship requires that we treat him as such. Every human being uses a variety of vocabularies. We routinely use different words and different levels of formality when we talk to our friends, or to our parents, or to our boss at work. We also use special language for our special endeavors; think of how many new words we need to learn to study science or to understand professional football. Every profession has its own "professional vocabulary," in order to be precise about important details. It makes a difference to a doctor, for example, whether water is "fresh" or "sterile." We use our best and most precise language when we talk to God in prayer. The Psalms, once again are a good example of the way we should talk to God during worship. They were, after all, inspired by God to be used in his worship.

Our Lord Jesus Christ quoted Psalm 22:1 when he hung on the cross: "Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"; using the Hebrew word for God (Matthew 27:46). Two things are worth noting here. First, citing the beginning of the Psalm was a traditional way of citing it all, so that our Lords prayer can only be understood in the light of all of Psalm 22. Second, is the lamentable fact that the mob around him did not recognize the Hebrew word for God (Matthew 27:47). In any event, at the most urgent moment of his earthly life, our Lord chose to pray to his Father in the formal words of the Scriptures. We have every reason to follow his example as Christians.

Public worship should, of course, be conducted in a language known to the congregation (Article XXIV, BCP 607), but the language does not need to be base or vulgar, nor does it need to be unchallenging. For example, the Prayer Book has been used in Latin at

Cambridge and Oxford, where the students are expected to know Latin, since the Reformation.

The English language of the Prayer Book is of particular note since it is one of the pillars of modern English. Archbishop Cranmer, when he prepared the first English Prayer Book of 1549, had few models of English prose to imitate. In many ways, Cranmer, the editors of the English Bible, Shakespeare, and Bunyan "invented" what we call "modern English." Cranmer is, in fact, much easier to read than most of Shakespeare or many hundreds of writers who came after him, including many in the nineteenth century.

It is also quite inaccurate to refer to Cranmer's English as "Elizabethan. Cranmer was one of Elizabeth's godfathers and obviously learned his English well before her birth.[18] He was martyred before her ascent to the throne. In fact, the English of Elizabeth's reign is difficult for many readers today because it wasn't based on the "modern English" of the Prayer Book, but on the Latin style of writers such as the Roman orator Cicero.

Today's Prayer Book, with a few emendations here and there, is still in Cranmer's English. The main changes in English since Cranmer's time are the introduction of dictionaries and fixed spelling; a shift in the meaning of a few words (e.g., "prevent" changes from "go before" to "go before to stop"); the loss of the second-person pronouns thee a.n& thou (and the verb forms that go with them); and a change from ending third-person singular verbs in "th" to "s" ("he walketh" becomes "he walks").

What few people recognize is that Cranmer was being intentionally old-fashioned about some of his language. "Thou" was becoming archaic even in Cranmer's time, used only for intimate address (like Spanish tu or German du). But "thou" is unquestionably singular (referring to one), while "you" can refer to one or more persons. When Cranmer referred to God, he called him "Thou" because God is one, and the Archbishop did not want anyone to be confused about how many gods there are. Cranmer's logic still holds true today. It is a good practice, however unlike our everyday English, to use "Thou" for God in formal worship, thus protecting the Oneness of the Blessed Trinity, and proclaiming the changeless intimacy of our relationship with God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Why do we pray?

We pray because God hears prayer and answers it (Genesis 20:17; 1 Kings 9:3; 2 Kings 20:5; Psalm 65:2; Psalm 66:19; Psalm 102:17; Proverbs 15:29; Philippians 4:6; James 5:16). We pray because God commands us to pray (Psalm 32:6; 1 Samuel 12:23; Jeremiah 29:11-13). We pray because our Lord himself taught and commanded us to pray (Matthew 5:44; Matthew 6:5-13; Luke 21:36; John 16:26-27). We pray to remain in communion with Christ and his Church (Acts 1:14; Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 2:1-8). We pray because heaven is the kingdom of prayer in Jesus Christ (Revelation 5:8).[19]

We pray to adore and worship God; to glorify his holy Name; to thank him for his goodness and mercy; to ask forgiveness for our sins; to seek our own welfare and the welfare of others according to his Providence; and to join our imperfect human wills to the perfect, loving will of God. The Litany, or General supplication (see below) is an almost perfect textbook on how to pray and what to pray for (BCP 54-59). Its regular, careful use, in a spirit of faith and humility, will teach you to pray as a Christian should.

Through Jesus Christ, Christians have a living relationship with God. It is natural and proper to open our hearts to God and to talk with him about those things that matter the most to us. We know, too, from our Lord's teaching, that God will always do what is best for us (Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 11:9-13). When our Lord taught us to pray, he taught us to say "Our Father." The Lord's Prayer is the first "common prayer," and the outline of all the prayers a Christian ought to say. Every service in the Prayer Book includes the Lord's Prayer, so that it may Partake of the perfection of Christ's own praying. Our Lord also taught us to pray by example, when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Father . . t) not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

We still pray, "Thy will be done," in order to make Gods will our will, and not the other way around. In prayer, we receive grace from God to know his will, to live it, and to be thankful for it (Romans 8:26-28). In prayer, we show our love for God, and our trust in him. When we don't even know where to begin to pray, we can always ask God, "Father, teach me how to pray. Teach me what to pray."

Why do we end prayers with the word "Amen"?

"Amen" is a Hebrew word that means "so be it" or "let this be." It is an ancient way of saying, "Thy will be done." It is pronounced "ah-men," and not "ay-men" (except in folk music).

What is a litany?

A litany (from the Greek for "entreaty") is a structured form of worship made up of a series of invocations (prayers that "call upon God" for help) and supplications (prayers that "submit" to God's mercy) offered by a leader, with alternating responses by the congregation. The litany is a Biblical form of prayer (see Psalm 136).

The main litanies in the Book of Common Prayer are The Litany, or General Supplication (which is meant to be used regularly by all Anglicans, BCP 54); the Litany for the Dying (BCP 317, part of The Order for the Visitation of the Sick); The Litany and Suffrages for Ordinations (BCP 560). When the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments) is read publicly in the Holy Communion or First Office of Instruction, it is read in the form of a litany (BCP 68, 286).

Why should every Anglican say the Daily Offices?

The Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer are (as we saw above) part of the fixed work of prayer of the Church. An old Latin name for the Offices is the opus dei: "the work of God." The Offices guarantee that we pray (at least) at the beginning and end of the day. Daily prayer is the duty of every Christian, and it opens the door to our hearts and souls and minds that God's grace may be at work in our lives every day (see Revelation 3:20).

The Offices are so important to the life of die Anglican Christian that the Prayer Book provides simpler alternative forms of them in the Forms of Prayer to be used in Families (BCP 587), so that even young children will learn this important daily discipline. Note that Family Prayer also contains a number of other useful prayers, including Grace before meals (BCP 600), which no Christian should ever fail to say before eating, wherever he is.

In the Offices, we submit our daily lives to God's grace. We begin our day with the Venite (BCP 9), praising God for his creation; and we end our day with the Nunc Dimittis

(BCP 28) and other prayers for a peaceful rest and a final homecoming in the Kingdom of our Father. The Psalms and Lessons teach us God's Will and Word in a systematic way. The Apostles' Creed reminds us of the basics of our faith. The collects and prayers ask God for the necessities of life.

The Offices do not replace our other prayer, but they give form, definition, and content to the rest of our praying. They unite our private prayers with the prayers of the rest of the Body of Christ. When we pray the Offices, we are never alone: we are joined by our Lord's grace to the two thousand years of faithful Christians who have offered these prayers.

How Scriptural are the services in the Prayer Book?

Let's answer this question by looking at the Order for the Holy Communion (BCP 67).

The Holy Communion service can be divided into two sections: the Ante-Communion ("ante" means "before") and the Communion. The Ante-Communion is the Christian continuation of the synagogue service of lessons and prayers, sharing this ancestry with the Daily Office.[20] We've seen already that our Lord attended the synagogue services (Luke 4:15-16). In the early Church, catechumens (those studying their catechism to become Christians) were allowed to attend only the Ante-Communion (called in Latin "the Mass of the Catechumens").

The Communion (beginning with the Offertory) is our Lord's completion of all Old Testament worship, including all sacrifice, all table fellowship, and especially the Passover Feast. Since only Christians were allowed to attend the Communion proper in the ancient Church, it is called in Latin "the Mass of the Faithful."

We can see that the basic structure of the Holy Communion is entirely derived from Scripture; but what about its parts? The following is a brief study of the derivation of the components of the Holy Communion service.

Rubrics: The rubrics follow the general Anglican practice: kneel to pray; sit to be instructed; stand to praise. Their purpose is the expression of unity in worship and that all things may be done in decency and order (see John 17:20 and Romans 14:40).

The Ante-Communion

The Lord's Prayer (p. 67): Taken from the Bible, is printed here as part of the Priest's preparation to serve before God on behalf of his people. The doxology words of praise": "For thine is the kingdom, . . .") is omitted here, as on other Penitential occasions. Praising God is a privilege, not a right (see Psalm 9:13-41) In times of penance, such as Lent, we forego certain words of praise, such "alleluia," as an act of humility.

The Collect for Purity: Said as our mutual preparation to worship God. A collect" is a "collective" prayer, collecting our thoughts and prayers as a congregation. Compare the thoughts of this collect with: Luke 8:17; Romans 2:16; 1 John 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8.

The Ten Commandments (pp. 68 & 69; Exodus 20:1-17): A preparation for personal confession by contrasting our lives with the perfect standard of God set forth in his covenant with Israel.

The Summary of the Law (Matthew 22:37-40): Our Lord quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 to explain the Commandments.

The Kyrie ("Lord have mercy . . ." p. 70): Kyrie is Greek for "Lord". This is not only a prayer for mercy, but also a declaration of praise. It is a translation of the Hebrew "hosanna" ("save, we pray thee!") used throughout the Bible.[21] It is used three-fold (1928 BCP) or nine-fold (1549 BCP) in honor of the Blessed Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The Lord Be with You: An Old Testament greeting (Ruth 2:4) adopted by the Christian Church (2 Thessalonians 3:18; 2 Timothy 4:22).

The Collect(s) for the Day: Ancient or Reformation era prayers coordinated with the Word of God as follows in the Epistle and Gospel. See BCP 90 and following.[22]

The Epistle: A reading from a letter (epistle) of one of the Apostles, or some other reading from the Bible. The congregation sits to be instructed.

The Gospel: A reading from one of the Four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We stand in honor of Christ, the Living Gospel, during die reading (John 1:1; 1 John 1-4).

The Nicene Creed (p. 71): A summary of the Bible's teaching about God. Every word of it may be proved by the Scriptures (see Article VIII, "Of the Creeds," BCP 604). We stand because the Creed is both a declaration of faith and an act of praise.

The Sermon: The Church's official teaching of the Word of God, especially as found in a

particular day's Epistle and Gospel (see Acts 20:7).

The Communion

The Offertory Sentences (pp. 72 & 73): Taken from the Scriptures. The Prayer Book gives their citation.

The Offertory: Includes the preparation of the oblations (the bread and the wine for the Holy Communion: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26); the gathering of the people's alms (their offering of money to the honor of God and for the support of the work of his Church: Psalm 96:8); and the placement of both on the altar or holy table. These are the "alms and oblations" referred to on page 74.[23] In many parishes, a little water is added to the cup as a remembrance of the water (as well as blood) that flowed from Christ's pierced side (John 19:34). The bread and the wine represent the bounty of God returned to him in tribute by the congregation of the Church. The same is true of the money taken up at this time. The basins containing this money are placed on the altar to show that their contents belong to God by right: "All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine
own have we given thee" (1 Chronicles 29:14, BCP 73).

The Lavaho: The priest washes his hands before he continues the service. ("Ldvdbo" is taken from the opening words of Psalm 26 in Latin: "I will wash my hands in innocency, O LORD. . . .) This ceremonial washing is the continuation of an ancient Jewish custom: the minister's preparation to touch what has been offered to God and belongs to God alone.

Individual Intercessions (p. 74): The priest invites the congregation to make "secret" or "private" intercessions (prayers) for others. Silence here, during the prayer that follows, or anywhere else in the service, is not an invitation to the members of the congregation to say something out-loud, but rather, in their hearts to God.

Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church: An expansion of St. Paul's admonition in 1 Timothy 2:1-3.

The Invitation & General Confession (p. 75): Our public expression of sorrow for our sins: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

The Absolution (p. 76): Said by the priest in obedience to John 20:21-23. The priest

raises his hand in the Old Testament sign of blessing (Leviticus 9:22), frequently adding the "sign of the cross," since our salvation and forgiveness come from Christ. The sign of the cross is a very ancient Christian custom, maintained even in the time of Reformation, as the final instructions in the 1549 Prayer Book indicate.[24]

The Comfortable Words: ("Comfortable" means both "able to give reassurance" and "able to give strength to grow better"). These are cited from the Scriptures.

The Sursum Corda ("Lift up your hearts . . . "): As we saw above, this is at least a seventeen-century-old part of the service. See also, Psalm 86:4; Philippians 4:6; Revelation 4:11, 5:12.

The Preface (pp. 76-79): A prayer to introduce the canon or "fixed" parts of the Communion. The various "proper prefaces" are appointed for special occasions, to summarize the Biblical doctrine taught on those days.

The Sanctus ("Holy, Holy, Holy . . ."): A prayer of praise to the Blessed Trinity, from Isaiah 6:1-3 and Revelation 4:8. The Benedictus qui venit ("Blessed is he that cometh in the Lord"), included in the 1549 Prayer Book and the later editions of the The Hymnal, 1940, is usually added here to recall our Lord's entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Psalm 118:26; Matthew 21:9); and because our Lord said, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed ls he that cometh in the Name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:39). The Preface and Sanctus are common features of the ancient liturgies.

The Canon (Prayer of Consecration, p. 80): Centers on the Words of Witution recounted in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25. The "manual actions" (that is, actions with the hands) required by the rubrics are in imitation of our Lord's a«ions at the Last Supper.

he Oblation: From the Latin "to offer up." This is a formal prayer of offering, in obedience to Christ's commandment, and a remembrance of Christ's mighty actions on our behalf (his Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension) This is a summary prayer, summarizing numerous passages in the Scriptures (for example, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25; Ephesians 1:3).

The Invocation (p. 81): From the Latin "to call upon." We pray to the Father (as you may have noticed we do throughout the Holy Communion) that he will send his Word and Spirit to fulfill Christ's promise that when we faithfully do what Christ commanded we will

receive his Body and Blood. This is vitally necessary for us, since Christ also taught us, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). See also 1 Corinthians 10:16.

The Concluding Paragraph of the Consecration Prayer: An "oblation of the Church," an offering of ourselves according to Hebrews 13:15 and Romans 12:1. The Amen that concludes this prayer is often called "the Great Amen" because it summarizes all of our prayers at every moment of our life in the one sacrifice, once offered, of Jesus Christ. This Amen demonstrates that what happens at the altar is the business of all the Church, and not just of the clergy.

The Lord's Prayer (p. 82): Includes the doxology ("words of praise") here because we are "celebrating the Holy Communion": rejoicing in what Christ has done for us, able in him to call God "our Father."

The Prayer of Humble Access ("We do not presume. . ."): Said, all kneeling, by the priest on behalf of all who intend to receive the Holy Communion. The logic of the Prayer Book requires that the priest pray "on behalf" of the Church as part of the ministerial representation of Christ, just as he recites Christ's Words of Institution alone. The communicants' "Amen" signifies their trust in the mercy of Christ that is being offered to them by his minister. The prayer is based on Matthew 8:5-13; Matthew 15:21-28; and John 6:53-58.

The Rubric "Here May Be Sung a Hymn": Meant to cause a hymn to be sung during or just after the priest receives the Communion. It is as necessary for the priest to receive Christ's Body and Blood as it is for anyone else. The purpose of the hymn is to avoid giving any additional or special significance to the priests Communion. A traditional hymn (or canticle) said or recited at this time is the Agnus Dei ("O Lamb of God"), found in The Hymnal, 1940 and in the 1549 Prayer Book, based on John 1:29; Revelation 15:3, 19:9.

The Communion: Consists of the minister's recitation of die Words of Administration ("The Body of our Lord," etc.; "The Blood of our Lord," etc.) as the people receive the Blessed Sacrament at his hands. The customary manner is to place the right hand upon the left, receiving the Bread in the palm of the right hand, then lifting the hands together to the

mouth. This method was first described in writing by St. Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century.[25] The Cup is received by gently taking the foot of die chalice in the right hand, assisting the priest or deacon by guiding it to one's mouth. When one has received, he simply releases the chalice, not pushing it away, lest the Cup be spilled. (Note that t is one of the wonders of secular forensic medicine that there has never been, in almost two thousand years, a single known case of anyone catching any disease from the communion cup.) Follow the custom of your parish, but it is a good practice to wait, at the very least, until the person next to you has received the Cup before standing to leave the altar rail, in order to avoid jostling or disturbing him while he is receiving the Communion.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (p. 83): Said by the priest on behalf of the entire congregation of the Church, is both an expression of gratitude to the Father for the gift of hi[s] Son and a summary of the teaching of 1 Corinthians 10:3-4, 12:27; Ephesians 2:10; and Titus 3:7.

The Gloria in Excelsis ("Glory to God in the highest, "p. 84): An ancient adaption of the angels' hymn at Bethlehem (Luke 2:14) and St. John's vision of the court of God in heaven in Revelation (e.g., 4:11, 7:12). In seasons of penance, some other proper hymn is said or sung here. We sing a hymn at this place in the service in imitation of our Lord and his Apostles, who sang a hymn after the first Communion at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30).

The Dismissal & Blessing ("The peace of God . . ."): Send the people of the Church out into the world to live their lives in accordance with the pattern of Christ. The dismissal is an expansion of Philippians 4:7; the blessing is an adaption of the Trinitarian formula of Matthew 28:19.

We can see, then, that the contribution of the historical Church to the form of our worship in the Prayer Book has been a matter of putting die words of the Holy Scriptures into a usable liturgical form; or of developing a system for acting out the words of the Scriptures. We do not practice a "man-made religion."

Are all prayers said with words?

While all prayers are said through the Living Word of God, we pray with our whole hearts, our whole souls, and our whole minds. We pray with our thoughts, our words, and

our deeds. A disciplined Christian life is, itself, a prayer to Almighty God; and perhaps the best prayer of all, since it includes all of the prayer of the Church.

LESSON EIGHT

THE POLITY OF THE CHURCH

What is polity?

"Polity" is the form of governance of a society, nation, or Church. The word is derived from a series of Greek words that mean "a city" (as a basic unit of human governance beyond the family and home); "a citizen"; and "to act as a citizen, as a full member of a society." The word "police" shares this derivation, meaning both "the power to maintain order" and "the officers charged with the maintenance of order."

The purpose of any polity, therefore, is to maintain the foundational principles of a society (what we would call "religion," if speaking of an individual: those beliefs that are relied on to make sense out of life); and to maintain order according to those principles. Polities based on the Bible add the elements of the consent of the governed (as the image and likeness of God) and the duty of a society to serve its members by protecting their life, liberty, and property (according to the Commandments).

The basis of all Christian polity, whether civil or ecclesiastical, is the simple revealed fact that God is Lord and King of all (Psalm 24; Romans 13:1; Revelation 4:11, 19:16). At the bare minimum, a valid Christian polity must accept the Kingship of God and pledge its members to obey all of the revealed Word of God, including all his commandments. A valid polity, although administered by fallible men, is an outward and visible sign of the unlimited power and infallible authority of the Creator of the world (see Job 38-41, where God declares his power, and Jobs answer, 42:2).

As Christians, we must admit that, "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:14). On earth, in this transitory world, our polities ("cities") are limited. Perfection is not possible until the Second Coming of Christ to judge the world. We remember and imitate Abraham, who ".. . looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). We seek our final citizenship in die Kingdom of God, and we form earthly polities, under God's guidance, to prepare us for the City of God (Hebrews 12:18,22-24).

We live by the Gospel, and we acknowledge that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us' (2 Corinthians 4:7).

Strictly speaking, we should differentiate between "power[1]

(which belongs to God alone: Matthew 6:13) and "authority" (which among human beings is Gods authorization or delegation of the use of his power to fulfill his purposes on earth). Our polities and our leaders have no power of their own. They are subject to God and exercise authority under his rule. Separate from God, they have no authority. If they seek power for themselves, they rebel against God and forfeit the lawful authority they once exercised (see Psalm 109:8; Acts 1:15-25).

Christians are definitely not anarchists, however. We are not a law unto ourselves. We honor those who have received God's authority (see 1 Peter 2:11-17). God's law binds us, not only to obedience to him, but to obedience to civil authorities (see Romans 13:1-7, where "power" translates the Greek word for "privilege" or "authority"). God's law also binds us to obey the leaders of his Church (Hebrews 13:17). And yet, our obedience to human leaders is not blind or unthinking (see Article XXXVII, "Of the Power of Civil Magistrates," BCP 610).[1]

If a human authority commands that we commit sin, that is, that we disobey the revealed will of God in the Scriptures, then we are bound to disobey. When the Temple authorities ordered the Apostles to cease preaching Christ, they disobeyed and answered, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). A more recent example is the American Declaration of Independence. The Christian founders of our country did not reject the usurped authority of George III because it was inconvenient for them, or because they were seeking personal power, but because the King had acted contrary to God's law. In the Declaration they submitted their case for liberty to God's judgment, according to his commandments, to be tested in "trial by combat," if necessary.[2]

We must also make certain to understand that true, righteous authority is never impersonal. All authority comes from the One whom our Lord taught us to call "Our Father." God is the Father before and without creation, because he is always the Father of the only-begotten Son. Human fatherhood is a vocation to exercise authority in the image and likeness of God, whose life is love. All righteous human authority is an image of God derived from his Fatherhood (see Hebrews 12:5-11).

When men exercise authority impersonally, without an effort to represent God's loving

Fatherhood, it is unlawful and a sin (1 Timothy 5:1-2). And while the main vocation of women is in nurture and caring, when they exercise authority, it must be under the Fatherhood of God and in relation to his created order to be righteous (see 1 Timothy 2:11-15; Titus 2: 3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

The created order itself, in its original righteousness, is a work of the Father's love (see 1 Corinthians 14:33). God's plan of redemption includes not only the salvation of mankind, but also the restoration of the created order (Romans 8:19-23). When a woman exercises any authority normally reserved to men by the Scriptures, one of two explanations applies. Either her actions are a continuation of the sin of Eve (with its accompanying confusion of desires both to love and to rule her husband: Genesis 3:16).[3] Or she acts as a part of a divine judgment against the failure of men to do their duty, with the ultimate goal of restoring the normative created order.

An example of the first case is the perversion of Solomon's religion by his pagan wives (1 Kings 11:1-8). An example of the second is the service of Deborah, who judges Israel, when that nation falls into sin (Judges 4:1-4). Her work as a prophetess, however, is to speak for God, recalling her people to obedience, and not to gain power for herself (or for her sex). She calls Barak to do his duty and to act as general of the army (Judges 4:6-10). Israel is saved by being restored to a right relationship with God. The Song of Deborah (Judges 5) explains that in the day of Israel's need, Deborah "arose a mother in Israel" (Judges 5:7). By God's grace and mercy, Deborah succeeds in fulfilling Eve's original vocation: she provides strength, courage, and comfort, for the sake of obedience to God (see Genesis 2:18). Her work done, she leaves the stage of Scriptural history.

A final note is appropriate here, on the ancient custom of referring to spiritual pastors by the title "father." As a custom, of course, it is not binding on the conscience of any Anglican. It is just as courteous to refer to Anglican clergymen as "Mister" (as they were called through much of our history) or "Doctor" (if that title of respect applies).[4]

But most people's scruples about calling a minister "father" come from a misreading of Matthew 23:8-10, taken out of context:

Be ye not called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And

call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

Christ is not forbidding courtesy, but chiding the Pharisees for their distortion of Biblical religion and their outrageous claims of authority for themselves. The word "rabbi" and the word "master" (from the Latin magister) both mean "teacher." The Pharisees were using these words, not in the sense of "one who dutifully teaches what he has received from God," but in the sense of the Hindu word "guru": "the one who is, in and of himself, the source of religious knowledge." The Pharisees were claiming that "true religion" came from themselves, from their sect, and not from God. Further, the Pharisees were claiming that the significance of Israel came from its human descent from "Father Abraham, rather than from God's Fatherhood and gracious call to be his chosen people (see John 8:51-59; and Luke 3:8, where John the Baptist makes the same point).

But here is the problem. Most of those who would not grant anyone permission to call his pastor "father," routinely refer to their own pastors as "mister" or "doctor" or "reverend," without a qualm of conscience. But "mister" is another form of "master"; and "doctor" is Latin for "teacher" or "rabbi. "Reverend" means "one who is to be revered for his office." "Sir" is short for "sire," or "father." Even "pastor" means "shepherd," and Christ alone is the Good Shepherd (John 10:14-16). If we take the position that these words are "set aside," along the lines of the pagan concept of the "taboo," then all titles of courtesy are forbidden, as is the routine use of any of these words for any other purpose.

God is not, however, a pagan god who teaches us "magic words" to conjure with. These words are lawful, just as any other words that are used in the sense of the Scriptures and under God's sovereignty as Father, Creator, and King of all. God himself teaches us, "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12; Matthew 15:4). St. Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, calls Abraham and Isaac our fathers in the faith (Romans 4:16; 9:10). Paul compares his ministry in the faith to the work of a father, and he calls Timothy and Titus his sons in the faith (1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Thessalonians 2:11; 1 Timothy 1:2, 1:18; 2 Timothy 1:2, 2:1; Titus 1:4).

In addition, Paul counsels Timothy, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father;

and the younger men as brethren" (1 Timothy 5:1). "Elder" translates the Greek word "presbyter" (from which comes the English word "priest"), here meaning perhaps both "those who are older" and "the ministry" (compare 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:17). St. John goes so far as to call the elders of the Church "fathers" (1 John 2:13-14).

These usages, upon which the custom of calling the ministry "father" is based (and arguably demonstrated), cannot be in opposition to "call no man father." God does not violate his own Word, nor does he send the Holy Ghost to teach his children to do so. God, unless he is not God, must understand his own commandments.

The purpose of this long illustration is not to compel anyone to act against his conscience, but to make this point: authority in the Church is derived from the Fatherhood of God, and not from abstract, impersonal principles. Church authority is a representation of the authority of God. It is wrong to make any human being a source of light and life, putting him in place of God. It is also wrong to erect a human, sectarian structure around any passage in the Bible, used as an abstraction, while blithely ignoring the rest of the Word of God. While it is right for Christians to contend for the truth of the faith (Jude 3), it is wrong for us to do so on any other basis than the whole of the Scriptures. Finally, honest differences on the customary application of the Word of God (if the Faith be kept entire, according to the standard of the Scriptures) are no reason for Christians to fail to treat one another as brethren: as children of the One Father in heaven.[5]

What is canon law?

We saw in Lesson Six, that a "canon" is a set of boundaries: a fixed and official list of what is included under the title "the Holy Scriptures." When the word canon" is applied to the polity of the Church, as in "canon law," it means the Church's own law regarding what behavior and practices are acceptable according to the Church's doctrine and discipline, including the courts and procedures necessary to provide due process when someone is accused of an offense against the Church, and the punishments for those who are convicted of offenses. The body of such law is often called "the canons," and a particular Church law is called "a canon."

While each branch of the Church, each national Church within each branch, and

each diocese has the right to adopt its own canon law (including the method for adopting and amending its canons), it must be clearly understood that no Church has the authority to legislate anything contrary to the Holy Scriptures (see Article XX, "Of the Authority of the Church," BCP 607).

The history of the canon law of the Church is rather complex, due to the fact that the Church is a two thousand year old mission from Jesus Christ to a variety of nations and cultures (see the Great Commission: Matthew 19-20). But while the circumstances and challenges that the Church faces may change, the Church's mission as the Body of Christ never changes: the glorification of God and the preaching of the Gospel. Thus, canon law must never be an end in itself, but only a means to faithful obedience to God.

The structure of the canon law of the American branches of the Anglican Church usually includes both a written constitution and the various canons themselves. The constitution lays out the basic principles of each branch's polity, and the canons implement that polity.[6]

Must the polities of all the branches of Christ's Church be identical?

The specific provisions for the right governance of the Church may vary from place to place, as long as these provisions are made subject to the Holy Ghost and to the judgment of the whole Church. For example, the Holy Ghost led the Apostles and elders at the Council of Jerusalem to make different provisions for the governance of Jewish and Gentile Christians (see Acts 15 and Article XXXIV, "Of the Traditions of the Church," BCP 609-610). Any appeal to the Holy Ghost, however, must be consistent with the canonical Scriptures (see Galatians 1:8; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 4:1-3). Revelation is complete in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Scriptures, so that there can be no private revelation or church law contrary to God's Word Written.

There are, furthermore, certain invariable elements that must be present in a valid church polity, since the Church is the Body of Christ, and that Body has a divinely revealed order (see 1 Corinthians 12, especially 26-31). Christ must be acknowledged as the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18). The Holy Scriptures must be the basis of doctrine, discipline, and worship. No Church may impose anything contrary to the Word of God

(see Article XX, BCP 607)-No Church may claim that salvation comes by obedience to its own man-made laws or customs, but only by Jesus Christ (see Acts 4:12; Acts 10:43; 1 Timothy 2:5; and Article XVIII, "Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ," BCP 606). The ministry and governance of a Church must be founded on the inspired ministry and governance of Christ's Apostles, and follow their example (see Matthew 19:28, 28:16-20; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:12-2:4, 2:42, 15:1-2).

The Anglican application of these fixed elements to our Church life will be familiar to anyone acquainted with any part of the historic, catholic family of Churches. But the Anglican contribution to the expression of Christian polity is two-fold. First, when the need for reformation presents itself (as it does in the life of any Church or individual Christian), the Anglican practice is to draw on the entire body of experience of the Catholic Church, paying special attention to the Apostolic and undivided Church, doing our utmost to resist the "sectarian temptation." We honestly believe that the Body of Christ is "the blessed company of all faithful people" (BCP 83). We recognize that God's work is perfect, so that the Church on the day of Pentecost must have been perfect in its essentials and remains a guide for the Church in all times and all places.

Second, the Anglican Church possesses a distinct vision of the beauty of God's covenantal mercy on his Church. We prize the constitutional order that serves as the outward and visible sign of this inward and spiritual grace. We begin all our thinking with the Incarnation of Christ, who is the personal revelation of the loving (and lovely) order of the Divine Trinity.

As redeemed sinners, we may fail sometimes to live up to these vocational gifts from God; but it is their presence in our branch of the One Church that teaches us our failures and that guides us to repent and try again.

What is the basic unit of the polity of the Church?

The basic unit of the Church is the "congregation," a "group of people gathered" in Christ's Name (Matthew 18:20). At first, the whole Church (Greek ecclesia: those "called out" from the world by grace) was the congregation of the Apostles, disciples, and believers in Jerusalem (see Acts 1:15). But as Christ had promised, after the coming of the Holy Ghost,

the Church began to grow through the preaching of the Gospel and missionary action (see Acts 1:8, Acts 2:41-42)7

These congregations, founded by the Apostles and their helpers, were considered "local Churches": the body of the Church in a given place, usually the Church's mission in a city, taken as an exhibit of the whole of the Body of Christ. They could be called simply, "the Church in such and such a place," as in "the Church in Smyrna" (Revelation 2:8); or they could be addressed as, for e[e]xample, "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1).

In the New Testament, we read of the ministry of bishops {episkopos: "overseer," "chief pastor"); elders (presbyteros: "elder," from which we get "presbyter" and "priest"); and deacons {diakonos: "helper," "servant"). These ministers were ordained at first by the laying on of hands by the Apostles, and later by the chief pastors appointed by them (see Acts 6:6; Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 4:14; and see the warning, 1 Timothy 5:22).

Some confusion enters any discussion of the ministers and polity of the Church because of the controversies that took place after the time of the Apostles. These controversies were usually the result of "legalism": the attempt to reduce the Gospel of Christ and the words of the Scriptures to a technical code of law, almost always after the pattern of a secular legal system.

For example, words are interpreted separately from the body of Scripture and bent out of shape, in order to fit a theory about polity. Some argue that "elder" means simply "someone who is older" in Greek, so that the word cant refer to the ministry. We know from the Scriptures, however, that this claim is untrue, since St. Paul advises Timothy, an elder and bishop at Ephesus, "Let no man despise thy youth" (1 Timothy 4:12). Clearly, "elder" can mean "an ordained minister," and not just "an older person." Others have claimed that "elder" refers only to "Church leaders in general," but we see in the Scriptures that while "elders" can refer both to lay-leaders and ordained ministers, a clear distinction is made between them (1 Timothy 5:17; compare Ephesians 4:11-12). One name for the pattern of organization described here is the present Anglican system of "Rector, Wardens, and Vestry" (see below).

Others have confused the issue of authority by trying to set the orders and offices of ministry against each other, as if the Scriptures allowed a competition among bishops, elders, and deacons for power. This mistake may be understandable, since fallen human beings do err (including the members of the ministry), but it is a mistake nevertheless, and it calls for reformation. Any reform of Church practice must be accomplished according to the pattern of the Scriptures; and in the Scriptures, the ministry of Christ is part of the coordinated order of all the Church, and not a struggle for power (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

Christ declares to his Apostles that the Christian ministry is a life of service in imitation of his own ministry (Matthew 20:25-28; Luke 22:23-30). The order of the ministry found in the Scriptures acts out this commandment, as the ministers serve Christ and his people together. The deacons are specifically called to be "assistants" (as their title reveals) in the work of the entire Apostolic ministry. The difference between elders and bishops is only the difference between "pastors" and "chief pastors," as St. Peter demonstrates when he calls himself a "fellow elder" serving with the whole of the ministry under the Chief Pastorship of Christ (1 Peter 5:1-4).

St. Paul further demonstrates this point when he reminds St. Timothy that he received not only Paul's appointment (1 Timothy 1:3), but also the laying on of hands of the entire presbytery (1 Timothy 4:14). When a priest is ordained in the Anglican Church, it is still the practice that the other priests present (the presbytery) lay hands on him with the bishop (chief pastor). We also see that after St. Paul left St. Titus to be bishop of Crete, he charged him in a letter to ordain presbyters for each city as the seeds of new, complete local churches; and Paul followed this admonition by listing the requirements for those new churches' chief pastors (Titus 1:5-9).

The witness of the early Church agrees as well, not so much with the specific canon law of any particular branch of the Church, but with the pattern Church rules are meant to preserve and implement. The early Church compared the ministry of the New Testament to that of the Old, with the distinction that Christian ministers represent the one sacrifice of Christ and his servant ministry, rather than offering the temporary sacrifices of the Old Law. St. Clement of Rome (c. A.D. 95) described the Church as a Chosen People living

together in a unified order: "To the high priest are given his special ministrations, a special place is preserved for the priests, and special duties are imposed on the levites, while the layman is bound by the ordinances concerning the laity (Epistle to the Corinthians, xl).[8]

Just as the high priests, priests, and levites of the Old Testament were a united ministry drawn from a single priestly family, in the New Testament the threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons is drawn from the priestly family of Christ, the Body of the Church. Just as the lay rulers of the Old Testament were drawn from the kingly family of David, in the New Testament the lay leaders are drawn from the kingly family of Christ, the Body of the Church (see Revelation 1:5-6). Just as in the Old Testament the various offices of service were not private property, but the vocation of whole families within one Chosen People; in the fulfillment of the New Testament, all ministries of service, all offices, are held on behalf of Christ and the one family of his New Israel, the Church.

Of course, the "lines of distinction" between bishops and elders/priests are blurry in the New Testament: Christ and his Apostles founded a Church, and not a bureaucracy with jealously guarded "job descriptions" and "turf." And arguing today about what to call "the elders" is simply not very useful: once we know that "priest" is a contraction of "presbyter"; once we remember that the ministerial priesthood ("elderhood") of the New Testament is the fulfillment in Christ of the ministry of the Old Testament; and once we remember that "minister" was a common synonym for "parish priest" well before the Reformation.

What is a parish?

A "parish" is a local Church, a congregation of Christ's Body. The word is derived from the Greek paroikia, meaning "a home away from home," "a temporary resting place," and "a way station for pilgrims." On earth, every Christian is a stranger and a pilgrim, away from his true home with Christ (see Psalm 39:12; 1 Peter 2:11). Our parish is not only our temporary, earthly home (as we wait to be united with Christ), but also the place where we offer Christ's hospitality to other strangers, that they may come to know him (Hebrews 13:2).

In the ancient Church, a parish was the jurisdiction or "cure" (from the Latin for

"care," and used for "the cure/care of souls") of a bishop. This chief pastor led his parish with the assistance of the presbytery (die priests) and the deacons. The priests and deacons served not only at die meeting place of die parish, but throughout the vicinity. The purpose of this united ministry was twofold: to provide pastoral care to the members of the parish; and to found other self-sustaining parishes. Then the bishops, priests, and deacons of these new parishes would attempt to repeat the process. Their goal was the establishment of local churches (parishes) throughout the world, beginning with the closest unevangelized communities, in a daily application of Acts 1:8.

Today, a parish is usually under the pastoral care of a priest, called a "rector" (from the Latin for "a director," "one who guides in the right way"), although some parishes still have bishops for their rectors. Parishes enter into spiritual union with other parishes to form a diocese, under the chief pastorship of a bishop.[9]

What is a diocese?

The word "diocese" comes from the Greek "to keep house," "to administer an area or region." As the membership of the Church grew, the ancient parochial (parish) system described above grew unwieldy. To coordinate the missionary and teaching work of the Church, the diocesan system was developed, literally to brine "good housekeeping" to the household of the Church. The diocese, which coordinates the work of the parishes, cares for their needs, and unites them spiritually in the common cause of Christ, became the normal cure for a bishop. This bishop is called "the diocesan" or "the bishop ordinary" (meaning "the bishop who maintains order"). The main authority of the diocesan bishop, in addition to the authority of his order to confirm and ordain, is called "visitation." Visitation is the bishops duty to "care for all the churches" for which he is responsible to God as chief pastor by visiting them to make certain that they are teaching the faith of the Scriptures and doing the work of Christ (see 2 Corinthians 11:28).

It must be understood, however, that the diocesan system is only an expansion of the ancient Church's parochial system, and not its abandonment. For example, both dioceses and parishes can work to form new congregations of the Church, called diocesan or parochial "missions," until they become self-supporting parishes themselves. New dioceses are founded

by the voluntary union of parishes, with the consent of the rest of the Church. Parishes choose their own pastors from the clergy of the Church, with the advice (and in some jurisdictions the consent) of the bishop. The clergy and people of the parishes that make up a diocese elect their chief pastor, with the advice and consent of the rest of the Church. Members of the clergy and laity are elected by the membership of the diocese to serve in councils of advice to the bishop.

Just as the bishop exercises the "ordinary" ("ordering") authority within hi diocese, the rector exercises the "lesser ordinary" authority of the pastorate within his parish. As representative ministers of Christ, the bishop is the spiritual head on earth of the diocese; and the rector is the spiritual head on earth of the parish.[10] Furthermore, the elections held to fill these ministries are not "democratic," in the technical sense of that word: "the rule of the people." Church elections are an expression of our constitutional interdependence and an effort to ascertain the will of God, who alone rules us as sovereign (see Acts 1:12-26).

Thus, parishes remain today the basic unit of the Church, entering into communion with one another in Christ to form a diocese. The several dioceses enter into communion with one another in Christ to form a national Church. National Churches enter into communion with other national Churches in Christ to form a "Communion," or a branch of the Church. The branches of the Church are in communion with Christ, who calls them out of the world, making them by his grace his one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

What is a synod?

A "synod" (from the Greek for "a meeting," "a coming together on the way") is an assembly of Church leaders, always including the bishops, to conduct the business of the Church. Depending on the jurisdiction, these meetings are also called "conventions" or "councils." The Apostolic Council of Jerusalem is the Scriptural model and pattern of all synods (see Acts 15:1-35).

In the Anglican Church, each diocese, province (group of dioceses), and national Church (sometimes also called "a province," since each national Church is only a part of the whole Church) has a regularly scheduled synod. The purpose of these synods (or

conventions, or councils) is: to maintain order in the Church; to preserve true doctrine; to organize missionary and educational ministries; and to join in visible fellowship (communion).

At diocesan synods, the bishop ordinary presides, and die members are the clergy of the diocese, and the lay representatives (delegates) of the various parishes and missions. On certain important matters (such as the election of a bishop), the members of a diocesan synod "vote by orders"; that is, lay and clerical members cast separate ballots, which must concur. The diocesan synod elects a Standing Committee (and in some places an Executive Council) to advise the bishop and to conduct business between synods. In some jurisdictions (such as the Anglican Catholic Church), the bishop ordinary must give his consent to the decisions of the diocesan synod before they are enacted. Diocesan synods elect clerical and lay delegates (or deputies) to represent them at provincial or national synods.

Provincial and national synods are usually organized according to the orders the Church. There may be separate "houses" for the bishops, the clergy, and he laity. Or the bishops may serve as an "upper house," and die clergy and laity may be combined into a "lower house" (analogous to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States). However many "houses" there are, they must concur in any action. A bishop, called "the presiding bishop," "the primus," "the archbishop," or "the metropolitan," convenes and presides over the synod. Such synods are required to act in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and their own constitutions.

Are all synods regularly scheduled?

No, since the needs of the Church are not always predictable. Some jurisdictions require that a special synod or convention be called to elect a bishop, whether a bishop ordinary or an assistant bishop. If the bishop to be elected to help the ordinary will automatically succeed him upon his death or retirement, he is called "a bishop coadjutor" (from the Latin "to help with"). If the assistant bishop will have no right of accession, he is called "a suffragan bishop" (from the Latin word "to vote" or "assist," since a suffragan is expected to support his ordinary with his presence and vote in other synods). The election of a bishop must be submitted to the other bishops and dioceses of the Church for their approval.

Another sort of synod, primarily of bishops, is called for emergency purposes: to answer specific challenges to the faith or well-being of the Church made either by heretics (false teachers) or non-believers. Such synods may be regional or general.

The greatest form of the synod is the General Council, to which the bishops of the entire Catholic Church are invited to discuss some great problem. Such a council is also called "ecumenical," from the Greek word for "household," since it is a meeting of the heads of the whole household of the Church.

No council or synod of the Church has any authority separate from Christ, the Holy Scriptures, and the Body of the Church. Synods are not human legislatures- but attempts to determine and enact Gods will for his Church. The doctrinal decisions of a synod must be provable by die Holy Scriptures, and its disciplinary decisions must be conformable to them. The whole Church must be invited to a General Council, and the whole Church must recognize and ratify its actions.[11]

There have been no General Councils since the Great Schism of 1054 (the formal separation or division of the Eastern and Western Churches). Until God in his mercy reunites his Church, no further General Councils are possible.

"The Church commonly recognizes up to seven councils as General: 1) Nicea I, in 325; 2) Constantinople I, in 381; 3) Ephesus, in 431; 4) Chalcedon, in 45[1;] 5) Constantinople II, in 553; 6) Constantinople III, in 680-681; and 7) Nicaea II, in 787. The first four General Councils are of special authority within the Anglican Church. At the time of the Elizabethan reform of the rules governing the Church of England, the authority of those charged with investigating ecclesiastical abuses was limited in matters of doctrine to the Holy Scriptures and the teaching of the first four Councils.[12]

What is the structure of an Anglican parish?

An Anglican parish is governed by the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry. This board, sometimes called simply "the Vestry," is charged with the conduct of all parish business, under the provisions of the canons of the Church, the parish's by-laws, and its articles of incorporation (if any). If the parish is incorporated (as it should be), the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry are also the officers and board of the civil corporation. The Vestry determines budgets;

the dispersal of funds; and the buying, selling, or mortgaging of parish property (consistent with the civil law regarding churches, corporations, and real estate).

The rector is the spiritual and corporate head of the parish. He is charged with the pastoral care and governance of the parish. He presides over meetings of the Vestry and of the entire Parish. He is solely responsible, under the law of the Church, for church services, sermons, Christian education, and church music. He has control of and access to all parish buildings and equipment. He is, by his office {ex officio), the head of all parish organizations. He may form or dissolve parish organizations as his conscience dictates, for the good of the parish. He keeps the parish registers and determines who is, and who is not, a member in good standing, subject only to an appeal to the diocesan bishop. He gives, or withholds, his approval of any candidates for holy orders from the parish. Every member of the parish staff, clerical or lay, paid or not, works for him and serves at his discretion.

Obviously, a rector bears a great deal of responsibility. The old English term for a rector is a "parson" (a form of "person"), meaning that "he is the person in charge" and "the person who acts for the Church in the community." The rector's authority is balanced and complemented by the authority of the lay leaders of the parish, the Wardens and the Vestrymen.

The two Wardens, either elected by the Parish Meeting, or appointed by the Rector (Senior Warden) and the lay members of the Vestry (Junior Warden), are basically "vice presidents." If it is necessary to have a Vestry meeting in the absence of the rector, one of the Wardens must preside. If the rector dies or resigns, the Wardens convene the Vestry to make provision for informing the bishop, for continuing the parish's work, and for calling a new rector.

The Wardens and Vestrymen together elect the rector, according to the canons of the Church, which usually require a Special Meeting of the Vestry for this purpose. After the bishop has been consulted, they issue "a letter of call" to the priest they have chosen. They must take this step very carefully, not only because they are choosing a pastor, but also because their letter, if the priest accepts its terms, becomes a legally binding contract on the parish. Furthermore, in most Anglican jurisdictions, a rector has tenure until age 72 (in

some cases, lifetime tenure). He cannot be removed from office against his will, without a complicated process involving the bishop, the diocese, and (if need be) an ecclesiastical trial of fact (see "The Letter of Institution," BCP 569). Nor can the rector simply resign without the Vestry's consent.

The Wardens and Vestry must also decide whether to approve candidates for the ministry from their parish. The rector, wardens, and vestry choose a treasurer for the parish; and the Vestry must approve all expenditure of funds (except for die rector's discretionary fund). While the rector hires the employees of the parish, the Vestry must approve their salaries and benefits. The Vestry is responsible for the care and maintenance of parish property and equipment. The Vestry is responsible for raising funds for the parish, for missionary work, and for the support of the diocese. The Vestry is responsible for meeting any civil obligations of the parish. The Vestry also acts as the rector's council of advice (unless the canons provide for a separate Parish Council).

Most of all, what the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry must provide their parish is Christian leadership. Nothing else will do. If they do not work together humbly, under the judgment of Christ, they can reduce their parish to a state of paralysis, stunt its growth, or even destroy it. A final balance and complement to the Vestry's authority in the Anglican structure is the Parish Meeting.

The Parish Meeting convenes at least annually (the Annual Parish Meeting), and whenever a Special Meeting is called. Its members are all baptized members of the parish in good standing. Anglican canons will usually define "good standing" in terms of the "bounden duty" outlined in die Second Office of Instruction: "to follow Christ, to worship God every Sunday in his Church; and to work and pray and give for the spread of his kingdom" (BCP 291). Those who have been admitted to the Holy Communion ("communicants"), and meet any other requirements of age and parish support, have voice and vote. All others have voice only.

The Parish Meeting is an opportunity for parishioners to express their Christian conscience. At the Parish Meeting, they elect the members of the Vestry, usually on a rotating system of partial "classes," so that the entire Vestry is not replaced at any one

meeting. If the canons or their by-laws direct, they also elect the Wardens. The Parish Meeting elects its delegates and alternates to the diocesan synod, issuing them any instructions it wishes. At the Parish Meeting, the rector gives the members of the parish an accounting of his spiritual stewardship; and Vestry gives them an accounting of its temporal ("earthly," "physical") stewardship. Finally, the Parish Meeting deals with such other matters as can only be dealt with by the parish as a whole, such as its membership in a diocese.

What is the structure of a mission congregation?

The structure of a mission is similar to that of a parish. Since a mission 's not self-supporting or recognized as a parish by the other parishes of its diocese* there are a few differences. The priest-in-charge of a mission is not its rector. He is called the "vicar" (from the Latin for "stand in") because he actually represents the bishop or rector responsible for the mission. While a vicar has die same spiritual authority as a rector, he exercises it at die discretion of his bishop or rector and does not have tenure. He is appointed by his bishop or rector, and is not elected.

In some Anglican jurisdictions, the "vestry" of a mission is called its "Bishop's Committee" or its "Rectors Committee," since it advises the bishop or priest responsible for the mission's cure of souls. The vicar does preside at its meetings, however, and at the mission's Annual Meeting.

Is polity an end in itself?

No. The purpose of polity is to maintain order in the Church according to God's Word, and to provide die organized human means for the accomplishment of the Church's work.

LESSON NINE

MORAL THEOLOGY

What is moral theology?

Moral theology is the study of our communion with God in our behavior. The word "moral" come from the Latin for "custom," "practice," or "will." So, put another way, moral theology is the application of Christian doctrine to daily living, decision making, and problem solving, always in answer to the question, "How do I conform my will to the Will of God?" (see Romans 12:1-2).'

It is important to remember here that just as the True God is One (Deuteronomy 6:4), all true theology (from the Greek for "the study of God") is one. Like the One Church of Jesus Christ, theology has branches, but no independent divisions. God is the sole basis of

the Christian religion. His perfect self-revelation in the person of his son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Scriptures' inspired record of his Word, actions, and commandments, is the sole basis for rational discourse about God or anything else. Even our experience has to be tested by God's standard for us to be able to interpret it correctly (see God's question to Job, Job 40:8, and Job's answer, Job 42:1-6; and see the extended discussion of God's law in Psalm 119, especially 73-80, 97-104, and 129-136).

It is quite possible for "theology" to degenerate into a purely academic discipline, disconnected from any religious significance. Knowledge for its own sake isn't knowledge for God's sake, or for the sake of salvation. A university or seminary theologian may very well be a believer, but he need not be, either. Great care must be taken to evaluate the work of theologians by the standards of God's Word and the Church's teaching. We must not exalt our human teachers above our Divine Master (see Matthew 15:1-14).

Further, there is a great temptation to reduce moral theology to a series of abstract principles, as if the principles of goodness can be separated from the God who is goodness himself (see Psalm 135:3; Matthew 19:17). The philosophical (from the Greek for "the love of wisdom") study of good behavior is called "ethics" (from the Greek for "custom" or "character"). While many fine Christians, especially from the Reformation Churches, prefer to call moral theology "Christian ethics," we must not confuse philosophical ethics with religious ethics.

All philosophy is not Christian. Some philosophy is an attempt to find wisdom and truth without God (which is impossible), and much of it is a search for wisdom rooted in pagan religions and their beliefs.[2] We must remember that the Bible teaches that all pagan religions worship devils (1 Corinthians 10:20), that pagan-based philosophies are not trustworthy. For an illustration of this truth, review St. Paul's encounter with the philosophers of Athens, Acts 17:18-33, especially verse 22 (where "too superstitious" can be translated "too reverent of demons") and verse 32 (where the philosophers mock the resurrection).[3]

Even within the boundaries of Christian doctrine, we must not set one branch of theology against another. What is true in one area of our theology must be true in all

others, or we know that it is time to reexamine our attempts to articulate God's Revelation in our own human terms. We cannot say that God is one sort of God in our moral theology and another in our sacramental theology. Much like a "proof" in mathematics, the unity of our theological teaching must match God's own Oneness.

What is the basis of Christian moral theology?

The basis of Christian moral theology is the personal God of Scriptural revelation: the Blessed Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (see Lesson Two: The Doctrine of God).

Eternally, without beginning or end, the life of these three Blessed Persons in One God is love for one another: the uncreated model and perfection of the love ("charity" in the King James Version) that St. Paul praises in 1 Corinthians 13. Such a love exalts the Beloved, obliterating the possibility of division, without any confusion of identity (see the first Preface for Trinity Sunday, BCP 79). Such love is perfect order, since the Lover loves the Beloved for Who He is, without fear, without envy, without any desire to make Him something else or something less, and with a limitless desire to enjoy His companionship and to act in union with Him for good. As revealed to St. John, "God is love" (1 John 4:16). This revelation cannot be reversed, transforming an abstract "love" into an abstract "God." But when we love, however imperfectly, we experience God's perfect life of love in us.

God's love is the power of God: his might, majesty, and dominion. Without a need for creatures, God creates: the Blessed Trinity expresses God's eternal love by creating others to share his love (see Genesis 1:26; John 3:16; Romans 8:35-39; 2 Corinthians 13:11; 1 John 4:10; Revelation 4:11). Creation in its original goodness is the celebration of the Trinity's love and fellowship, of the communion of the Godhead. We were created to be the outward and visible sign of the Divine Love, according to the eternal purposes of God, for the manifestation of his glory and for the sake of our own enjoyment of eternal life and love.

To love God, and to love one another in him, is to be what we are: creatures designed to love (see Matthew 22:37-40). Not to love is death. Hell is a place of ^{et}ernal death: the self-chosen separation from God of creatures who have chosen to hate him and whatever exists in his love. If by some catastrophe the Trinity should choose to cease loving One

Another, all would end. It was, in moral human behavior is the attempt to imitate the Father in heaven, to fulfill his image and likeness in our lives by his grace. This truth binds the non-Christian, as well as the Christian. Where we Christians have die advantage, through no deserving of our own, is that we have received God's grace in Jesus Christ to become redeemed sinners. Except for the Son of God made man, all human beings are sinners in need of redemption (see Article XV, "Of Christ alone without Sin," BCP 605; Hebrews 4:15, 7:26; 1 John 1:8, 3:5). By our redemption, we receive the benefits of Christ's perfect obedience to his Father: the example of his perfect imitation of the Father's love; the grace to follow in his love; and the forgiveness of our sins, when we repent our failure to love as well as we should (see Philippians 2:5-13).

It should be clear to every Christian that the imitation of Christ is the imitation of his Father in heaven. Christ and his Father are One, with the Holy Ghost in the loving unity of the Blessed Trinity; and Christ came into the world to unite the redeemed with God in love, as the Father and the Son are united (John 17:21-26). Moreover, our union with God unites us to one another in the Body of Christ (the Church), granting us by grace the same mission and purpose in life as Christ possesses by right: to imitate our Father in heaven by living his life on earth (John 17:18-23).

Jesus Christ is the true image of God: what can be seen in this world of the unseeable spiritual reality of the life of God (2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Colossians 1:12-17). When we are born again by water and the Holy Ghost (John 3:5-8), we put off our fallen human nature and put on Christ. We put on the "new man," the new humanity in Christ that is created to live in the holy and righteous image of God, in the place of the old humanity that failed (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:8-10).

God the Father has ordained that the redeemed be conformed to the image of his Son (Romans 8:29-30). But we must always remember that the Son's glory is not a created image, but the actual, personal expression of God's goodness and the true light of God's glory (Hebrews 1:1-4).

In Jesus Christ, we behold the Father's glory, and by the power of the Holy Ghost we are transformed:

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18).

What about doing "good works"?

Just as God has ordained that we conform to the image of Christ, he ordains us to good works: to bear the fruits of our faith (see John 15:16; Ephesians 2:8-10; and the conclusion of the Prayer of Thanksgiving, BCP 83). We do not perform good works to gain praise for ourselves, but to glorify our Father in heaven, who gives us the grace to do them (Matthew 5:16). We do not perform good works to "earn" our salvation, since no one is saved by good works, but only by faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:16). We do not even perform good works to prove to God that we love him, since the thoughts and intents of our hearts are naked to his eyes (Hebrews 4:12-13).

Before we go any further, we should stop to define what we mean by "good works." Good works are the performance of the Father's will, the expression of his love on earth. Those who love the Father have a positive need to do his will. Our Lord said, "My meat ["food"] is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). It is the Father who performs good works, in Christ, and through us in Christ (John 14:10). If we believe in Christ, and abide in him, we are given the grace and power to do the good works that Christ did during his earthly ministry (John 14:12).

Put another way, good works are obedience in Jesus Christ to the Father's will in creation: that we be the image and likeness of God. We may appreciate each other's good behavior, and even encourage it, but we must not think that God owes us a debt when we live the life he gave us to live (see Luke 17:10; and Article XIV, "Of Works of Supererogation," BCP 605).[4] Our true gratitude for anyone's good behavior, including our own, belongs to God. By God's creation, it is sin that is unnatural, not goodness. By God's grace in Jesus Christ, goodness is becoming our true nature again. In the meantime, while we await the Second Coming of Christ and the complete restoration of our created goodness in him, the sole test of our behavior's goodness is whether or not we act to please God according to his revealed will (see Romans 6:3-6, 8:3-4, 8:22-23).

In addition, good works are not merely our witness to the glory of God as we

experience that glory in Christ Jesus; but good works are the Father's witness that we belong to him. Jesus Christ taught us that the works he did were the Father's witness to him (John 5:36, 10:25). As Christians, we both witness to the Father's glory and are witnessed to, by the Father, as belonging to Christ. Christ is the Vine, the Father is the husbandman, and we are the branches John 15:1,5). We cannot bear the fruits of good works without Christ (John 15:4), but we must bear fruit to remain in him. To that end, the Father cleans and nurtures us, bringing us to repentance as necessary (John 15:2). And the Father is glorified in our bearing fruit: not that the Father's glory is increased; but because our doing good is only accomplished by his grace, in obedience to him, and therefore manifests his glory (John 15:8). By our fruit it is known that we belong to God and are a good tree (see Matthew 7:16-20; and Article XII, "Of Good Works," BCP 605).[5]

At the beginning of this lesson, we saw that God's life is the action of loving. To be alive in God, our lives must be given over to acting out God's love. When God created Adam, he breathed the breath of life, the Spirit of love, into his nostrils, making him a living soul (Genesis 2:7). If we do not continue in that same Spirit of love by doing good works, we cannot say that we have a true, living, saving faith. As St. James tells us, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). Doing the work of God is our life itself, and not an addition or ornament to it.

How do we do the work of God?

Above all else, we do the work of God by believing in his Son Jesus Christ (John 6:28-29). This belief must lead immediately to obedience, since Christ asks, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Such obedience is the test of our love for Christ (and for his Father). We cannot be Christ's friends unless we obey him (John 15:14), since he tells us, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Christ's commandments are an unlimited call on our time, work, treasure, . and life. His "new commandment" of die New Testament is the summation of all Biblical commandments: "That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 13:34). It is by this love that others will know that we are Christ's disciples (John 13:35). And this is a love unto death, if need be: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his

life for his friends" (John 15:13). Out of this kind of love for us, the same sort of love shared within the Blessed Trinity, Christ gives his life on the cross.

We must not make the mistake, however, of believing tJiat we are bound only by the commandments of Christ's earthly ministry as recorded in the Four Gospels. The whole of the Bible is the Word of God, and Jesus Christ is that same Word incarnate (John 1:1,14). Christ attests in his preaching to the authority of the Old Testament (see, for example, Matthew 5:17-20). Christ warrants the authority of the New Testament, by the power and person of the Holy Ghost, acting for the Blessed Trinity (John 16:12-15). And writing by the Holy Ghost, St. Paul tells us:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly [thoroughly] furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

We are, quite literally, immoral, if we do not study the Holy Scriptures to learn our entire duty to God: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3). Nor can we dismiss the Old Testament that Jesus Christ bled to fulfill. Except for the ritual law now superseded by the laws of worship of the New Testament, and except for the civil law (that is the penalties, not the moral principles behind them) of the ancient kingdom of Israel, all of the Old Testament is binding on Christians (see Article VII, "Of the Old Testament," BCP 604).

At the same time, we must avoid the sin of "legalism," an idolatrous love of the law for its own sake. We do not obey the law of God for the law's sake, but because we love God before we love anyone or anything else, including ourselves and our own desires. Nor can we use the law of God as a weapon against others, or to proclaim our own "righteousness" (which is only "self-righteousness"

when it is based on ourselves, instead of God's mercy). God provides the same test and corrective for this error in both Testaments of die Bible.

God causes the Prophet Hosea to write: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6). When God's Son quotes the prophet in the New Testament, he adds, "But go ye and learn what that meaneth … for I

am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9:13). As we have seen, all men are sinners, and only those who throw themselves on the mercy of God by faith are made righteous by God. We are not made righteous by the works of the law; but love for God and love for our neighbor make true obedience possible (see the Summary of the Law, BCP 69; Matthew 22:37-40, where our Lord is quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18).

Can't I just "let my conscience be my guide"?

As in all things, we must use words in Christianity in the way they are used in the Bible. The English word "conscience" comes from the Latin for "knowledge with." It is used to translate a Greek noun built on the verb that means literally "I know in common with." But the technical meaning of the verb is "I bear witness," as in testimony given in a court of law.[6]

In the New Testament, "conscience" is given such attributes as "good" (Acts 23:1; 1 Timothy 1:5), "evil" (Hebrews 10:22), or "weak" (1 Corinthians 8:7). It is a pain caused by wrongdoing and, thus, related to the Fall of man. It is essentially negative, telling a person that something is wrong, without providing specific information about what is right. One may even become calloused to the pain of conscience, and learn to ignore it. This was the fear of St. Paul for those whose "conscience" might be offended by other Christians' eating meat offered to idols (see 1 Corinthians 8).

"Conscience" is also a record, as well as a witness, as we see in Romans 2:14-16, in Paul's discussion of the Gentiles and their conscience. Things are written on the heart, much like a deposition; and the conscience bears witness, as in a trial, on die day of judgment, accusing and excusing. The use of the image of a trial by St. Paul in this passage is especially important for our understanding of "conscience," since the judge is not the "conscience" of the Gentiles, but God himself, through Jesus Christ.

The New Testament witness is that all men do indeed suffer the pain of conscience to some extent, due to their loss of union with God. What is not found in the Scripture is any sense of a "law of conscience" that we can use to guide us without the positive revelation of God's will. Conscience becomes "good" or "clear" when the pain of sin is wiped away,

along with the record of sin, by Christ's sacrifice of himself (Hebrews 9:14). Conscience can only become good through faith in Jesus Christ:

Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled (Titus 1:15).

Our conscience cannot be made a guide to replace the Scriptures because we are fallen; and so, then, is our conscience. It is God we must please, after all, and not ourselves. Moreover, the false promise of personal "power" to determine good and evil, apart from God, was the devil's temptation of man in the Garden (Genesis 3:5).

What is of great use to a Christian, however, is what is usually called "an informed conscience." We can train our conscience to alert us to actions or intentions contrary to the Word of God; but an informed conscience requires regular prayer (a submission to God's will) and knowledge of the Scriptures. The training of an informed conscience is called "spiritual formation"; that is, a discipline of conformity to the truth of God. The goal of all spiritual formation was described by St. Paul in this way: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Christ took upon himself the form of a servant of God, humbled himself in all things, and became obedient even unto death (Philippians 2:5-8).

What if I find it difficult to obey God?

It means that you are a human being. God understands our difficulty in obeying him. He promises us through St. Paul:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

God allows ("suffers") us to be tempted, so that we may have a free will to obey him, and learn to obey him freely (see Psalm 119:65-72). But God also gives us the grace to resist temptation, so that we are not lost to sin forever. As Christians, we train to resist sin, the way athletes prepare for a contest (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). We learn to "run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

But we do not have to depend on ourselves to overcome sin, if we depend on God. It is Christ who is the "author and finisher of our faith," who begins and completes our

faithfulness, making up whatever we lack (Hebrews 12:2). God does not wish us to sin; after all, his Son died for our sins (Romans 6:1-3). But God is merciful: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

God also provides us with one another in the Church, to work together to overcome disobedience. We are to learn to give the same mercy we seek from God:

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ (Galatians 6:1-2).

Of course, when we confess our sins, or when we counsel each other, our intention must be to amend our lives; to do our best to put away sin forever. As we struggle, we must recall that God wishes us to try to obey him, and to continue to try to obey him even if we fail. God's mercy is his acceptance of our best efforts to obey as a token of our love for him; thus, "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise" (BCP 404: Psalm 51:17).

Finally, in regards to obedience, there are foolish people who claim that true believers cannot sin, or that there is no forgiveness for those who sin and repent. It is the Bible's teaching, and thus the teaching of this branch of the Church, that such people are dead wrong (see Article XVI, "Of Sin after Baptism," BCP 605-606).[7] Jesus Christ taught that only one sin was unforgivable, die blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (see Matthew 12:31-32). Our Lord offers no further definition, but it appears from the context of the rest of the Scriptures (and especially Matthew 12) that such a sin is unforgivable, not because God refuses to forgive, but because it is a sin of utter hatred for God, both inwardly and outwardly. In effect, the blasphemer of the Holy Ghost declares that the Holy Ghost is both evil and the source of all evil, so that the sinner forbids himself the necessary repentance that must precede forgiveness.

What is "moral ambiguity"?

"Moral ambiguity" describes those occasions in life when a decision to act is necessary, but the Scriptural principles at stake seem to be in conflict. For example, a Christian might

feel torn between his Scriptural duty to obey the laws of his country and the Commandment "Thou shalt not kill," when called to serve his country as a soldier.

The first and most important question a Christian should ask himself in such a case is whether the ambiguity is real, or whether it is only a trick of his fallen will to distract him from what he knows he ought to do. Many times, when a person claims "a crisis of faith," he is really only saying that he is doing (or planning to do) something that he knows is forbidden by God, but he wants to do it anyway.

Second, a Christian must ask himself if he really understands the portions of the Scriptural teaching in question. Returning to our example, the Commandment says in Hebrew, "Thou shalt do no murder' (note the translation, BCP 69), and not merely "thou shalt not kill."[8] In other places in the Bible, God commands the death penalty for certain crimes (e.g., Leviticus 20:2); grants the civil authority the "power of the sword" (Romans 13:4); and sends the armies of Israel into the field to defend it, fighting on their side (see Judges 7, especially 20-22).

Third, when a Christian has examined his own motives and is reasonably sure that he understands the teaching of the Scriptures, he puts his trust in God, and attempts to serve God in his decision with his whole heart, his whole soul, and his whole mind. We won't try to give a solution to our example, because it is possible for decent, God-fearing Christians to come to different conclusions in certain cases, especially in judging the cause for which they are being called to fight by their civil authorities (consider the moral agonies suffered by so many American Christians during the War between the States). All God expects is a realistic, faithful effort to do his will.

At the same time, some decisions made this way will prove to be wrong in the event. It is a Christian's duty to examine his conduct after the fact, as well as before. If he has failed, even with the best of intentions, to serve God, he must repent his action; seek further guidance from God; and if need be, try something else. It is also perfectly permissible for one Christian to attempt to guide another, even to argue vigorously for what he believes to be the right course of action (see Jude 3). There are no purely private decisions, since God is always a party to them, along with the whole Body of Christ's Church.

We may never, it must be clear, disobey any distinct commandment of God. There is no occasion, for example, so ambiguous that we may commit murder, hate, commit adultery, worship false gods, or deny Jesus Christ. Also, the informed conscience discussed above is a prerequisite for using this methodology. Refusing to plan ahead, or to consider the possibility of future difficulties in behaving like a Christian, does not absolve us of our duty to obey God in all things. Planned or intentional ignorance is a terrible sin.

Are there some simple guides to Christian behavior?

Yes. The First Office of Instruction provides the text of the Ten Commandments and an easy to understand commentary on them, beginning on page 285 of the Prayer Book. Of course, every Christian should know our Lord's commentary on the Ten Commandments, the Summary of the Law (BCP 69).

A Christian should also be familiar with the Beatitudes ("Blessed are the . . ."), found in Matthew 5:3-12, and the entire Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) from which they are taken. Every Christian should strive to conform his life to all of the blessings offered in the Beatitudes, as well as the description of godly love offered by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 (where "love" is translated as "charity" in the King James Version).

Two ancient Christian lists that may also be of help are the Corporal Works of Mercy ("bodily": see Matthew 25:35-36) and the Spiritual Works of Mercy (drawn from the Scriptures in general).[9]

The Corporal Works of Mercy

1. To feed the hungry
2. To give drink to the thirsty
3. To clothe the naked
4. To shelter the stranger
5. To visit the sick
6. To visit and minister to prisoners
7. To bury the dead.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. To convert the sinner

2. To instruct the ignorant

3. To counsel the doubtful

4. To comfort the sorrowful

5. To bear injuries patiently

6. To forgive those who harm us

7. To pray for the living and to commend the dead into the hands of a merciful Lord.

These lists are self-explanatory, and quite enough to start with. But imagine living in a world where any significant number of people tried to do the works of mercy and to obey the Commandments as Christ and the Prayer Book teach!

What must a Christian do about immoral situations?

If a Christian discovers an immoral situation, as determined by God's teaching, he is bound to attempt to correct it, if he is able. If he is not, he is bound to avoid it as an "occasion of sin" (that is, as a set of circumstances that may lead him into sin himself: see Ephesians 5:11).

If the immoral situation is a law of the civil state (such as the current permissive abortion laws in the United States), a Christian is bound to do everything within his power as a citizen to change the law, and everything within his power to encourage other people to obey Gods law first. If an immoral law cannot be changed, a Christian may be bound to disobey it, since the law of God supersedes the laws of men (see Acts 5:27-29).

What is my bounden duty as a member of the Church?

"My bounden duty is to follow Christ, to worship God every Sunday in his Church; and to work and pray and give for the spread of his kingdom" (BCP 291). There is nothing optional about membership in Christ's Church for the sake of salvation, and there is nothing optional about these simple duties as members of Christ's Church.

The sole "exceptions" to these duties are "incapacity" and "the superior demand of charity." Someone without an income, for example, is excused from giving until he has an income. But even a pauper or a paralytic can, and is expected to, pray for the spread of God's kingdom. Someone who is too ill to leave his house or unable to reach a church on Sunday is allowed to pray privately. Someone who has the vocation of caring for the lives of

others (doctors, nurses, policemen, soldiers; someone who cares for an infirm family member or friend; someone who cannot avoid working on Sunday to support his family) may worship on Sunday by offering God his or her service, pray privately, and take advantage of some other opportunity to worship God in his Church during the week.

One of the Christian duties most neglected by modern Christians is "tithing": the giving of a tenth of our income to God's Church for his work. The tithe is a tribute owed to God, from whom our income and the capacity to earn it come (see 1 Chronicles 29:14, BCP 73). We do not begin to do alms or charity until we have offered God his due. It is the combination of tithes and aims that the Prayer Book means by "giving for the spread of God's kingdom."

The tithe is part of our Biblical covenant with our Lord God. The tithe is also an invitation to God to bless us according to his covenant. The Scriptures teach that it is "robbing God" and "a curse," when we do not pay our tithes (see Malachi 3:7-12).

Since many of the Biblical commandments to tithe are contained in the Old Testament, some Christians mistakenly believe that tithing is no longer required. But Christ himself commanded us to tithe. When he criticized the Pharisees for not going beyond tithing to the weightier matters of God's law, Christ did not condemn tithing, but said of the Pharisees' tithes, "these ought ye to have done" (Matthew 23:23). And these ought we still to do.

Christ further tells us, "lay up treasures for yourselves in heaven . . ., for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (see Matthew 6:19-24). Christ knows that we work hard for our money, but he also knows that we will never support spiritually what we will not support financially. It is interesting to note that tithing is one of the obeyed commandments in Churches that are growing, and a commandment that is disobeyed in Churches that are stagnant or shrinking. This effect has a double cause: God's fulfillment of his promises of blessing on the obedient; and an increased witness to God's Word by those churchmen who give God his due first.

Some people will complain, "no one is going to tell me what to give to the Church." But it isn't another human being who is telling us what to give, but God himself. Some will

say, "I have taxes to pay"; but God's people had taxes to pay when he made this commandment, and God really does understand the ins and outs of the contemporary IRS (he may be the only one who does). After all, God's Son Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem in part because Mary and Joseph had gone there to be taxed (Luke 2:1-5).

In any case, consider the necessary works of charity and evangelism that are not being done because we have refused God his own money. We will have to answer to God for this, as for all the rest of our behavior.

LESSON TEN

A CHURCH MISCELLANY

How do Church customs and paraphernalia develop?

Church people, out of love and reverence for God, and out of practical necessity, develop customs for their worship and for their daily Christian lives. If we tried to live without shared and predictable ways of doing things, our lives would be a chaos. And God isn't a God of chaos, but a God of peace and order (1 Corinthians 14:33).

A custom may be a repeated action (such as bowing the head at the Name of Jesus, in remembrance of Philippians 2:10). Or a custom may be an action avoided (such as the lovely old custom of never stacking anything on top of a Prayer Book but a Bible, and vice versa).

All Churches have customs. These may be practiced positively, in continuity with some historic branch of the Church, and thus "in imitation of the Saints." Or customs may be negative: designed to repudiate some period of Church history especially despised for its laxity or error. Either approach can be quite reverent, as long as discretion and a knowledge of the Scriptures guide it. Ironically, some Churches which reject the very idea of a fixed liturgy as "formalism" exhibit greater conformity in their worship from one congregation to another than is found in the liturgical Churches. Their dedication to not having customs has provided them with many.

What scandalizes the unevangelized is the appearance (or worse, the reality) that

Christians may sometimes value their customs above their faith. This is especially the case when an outsider views members of two branches of the Church performing what are, from his perspective, similar actions for similar purposes, all the while arguing that this or that particular custom is, in itself, "the true faith."

Customs are not the Faith, nor can a faithful Christian confuse the two. Customs are an expression of the Faith, or customs are a sin. Each branch of the Church is free to develop its own customs, as long as they are not contrary to the Scriptures (see Article XX, "Of the Authority of the Church," BCP 607; and Article XXXIV, "Of the Traditions of the Church," BCP 609-610). But this freedom requires that the branches of the Church and their members evaluate the customs of others, not by their own preferences or by familiarity, but on the basis of the Scriptures. We do Christ a disservice when we pester one of his own to be like us, instead of like him.

All of the above can also be said of ecclesiastical paraphernalia, the physical articles we use in the course of our customs. But whether we are speaking of things or of actions, we must think of them as the way our family within Christ's Church does things, and not as objects of worship or enforcement. To use an analogy, the family next door does not lose its American citizenship if they eat a goose, instead of a turkey, on Thanksgiving Day. What is important is that God is thanked for his blessings.

It is an absolute rule of Christian liberty within the Anglican branch of the Church that customs be left to the discretion and devotion of Christians and their pastors, as long as all is done to the honor of God, in accordance with the Scriptures, and for spiritual edification (see Romans 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 10:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11; and the Preface, at the beginning, and "Of Ceremonies," at the end, of the 1549 Book of Common Prayer).

The following brief articles are not meant to be a directory of customs, but to provide information, especially for the newcomer and die traveler. It would be a rare (and, indeed, odd) Anglican parish where all that follows could be found in constant use.[1]

Why are church appointments so costly?

As the Psalmist says, "I will sing, and give praise with the best member that I have"

(Psalm 108:1, BCP 479). When we worship God, we should worship him with the best part of ourselves, and with the best things we possess. Church appointments are costly because we make them so, in honor of our God. They are always either the best things available, or at least the best we can afford.

For these reasons, the cloths used on or at the altar (holy table) are usually made of linen, a fine durable cloth that was the best cloth available in the ancient world. Our Lord was buried in linen clothes by Joseph of Arimathaea (John 19:40). Fine linen is also a symbol of the righteousness of the saints, as the Bride of Christ is arrayed in it (Revelation 19:7-9). Silk is often used for vestments, hangings, frontals, altar covers, etc., as a cloth worthy of the dignity of the King who is served in our worship.

The vessels (chalice = cup; paten = plate) used in the Holy Communion are made of silver or gold, or at least plated with precious metal. Other vessels (such as alms basins) and objects (such as candle sticks) are usually made of brass. This use of metals imitates the furnishings used in the Old Testament tabernacle (see Exodus 38:24-31).

Altar candles are usually made of beeswax. Such candles were the most expensive (because they were the cleanest burning, best smelling, and brightest) form of lighting in the ancient world. Thus, they were used only on special occasions, as when entertaining an important guest. The more important the guest, the more candles that were lit. The fineness of beeswax candles caused their association with worship. The beehive became a symbol of harmonious industry in

the Church. The use of beeswax lights for great occasions lies behind the frequently seen custom of burning a greater number of candles on feast days and at important celebrations. Obviously, other forms of lighting have been developed since those ancient days, and they are perfectly permissible. No one sensible would insist that candles must be used, or that Churches should forego the use of electric lights. But our beeswax altar candles are a tie with the Christians of the past.[2]

What is holy water?

Holy water is water blessed as a symbol of Baptism and the purifying power of God. Commonly, salt is blessed and added to the water when holy water is prepared. Salt is a

Biblical symbol of wisdom, preservation, purification, and exorcism (see Leviticus 2:13; 2 Kings 2:19-22; Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:50).

Holy water is not "magic water," nor is it a "special" water used in Baptism. At Baptism, water is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of the Holy Ghost for salvation. Holy water, which no Church is required to use, is simply a remembrance of this cleansing action, not its completion or its replacement (see John 13:10). Holy water is also used as a visible sign of God's blessing on people, animals, places, or things.

What is exorcism?

Exorcism is not really a custom of the Church, but a commandment from Christ to his Apostles to cast out unclean spirits in his Name, and to heal all manner of sickness and diseases (Matthew 10:1). It is an effective defense against the work of the devil (Luke 10:17-20), and a proof that God's Kingdom has come in the person of his Son Jesus Christ (Luke 11:20). How the various branches of the Church obey this commandment, however, is a matter of custom.

In the ancient Church, the list of "holy orders" included four "minor orders." These were usually received in preparation for the priesthood and the parochial cure ("care") of souls.[3] They were: porter (doorkeeper); lector (reader); exorcist; and acolyte (server at the altar). Since we so often relegate service at the altar to young boys, it should give us a moment's pause to remember that altar service was once considered a senior ministry to casting out devils.

The minor orders (except for lector) were merged into what is called "the subdiaconate" in the Eastern Church. The Roman Church in this century reduced them to reader and acolyte. At the time of the Reformation, the Anglican Church simplified the orders by returning to the three Scriptural orders of deacon, priest, and bishop.

Generally in Anglican Churches, priests and bishops, by virtue of their office as pastors, exercise the ministry of exorcism given to the Apostles, commanding and casting out devils in the Name of the Lord Jesus.[4] In some Anglican dioceses, the Bishop appoints one or two priests of sound learning and piety to investigate claims of direct demonic action. The parish priest is, however, the first person whose counsel should be sought if there exists

any concern about demonic action. He, of course, if he is wise, will consult with his chief pastor, the bishop (whether that consultation is required by canon law or not). The purpose of the Anglican discipline concerning exorcism is to avoid two extremes. The first is a superstitious dread of the demonic. Christ has conquered sin, Satan, and death. That victory is secure for every faithful Christian in Christ (James 4:7-10). Further, it is necessary to distinguish among ordinary human sin, the fallen state of the world, and direct demonic action. This is a job for spiritual pastors. The second extreme is disbelief in the fallen angels called "devils" and "demons" in the Scriptures. Devils, unlike God, are limited, so that they cannot be everywhere at once. But devils do sometimes attack the faithful. Christ's Temptation in the Wilderness ought to be proof enough of that (Matthew 4:1-11; see also, Ephesians 6:10-12; 1 Peter 5:8).

Why shouldn't women serve as layreaders or acolytes?

We saw, in the previous article, that the offices of reader and acolyte were once separate "orders" in preparation for the parish ministry. These offices have been restored to their place in the ministry of deacons, priests, and bishops. Today, a reader, usually called a "lay reader," is appointed by the bishop on the advice of the parish priest, after training and examination. Acolytes are appointed and trained by the priests or bishops they assist at the altar.

But it should be clear that only customs have been changed, and not the purpose or the nature of these ministries. Readers and acolytes remain under the authority of pastors. These offices are a delegation of the pastors' authority to those who serve in them, to engage in recognized ministries in the Church. And even though this authority is delegated, it is authority nevertheless, and women may not exercise spiritual authority over men in the Church (see 1 Timothy 2:11-15).

The same Scriptural reasons that prevent a woman from serving as a pastor apply to these appointed ministries. The argument that "these offices aren't that important, so why make a fuss over them?" isn't a very good one, because it demeans appointed service in the Church and teaches officeholders to underestimate the value of the gift they have received from God through his Church.

The one possible exception to this rule (if the canons permit, and with the express approval of the bishop ordinary) is the appointment of readers and servers for places where there are no men (as in the houses of female religious orders). But even this situation is not entirely compelling. The priest who attends to them, unless feeble, can very likely perform all necessary actions. Further, it would do men no harm to accept the burden of their duties and to take part in spiritual administrations to women, even if that requires a special effort.

Note, however, that in the family prayers of a household, the Prayer Book permit either the "Master" or the "Mistress" of the household (or someone they appoint) to lead prayers (see the rubric, BCP 587).

What is a procession?

A procession is solemn prayer addressed to God in movement.[5] A procession is the Church's equivalent of a parade, which of course, is not a means of travel, but a way to honor some event or person (e.g., Christopher Columbus, on "Columbus Day"). As some people watch and some march, a procession is dedicated to God's honor. As a procession moves through or around a church, its movement serves to focus the attention of the congregation on God's goodness and excellence.

As proof of their dedication to God, most processions are led by a "processional cross" and torches. The processional cross is a marching standard, like the eagle of Roman legions that declared "this army belongs to and serves the Senate and the People of Rome." The cross means that the members of the procession belong to and serve Christ. The torches (usually candles) are carried to light the way for the "standard," and to honor the One it represents.

Many processions will have pauses for prayer built into them. These are called "stations," from die Latin for "a stopping place."

The Litany is a procession found in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP 54-59), although since Reformation times it has also been done from a place in the crossing of the church. When the Litany is not a procession, the litanist (the one who leads die Litany) kneels at what is called "a litany desk."

A Rogation Procession is an outdoor procession on Rogation Sunday (the Fifth Sunday

after Easter, BCP 175) or on one of the three Rogation Days that follow (BCP 261). A "rogation" is a solemn supplication of God for the kindly fruits of the earth (see the prayers, BCP 39-40). In rural locations, Rogation processions mark out the boundaries of fields, blessing them as truly belonging to God. In city locations, the Rogation procession marks out the boundaries of the parish grounds, blessing them as a representation of all the land under God's dominion.

A Festival Procession is a celebration of some great day in the Church's life, such as the great feasts of Christmas and Easter.

A Penitential Procession is a public act of penance and prayer for God's forgiveness of sins.

The Stations of the Cross are a "popular" devotion (that is, performed by the "people" of the Church, but not included in, or required by, the Book of Common Prayer). The "Stations" are a procession honoring the suffering of Christ for our sake. The Stations were developed to allow those who were unable actually to visit Jerusalem and to walk the very ground that Christ had walked on his "way of the cross" to honor him by making a spiritual pilgrimage at home. A course is marked, either in the church or in some other convenient place, including stopping places (stations) to recall the events of the crucifixion.

Meditations are usually offered by the leader, and the prayers that follow form a sort of litany. Some Christians object to die Stations because, during the Middle Ages, certain sentimental oddities crept into them. But a faithful Christian may still find the Stations of help today, if he adheres strictly to the Scriptural record of events.

The Asperges are an ancient procession, during which the congregation is sprinkled with holy water as a memorial of their baptism. The name comes from the Latin version of Psalm 51, a psalm used in the service: "Thou shalt purge me ["sprinkle me": asperges me] with hyssop, and I shall be clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7, BCP 403).

Is there a "wedding procession"?

When the clergy, the groom and his attendants, and the bridal party move solemnly to music, to gather together before God's altar and in his presence for the exchange of the vows of Holy Matrimony, it is a procession and part of the service. So is the solemn

movement of the new husband and wife out into the world to face it together in Christ. For this reason, the music used in a wedding procession must be Church music: music under the authority of the Church, for the purpose of honoring God. As in all Church service, light or secular music is not permitted.

The "pageantry" of weddings is a gracious hold-over from the days of chivalry. The bride and groom are treated as "a lord and lady," as Adam and Eve were before the Fall. The white dress of the bride is in imitation of die Bride of Christ, clothed in the righteousness of the saints (Revelation 19:8). All of the attendants serve to give honor and dignity, under God, to the new estate and the new household of the Man and Wife, including the man who accompanies the bride until she gives her hand.

You will note that there is no answer provided in the Prayer Book to the question, "Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?" (BCP 301). No answer is expected, or should be permitted. The question is not addressed to the "father of the bride," but only to the champion the woman has chosen to represent her, until she is placed in the care of her husband by God. One hopes that the man a woman would choose to honor as her champion, second only to her husband, would be her father, but that is not a requirement of the Prayer Book. He does not answer the question because he acts only on the bride's behalf (who as a lady deserves this service, so that she will not have to suffer the indignity of offering her own hand). The "giving of the bride's hand" is her free choice as a child of God, and not a pagan transfer of ownership. It is vulgar, presumptuous of God's sole claim on his children, and disrespectful to the bride to answer anything, especially "I do" or "Her mother and I do."

One final note: the newly invented "custom" of applauding the bride and groom at the conclusion of a wedding, especially when they kiss, must be avoided at all costs. The kiss is a "kiss of peace" and part of the service. The service itself is called "the Solemnization of Matrimony," not its trivialization (BCP 300). It is no more proper to applaud the Man and Woman's offering of themselves to God and each other, than it is to applaud the consecration of bread and wine in the Holy Communion.

What are Ember Days?

Ember Days (from the Old English for "circuit, or anniversary days") are the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday following the First Sunday of Lent, Whitsunday, September 14 (old Holy Cross Day), and December 13 (old St. Lucy's Day) (BCP li). These are days of fasting and prayer that precede the Sundays appointed in ancient times for ordinations to the ministry. During them, we offer our prayers for the sake of all the ministers of God, and especially for those about to be ordained.[6]

What are clerical vestments?

Clerical vestments are the adaption of ordinary clothing to set die clergy apart from the laity in God's honor. They are essentially a uniform, like the uniform worn by a soldier or policeman, indicating dedication to a profession of service. Thus, we get the expression "a man of the cloth."[7]

Every Day Dress, the black suit and clerical collar, are basically the clothes any professional man wore from about the 17th century on. The collar is reversed to indicate spiritual, rather than earthly, service. The black has come to mean "separation from the world"; although, truth were told, at one time "black" was one of the few dependable dyes for cloth. During the American War for Independence, it was the black clothing of the American clergy, together with their preaching of liberty under God's rule, that earned them the name "The Black Regiment."

The "Eucharistic Vestments" are a preservation of the clothing worn by the equivalent of our "middle class" in ancient (Roman and Hellenistic) times. They were kept by a number of branches of the Church in honor of the saints and martyrs of the Church's earliest days. They are worn during the celebration of the Holy Communion.

The Alb (from Latin albus: white) is a long, white, linen vestment, reaching to the ankles, with close sleeves. This was the normal "bottom layer" of clothing worn right up to the Middle Ages. Its symbolism is the white robe of Baptism and the purity of the saints in Christ (Revelation 9:8).

The Girdle (or cinctuire) is a woven cord used as a belt over the alb. Its practical use is to hold the clothing together. When there was work to be done, the ancients would use the

girdle to tie up the skirts of the alb into a form of "work pant." The expression "girding the loins" comes from this practice (see Job 38:3; 1 Peter 1:13). The symbolic meaning attached to the girdle is self-control and obedience to the truth (Ephesians 6:14).

The Amice (from the Latin amictus: a cloak) is a rectangle of white linen

with tapes (ties), worn over the shoulders (under the alb) and pulled down from the head. It is a form of cowl or hat, originally used to keep the sun or rain off the head, like a burnoose or a worker's kerchief. Its symbolic meaning is the helmet of salvation, God's grace in the fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil (Ephesians 6:17).

The Stole (from Latin stola: a garment) is a type of scarf: a long, narrow strip of fabric. It was the ancient badge of office. The Roman emperor wore a scarf of office, and he presented such scarves to his magistrates as a sign of their authority to act in his name. The Christian Church adopted the stole as a sign that the clergy act in the Name of their King Jesus Christ.[8] It is worn over the left shoulder by deacons; over the neck and crossed by priests and bishops; or over the neck and uncrossed by bishops, if they are already wearing a cross on their breast called "a pectoral cross" (Latin pectus: chest or breast). The symbolic meaning of the stole is that bearing the authority of Christ means also bearing his cross (Matthew 16:24-25).

The Maniple (from the Latin manipulus: a handful, something taken in hand) is a narrow strip of fabric worn over the left arm on the sleeve of the alb. Its secular origins were the handkerchief worn on the sleeve and the waiters towel draped over his arm. It was perhaps used originally in the Church to wipe the mouths of the communicants. It is a sign that true Christian authority is service in Christ's Name (John 13:3-17).

The Chasuble (from the Latin casula: a little house) is worn over all of the above. It was originally a "poncho" style overcoat. The chasuble is often marked with a cross on its back (in the form of a "Y"), as a symbol of carrying the cross of Christ. The chasuble is also a symbol of "the breastplate of righteousness," as part of the "whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13-18).

The Cope (from the Latin cappa: cape) is another version of the overcoat and was once intended to be worn over the other vestments to protect them in bad weather. It is now used

in processions and on other occasions in place of the cha-sublet

The Mitre (from Greek and Latin mitra: headband, turban) is worn by bishops, much like the headdress worn by the high priests of the Old Testament, as a sign of their office (see Exodus 28:4). The Western form of the mitre is a double-peaked hat, representing the Holy Ghost's descent upon the Apostles as in cloven tongues of fire (Acts 2:3).[10]

Choir Dress is basically the clothing of the medieval university. Choir dress is worn during "choir offices," that is, during the services performed in the choir of the church (such as the daily offices). It is also worn for other administrations, depending on the practice of a particular Church, sometimes with a stole (in place of the tippet and hood). Modern academic dress and the robes worn by judges are also derived from these clothes.

The Cassock (from Old French casaque: a long coat) is a long, usually black, close-fitting robe with sleeves. It is the basic article of academic clothing, indicating a life of study.[11]

The Surplice (from the Latin superpelliceum: over a fur garment or robe) is really a loose fitting version of the alb, worn to the ankles or at least below the knees, meant to be worn over the cassock. It originated because medieval churches and chapels were so cold that the clergy began wearing fur vests or fur-line cassocks, and the surplice had to be loose to fit over them.

Since the Reformation, many Churches in Anglicanism have used the surplice as their chief vestment in services, including the Holy Communion, as a simplification of the clerical vestments. In fact, the Anglican minister dressed in his full, ankle-length surplice and stole or tippet looks very much like the descriptions and depictions of the ministers of the ancient Church.[12]

The Cotta (from the Latin for "coat") is an abbreviated, less ample surplice.

The Tippet (from Old English tip: a point) is a black scarf, worn over the neck and hanging straight down on both sides of the chest. The tippet was a garment worn to protect against the cold in medieval colleges and churches. It first became a symbol that the wearer had earned an academic degree, then a symbol of office of the parish priest (who had gone to school to prepare for his ministry). Some tippets were made of fur, and came to points at the end, like some modern fur stoles. Thus the name was derived. The tippet is worn over

the hood.

The Hood as originally another means of keeping warm in medieval buildings. It was reserved for those who held a degree, on the theory that undergraduates needed to be kept cold in order to keep them awake. The rule became the higher the degree, the bigger and warmer the hood. Today, as in the universities, the hood is worn hanging down the back, its size and color indicating the degree, the subject of study, and where the degree was earned.

The Gown was originally an outer-garment, worn over the rest of the clothing by men. At times in the Anglican Church, it has been worn over the choir dress (except the surplice), or in place of the choir dress. It has often been worn as a preaching vestment. A number of Reformation Churches adopted the gown as a vestment for all of their clergy's public administrations.

The Cap is worn on formal occasions, usually outside the church. Just as modern nurses wear a variety of caps representing the places where they took their training, the medieval universities and colleges had their own forms of the academic cap. We see a remnant of this custom at university commencements today, especially if some of the professors hold their degrees from European schools. The basic Anglican cap is the English cap of black cloth, very much like an unstiffened "mortar board" (which is another, later version). Some Anglican clergy wear the Italian version of the cap, called a "biretta." It is stiffened, with three to four wings or fins over the seams on top. If worn, it is usually worn according to the continental church customary, rather than the English.[13]

The Purpose of Vestments is to keep our connections with the Church in past ages, and to stress the offices of the ministry over the particular men who fill them. The Church's intention is that every minister's clothing represent his office of service, derived from the ministry of Christ, and never himself.

What are "high church" and "low church"?

These terms are almost indecipherable, and are used today mostly as epithets to describe anything the speaker dislikes personally in the way of religion, or as "party terms" to breed dissension in the Church.

Their meanings have shifted throughout the history of their use, beginning in about the seventeenth century. "High" has meant, among other things, "a high opinion of the Crown, versus the Parliament, in the governance of the Church"; "a high opinion of die value of bishops and sacraments"; "a respect for the Church's practices in ages past"; "the belief that the Church should govern herself, free of earthly governmental control"; and "the belief that Church unity is more important than anything else, with a willingness to accept the universal authority of the Bishop of Rome." One need not be a very learned historian to see that some of these "definitions" contradict the others.

The same is true of "Low Church." It has meant, again, among other things: "theological liberalism"; "an emphasis on preaching the Word, sometimes over all other administrations"; "a belief that the Parliament should govern the Church"; "a willingness to follow the pattern of the Reformed Churches of Europe"; "strict adherence to the Bible"; and "anti-Romanism."[14]

The best course for the Anglican Christian is not to take these terms very seriously, but to concentrate on following Christ, who never belonged to "an ecclesiastical party" (see 1 Corinthians 1:10-13).

Why do stained glass windows face inward?

Stained glass windows face into the church because they are a reminder to the Church's members of the Kingdom of Heaven, where the glory of Christ and his Saints can be enjoyed always. They are not a form of advertising to attract those who pass the church. Stained glass windows were once known as "the poor man's Bible," in the days when the poor were almost universally illiterate. They , may become so again. Stained glass windows, and all the art used in a church, should be chosen for their power to teach the true Faith of Jesus Christ, and not merely as decoration.

Why do so many Anglican churches have red doors?

Different explanations are offered. Until modern developments in pigments, red was one of the few easily made, durable, and colorful types of paint. Many barns are painted red for the same reason. A further explanation is that 1 the red doors marked the churches as places of "sanctuary": of refuge and safety from the violence of men (compare

the "cities of refuge": Numbers 35:9-12). The red paint indicated that their "bloodiness" had no place within the Church. The most attractive explanation is that the red symbolizes the Blood of Christ. I

We cannot enter Christ's Church and salvation but by his Blood shed for us. Just as the blood of lambs marked the doors of the Children of Israel during the first Passover in Egypt, the Blood of the Lamb of God marks the doors of the New Israel.

Why are "offering plates" called "alms basins"?

The original purpose of the alms basins was not to collect the normal support of the Church, but to collect money for charitable work among the poor. The tithes of the congregation were paid at other times, and were expected to be too large to be placed in the basins in a seemly manner. One suspects that the Church would be more prosperous and more effective if we returned to this practice.

What is an "every member canvass"?

A canvass is an effort, usually annual and usually in the Fall, made by a Vestry to solicit financial support for the Church in the coming year from the members of their parish. In the "best of all possible parishes," the members would tithe as required by the Scriptures; and they would routinely drop a note to the Vestry, once a year at budget time, estimating their coming year's giving so that their church and its charitable work could be well planned and well run.

What kind of bread should be used at the Holy Communion?

Any good-quality bread is permissible. Some Anglican churches use leavened ("raised") bread, as is the custom in the Eastern Churches. One finds "wafer bread" (unleavened) commonly used in Anglican churches today. It is less messy, easier to count and handle, and spoils less quickly than leavened bread. Some also attribute to the wafer bread a symbolic connection with the unleavened bread of the Exodus and Passover.

What is a paschal candle?

A paschal candle is a large candle placed on the Gospel side of the sanctuary in celebration of the resurrection of the Light of the World. It is burned during services from Easter (Greek Pascha, from the Hebrew for Passover) until the end of the Gospel on

Ascension Day. It is extinguished at that time as a memorial of Christ's bodily return to his Father in heaven.

What is a sanctuary lamp?

A sanctuary lamp is a hanging or standing light (traditionally of clear glass, although red is common) that burns continuously in the sanctuary (inside the rails) of a church. Its purpose is to signify the abiding Presence of God in his Church, through Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world (see John 8:12; Matthew 28:20). Its precedent is the lights that burned in the Temple to honor God (see Exodus 25:31, 40:25; Leviticus 24:2; 2 Chronicles 13:11).

Why use colored vestments?

God commanded Moses to make colorful vestments for the priests serving in his Tabernacle (see Exodus 39). When we remember that God gave us bodies, and not just souls or minds, it makes sense that he would expect us to worship him with our bodies, including our five senses. But the Old Law had only a shadow of the good things to come (Hebrews 10:1). Now that the true High Priest and true worship have come in Christ, why should we worship God with less beauty than when we had only a shadow of the true (Hebrews 9:11-14)?

Over the years, a variety of colors have been used in the Christian Church. Christians have attached symbolism to the colors, and appointed them for different times of year.[15] The following are simply examples of common usages.

White is a symbol of purity and joy. It is used at Christmas and Easter, and at feasts in honor of our Lord. It is used to honor adult saints who were not martyrs, and the Holy Innocents (although use varies for the last; the traditional Roman use was violet [purple] or red on a Sunday).

Gold is a royal color, honoring Christ's kingship. It may be used in place of white for feasts of our Lord.

Purple & Blue are also royal colors, used during Advent, in anticipation of the coming of our King.

Violet is a symbol of penance and humility. It is used during Lent and on fasting days.

In many places no distinction is made between violet and purple, so violet may also be used during Advent.

Unbleached Linen (or silk, or some other cloth) is not a color, but an absence of color. Where violet is not used for Lent, unbleached cloth is used for the "Lenten Array" (a special set of vestments and appointments for that season). It is a liturgical use of the Biblical symbol of "sackcloth" as a sign of mourning and penance.

Red is the color of blood and fire. It is used on Whitsunday (Pentecost) and other days honoring the Holy Ghost. It is used on the feast days of martyrs.

Black is the color of deepest grief and sorrow. It is used in many places on Good Friday. Usually black (sometimes violet) is used at a funeral. It is the grim reality of death that makes Christ's Resurrection (and our resurrection in him) so glorious.

Green is the color of new life in the Spring and, thus, a symbol of hope. It is the general color of the Church year, used on Sundays after Epiphany and after Trinity. It signifies the Christian's constant hope in our Lord and in his Gospel.

Where do the ashes on Ash Wednesday come from?

The ashes blessed and distributed on Ash Wednesday are the ashes of the palms distributed on the previous year's Palm Sunday. The Jerusalem mob welcomed Christ to the city in glory on Palm Sunday, but taunted him and crucified him on Good Friday. The ashes, an ancient and Biblical symbol of mourning, represent to us our sorrow over our bright promises to our Savior so often unkept.

What is incense?

Incense is the gum of trees and various spices burned on charcoal in an incense burner called a "censer" or "thurible." Incense is a Biblical symbol of prayer, which rises to heaven like the smoke of burning incense (Psalm 141:2). "Incense" means "something that is burned," and because it is used up so completely as it burns, it is a symbol of sacrificial worship. God decreed the use of incense in his worship (see, for example, Exodus 25:1-9, 30:1-9). The burning of incense to the honor of God by the Gentiles is one of the prophetic signs of the coming of the Messiah (see Malachi 1:11, used as an Opening Sentence at Morning Prayer in Epiphanytide, BCP 4, thus warranting the use of incense, for those who

choose to do so, in the Anglican Church). The gift of incense to the infant Christ by the Wise Men was the first fulfillment of this prophecy (Matthew 2:11).

What is the "Via Media"?

The via media is a Latin term that means "the middle way." It is often used to describe the Anglican system of obedience to Christ. The malice of the devil and fallen human nature place obstacles between the faithful Christian and God. The "middle way" is tiie path revealed in the Scriptures that takes us around these barriers safely. It is not the "middle of the road" or any sort of compromise in our Faith. The via media is the one sure road that God has provided, in his Son the Living Word, that leads us through the middle of the sorrows and the errors of this world, instead of crashing us into them.

What should I do when I don't understand a custom in my parish?

Whenever you don't understand something in your parish, a custom, a ceremony, one of die furnishings or appointments, an idea in a sermon: ask your rector, at a convenient time and in private, to explain it to you. You should not attempt to serve Christ in ignorance, since you are bound to worship God with your whole mind, as well as with your whole heart and whole soul.

APPENDIX I

PARTICIPATION IN AN ANGLICAN SERVICE

A congregation of Christians in church is not so much an audience, waiting to be entertained, as it is an orchestra in concert to honor God, under the direction of a conductor, each member taking his proper part. It is God, and not ourselves, that we seek to please with our worship. The keys, therefore, to intelligent participation in Anglican services are preparation, attention, and cooperation.

Preparation. First, make a spiritual preparation. Before every service, ask God to open your heart, your soul, and your mind to the Spirit of prayer, to his Word, and to his Will. Ask him to guide and illuminate his ministers who have been appointed to lead the service.

Second, get to church early enough to examine any bulletin or service order provided for the congregation. Find your place in the Prayer Book and Hymnal as needed, and review any parts of the service with which you are unfamiliar so that you will know what is expected of you during the service. The "rubrics" (instructions in fine print) will provide most of this information.

Third, as quietly as possible, to avoid embarrassing diem, assist visitors and guests in preparing for die service.

Attention. Once the service begins, focus all of your attention on it. Listen for what God may be telling you through his Word and worship. Listen for any additional instructions the officiant may offer. Make the proper responses with the rest of the congregation. Listen to the people around you and keep pace with them. During hymns, listen to the organ: try to stay on key and to follow the accompaniment. When the officiant leads the congregation in corporate prayer, follow his lead (and not your own or anyone else's). Pay attention to the sermon, and if the preacher says anything that you don't understand, ask him about it later at some convenient time.

Cooperation. The Book of Common Prayer is a "church order," not a strait-jacket; and Anglicans are not robots. Congregations have "personalities," just as individual Anglicans, clergymen, and other officiants do. These personalities come through during our public worship, but they must not be allowed to compete with one another. Christian worship is the expression of our unity in Jesus Christ.

Local customs and practices are perfectly legitimate, as long as we are not so silly as to want to excommunicate anyone who doesn't follow the local customs of our own parish church (or of the church where we grew up). Whether in our home parish, or while visiting another, our goal is to "fit in" with the rest of the congregation, and not to stand out. Opinions about the "best" way to conduct a service are fine, but during a service is not the time to express diem.

By custom, Church law, and God's commandment, the officiant (whether a clergyman or a lay-reader) whom the Church has appointed to conduct the service is in charge of the service. It is his lead that mustbc followed. If you truly believe, for example, that

he reads the service "too slowly" or "too quickly," you may take the matter up with him sometime in private. During the service, stay witii him, even if you must concentrate a bit to do so. Special care is sometimes necessary to provide this courtesy to a visiting minister (or even to the Bishop when he makes his official visitations).

In any event, never try to "reform" the practice of the officiant or of the rest of the congregation from a pew during services. Even on days when you attend public services, God still provides you with almost twenty-three other hours for private prayer and private expression.

Some Things You Should Know

The following are generalized observations and instructions for worship according to the Prayer Book. Many are simply matters of courtesy and custom. Some are what might be called "Anglican folk-ways." Refer any questions about them to your rector.

Posture. The general Anglican rule is Kneel to Pray; Sit to Be Instructed; and Stand to Give Praise. Follow the rubrics, however, when they require otherwise. For example, the members of the congregation (because they act as witnesses) stand throughout the Ministration of Holy Baptism and the Form of the Solemnization of Matrimony, even during the prayers.

The Rubrics. The fine-print instructions in the Prayer Book are called "rubrics," because they were once printed in red. The rubrics should be followed, unless otherwise instructed by the officiant, who is given the benefit of the doubt that he has his pastoral reasons for any variance from the rubrics.

The Infirm. The weak or the infirm may sit while others kneel or stand. You may stand at the altar rail to receive Communion, if you cannot kneel. If you cannot go to the altar rail, ask an usher to request that the priest administer the Communion to you at your seat in the congregation.

At the Minister's Entrance & Exit. Stand when the priest and other ministers enter at the beginning of the Holy Communion, and when they leave. You needn't stand at the entrance of the officiant for Morning and Evening Prayer until he stands to begin the service. Stand at the Opening Sentences of a funeral. Stand when the bride enters at a wedding. Stand during processions.

Gestures of Reverence. Since the 1549 Prayer Book (the first Prayer Book in English, produced during the Reformation), all gestures of reverence (signing with the cross; bowing; genuflecting; knocking or beating on the breast to show repentance), except kneeling or standing when the rubrics of the Prayer Book require them, have been left to the piety and discretion of the individual Anglican. The gestures, when they are used, reflect the courtesy and protocol of service in the court of a king, in this case, the King of Kings.

The sign of the cross is a marking of someone or something with the Cross of Christ. Once it was a secret recognition sign among persecuted Christians. Now it is a public announcement that someone or something belongs to Christ. It is used at blessings, at the absolution of sins, at the signing of a newly baptized person, at anointings with holy oil, at the mention of the Trinity, and at the end of the Creeds to show that eternal life comes from the Cross of Christ alone. The sign is made by taking the right hand and placing it on the forehead, on the center of the breast, and then on the left and the right of the breast. At the introduction of the Gospel at Holy Communion, it is made with the thumb on the forehead, lips, and heart, as a prayer that the Gospel will be in our minds, on our lips, and in I our hearts. Once again, with the exception of the cross in baptism (which the 1928 Prayer Book requires the minister to make: BCP 280), the use of the sign of the cross is a matter of personal piety and discipline.

Genuflecting means "bending the knee." It is a gesture of humility before our king, and an application of St. Paul's injunction that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow (Philippians 2:10). It is made before (not "to") the altar, as the earthly representation of God's throne, much the way a soldier salutes the flag as a symbol of his country. In some churches it is the custom to genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament, and at the words "and I was incarnate . . ." during the Nicene Creed, in recognition of the * Incarnation of Christ. Genuflection is done on the right knee.

Bowing the Headis another application of St. Paul's teaching about reverence for the Name of Christ, mentioned above. It has generally replaced 1 genuflection at the mention of Jesus' Name. Bowing is also used in place of f genuflection at other times, and is sometimes called simply "reverencing." ! It is customary among many Anglicans to bow at the mention

of the Trinity ' (as during the Gloria Patri: Glory be to the Father, etc.).

Knocking on the Breast is a sign of repentance. In the Bible, the heart is the "organ" responsible for making choices, so that beating the breast (or heart) is a sign of our admission that our hearts' choices have been faulty.

Bells are a signal. Their original purpose was to signal to the members of a parish (who in ancient days mostly lived close enough to the church to hear them) and to the community in general that Divine Service was about to begin. In some places a hand bell was rung through the streets of the town before service. The purpose of bells rung within the service is similar: to signal to the congregation and the world that the Church is now at prayer. The bell rung in some churches at the Holy Communion, after the Words of Institution are read, is called "the sacring bell" (a shortening of "consecration"). It is properly rung on the great bell of the church as a signal to those outside (such as the sick, or those required to be at labor) that Christ is being worshiped and Common Prayer is being offered for them. This signal may also be rung on a hand bell. Bells are also tolled for the dead, and rung on occasions of great rejoicing. At Morning & Evening Prayer Stand for the Opening Sentences; the Gloria Patri; the Canticles {Venite, Te Deum, Magnificat, etc.); the Creed; and any sung hymns.

Kneel for the Confession, Absolution, Lord's Prayer, and any other prayers (after "Let us pray").

Sit for the Lessons; Sit or Stand for the Psalms as instructed, or following the lead of the officiant.

Breathing Capitals are found in the corporate prayers in the Daily Offices and throughout the Prayer Book. Their purpose is to mark pauses for breath, so that the congregation and ministers will keep together when reciting their joint prayers. The marked capital letters in the following phrases are examples of "breathing capitals": Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. The breathing capitals should not be ignored by the congregation, unless the officiant ignores them. Without some system of pauses, however, corporate prayers tend to turn into babble.

The Service Music for the Offices begins on page 697 of the 1940 Hymnal. An

explanation of how to chant the service music of the Church is also included. If your parish uses a different hymnal, find the service music in the index. If you are unfamiliar with any of the service music, it is best to look it up and sing it from the Hymnal. Most people should not trust their memories when it comes to the Canticles (see below). The "pointing" (the musical arrangement, pauses, and phrasing) of the Canticles is complicated enough that the Hymnal will be a great help in the congregation's keeping together.

The Canticles are liturgical songs, named for the Latin word for "little songs." They are said or sung in unison (that is, by the ministers and congregation together), including the Gloria Patri that follows those canticles without their own doxology (concluding words of praise). Gloria Patri is not said with Te Deum or Benedicite.

Whether said or sung, the asterisk (*) in each verse (line) marks a definite pause (or caesura), and must always be observed.

Whether said or sung, the canticles are begun by the officiant (or a leader called "the precentor" or "the cantor"), who reads or sings to the first (*). At this point, the congregation joins in. (Note that it is a good practice at all times to allow the leader of a prayer to recite the opening phrase, before the congregation joins in. For example: the officiant says, "Our Father," and dien the congregation continues with him, "who art in heaven.")

The Psalms are usually read or sung antiphonally (in alternating verses, begun by the officiant or other leader). As with the Canticles, the (*) must always be observed. The Gloria Patri may follow each Psalm or the entire selection of Psalms. Practices vary, but one that works very well is as follows. Allow the leader to

begin each Psalm and the Gloria Patri that follows the Psalms, regardless of who read the previous verse.

During the Canticles and Psalms pay attention to the meaning of the words and to the punctuation. Stop at the periods and (*). Generally, stop at (;), or at the conclusion of any self-contained thought. Pause for breath only at logical places. Listen to the others reciting with you, and try to keep together. Don't drop your voice before pauses or the ends of verses. Seek the natural rhythm of the language: stress the verbs and important nouns. Do

not reduce the Word of God and the prayers of the Church to gibberish.

During the Creed it is a common Anglican practice to face the East end of the church (the front, where the altar is), because of the ancient Christian association of the altar with the throne of God and of the sunrise with the Resurrection of Christ.

A Prayer for the President, A Prayer for the Clergy and People, A Prayer for all Conditions of Men, and A General Thanksgiving are sometimes called "the State Prayers," because of the prayer for the civil authority. Originally they were required at Morning Prayer whenever the Litany or Communion did not follow, because they cover the general range of topics a Christian should consider in prayer every day. While they are optional now, they remain the best conclusion for the offices.

At the Holy Communion

Stand for processions; the Gospel; the Creed; hymns (unless instructed otherwise); and the Gloria in Excelsis. Also stand when the Alms Basins (offering plates) are brought forward and presented to the priest, as a sign of your participation in this offering to God, and out of respect for the One to whom it is offered. Remain standing until the beginning of the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church. It is also good practice to stand when the preacher leaves the pulpit after the Sermon, at least until the Offertory Sentences are read.

Kneel for prayers; the General Confession and Absolution; and for blessings.

Sit for the Epistle; the announcements; the Sermon; and for anthems. If there is no hymn, you may sit during the Offertory, until the alms basins are brought forward to be offered.

The Service Music for the Holy Communion begins on page 743 (with Hymn 701) of the 1940 Hymnal. When chanting, respond in the same key and at the same pace as were used by the priest.

The Best Practice is that the congregation never recite the Prayer of Humble Access or the Prayer of Thanksgiving. The rubrics do not permit it. The Amen is printed in italics, to show that it is a response by the congregation to prayers said on their behalf, just as the Canon (the consecration prayers) is concluded by the people's Amen. The Prayer Book intends that the congregation's participation and cooperation be demonstrated by this use of

a corporate Amen.

The Exhortations (beginning BCP 85) are concluded by the congregation's Amen. The congregation kneels for the first Exhortation, and sits for the other two.

An Odd, But Charming, Anglican Custom is not to leave the pews until the candles are extinguished. Its purpose is a matter of courtesy, so that those who wish to say a private prayer after the service (which ought to include everyone) will not be jostled about or disturbed by conversation. Similarly, it is the best practice to prepare for the service by avoiding any unnecessary conversation.

At the Burial of the Dead

Stand for the procession into the church and for the Opening Sentences ("I am the resurrection and the life . . ."); for the Psalms (if the officiant does); for the Creed (if it is said); and for the procession out of the church.

Sit for the Lesson(s); for the Sermon (if there is one); for any anthems; and for the Psalms (if the officiant sits).

Kneel for the prayers (after "Let us pray").

The Psalms are recited in the same manner as at the Daily Offices (see above).

If a Celebration of the Holy Communion Follows the Burial Office, participate as usual. The Collect, Epistle, and Gospel are found on page 268 of the 1928 Prayer Book.

At the Grave, gather as instructed by the officiant. Stand quietly, but make the responses. Note that the Lord's Prayer concludes, without the doxology, at "But deliver us from evil."

Eulogies are not appropriate during an Anglican funeral service. We gather to worship God, and to pray for God's mercy for our deceased brother or sister, and for ourselves. Each of us is a servant of God, and it is God's business to offer us praise or correction, as he chooses (see Romans 14:4). A sermon expressing the Church's hope in the Gospel promise of eternal life for all faithful people is always appropriate, however.

Flowers are not customarily used at a funeral in the Anglican Church, as a sign of mourning and out of respect for the deceased. Similarly, flowers are not used during times of preparation and repentance, such as the seasons of Advent and Lent.

The Burial of a Child is a separate order of service in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP 338). A common custom is to use white vestments; and depending on local custom, flowers may be used. If the Holy Communion follows, it is a common practice to use the Collect, Reading for the Epistle, and Gospel appointed for the feast of St. Michael and All Angels (BCP 251-253). The reading from Revelation assures us that the death of children is an act of malice by the devil, in a war of rebellion against God that he has already lost. The Gospel provides our Lord's reassurance that the Father in heaven has put our children

in the care of the angels, so that they may be protected unto eternal life.

At Baptisms and Weddings

Stand and make the responses.

At Confirmations

Stand until the Lord's Prayer, and make the responses.

At the Litany

Stand if the Litany is said or sung in procession. Kneel if the litanist (officiant) kneels.

In General

There is No Substitute for regular attendance at services. If you are new to Prayer Book services, or to a particular congregation, it is quite normal to feel a little awkward at first. A little practical experience will soon change all that. Do your best and pay attention, and soon you won't be worrying about the "mechanics" of worship. The people around you should be paying attention to the service, and not "rating" your "performance." Besides, as Christians, we are all under a positive obligation of charity to assist one another in the worship of God.

Use the Prayer Book, since it is better to follow the service in the Prayer Book than to depend on memory.

The Purpose of a Fixed Liturgy is decency and order; and to permit the Christian who knows the forms of his Church to give his full attention to the worship of God (without his having to wonder, "What comes next?").

APPENDIX II

THE VIA MEDIA*

Adapted from a paper presented to the Anglican Society, University of South Carolina, February 28, 1989.

What follows is a brief history of the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church, organized around a discussion of Article XIII and the doctrines of grace connected with it.

Many people do not understand the vast amount of spiritual and intellectual effort behind the Articles, or behind such terms as the via media. Others assume that the work of theology is done in isolation from the problems of real life. The purpose of the inclusion of this essay is to

begin to correct both errors.

The Latin text of the Article is given here, and a few Latin terms are used, because Latin was the international language of scholarship at the time of the Reformation, and because the Articles were addressed by the Church of England as much to the world, as to her own members. But a knowledge of Latin is not needed to make sense of the essay.

Article XIII: Of Works before Justification

Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ; neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the school-authors say) deserve grace of congruity; yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

De Operibus ante Justificationem

Opera quae fiunt ante gratiam Christi et Spiritus ejus afflatum, cum ex fide Jesu Christi no prodeant, minime Deo grata sunt; neque gratiam, ut multi vocant, de congruo merentur; immo cum non sintfacta, ut Deus ilia fieri voluit et praecepit, peccati rationem habere non dubitamus (Browne 331).

From a Christian point of view, "religious" people (along with every odicr member of the human race) will always be hypocrites, will always remain justly

* The works cited in this and each following appendix are listed in the general bibliography.

liable to charges of "saying one thing and doing another," until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Even the "faith" described in the phrase "the Christian Faith" is, in itself, an act of trust that die God who has acted on mankind's behalf in history is not like us, will not disappoint us in his future fulfillment of his promises, is not a Confidence Man on a cosmic scale abusing our credulity. We Christians firmly believe that the pea is really under the walnut shell, if God tells us that it is.

All human beings, because we are fallen into sin, engage in "bait and switch" behavior: "Yes, my dear, I know that I promised you my love and loyalty, but what I am actually giving you is really much better, if you will only look at things from my point of

view."

Fallenness is, above all else, about inconstancy and undependability. Even fallen angels, known colloquially as "devils," operate in this manner. In the Garden, Satan offers Adam and Eve "god-hood," knowing all the while that he cannot deliver on his promise (see Genesis 3:1-7). Throughout history, he continues this deception, arguing, even to Christ in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), that death and rebellion against God are not only "just as good" as divinity, but even better than eternal life in union with the Father. Satan's claim, even today, is the cynical argument that serving him in hell is better than ruling with God in heaven.

No religious person, to be specific, no Christian can ever be as good as his own publicly confessed standards, precisely because those standards are not really his own. As die first of the Anglican Articles of Religion (used in their present form since 1571 by the Church of England and other Anglican national Churches for settling basic religious controversies) informs us, God is "of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness" (see the 1928 American Book of Common Prayer, 603). None of us, as finite beings, can compete with an infinite person; and since the Fall has attenuated our connection with God's power, wisdom, and goodness, we cannot hope to meet his standards on our own. So what are we to do?

One common expedient, when Christian hypocrisy is either admitted or discovered, is to reject the entire Christian enterprise. While this approach is, as I said, quite common, it is at heart not very reasonable. No human being lives up, or even lives down, to the standards of life and behavior he sets for himself. Even the outright libertine never has as much fun as he intends. And the suicide must act definitively and in self-contradiction in order to pursue his fantasy of a meaningless, agentless, powerless existence.

The careful, pristine atheist must still bear in his efforts to live according to his own standards the same burdens of "sin" and "justification" as everyone else, Christians included. For "sin" is, in the end, only a failure to maintain a standard, a failure to reach a goal, a "missing of the mark" as the Greek term hamartia implies; and pagan Greek philosophers, the New Testament writers, and the Christian Church Fathers all used the word hamartia, "sin," to describe the

human predicament. "Justification," on the other hand, is die attempt to deal with sin: an effort to vindicate a standard unfulfilled and to close the gap that yawns between human aspiration and performance.

Another approach to lifting the twin burdens of sin and justification, common among Roman Catholics and many modern American Christians of various denominations, is to try to "balance the books." If we fail today, perhaps we can make it up tomorrow. While this endeavor at "goodness in arrears" is at least reasonable, from a human perspective, it is yet a failure from the divine perspective.

God is not limited by time and space: they are his creatures. God tells Moses from the burning bush, "I Am Who I Am" or "I Am That I Am" (Exodus 3:14), intimating more than immortality, but also eternity. Given the weaknesses of human language, bound by time and space, the closest we can come to expressing eternity is "a permanent, unchanging state of now-ness," an unbroken present. Thus God is not a human bill-collector: we may have to wait for tomorrow to come, hoping to keep a step ahead of a day of reckoning; but tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow are already present to God, and all our accounts are irremediably past due.

A third option for dealing with sin and justification is an appeal to some species of fatalism or determinism. If human beings are not structurally free to choose their own actions, then their choices no longer matter. If I "miss the mark," if I am inadequate in meeting the objective standards of good behavior, it is the fault of the power or powers that control me. Chessmen receive no credit or blame for the actions of the chess master. This view is found among the more extreme adherents of Jansenism and among the followers of the most distorted forms of Calvinism (although not in the Calvinism of the Institutes), who tip-toe their way to accepting the Islamic principles of Insha'Allah ("as Allah wills") and kismet ("fate," "portion," "lot"), an undigested bit of outright paganism often found in that religion.

Less mystical sounding, but of a piece with the doctrines of the "religious" fatalists, are the teachings of the modern philosophical and psychological determinists. The American behaviorist B. F. Skinner, for example, called his most famous book Beyond Freedom and

Dignity.

We could develop, of course, a long list of fatalists and determinists, but what interests us here is the fact that the fatalists are as prone to preaching as anyone else. Their approach to life must be inarguable, if it is to be true; but they persist in arguing it, as if the assent of a mankind without a will of its own were necessary, thus disproving their own theory by the very act of espousing it. What may not be apparent yet, however, is that each of these approaches to dealing with human fallibility, even when God is explicitly mentioned or named, remains focused on how we may please ourselves, on how we may cope personally with the variance between what we might wish to be and what we are. None actually addresses the more important issue of how we may please God.

However charming or neighborly the people who take these positions are, their religion is faulty because it centers on themselves, functionally if not by conscious intention.

If "religion" is understood as "that set of beliefs upon which a human being relies (from Latin religare) to make sense of the world and to order his life," then a theistic religion must center on God, and a Christian religion must center on God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son of God (in whom the Father is "well-pleased": 2 Peter 1:17), and be under the power and teaching of the Holy Ghost. In die case of Christian religion, God must be pleased, and he must set forth the standards for our behavior. The test must be Christ, who is both God and man; and his standard is a remarkable one: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

"Uh-oh," we say to ourselves. We are right back where we started. We might try to fall back on "love," looking for our perfection in a vague "ethic of love," as did the mid-twentieth century "situationalists," but Christ also tells us, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). And we already know that consistent, perfect obedience is illusory, even obedience to our own whims.

The obstacles in our path to justification appear insurmountable, but there is an answer: not over the obstacles, but around them. The English expression of historic, Scriptural Christianity has a name for such a route "around the obstacles," and it is, as is die case with so many important English terms, drawn from a foreign language, in this case

Latin.

The religion of the Church of England and of the various national churches founded by missionaries from the English Church is known as "Anglicanism," from the phrase "ecclesia Anglicana," the "English Church," used in Latin documents from the time "Britannia" became "Angle-land." For example, in 1215, Magna Carta guaranteed "we will and firmly command that the English Church [ecclesia Anglicana] be free" (Bettenson, Documents 166; OED). Anglican Christians call their path around the obstacles the via media: the "middle way." The via media is not an average or a compromise, however. Obstacles cannot be overcome by averaging them out: adding nine mole hills to Mt. Everest and dividing by ten does not make Mt. Everest more passable. Nor should the words via media be translated in the crudest, school-boy way as "middle of the road."

I would suggest that the use of the term via media began as a literary allusion, obvious to the educated in the generations of the English Reformation and the Elizabethan Religious Settlement, to Ovid's Metamorphoses.

This mention of Ovid in the middle of a discussion of justification may seem odd to us, but we are not speaking of our sensibilities, but of the mental furniture of a previous era. From the Middle Ages on, a tradition of interpreting Ovid's pagan tales of transformation as moral fables developed among the educated in Western Europe. This "moral" method of reading Ovid is often called Ovide Moralise, after a fourteenth century work of that name, consisting

of 70,000 octasyllabic lines interpreting the Roman poet's work in a "moralized" way (see Wilkinson 186).

In sixteenth century England, this interest in Ovid became a "vogue" (Wilkinson 200). In 1529, for example, Cardinal Wolsey included the Metamorphoses and the Fasti in the curriculum for Ipswich School (Wilkinson 200). It even became common at Elizabethan dinners for selected scenes from the Metamorphoses to be presented in confectionery (Wilkinson, note 201).

The specific passage that interests us is found in the story of Phaeton, the son of Apollo, the sun god. Phaetons tale begins at the end of Book 1 of the Metamorphoses and

continues into Book 2. Phaeton, in an effort to prove his paternity, tricks Apollo into permitting him to drive the chariot of the sun. Before the fatal ride, Apollo gives Phaeton this advice:

To allow earth and heaven to share equally in your warmth, do not go too low, nor yet force your way into the upper air: if you drive too high, you will set the dome of heaven on fire, and if you are too low you will scorch the earth. The middle way is safest [medio tutissimus ibis] (2: 134-137; Innes 53).

Phaeton, impetuous, weak, and mortal, strays from this "middle way" and perishes, causing great harm to the earth in the process. What is clear, however, is that the "middle way" is no compromise, but a path through dangers and obstacles: the only path that is right and "works."

An awareness of the literary tradition of a "middle way" is necessary to an understanding of the Anglican via media. No movement is without its enemies and opponents, and the Elizabethan Religious Settlement, the attempt to bring religious peace and order in England in the midst of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, is no exception to this rule. It was common in the sixteenth century, and remains so, to deride the via media as a mere path of political expedience, splitting the difference between Rome and Geneva. For some, the "middle way" is a term of contempt, as William Clark noted and countered in his famous book The Anglican Reformation:

It has been sometimes charged against the Church of England that she takes what is called the Via Media, meaning by this that she makes a compromise between the party who clung to the traditional beliefs and those that advocated revolution. Even if this were the case, probability would be on her side. But it may be said with some confidence that history will not bear out this theory. The English reformers, taken as a whole, were neither eclectics nor were they mediators between extremes. They acted and they intended to act upon the principle laid down in the Ten Articles [an earlier version of the 39, given in 1536], that the faith of the Church must be determined and tested by the Scriptures and the Creeds, then by the Fathers and the early Councils of the Church. Here is a clear principle upon which the Church of England professes to base her action, and she has never departed from it (104).

If we are fair, we see exactly this principle at work in the writing and living

of the Anglicans. For example, in 1632, in his A Priest to the Temple, almost a century after the Ten Articles, we read George Herbert, Anglican priest and poet, whom The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church identifies as a significant spokesman for the via media (see that entry), explaining the duties of a country parson in the maintenance of his church building in these terms:

And all this be doth, not as out of necessity, or as putting a holiness in the things, but as desiring to keep the middle way between superstition and slovenlinesse, as following the Apostle's two great and admirable rules in things of this nature: the first whereof is, 'Let all things be done decently and in order;' the second, 'Let all things be done to edification (I. Cor xiv 11:13(Herbert 242-243: Chapter 13).

Unless the kindly Herbert is using "superstition" and "slovenliness" as code words for Rome and Geneva, a highly dubious claim in or out of context, the "middle way" is not a political trade-off of religious principle for civil peace, but a religious principle in and of itself: our sought after path through the obstacles of sin and justification.

Thus we come finally to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, "agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces, and the whole Clergy [of the Church of England], in the Convocation holden at London in the Year 1562, for the avoiding of Diversities of Opinions, and for the establishing of Consent touching true Religion" (title in English BCP: Mant 749). These Articles were drawn up in Latin only, but they were accepted by Parliament in 1571 in both Latin and English versions and made a matter of clerical subscription thereafter (Clark 301; Mant 749).

Until the time of the Reformation, the only formularies used by the Church of England were the three Creeds: the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian (Daniel 551). But in the sixteenth century, as had been the case during the time of the Christological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries (which had produced the Creeds in the forms that we have them), a need developed for a statement of faith (Kidd 1). The English Articles of Religion, in their various versions, were not meant to be a comprehensive creed (since such already existed), but to be a guide through the controversies of the time (Kidd 29).

The main stages of the development of die Articles are the Ten Articles of 1536 ("to establish Christian quietness and unity among us and to avoid contentious opinions") (Bicknell 10); the Forty-Two Articles of 1552-1553 (mainly the work of Cranmer and Ridley) (Mant 749); and the Elizabethan Thirty-Nine Articles of 1562-1571 (edited from the Forty-Two, which had been repealed by the Romanist Queen Mary) (Mant 749).

Our particular Article, "On Works before Justification," number XIII, the text of which is given in English and Latin at the beginning of this essay, remained unchanged between 1552 and 1571 (Kidd 140). It was chosen for our examination as an example of the whole, and as an illustration of the true via media through the obstacles of human sin to Christian justification before God.

Article XIII is part of a series within the Articles that deals with the nature of man and his salvation, ranging from Article IX, "Of Original or Birth-Sin," and ending with Article XVIII, "Of Obtaining Eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ."

We began this discussion by examining the obstacles to justification: the attempt to ignore God completely; the attempt to bargain with God by balancing the books; and the attempt to blame God for human failure by making him solely responsible for the actions of his human puppets. We saw how each of these must fall of its own inconsistency; and here in Article XIII we see the alternative, the middle way around these failures.

"Works," what we would call "good works," are declared unpleasing to God, unless they follow "justification," which is here defined, not as a human action, but as a divine outreach to man: the gift of "the Grace of Christ and the inspiration of His Spirit." This statement means, above all, that "good works" are only good in that they satisfy God's infinite standard of goodness, himself, and not our own ideas about goodness. "Goodness" is not an abstraction, but the life of God himself. Only those actions which take place within that life can be called "good," which was in fact the quality of all of Adam's actions before he broke away from unity with God by sinning. Christ's life and works are "good" and "well-pleasing" precisely because they take place in the context of the life of God.

This definition of "goodness" solves the problems of standards, and explains why fallen men cannot adhere to any standard of goodness, accurately stated or not: because man, even

before the Fall was not God. Man never was capable of being good on his own. The effort to define goodness personally and individu-alistically is the Fall of man. One may attempt to deny the Fall as a real event, of course; but one may not reasonably deny the phenomena associated with it. And those who deny the Fall must provide another explanation for the various phenomena of "fallenness" that all men experience. The approach of this Article alone provides both an explanation and a workable solution for the problems of human fallibility.

A second implication of the Article is exactly that "workable solution": the grace of God and "faith in Jesus Christ." Human will is damaged, since we cannot do what we want to do; but faith in Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, reunites man with God, so that man's actions may take place within the life of God, according to God's standards. We saw that Christ commanded, "If you love me, keep my commandments." And while we know that we are incapable of keeping the commandments consistently, inside of a relationship of divine love, failure is forgivable, not through a weakened standard of abstract goodness, but through the mercy of divine love itself, which is also goodness itself, because both love and goodness are expressions of the one divine life of God.

Christ, who is sinless and innocent, takes to himself and suffers in his own body the results of sin. Christ who is never in arrears in his relationship with the Father can "make up the difference" of justice for us, and pay the debt that we as permanent debtors have no hope of repaying. This is not hypocrisy on Christ's part as our sovereign and good God, any more than it is hypocrisy when we forgive and love ourselves or our fellow human hypocrites. Forgiving love is the cure for hypocrisy, and not hypocritical at all, since fault must be acknowledged before it can be forgiven. Christ's death on the cross, made effective in our lives by his gifts of grace and the Holy Ghost, is an utterly realistic act of love, taking us as we are, and not as we might like to think of ourselves as being.

We discover in contemplation of this Article that the perceived obstacles to justification and good action are simply the wrongheaded establishment of our i too-narrow observations of die human predicament as the principles of religious " or ethical systems. Human beings are hypocritical; we do owe God an infinite debt for our failures; we are not

as free as we could wish to be. But each of these 1 realities is only an experience of our predicament, and not an insight into its solution. Only by moving around these barriers to good living are we able to live well and to be justified in our action.

Article XIII attempts to deal with one other confusion which may get in the way of our good living. There are actions of which a Christian may approve that are performed by those who are not united by grace and faith to Christ. The medieval explanation of this fact, called here the teaching of the "school authors," was that all "good" human actions have "merit" attached to them. This merit comes in two forms: merit de condigno, the grace that God "owes" to those who obey his commandments (denied in Article XII), and merit de congruo, grace that God gives, not as a matter of debt to the faithful human being, but out of his recognition of the "fittingness" of some humanly determined action (denied here in Article XIII) (Bicknell 274).

But the whole idea of human "merit" for doing "good" is silly. God created mankind to be, and to do, good. When we act well, we do only what we were created to do. Our failures are our abnormalities, at least in terms of our creation. As Christ said, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10; see also Article XIV).

The idea of merit is an attempt to return to human standards of goodness, but as St. John Chrysostom points out, quoting St. Paul in Romans 8:33, "It is God that justifieth" (quoted in Browne 286). And as St. Augustine argued, from St. Paul in Romans 1:17, "Quantum non est ex fide, peccatum esf: "What is not of faith is sin" (Browne 332).

Intention is the final obstacle to justification. What we intend when we act, whether to please God or to please ourselves, is the moral fact that makes us able to say that we doubt not that works ". . . not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done . . . have the nature of sin." Why we act is as important as how we act. A burglar who breaks into your home to loot it, and in the process awakens you to a fire and saves your life, has a slim chance indeed of receiving a medal for his accidental "good deed." You may benefit from his act, but this benefit was unintentional on his part.

We may benefit, as well, from the actions of those who act to please themselves instead

of God, but that benefit does not transform the basic sinfulness of actions separated from the life of God into goodness. This observation is not even unique to formal Christianity. The central character of Albert Camus' existentialist novel The Fall, Jean Baptise Clamence, a respected philanthropist who acts for all the wrong reasons, is a case in point.

But Article XIII is moderate, as befits the via media, in its rejection of such actions. It claims only that actions not performed to please God have the "nature," the "ratio," of sin. What lies behind self-pleasing actions is the "cause," the "reckoning," the "motive" of sin. As the Oxford English Dictionary explains, the native English word for "nature" is "kind." The Article leaves it to God to judge the individual action "a sin" and the doer "a sinner," contenting itself with the observation that such actions, done to please ourselves, are the very stuff of sin; that all self-will is of the same kind.

The "middle way" of Anglicanism, as represented by Article XIII, is an aggressive attempt to deal with the problems of human failure. It is not a compromise, but a principled endeavor to avoid the most common sorts of mistakes in living and thinking.

One hesitates, in periods of revolution, whether in the sixteenth century or in our own, to appear too moderate, lest moderation be interpreted as weakness and draw down upon itself the wolves of competing parties dwelling at the fringes. For this reason, moderation may well be more courageous than the extremes, and the center more a place of isolation that anywhere else.

Contemporary Anglicans have been tempted by the call of the extremes, and many have yielded to that call. But Anglicans are human beings, and as fallible as anyone else. What remains secure is die truth and the validity of die via media, both in its practical effort to avoid the obstacles of partisan human life and in the necessary attempt to obey and please God. This is a pastoral path, and not a polemical or political one, as pastor George Herbert noted so long ago: "A pastor is the deputy of Christ for reducing man to obedience to God" (217: Chapter 1).

And the via media is the peculiar invitation and call made by the Anglican branch of Christ's Church, by Christ's Anglican deputies, for all mankind to do as Christ did, and to be what Christ is. Thus, passing around the obstacles with Christ, rather than clinging to

them, God's human creatures can experience the negation of sin and the fulfillment of justification, living by grace within the eternal life of God.

APPENDIX III

THE "TEXTUS RECEPTUS'

Adapted from a paper presented to the Clericus, Diocese of the Eastern United States, Anglican Church in America, June 11, 1993.

It seems as if a new translation of the Bible is published almost every day, even as people are bombarded with the contradictory and confusing opinions of various sorts of "scholars" and self-appointed "experts" as to how they should read and interpret their Bibles.

Such confusion is relatively new in the Church. The essay that follows discusses the reasons for this confusion and some correctives, including some simple principles of Bible reading.

What is the "Textus Receptus"?

According to The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible (IDB), the term "textus receptus" (or "received text") usually refers to die 1550 edition of the Greek New Testament published in Paris by Stephanus, which became the standard text in Britain; or to the Dutch 1633 edition of the Elzevirs, which became the standard text on the Continent. These two editions differ in only 287 places (IDB IV:6l4, 601). The term "textus receptus" itself is taken from the introduction of the Elzevir edition; "You have the text, now received by all: in which we give nothing altered or corrupted" {IDBYV:60l).

By extension, the term "textus receptus" is also applied to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. In the case of the Hebrew Bible, it may refer to the standardized consonantal text of the First Century A.D.; to the vocalized text of the Tiberian Masoretes of the ben Asher family, completed in the eighth-ninth Centuries A.D.; or to the edition printed in 1524/5 A.D. by Daniel Bomberg, as edited by Jacob ben Hayyim (IDB Supplement: 895).

These technical definitions of the textus receptus are not very helpful, in the sense that they obscure as much as they reveal. By focusing on particular editions of the Hebrew and Greek testaments, they give the impression that the particular editors invented the particular texts they published. But by whom was the "received text" received? Was the Bible originally received by scholars, or was the Bible first received by the Church? Even more importantly, was the Holy Ghost given to scholars "to guide us into all truth" (see John 16:13) or to the Church as a whole?

Of course, the whole matter of Bible texts can be made stunningly complicated. There are thousands of manuscripts of various descriptions, as well as ancient versions (a version is a complete translation), lectionaries (readings for services), and quotations by the Church Fathers. These can be sifted and their variant readings collated endlessly, and perhaps they should be, but scholarship is not die primary work of the Church. It makes very little difference, for example, to a modern English-speaker, whose own language did not begin to have fixed spelling until the eighteenth century, that a Greek name may have been spelt a dozen different ways by manuscript copyists. It does matter very much, however, that our modern English-speaker know that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

The potential for conflict between the scholar and the pastor has always existed in the Church. Not unexpectedly, no one makes the point more bluntly than St. Paul:

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Corinthians 1:20-21).

Scholarship, whether textual, critical, or theological, must always be subordinate to kerygma, the preaching of the Word of God by the faithful Church. The supernatural must always take precedence over the natural, a state of affairs that galls many scholars, since scholarship cannot finally manage or handle the supernatural. The supernatural undercuts die work of human hands and minds, or at least all claims of human mastery. But the Church is a supernatural Body first, before it is anything else. And the Bible is a supernatural book first, before it is anything else.

It is important to say here that I am not attacking scholarship as a Christian vocation, but only trying to put it into perspective. Godly scholars have served the Church well, and they have been God's instruments, among other things, in transmitting and preserving the Bible. But the Christian scholar must answer to God and his Church, and not simply to other scholars, lest the scholars become a self-elected permanent synod enacting their own fads and whimsies as the dogmas of the Church, as actually happened with the periti (experts) connected with the Roman Church's Second Vatican Council.

The text and the translation of the Bible are especially bad places to indulge the scholarly appetite for the novel or the unusual. The "I've looked at more manuscripts than you have" game doesn't guarantee any more insight into God's Word than a tour of museums guarantees an understanding of art. And scholarly preemption, however well meaning, can be very misleading. The decision by the committee behind the New International Version of the Bible that they could do better than God by substituting a variety of terms in place of "sarx" (or "flesh") is a case in point. "Sinful nature" may be one valid way of reading sarx in 1 Corinthians 5:5, but it certainly isn't the only way. Theologians should cite the Scriptures, not edit diem.

So, then, what is the textus receptus? It is the Bible as the Church has received it and used it over the centuries. When the scholars of die sixteenth century prepared their printed Bibles, they were engaged in an occupation very different from that of the modern Bible scholar. They were attempting to make available the Hebrew and Greek of the Bible as the Church knew it, in both the Western and Eastern Churches. They worked from the premise that the Bible exists separately from scholarship, and that scholarship at its best sheds light on the Church's understanding of the Bible. Most of all they believed that they were preparing a printed edition of God's Book, and not simply an edition of one human work among many others.

Let us use this, then, as our definition of the "textus receptus.[1]' The textus receptus is the Church's working text of the Bible, understood as the inspired Word of God, and intended for preaching the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. The composite or critical text, on die other hand, is the text of the Bible viewed primarily as a problem of human editing, in a universe where claims of the supernatural are always, or at least usually, held to be pious falsehoods.

How Did This Get to Be a Problem?

The seventeenth to eighteenth century "Enlightenment," with its excessive rationalism, saw every problem as soluble by human reason. If die autographs of the Biblical books were lost, reason could reconstruct diem, purging them of the various superstitions that had embarnacled them over the ages. Thomas Jefferson, for example, took it upon himself to

issue an edited Bible.

The nineteenth century added to the Enlightenment's rationalism a superstitious belief in mechanisms and an overweening self esteem. The Victorian believed that all knowledge would ultimately be reducible to mechanistic processes and that what a Victorian expert did not know was untrue or not worth knowing.

A spectacularly naive archaeology grew up in the nineteenth century, under the influence of this mechanistic thinking. The natural order of things was to be reversed: the higher was to be subordinated to die lower; mind was to be subordinated to matter. Sunday supplement scientists like Carl Sagan still indulge in this sort of foolishness. Physics became the great hope of reductionistic science: the explanation of everything, including a mother's love, by the manipulation of particles. Physics has yet to prove the key to reality, but this failure hasn't deterred the materialists who have captured die humanities.

Thus, since the nineteenth century scholar knew of no such place as Troy, there was no Trojan War and Homer was an elegant farce. Thus, since the nineteenth century physicist could not part die Red Sea, neither could Jehovah. It was that simple, and the archaeologists' job was to make the facts fit these prejudices. But honest men, willing to listen to the records of the past, got by the sentinels. Schliemann dug up Troy, and die ordinary believer simply nodded as the Biblical description of die ancient world was confirmed again and again.

The rejection of facts in favor of preconceived theories is the essence of gnosticism. Ironically, even as secular literary studies abandoned the gnosticism of nineteenth century textual and historical criticism, such a gnosticism became ever more entrenched in the Church. It is fascinating to note that a churchman like Alfred Mortimer in his Catholic Faith and Practice (London: Longmans 1898; Revised 1902) could systematically debunk historical criticism on rational and archaeological grounds at the turn of the century (Vol. II, Chapter 8, The Holy Scriptures), and yet opinions known to be unsubstantiated for almost a century continue to be taught as the assured results of modern scientific scholarship. Unfortunately for us, secular literature has relapsed into the gnostic disease in the form of deconstructionism.

Why This is Important

As our XXth Article of Religion states, the Church is a witness and keeper of Holy Writ. As Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the Bible is the Church's Book, and the Church is the incarnation of God's Word. The Church's canon of Scripture is not the Church's approval of certain books. It is the Church's faithful recognition, by the power of the Holy Ghost, of the saving work of God recorded and revealed in these books. The Old Testament Church canonized books because of their prophetic authority: they spoke for the Lord God. The New Testament Church canonized books because of their Apostolic authority, their reception by the entire Church, and their consistency with the rest of the Word of God (see R.K. Harrison and E.E Harrison, "The Canon of Scripture," appended to Young's Analytical Concordance, Eerdmans, 1975).

The textus receptus is the Church's Bible through the ages, in the context of her relationship with God. The Bible is not "personal" or "objective": it is both at once, and a choice of one over the other is always heretical. Just as a micro-analysis of the bread and wine taken from the altar cannot reveal their spiritual significance and reality, a microanalysis of the text of the Bible misses the point: it fails to grasp that the Bible is unique, divine and human, and not one book among many.

Worse, textual and historical criticism can easily become a more refined Marcionism. The constant search for the "perfect text" means we do not have the Bible yet. The only true text will be die one decided on by experts, so don't get carried away with building your life on the Bible until the experts speak.

The demand for human control implicit in so much of textual and historical criticism can also pervert valid, useful concepts of Biblical study. The autograph, the original text of a particular holy book, for example, can become an idol. What is the correct text of a piece of writing, the first or the last draft? What happens, as was often the case in the days of the Scriptures' composition, when more than one secretary was used to prepare the text? Were revised versions ever made by the Bible writers, and were the previous versions always recalled? Too much effort spent on "recovering" the autograph simply removes the text from reality and imprisons it in the scholar's study.

The Bible was written for farmers, fishermen, tradesmen, and all sorts of ordinary people. The effect of gnostic criticism has been to take the Bible out of ordinary hands. Too many people now believe themselves completely incompetent to read the Bible because they cannot evaluate the critical apparatus attached to the text. We could restore the Bible to them by using the Church's ancient principles of Bible study, the kind of approach that depends on a textus receptus, a received text generally recognized by the whole Church. I teach this sort of thing to my college literature students, and they are amazed to find themselves reading and understanding the Bible.

1) Determine what the text says, before you interpret it or claim to know what it means.

2) Use the entirety of Holy Scripture as the context for each particular passage.

3) Use the text itself to identify its genre (type of literature).

4) Be willing to admit that most often the text will mean exactly what is says in context.

Is There a Moderate Position?

The textus receptus ought not to be transformed into a competing idol with the composite text. Some conservative Christians have over-reacted to liberal claims by denying the usefulness of any textual study, but this would be a mistake.

Textual study, if done in die context of the Church's life and her zeal for the Word of God, can work as a necessary corrective to the more bizarre claims of the liberal critics. The Church is not the Bible's critic, but the Bible's witness and keeper, and as a good steward of God's gifts careful about the things that belong to God.

The New King James Version of the Bible is an interesting effort in this direction. Reference is made to significant textual variants, without giving the impression of a loose-leaf Bible. At the same time, the traditional Church text of the Scriptures, the textus receptus, is used as the basis for translation.

As Churchmen, we need to encourage this sort of approach, not denying scholarship, but putting it into perspective. We need to present to our people, not the results of abstract

scholasticism, but the Word of God, as the Church of Christ has received it over the centuries. We ought not to allow our people to be cut off from the Church Triumphant or isolated in the present by giving them a different Bible every day.

We all need, but especially pastors, to be more careful about Bible texts and Bible versions. And we need to stop apologizing for being the beneficiaries of thousands of years of witness to the dependable text of the Word of God that we have received from the living Church of Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX IV

CANON LAW

Adapted from a presentation to the Clericus, Diocese of the Eastern United States, Anglican Church in America, 1992.

A misunderstanding of the principles of law, and especially Church law, stands behind much of the disunity in the Church today. Some people espouse legalism: the law for its own sake. Others deny that any law can or should bind them.

Thus, many important questions arise. What is the purpose of the rules of the Church? What is their authority? Is there a "middle way" that makes sense out of the law? On what basis can disagreements among Christians be settled?

The following essay tries to answer these questions in an Anglican way.

I have in my library a book entitled Clerical Attire: A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary. It is the dissertation of the Rev. Bernard J. Ganter, written to obtain his doctorate in canon law from the Catholic University of America in 1955. It is a two hundred page book about the rules and regulations concerning the clerical attire, down to what color and what type of stockings the clergy ought to wear. But most important for us, as American Anglicans, it is an elegant, learned irrelevance. A treatise on "The Sonnets from the Portuguese" would be as useful pastorally, and radier more interesting reading.

One among the factors that have kept American Anglicans aloof from one another, even though we need each other so badly, has been a misunderstanding of what we Anglicans mean when we use the words "canon law." We need to remind ourselves periodically of what it is we are trying to "continue" in the Continuing Church, so that we will be better at doing it and being it.

A most important fact for us to remember is that for us Anglicans the "law" can never be an end in itself, whether it is God's Law or the law of the Church. We know, along with St. Paul, ". . . that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ… for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16). We know that the law itself is not morality, since even with the best of intentions the human component of the Church is fallible. We misinterpret, we misapply, we disobey, we legislate

on the trivial (it was black socks all around, by the way, for the ordinary clergy). We even admit, in our XlXth Article of Religion, that die greatest of churches can err.

At our best, we are powerfully aware of our need for mercy from God and one another, and that our faith in Jesus Christ is a trust in a divine mercy that we have no right to ask. Our Prayer Book teaches us day by day not to trust in our own power for good, but to become the conduits for a greater, better power. It is no wonder that those who had transferred their faith from Christ to themselves in the former Episcopal Church tried to take our Prayer Books away from us, even as they wrote canon after canon of new ecclesiastical law. When they called the historic Prayer Book "gloomy and pessimistic," they meant that God, rather than man, was exalted as the true agency of goodness.

The real Anglicanism, then, is a relationship more than it is a religion (in the way that word is used today), certainly more than it is a human institution. We believe that reality is personal and founded in the internal relationship of the Triune God, rather than something static or abstract. We believe that reality cannot be manipulated because God cannot be manipulated; and so we are often chided for not producing "great" theologians of the sort who can make an imaginary God leap through an intellectual hoop.

Moreover, because of our historic and primitive grounding in the preaching and ministry of the line of St. John, St. Polycarp, and St. Irenaeus, we are sacra-mentally minded. We see creation as the outward and visible sign of the love, power, and glory of God, all focused through, with, and in the unique person of God's Son Incarnate, Jesus Christ. Thus, we are not even in the business of saving souls. We exist to glorify the God who saves souls. We are living a life together, a life dedicated to worshipping and glorifying God as he saves us from ourselves, restoring us to that intimate union with himself that we lost through sin. False modesty aside, it takes an Anglican to put all of this in a word; and our brother William Tyndale did, when he coined the English word "atonement."

Christ Jesus died and rose again to make us "at one" with his Father, the Holy Ghost, and himself. This is, as I said, a relationship, and on the basis of this relationship Christ makes all of us who live in him at one. Our job is to manifest this oneness, not to create it. Our job is to work with the grace of God in our lives to purge ourselves of anything and

everything that interferes with our being the human sacrament of unity with God.

This one job is real work, and it is hard to do, so we may shrink from it. We may be tempted to take refuge in the theoretical or the legalistic, secure in the impossibility of completing those tasks that belong rightfully to God. We've all endured as pastors the lay version of this error, when lay people complain that laywork bores or frightens them, so they would really rather do our work as priests instead. But as Christ's representative priests we should never ask God to endure the same sort of annoyance from us, as we try to avoid die work of unity and seek instead to improve his Church with our own ideas.

We read a perfectly good description of the primitive Church in action in the Acts of the Apostles: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (2:42). To the extent that these words do not describe us, we are in error. More than this, if we can dredge up our Greek lessons, we will remember that "fellowship" and "communion" are the same word in Greek (koinonia). We are a steadfastly continuing communion with Jesus Christ, and through him a communion with his Father and with one another. We are by grace and regenerate nature a relationship of oneness, and a fellowship with all the saints of God.

This unity, however, cannot be disordered and still be a unity. It is not free-form. Unity with Christ is to be his Body, and as St. Paul explains: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Corinthians 12:27). The Church is not a democracy; it is ruled by its Head, Jesus Christ, who establishes particular organs of order and unity within it. Note, for example, that it was through the Apostles' fellowship that the early Church was at one with Christ. Note, as well, St. Peter's admonition, "All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5). "Be subject," here, means to live under a structure (hupotasso). "To be clothed in humility" (to bind on tapeinophrosune) means to abide by that structure, in order to please God and to receive his blessings. And it is only in terms of this structure that we can ever understand the law.

The Law of God, perfectly revealed in the Scriptures, is the will of God for the life of the Body of his Son, perfected today only in the Head of the Body, to be perfected in the lives

of all the other members of the Body in Gods good time. Under the Old Testament, before the fulfilling obedience of Christ, the Law was the condemnation of a humanity separated from God by sin. In the New Testament of Jesus Christ, the Law is the loving guidance of a Father given to his adopted children in Christ, the careful shaping of their lives into his own righteousness, and a warning of what we would be without him.

Similarly, our canon law has a subordinate place within the ordered structure of our unity with God and one another. It serves the real purpose of enacting God's Law, preserving the Gospel intact, and keeping this household of God's Church at peace and in order. Just as with God's Law, however, our canon law must be subordinate to persons. True law comes from loving persons, is obeyed by loving persons, and expresses love for persons, rather than for itself. Just as with God's Law, canon law is a condemnation without real people, related to God by grace, to obey it.

A precondition of our canon law is our willingness to obey it as part of being an orderly household. Our First Office of Instruction teaches that this precondition is commanded by the Fifth Commandment, which binds us to say, "My duty towards my Neighbour is . . . . . To love, honour, and help my father and mother: To honour and obey the civil authority: To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: And to order myself in that lowliness and reverence which becometh a servant of God. . . (BCP288).

Each of us has already promised obedience on this basis many times: at our baptism, our confirmation, our ordinations, and every time we have accepted an office of authority in the Church. Our authority is, thus, Biblical and spiritual. It comes from God (who alone has power by right) to us, as his delegates, each in our own order and estate of life. When we are challenged in the rightful

administration of our authority, it is God, not ourselves, who is the offended party (remember Samuel: see 1 Samuel 8:7-9). When we disobey rightful authority, or overextend our own, we also offend God, and we undercut the authority we are bound to exercise as God's servants.

There is, then, a sort of "double table of organization" laid out by our faith and enacted by our canon law, one personal and one written. Personally, we are ruled by God the Father,

through and under his Son, our Savior and Head, Jesus Christ; by the life-giving power of the Holy Ghost, who guards the mortal members of Christ from final error. Further, we are governed under God by the council of our bishops, our Chief Pastors (BCP 294), as the successors of the Christ-appointed Apostles and the "overseers" appointed by them, with the assistance of the clerical and lay councils of our Church. Our diocese is governed by our bishop, with the assistance of our Synod and Standing Committee. Our parishes are governed by their rectors, with the assistance of our Parish Meetings and Vestries.

Our written table of organization is meant, therefore, to protect our human participation in God's rule from becoming self-willed or self-righteous. We must begin with the Holy Scriptures, God's Word Written, the experience of the Living Word of God delivered to us by the Holy Ghost. No enactment of our own, however old or enduring, may ever rightfully contradict God's Word (see Article XX). It is our oath to obey the Scriptures in our lives and work tliat makes us ministers of the Gospel.

Next come, in something like this order, the undisputed General Councils of the Catholic (universal) Church, the Fathers, the general canon law, and the records of historic practice and experience. These items ought to be what we mean when we say "tradition," and tradition must be subjected itself to two tests. The first is the test of the Holy Ghost. We must not teach or do what is forbidden by or inconsistent with the Holy Scriptures. The second test often takes the form of the "canon" (rule) of St. Vincent of Lerins (A.D. 434: Bettenson, Documents 84):

Now in the Catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold THAT WHICH HAS BEEN BELIEVED EVERYWHERE, ALWAYS, AND BY ALL.

It is obvious that an obscure precedent or local practice is never enough to meet this test. Further, we must understand that our local canon law is subject to this same test, as well as the test of the Holy Ghost. Next, then, in order comes the Book of Common Prayer, which is of superior authority to our Church's national constitution, since it has passed botli tests, is our connection widi historic Anglicanism, and antedates the adoption of our Church's written constitution. Next come that written constitution, the national canons, the diocesan canons, the parish articles of incorporation, and the parish bylaws.

These may seem like a lot of laws, but they can be summarized as following Christ, as well as we can, where we are. Whenever our law or our behavior will

not fit into this summary it is time to worry. To avoid such worry, then, let us look at how these laws are to be obeyed and enforced.

The key to obedience is to obey. If a genuine doubt about a particular law exists, it should be tested by die Scriptures. Such a test includes seeking the godly counsel of other members of the Body of Christ, in as quiet a way as possible, since our doubts may be wrong. Our bishops have been charged preeminently with giving godly counsel, but seeking die counsel of other godly men is quite acceptable, as long as our purpose is not to circumvent the bishop's rightful exercise of his ministry. If this step does not quiet the doubt, and scrupulosity has been guarded against, then we must go to the bishop, to the bishop and standing committee meeting together, and to the diocesan and national synods as necessary. This order of inquiry and examination is the legislative due process of our Church.

It must be clear that we are never to legislate for ourselves, nor are we to attempt to micro manage the lives of our fellow Christians by manipulation of the law. We must also understand pastorally that doubt is frequently displacement of guilt connected with law breaking, so that we blame the law rather than ourselves. Finally, we must remember that the essence of heresy is the formation of "parties" or "schools of thought" within the Church that revel in their certainty that they alone understand Christ and seek the power to impose their opinions on the entire Body.

We must, of course, "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3); but we must do so in love, under the rules for disagreeing in love given to us by God. The previous process of inquiry, as you will have recognized, is only an application upon ourselves of Christ's rule for settling controversies and governing the Church, found in Matthew 18:15-18:

If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may

be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

How much peace the Church would have enjoyed over the centuries if this commandment had been regularly followed is incalculable: we know the price we have paid for its disobedience. To enforce the canon law, we must begin by enforcing Christ's law upon ourselves. If someone appears to be disobeying the canons, he should be approached in private first. Then he should be asked to meet with a few others, not to catch him up, but to be fair to him and to seek arbitration. Those few others, for example, might tell us that we are the ones who are wrong about the law, or that we misunderstand what is happening. This step failing to settle the matter, we turn next to the Church, beginning with our bishop. His godly counsel may very well settle the matter, especially since we deacons and priests have promised to obey our bishops' and other chief ministers' godly admonitions and godly judgments (BCP 533, 543).

It is only as a final resort that we turn to die legal due process of die canons: to a trial of fact, governed by the rules of justice, to determine guilt or innocence. And we must understand that this due process is not infallible, that it may be wickedly misused by ungodly men against the innocent. Many of us have suffered such abuse in other "churches," giving us all the more reason to be tenderhearted and utterly fair in this household. Further, we must understand that God is the final appeal for every human action, and that in the court of his grace even the guiltiest may be forgiven and restored. Never forget what God did with Peter and Paul, a traitor and a murderer.

Lastly, in thinking about canon law, we must not think of it as a game, or even as the rules of a game. Keeping score by the canon law is suicidal, since it demands of God the same severity with ourselves. We seek, instead, the blessed answer to the Psalmist's question: "If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?" (130:3; BCP 507). And receiving our answer, "O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption" (130:7), we should go and do likewise

ourselves.

Similarly, we must not use the canon law against each other. It was die mob on Good Friday that made the memorable statement, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die" (John 19:7). We should identify with the victim of that mob, with our blessed Savior, rather than with the mob's vindictive legalism.

Nor should we expect (or desire) the canon law to provide us with a complete church discipline. The Church existed and had a discipline before the first code of canon law was ever written. That discipline resided in the Gospel and other Scriptures, and in the administrations of faithful men. Our sinfulness and failure have demanded the writing of canon laws, but we must not prefer them to the Church itself. That would be like insisting on riding in the lifeboats, instead of in the ship to which they are attached.

Nor are our canon laws the fixed rules of a bureaucracy. Our canon laws are the regulations that guide us in our pastoral ministry, in seeking the good of those entrusted to our care by God. If we discover our bishop or one of our fellow pastors exercising patience with someone we would condemn, we might ask ourselves first whether we are lacking in charity, before we also condemn his laxity in office.

Lastly, we will never win the world for Christ by the perfection of our system of laws. If this were possible, the Pharisees would have converted the world long ago. Our perfection is in following Christ, and as long as we use canon law as one not very important tool among many others, we will have done our duty and kept our claims about our own abilities in proportion. Our purpose is to glorify God and to preach Christ Jesus, and not to tell other people what color socks they ought to wear.

APPENDIX V

A FINAL EXAMINATION

1. Number and name the Ten Commandments (BCP 286).
2. Recite (or write) the Apostles' Creed (BCP 284).
3. Recite (or write) the Lord's Prayer (BCP 289).
4. What is your bounden duty as a member of the Church (BCP 291)?
5. Name the two Sacraments ordained by Christ as generally necessary for the salvation of all men (BCP 292).
6. What is meant by the word "sacrament" (BCP 292)?
7. What are the two parts of a sacrament (BCP 292)?
8. What is the outward and visible sign of Baptism (BCP 292)?
9. What is the inward and spiritual grace of Baptism (BCP 292)?
10. What is the outward and visible sign of the Holy Communion (the Lord's Supper) (BCP 293)?
11. What is the inward and spiritual grace of the Holy Communion (BCP 293)?
12. What is required of those who come to the Holy Communion (BCP 293)?
13. Name the three orders of ministers in the Church (BCP 294).
14. What is Christ's Summary of the Law (BCP 69)?
15. How much does God love us (BCP 76, John 3:16)?

NOTES

LESSON ONE: The Church

1.The reference here is to the Second Office of Instruction in the Prayer Book (unless otherwise noted, all BCP page numbers refer to the American Prayer Book of 1928). The two Offices of Instruction were added to the American Prayer Book in 1928, with most of the instructional material derived from the Catechism (BCP 577), which itself first appeared in the English Prayer Book of 1549. The Offices are a liturgical presentation of the Church's Faith and intended for the entire congregation, and not simply those preparing for Confirmation (Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary [New York: Oxford, 1950], notes on 283, 577-583).

2.Depending on one's religious background, now might be a good time to review John 15:16: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you . . ." (all biblical quotations King James Version, unless otherwise noted). A persistent American heresy is the notion that we choose what God we will worship in the same way that we choose a political candidate in a civil elec tion. But this view is exactly backwards. God elects the Church, not the other way around. Our membership in the Church is a free gift of God's grace, and not something we can choose for ourselves.

3.The key Scriptural passages to review are 1 Cor. 12:12-31 (explaining Christian mem bership in the Body of Christ) and 15:35-58 (the comparison of the body of Adam and the Body of Christ). From the length of these discussions it is obvious that St. Paul believed that these were critical issues for understanding the Christian life. It remains essential that mod ern Christians understand that Christianity is not simply ordinary-humanity-plus. Life in Christ is a whole new life and membership in an entirely new humanity established in Christ's resurrected Body. We were dead in Adam, and now we are alive in Christ.

4.This is a good time to mention some helpful books for researching words in English Bible translations. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is still the best reference on the his- tory of word usage in English. It gives examples of how words were used in various time periods, including samples of Christian documents (The Compact Edition of the Oxford English

Dictionary [New York: Oxford, 1971]). For Greek words (spelled in Greek characters), see William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. A translation and adaptation of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Worterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der ubrigen urchristlichen Literatur, 4th revised and augmented edition, 1952 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1957). A good compromise for those who do not read Greek or Hebrew is Spiros Zodhiates, ed., The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible: King James Version (Iowa Falls, Iowa: World, 1984). This vol ume includes transliterations, linguistic commentary, and Strong's Dictionary.

5."In itself the term 'Catholic' simply means 'universal.' It is first applied to the Church in the letters of St. Ignatius, who contrasts the one universal Church with the many local bod ies of which it is composed. Later on, as meaning the Church throughout the world, one in discipline and doctrine, it was used to mark the contrast with heretical bodies that were local, peculiar, and isolated in their views" (E. J. Bicknell, with additional references by H. J. Carpenter, A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, 2nd. ed. with additional references [London: Longmans, Green, 1946], 810). From Bicknell's dis cussion of Article XIX: Of the Church (see BCP 606).

6. Extensive commentaries on this Article, as well as all the others, are available in Bicknell (cited above), and in Edward Harold Browne, ed., with notes by J. Williams, An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles (New York: Dutton, 1890); and B. J. Kidd, The Thirty-Nine Articles: Their History and Explanation, 2nd ed. two volumes in one (New York:

Gorham, 1905).

7. See Van A. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological Terms (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 166; and F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford, 1974), 982-983. The Oxford Dictionary is a far more extensive work, but Harvey's Handbook is a very useful small book, and helpful in reading more advanced theology.

8.OED, s.v. "religion"; and Philip Schaff, et. al., eds., A Religious Encyclopaedia: or Dictionary of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology, based on the Real-Encyklopadie of Herzog, Plitt, and Hauk, in three volumes, revised edition (New York: Funk

and Wagnalls, 1889), s.v. "religion and revelation."

9. Our branch of the Church could not make its commitment to this truth any clearer. See Article XVIII, "Of Obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ" (BCP 606):

They are also to be had accursed that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law, and the light of Nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.

10.See Article XXXIV, "Of the Traditions of the Church" (BCP 609-610). Note this limit on legitimate diversity: "Every particular or nation Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, Ceremonies or Rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying." For a good, brief commentary on the entire article, see Kidd, 251-254.

11.It might be well to recall here that Jesus Christ's human descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob unites the Old and New Testament Churches. This unity (and the faithful ness with which God keeps his promises) is the point of the often-ignored family records in Matthew 1 and Luke 3-

12.For a further discussion of division and diversity, and a slightly different view, see C. B. Moss, The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Dogmatic Theology (London: SPCK, 1943; reprint 1957), 268-269.

13.See on unity and schism, including internal and external terminology, Francis J. Hall, The Church and the Sacramental System, The Dogmatic Theology Series (London: Longmans, Green, 1920; republished American Church Union, 1967; reprint, 1973), 173-179.

14.Good brief articles on "Salvation" and "Election" can be found in J. I. Packer, Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1993), s.v. It might also be well to review Article XVII: "Of Predestination and Election," noting the pastoral nature of this doctrine (BCP 606). The Christians of the Middle Ages were often dangled over the abyss of hell throughout their lives, without any assurance of salvation ever being offered them. In contrast, the Bible doctrine articulated here is a gift of real hope in the divine, sov

ereign, and consistent mercy offered by a faithful and dependable God.

15.The Quadrilateral was adopted by the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops at General Convention, in Chicago, in 1886. It was adopted, with slight emendation by the international Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops in 1888. For a brief history and die final text, see David M. Paton, Anglicans and Unity (London: Mowbray, 1962), 8-10. For an older, more extended study see Christian Unity and the Bishops' Declaration, The Church Club Lectures 1895 (New York: E. & J. B. Young, 1895).

16.We would all do well to remember that these bounden (or "obligatory") duties are ours by virtue of our baptism. These are duties we reaffirm as binding on our lives in Confirmation, so that, if we do not intend to perform them, we ought not to be confirmed.

17. For a brief sketch on the Anglican Church, see my pamphlet What is the Anglican Church? (Charlottesville, VA: Carillon, 1994). For a simple, popular history of the Church

from an Anglican perspective, see Frank E. Wilson, The Divine Commission: A Sketch of Church History, 5th cd. (New York; Morehouse-Barlow, 1964). For more advanced readers, see J. R. H. Moorman, A History of the Church in England, 3rd ed., reprinted with corrections (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1976). For the history of the Episcopal Church in the United States, see S. D. McConnell, History of the American Episcopal Church: 1600-1915, 1 lth ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Morehouse, 1934) and William Wilson Manross, A History of the American Episcopal Church (New York: Morehouse, 1935).

18.See, for example, the Preface to the American editions of the Book of Common Prayer, adopted in Philadelphia, in 1789 (BCP v-vi).

19.Besides the historical works mentioned in note 17 (above), a very useful work is Henry Bettenson, ed., Documents of the Christian Church, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford, 1963; Oxford Paperback, 1967). Bettenson provides brief selections of key historical documents and helpful commentaries. See, for example, his use of Tacitus to date the Christian mission to Britain (1). These original documents can bring real life to a study of Church history.

20.One serious challenge continuing Churches face is unity. Not surprisingly, the con tinuing movement sprang up in a variety of locations, under a variety of leaders. Given human nature, it is also not surprising that the unification of these efforts was not automat

ic. Hopeful signs for the future are working arrangements and inter-communion agreements, or negotiations toward such, among the several continuing Churches and the older Reformed Episcopal Church. For example, in 1991, at Deerfield Beach, Florida, the Anglican Church in America was formed of uniting elements from the American Episcopal Church, the Anglican Catholic Church, and others. The Anglican Church in America also participates in an international union of continuing Churches called the Traditional Anglican Communion. For an excellent history of the Reformed Episcopal Church, as well as a study of the difficul ties that face church reform movements in general, see Allen C. Guelzo, For the Union of Evangelical Christendom: The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

21.See Helen Gardner, Art through the Ages, rev. Horst de la Croix and Richard Tansey, 5th ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1970), Chapter Seven: Early Christian and Byzantine Art, 232-273.

22.Helpful books for studying the ceremonial usages of the Anglican Church and their history include: Nelson R. Boss, The Prayer Book Reason Why, 36th ed. (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1890); Charles Walker, ed., The Ritual Reason Why, 2nd ed. (New York: James Pott, 1868); and Percy Dearmer, The Parson's Handbook, 12 ed. (London: Humphrey Milford, 1932; 3rd impression, 1943). See especially Dearmer's Plate 19 (facing 249), for a charming seventeenth century representation of the altar or holy table as the throne of God and mercy seat, above which abides the shecinah or presence of God. This reminds us that we do not rev erence altar or cross, but salute the King who rules over us.

LESSON TWO: The Doctrine of God

1.See Stephen Neill, Anglicanism, 3rd ed. (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1965), 417-418. The lack of any specifically Anglican doctrine is a more important point (or commitment) than it may seem at first. In much of the rest of the Church today, sectarian appeal to denom inational distinctives is often made. But it ought not to be so among us. Anglicans should strive constantly to keep all of the faith, but nothing more than all of the faith that can be found in the Bible. Out of this same spirit of Biblical loyalty, our Puritan brother Richard Baxter (1615-1691) coined the term "mere Christianity," adopted in the twentieth century by

C. S. Lewis for his popular introduction to Christian doctrine: Mere Christianity, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1952; Macmillan Paperbacks, 1960).

2.Browne's commentary on these articles is especially useful and exhaustive. The need for both the Church and the Scriptures as elements of a single, unified Christianity was notably articulated during the Patristic period by Vincent of Lerins in 434, in the so-called "Vincentian Canon":

. . . if any one wishes, to detect the deceits of heretics that arise and to avoid their snares and to keep healthy and sound in a healthy faith, we ought, with the Lord's help, to fortify our faith in a twofold manner, firstly, that is, by the authority of God's Law [meaning the Scriptures], then by the traditions of the Catholic Church. . . . Now in the Catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold THAT WHICH HAS BEEN BELIEVED EVERYWHERE, ALWAYS, AND BY ALL {Commonitorium, ed. Moxon, Cambridge Patristic Texts, in Bettenson, Documents, 83-85).

3.See A. A. Benton, ed., The Church Cyclopaedia: A Dictionary of Church Doctrine, History, Organization, and Ritual (New York: M. H. Mallory, 1883), s.v., for an extended def inition of "dogma." The Cyclopaedia itself is a fascinating window into life in the Episcopal Church prior to its conquest by modernism.

4.Relativism is an environmental given in our society, and we, as well as those to whom we witness our faith, may become uncomfortable when it is challenged. But relativism itself rests on a logical absurdity: the claim that there are (and can be) no absolutes, except for the absolute statement that there are no absolutes. Relativism and its evil twin subjectivism (the claim that there can be no objective knowledge) are word games, and they have their origin in the sin of Adam and Eve: a desire to be our own gods and to avoid the objective moral law of the True God. For many modern examples of the use of relativism as a means of avoiding objective moral standards, see Paul Johnson, Intellectuals (New York: Harper and Row, 1988).

Pastors often encounter relativism and subjectivism expressed as "a crisis of faith." This usually occurs when a person knows or suspects that some action (ongoing or planned) is contrary to God's moral law, while still desiring to perform it. The effectiveness of prayer for a strengthened will to obey God at such times indicates the interrelationship between objective

knowledge and the will.

5. It might be well here to consider the difference between philosophy and theology. While philosophy may supply some useful methodologies for organizing thought and some valuable technical vocabulary for discussing complex issues (e.g., metaphysics [the study of reality and its sources] or epistemology [the study of knowledge, its sources, and validity]), most philosophy is founded in a love of knowledge for its own sake and the self-sufficiency of the human mind for achieving all knowledge. Theology, on the other hand, admits the pos sibility of a transcendent God who cannot be contained by either the physical universe or the human mind. Biblical theology, in fact, insists on the insufficiency of the human mind to comprehend God and the absolute need for God's self-revelation to those whom he wishes to know him. Moreover, Biblical theology is founded in a desire to glorify God and to share loving communion with him, rather than an abstract love of knowledge for its own sake.

Christians have used philosophy from the beginning, often failing to heed St. Paul's admonition: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:18). Every system of philosophy has its own set of premises or starting principles, which may in fact conflict with Christian truths. The "School-authors" criticized in Article XIII (BCP 605), for example, were scholastic philosophers who had allowed their desire for consistency within their Aristotelian method to overshadow their loyalty to God's Word Written. Thus, while no one can escape using a philosophical vocabulary, whether he is aware of it or not, Christians must test every idea and method by God's revelation in the Scriptures. For an extended discussion, see S. R. Obitts, "The Christian View of Philosophy," in Walter A. Elwell, ed., Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984); on The Bible Library CD ROM (Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988).

6. Some have attempted to claim, on the basis of the out-of-context misuse of Scriptural passages such as Romans 2:12-16, that there is such a thing as "natural theology" or "natural religion," founded solely in the human study of the natural universe, in opposition to revealed religion and theology founded in the supernatural grace of God. They forget, however, that the creation of the universe itself is an act of God's grace to proclaim his glory; and they for

get the present fellenness of created nature in general and of the human intellect in particular.

Much preferable is the comparison of general and special revelation. General revelation refers to God's use of the created order to reveal his glory. Special revelation refers to God's specific, personal revelation of himself by his own historical actions, in particular to his chosen people and by the Incarnation, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures. See, for example, "Revelation," in Louis Berkhof, Summary of Christian Doctrine (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1938; Reprinted, 1986), 13-17.

The necessity of revelation for the knowledge of God has been a fixed principle in all orthodox Christian theology. For example, one of the first Christian theologians, St. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130-200), wrote:

The Lord has taught us that no one can know God unless he is taught by God; that is, without God's help he cannot be known. But it is the will of the Father that he should be known; for he is known by those to whom the Son reveals him. And the Father has revealed the Son to this end that he may be displayed to all through the Son and that those who believe in him and are justified may be received into immortality and eternal refreshment. Now to believe in him is to do his will. Those who do not believe and therefore shun his light he will rightly shut up in the darkness which they themselves have chosen. Therefore the Father has revealed himself to all, making his Word visible to all: and on his part the Word showed the Father and the Son to all since he was seen by all. And thus there is a just judgement of God; for all alike saw, but all did not believe {Adversus Haereses, iv.vi.4, in Henry Bettenson, ed., The Early Christian Fathers (London: Oxford, 1956; Oxford Paperback, 1969), 101.

7. While the use of the imagination as part of a meditation on the Scriptures can be helpful in learning about God as he reveals himself, a free-wheeling imagination is no help at all, and dangerous. As J. I. Packer rightly observes in his excellent and useful book Knowing God:

Just as [the Second Commandment] forbids us to manufacture molten images of God so it forbids us to dream up mental images of him. . . . How often do we hear this sort of thing: "I like to think of God as the great Architect (or Mathematician or Artist). " "I don't like to think of God as a Judge; I like to think of him simply as a Father. " We know from experience how often

remarks of this kind serve as the prelude to a denial of something that the Bible tells us about GodQ. I. Packer, Knowing God, 20th Anniversary Ed. [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993], 47.

8. The first four of the Articles are especially relevant to the topic of the doctrine of God. Bicknell's and, especially, Browne's commentaries are very thorough. For a good sampling of Anglican writing on this subject in the seventeenth century, a key era in Anglican theology, see Section VII: Revealed Theology, in Paul Elmer More and Frank Leslie Cross, eds., Anglicanism: The Thought and Practice of the Church of England, Illustrated from the Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century (London: SPCK, 1935; repr. 1962), 241-280. For a very accessible presentation by a modern Anglican evangelical see J. I. Packer's Concise Theology.

9. For a brief review of the history and early texts of the Creeds, see Section II: Creeds, Bettenson, Documents, 23-26. For a detailed history of early Christian doctrine and the devel opment of the Creeds, see J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, I960); and Jaroslav Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600), The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1971).

10.It is important to remember the danger of abstractions when talking about God. Abstractions are not alive, so they cannot contain the majesty of the Living God. Abstractions give the illusion of definitive statements about God, and a sense of power over him. It sounds as if we have said something definitive when we say, "God is just," as if God must obey some standard of justice apart from himself. But justice is how God acts, what he promises to do, what he commands. We don't know "justice" as an abstraction at all, but as an experience of the Living God. As long as we remember the descriptive, but not definitive, nature of true theological language, we will remain on safe ground. But we must not fell into abstraction, and we must guide our thinking safely away from it.

11.For a good, but very brief, exposition of Trinitarian doctrine, along with basic theo logical errors in conflict with the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity, see J. I Packer, Concise Theology, "Trinity," 40-42. Similarly, see Van Harvey, Handbook of Theological Terms, s.v., 244-247. For a longer exposition and a history of the theological development of the doctrine

of the Trinity, see C. B. Moss, The Christian Faith, 35-51. Fora book-length study, see Francis J. Hall, The Trinity, The Dogmatic Theology Series (London: Longmans, Green, 1910; Republished, American Church Union, 1964; 2nd reprint ed., 1968). For an Evangelical Anglican's look at the doctrine of God, see Gerald Bray, The Doctrine of God Contours of Christian Theology series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993).

12.Note carefully, however, that a Biblical statement such as "God is love" cannot be reversed into "love is God," any more than "God is one" can be reversed into "one is God." We encounter here the limits of language, such that a simple declarative sentence should not be confused with an algebraic equation. The sense of St. John's inspired statement is more along the lines of "God is God loving," "God is a loving God," or "God's self-defining action is to love."

LESSON THREE: Sin, Salvation, & Grace

1. We must all understand clearly that we all are sinners, that sin is not a problem that "other people" have. Consider Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Consider, too, the sobering truth of 1 John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Given the laxity of much teaching, some may labor under the misapprehension that the Anglican Church teaches something other than the sinfulness of all men. But this is not so. The American version of Article XXXV "Of the Homilies" (BCP 610) teaches that the Homilies are "an explication of Christian doctrine, and instructive in piety and morals." Thus they are the teaching of this Church. Further, the "Homily of Justification" referred to in Article XI "Of the Justification of Man" is understood to be Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's "Homily of Salvation" (Browne 299). The entire "Homily of Salvation" is worth intense study, but the opening is especially useful here to indicate the unequivocal teaching of this Church:

Because all men be sinners and offenders against God, and breakers of his law and commandments, therefore can no man by his own acts, works, and deeds (seem they never so good) be justified and made righteous before God; but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness, or justification, to be received at God's own hands, that is to say, the remission, pardon, and forgiveness of his sins and trespasses in such things as he

hath offended. And this justification or righteousness, which we so receive by God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowedofGodfor our perfect andfulljustification (Carl S. Meyer, ed., Cranmer's Selected Writings [London: SPCK, 1961], 12).

2.The term "original righteousness" is used in Article IX "Of Original or Birth Sin." Kidd's commentary on this article is especially interesting, especially his discussion of the the ological term "total depravity." Bicknell's commentary suffers from his inability to conceive of a literal Adam and Eve. Packer, Concise Theology, 82-84, also offers an excellent, brief discussion of the effects of sin on human nature.

3.What is presented here is called the "trichotomous," or three-part description of human nature: that man is made up of body, soul, and spirit. The competing description among faithful Christians is called the "dichotomous," or two-part position: that man is made up of body and soul, with the soul being itself the spiritual element in man. Of course, we must remember that God did not create man to be taken apart, so that both of these descriptions are only attempts to describe God's creation and are elements of a theological doctrine of man, called an "anthropology." The present author believes that trichotomy is more consistent with a completely biblical anthropology. For a dichotomist position, see Berkhof's Summary of Christian Doctrine, 67-68.

4.The word "sacrament" means originally in Classical Latin "an oath," in particular a military oath (Schaff-Herzog, Encyclopedia, s.v.). Roman soldiers also referred to the "blood ing" of a new member of a legion, and thus his fulfillment of his oath, as a sacramentum. The word appears in the Latin Vulgate as a translation of Greek mysterion, and comes into technical use in the writing of Tertullian, the first major theological writer in Latin. St. Augustine of Hippo gave us our present definition (found, for example, in the Second Office of Instruction, BCP 292) of "a visible sign of an invisible grace" (Schaff-Herzog, s.v.). The number seven, attached to the sacraments by many writers, only comes later as an application of numerological principles.

Henry Bettenson gives us a picture of the broadness of the term in his notes to his translation of Tertullian (c. 200), in The Early Christian Fathers. He gives the sense of

sacramentum as a symbol or bond (n. 122); as a mystery (n. 131); as a revelation (n. 137); and excerpts Tertullian's explanation from De Baptismo that the sealing of baptism is "the clothing, as it were, of the faith which before was bare" (145).

Similarly, in Bettenson's The Later Christian Fathers (London: Oxford, 1970; Oxford Paperback, 1972; reprint with corrections, 1974) we find a variety of interesting uses of the word sacramentum in St. Hilary of Poitiers (315-67). Summarizing, we find Christ himself is the sacramentum of mediation between God and mankind (p.49, De Trinitate, 9.3,4); there is the sacramentum of the gospel dispensation (p.50, De Trinitate, 9.14); and there is the sacramentum of Christ's weeping (p.53, De Trinitate, 10.55).

5. John Milton summarizes a number of passages of Scripture when he describes Adam and Eve in creation: "He for God only, she for God in him" {Paradise Lost, IV, 299; in The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton, Cambridge Edition, ed. Douglas Bush [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965]).

For example, St. Paul outlines the human order in terms of creation and marriage in 1 Timothy 2:13-15. Moreover, the entire Song of Solomon has consistently been read as an extended allegory of the relation between God and the elect. Here we see the interlocking human order, since the redeemed taken together (male and female) are described as the Bride of God. The same image is offered in St. John's vision of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9). This two tier set of signs is also used in Isaiah 62:5: "For as a young man marrieth a virgin; so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bride-groom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

6.Kidd explains in his discussion of Article IX that "birth sin" is a clearer term in English than original sin, since it translates the sense of the original Latin that sinfulness is a fact of fallen human existence from the very beginning of each human person's life (The Thirty Nine Articles 122).

7.St. Augustine of Hippo offers the classic explanation of original sin in The City of God, XIII, 14 (Trans. Marcus Dods, with intro. by Thomas Merton [New York: Modern Library, 1950], 422-423):

For God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright; but man, being of

his own will corrupted, and justly condemned, begot corrupted and condemned children. For we all were in that one man, since we all were that one man who fell into sin by the woman who was made from him before sin. For not yet was the particular form created and distributed to us, in which we as individuals were to live, but already the seminal nature was there from which we were to be propagated; and this being vitiated by sin and bound by the chain of death, and justly condemned, man could not be born of man in any other state. And thus, from the bad use of free will, there originated the whole train of evil, which, with its concatenation of miseries, convoys the human race from its depraved origin, as from a corrupt root, on to the destruction of the second death, which has no end, those only being excepted who are freed by the grace of God.

8.St. Basil of Caesarea (330-379) writes in his Ninth Homily (Bettenson, Later Fathers, 60-61): Do not on any account suppose God responsible for the existence of evil: and do not imagine that evil has any substantive existence of its own. Wickedness does not exist as if it were a kind of living creature. . . . For evil is the privation of good. . . as blindness supervenes on destruction of the eyes, so evil, having no independent existence, supervenes on mutilations of the soul.

9.St. Augustine explains, "The devil encouraged evil, as a sin: he did not create evil, as a part of nature. Man is a part of nature; thus the devil persuaded nature, and perverted it. To inflict a wound is not to create a limb, but to harm it" (De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia, 2.57, in Bettenson, Later Fathers, 197).

10.One frequent error that we must watch for in our thinking is the tendency to read the Bible outside of any historical context. The Bible is not a random assembly of verses, but a historical narrative of the teaching and works of God. This is one of the points of Article VII "Of the Old Testament" (BCP 604). God's moral law never changes, but the teaching ordnances of the Old Testament have been fulfilled in the New, so that their preparatory purpose is complete. This is a Biblical doctrine, as evidenced by the tearing of the Temple veil (Luke23:45), indicating God's completed use of that sanctuary and its ordinances. Similarly, in Peter's vision of the great sheet in Acts 10:9-16, God replaces the purity laws of the Old Testament with a completed, higher

standard of redeemed spirituality and purity.

11.For a brief commentary on Article X "Of Free Will" (BCP 604) see Kidd 128-130. For a very interesting exposition of the Scriptural proofs for this Article, see Browne 273-281.

12.Of the commentaries on Article XI, "Of the Justification of Man," BCP 605, Kidd's is as usual a masterpiece of concision and Browne's is both extensive, covering the theological history of the related doctrines, and Scriptural.

13.See St. Augustine's explanation of paternal or "seminal" transmission, in note 7, above.

14.The word "remission" in Matthew 26:28 is aphesis, "to release," "to pardon," "to cancel an obligation, punishment, or guilt." It comes from the verb aphiemi, which has the legal sense of the cancellation of a debt or even a divorce (in this case from bondage to sin [see Romans 7:4]) (see Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, s.w.).

15.For a longer discussion of faith, see Cranmer's "Homily of Faith, or A Short Declaration of the True, Lively, and Christian Faith" from the Book of Homilies of 1547 (Meyer, Cranmer's Writings, 22-31). Here, for example, Cranmer writes about true faith: "Therefore, as ye profess the name of Christ, good Christian people, let no such phantasy and imagination of faith at any time beguile you; but be sure of your faith, try it by your living,Look upon rk fruits chat cometh of it, mark the increase of love and charity by it towards God andvouiHfrkand so shall you perceive it to be a true lively faith" (31). True faith is not simpltidkual knowledge or assent, but a moral commitment to God and to all his purposes.

16. As is sc often the case, Kidd offers a useful brief commentary on Articles XII and XIII "Of Good Tories" and "Of Works before Justification"), and Browne offers a more ahaiotdiscussion of them (Kidd, 138-142; Browne, 324-340). Cranmer's "Homily of Good lot or A Sermon of Good Works Annexed unto Faith" is also helpful (Meyer, Gsnri Jfop 3243). He writes there, "Even as a picture graven or painted is but a dead repranioDofthe diing itself, and is witliout life, or any manner of moving; so be the •woisifaliriitriful persons before God" (32). See, also, Appendix II of

the present work, foriknssion of Article XHI. II.Goodsunmary discussions of the doctrines of salvation can be found in Berkhof's) and Packer's Concise Theology (146-171).

LESSON Four The Dominical Sacraments

Llttiorthnoting that the Greek word for sign (semeion) is used throughout St. John's Gospel to name vshat we call a "miracle," the sovereign use of God's power to intervene in turnat.Tc should also note that Article XIX, "Of the Church" (BCP 606), teaches that tkimkiititration of the sacraments is a mark of a true Church. The sense of this decla-ntioi touts (specially clear when we realize that Christianity is a new covenant with God in m Blood of Jesus Christ. A covenant is of its nature a mutual promise between the cowaiiiijpanes, including an outward expression. Just as a covenant or contract between men bs u enession, perhaps a handshake or a signed and sealed document, Biblical coveimts with God have their signs. For example, God uses the rainbow as a sign of his covtmtfidiNoah (Genesis 9:11-13). Similarly, God sets out the blessings and curses that ire it spot obedience and disobedience of his covenant with Israel in Deuteronomy 28.

1. tegardi die sacraments of the New Testament, Calvin summarizes quite effectively in the lias*, "I affirm that Christ is the matter, or substance, of all the sacraments; since they hm Ida solidity in him, and promise nothing out of him" (Book 4, Chapter 16) (John Calvin, Idtmof the Christian Religion, trans, and ed., John Allen, intro. by Benjamin Wiiild aid Thomas Pears, in two volumes [Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian EAmklffl.vol. 2,570).

2. It would be helpful here to take time to review Article XXV, "Of the Sacraments," |KW.Browne provides an extensive commentary, including Scriptural proofs in his ExjUmif it Thirty-Nine Articles (583-609). Bicknell provides a generally scholastic dis-asonofditkicle, while Kidd gives a good short summary.

It should especially be noted that the Article denies the medieval doctrine of ex opereienotion that the mere performance of the outward sign guarantees the promised grace, scpiratcfrom faith and worthy reception. Compare St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:28-50, aid ctiE application of his teaching in Article XXIX, "Of the Wicked, which eat

not the BodtofChrism the use of the Lord's Supper" (BCP 609).

klknaon that might be helpful is a birthday cake. Singing the birthday song and blowing out candles on a cake do not make a person another year older. It is God who miBtsJvctbepcrson life and time to celebrate the birthday. The celebration is a participatory anofltdjient, a sign, of what God has done, not a means of compelling him to do it.

J, We like English Reformers were attempting a more careful use of the word "sacrament" most of their immediate theological predecessors, a perusal of even the tables of coniirsoftiitFirst (1549) and Second (1552) English Prayer Books (let alone the texts) will demonstnte their loyalty to the traditional administrations of the Church (The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI, intro. Douglas Harrison, Everyman's Library 448 [New York: Dutton, 1910; 1968 reprint]).

For insight into the terms of the Reformation debate, read Richard Baxter, the Puritan divine, who wrote in 1658:

The name "Sacrament" being not in Scripture, but of mere Ecclesiastic use, and being a word that will stretch, I distinguish between three sorts of Sacraments: (1) For any Divine institution which notably signifieth spiritual grace. . . (2) For any solemn investiture of a person by ministerial delivery in a state of Church privileges, or some special Gospel mercy. . . . (3) . . . in that strictest sense, as our Divines define a Sacrament, as it is an outward sign of Christ's institution for the obsignation of the full covenant of grace betwixt Him and the covenanter, and a delivery, representation, and investiture of the grace or benefits of that covenant; thus [by this definition] we have only two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Richard Baxter, Confirmation and Restauration, The Necessary Means of Reformation and Reconciliation for the Healing of the Corruption and Divisions of the Churches, Proposition 10, in More and Cross, Anglicanism, Selection 172, 413-414).

4. See C. B. Moss on the effects of a sacrament, on the meaning of "validity," and the conditions for a valid sacrament (The Christian Faith, 332-336).

But it must not be assumed that the theological analysis of the necessary elements for the validity (proper administration) of a sacrament is the work of human theologians alone. It is

the application of the Word of God, found in Hebrews 10:19-25, to the outward signs of God's grace, by theologians. Here we see all the elements of the Church's historic understanding: the Proper Minister (v. 21); the Proper Object (receiver: v. 22); the Proper Form (manner of administration: w. 23, 24, 25); the Proper Matter (the proper visible, physical sign of God's grace: w. 20, 22, 25); and the Proper Intention (v. 19).

5. The authority to baptize in emergencies granted in the Baptism rubric (BCP 281) is derived from the status of the entirety of the Church's members as a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:5-6). Under the usual terminology, we would describe a lay baptism (in water, in the Name of the Trinity, and with die intention of doing what the Bible teaches and die Church requires) as "valid" but "irregular." In Latin a regula is "a rule." Something irregular, therefore, does not follow the usual rule or discipline, but is not necessarily so defective as to be invalid or useless.

6. This requirement that a bishop or priest (presbyter) officiate at the Holy Communion is derived from Christ's institution of the sacrament at the Last Supper, when only his Apostles were present to receive his command. Thus, the tradition of the Church has been that only die "elders" (Greek presbuteroi, contracted in English to "priest") should officiate at the Lord's Supper. We know that this term was applied to the Apostles by themselves from St. Peter's calling himself "also an elder" (Greek sumpresbuteros, or "fellow-elder") (1 Peter 5:1-2).

7. It cannot be repeated enough that the true minister of the sacraments is Christ, by die Holy Ghost, through the instrumentality of his ministers, who being human must be sinners. It is Christ's perfect goodness that stands behind the sacraments. Often the false doctrine that makes the worthiness of the minister a precondition of sacramental validity is called "Donatism" (see Cross and Livingstone, The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, s.v.). Browne {Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles) gives an excellent summary of the controversies behind Article XXVI, in his article under that tide.

8. See Browne and Kidd for Article XXVII, "Of Baptism." For an extended study of the historical background of Baptism and the development of the rite, see Francis Procter and Walter Frere, A New History of the Book of Common Prayer: with a Rationale of its Offices, Third revised and corrected impression of 1905 (London: Macmillan, 1949), 556-602; and W. K.

Lowther Clarke's discussion in W. K. Lowther Clarke and Charles Harris, eds., Liturgy and Worship (London: SPCK, 1932; reprint 1940), 410-425. See, too, the article under "Baptism in Benton's Church Cyclopaedia.

9. The claim that the primitive custom in baptism (and thus the normative form today) was total immersion is more romance than reality: "[The] probabilities of the case, on the Day of Pentecost, for example, and in the prison at Philippi, descriptions of baptisms, and pictorial representations in the Catacombs and elsewhere, combine to show that affusion was the normal method" (Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 417).

10.See Browne, Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles, 677-682, on infant baptism.

11.See Browne and Kidd for Article XXVIII, "Of the Lord's Supper." For a background history of the sacrament and the rite, including the Prayer Book form, see Procter and Frere, A New History, 430-505- See also Frank Gavin, "The Eucharist in East and West" and James Herbert Srawley, "The Holy Communion Service" in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 78-129 and 302-373.

12.We must stress that Jesus Christ is both the power and the substance of the Holy Communion, acknowledging the Church's limited capacity to define so great a thing. George Herbert (1593-1633) wrote in his classic Anglican discussion of the ministry A Priest to the Temple; or the Countrey Parson:

The countrey parson being to administer the sacraments is at a stand with himself how or what behaviour to assume for so holy things. Especially at communion times he is in a great confusion, as being not only to receive God, but to break and administer Him. Neither finds he any issue in this, but to throw himself down at the throne of grace, saying, Lord Thou knowest what Thou didst when Thou appointedst it to be done thus; therefore doe Thou fulfill what Thou dost appoint; for Thou are not only the feast, but the way to it" (George Herbert, The Temple and A Priest to the Temple, Everyman's Library [London: Dent, n.d.], Chapter 13, 255-256).

Similarly, the Middleburg Liturgy of the English Puritans (1586), taking up the term of St. Augustine, requires that during the administration of the sacrament, ". . .

some place of the Scriptures is to bee read, whiche doeth set forth the death of Christ, to the intent that our eyes and senses maye not onely be occupied in these outwarde signes of bread and wine, whiche are called the visible word [emphasis added], but that our heartes and mindes also may be fullie fixed in the contemplation of the Lordes death, which is by this holy Sacrament represented" (in Bard Thompson, ed., Liturgies of the Western Church [New York: New American Library, Meridian, 1961], 338-339). Whatever other matters may have been at issue, the working of Christ in the Holy Communion was not in dispute even in this Puritan liturgy.

13.The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, George Arthur Buttrick, et. al., eds., Four volumes and supplement (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962-1976), has an interesting background article on the significance of memory in the Bible under "Memorial, Memory."

14.On the conduct of the Holy Communion in the early Church and who presided, see Frank Gavin in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 88-89. See also the Second Office of Instruction's description of the offices of the ministry, BCP 294, which excludes the deacons from celebrating the Holy Communion, as an order subordinate to the priesthood (presbyterate) and episcopate.

15.The term "real presence" is a good illustration of the confusion that can come about due to a term's differing use in various historical periods and by different communions. Among the Roman Catholics, for example, "real presence" is often used as a synonym for "transubstantiation," which of course, this Church does not teach or believe. Part of this difficulty comes from the unwarranted insistence by some that "real" must mean "physical" or "corporal." But this is not so, since the spiritual must also be real. Christ tells us, "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24), and God is certainly real. In fact, the spiritual is the basis of the reality of the physical, not the other way around.

It was to avoid this confusion that the rubric concerning kneeling by communicants was added at the conclusion of the Order of the Holy Communion in the 1552 Prayer Book, denying any "reall and essencial presence" (First and Second Prayer Books, 393). This rubric was dropped under Queen Elizabeth, but readopted with

amendments in the 1662 Prayer Book. Mant cites Charles Wheatly's Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer, regarding this amended rubric:

[In 1662] it was again added, with some little amendment of the expression and transposal of the sentences; but exactly the same throughout as to the sense; excepting that the words "real and essential presence" were thought proper to be changed for "corporal presence. "Fora "real presence" of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, is what our Church frequently asserts in this very office of Communion, and in her Articles, in her Homilies, and her Catechism: particularly in the two latter, in the first of which she tells us, "Thus much we must be sure to hold, that in the supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent; —but the communion of the body and blood of the Lord in a marvellous incorporation, which by the operation of the Holy Ghost is through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful, etc.; who therefore" (as she farther instructs us in the Catechism) "verily and indeed take and receive the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. " This is the doctrine of our Church in relation to the "real presence" in the sacrament, entirely different from the doctrine of transubstantiation, which she here, as well as elsewhere disclaims… (in Richard Mant, ed., The Book of Common Prayer with Notes, Explanatory, Practical, and Historical, from Approved Writers of the Church of England Sixth ed. [London: Francis and John Rivington, 1850], 328.

The Seventeenth Century Divines also shed light on the doctrine of the real presence. Richard Hooker (Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V, Chapter 67, 12) explains our Church's exposition of "This is my Body" with this paraphrase: "this hallowed food, through concurrence of divine power, is in verity and truth unto faithful receivers instrumentally a cause of that mystical participation, whereby, as I make Myself wholly theirs, so I given them in hand an actual possession of all such saving grace as My sacrificed Body can yield, and as their souls do presendy need, this is to them and in diem My Body" (in More and Cross, Anglicanism, Selection 199, 463). Lancelot Andrewes, in a controversy with Cardinal Bellarmine wrote, "We believe no less than you that the presence is real. Concerning the method of the presence, we define nothing

rashly, and, I add, we do not anxiously inquire, any more than how the Blood of Christ washes us in our Baptism, any more than how the Human and Divine Natures are united in one Person in the Incarnation of Christ . . . (Responsio ad Apologiam Cardinalis Bellarmini, Chapter 1, trans. D. Stone, in Cross and More, Anglicanism, Selection 200, 464). And Bishop James Ussher explains, "In the outward part of this mystical action, which reacheth to that which is sacramentum only, we receive this Body and Blood but Sacramentally; in the inward, that containeth rem, the thing itself in it, we receive it really. And consequently, the presence of these in the one is relative and symbolical, in the other real and substantial" (A Sermon Preached before the Commons House of Parliament in St. Margaret's Church, at Westminster, the 18th of February, 1620, in Cross and More, Anglicanism, Selection 71 1. Finally, on this spiritual reality, Calvin writes:

We conclude, that our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ, just as our corporeal life is preserved and sustained by bread and wine. For otherwise there would be no suitableness in the analogy of the sign, if our souls did not find their food in Christ; which cannot be the case unless Christ truly becomes one with us, and refreshes us by the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood. Though it appears incredible for the flesh of Christ, from such an immense local distance, to reach us, so as to become our food, we should remember how much the secret power of the Holy Spirit transcends all our senses, and what folly it is to apply any measure of ours to his immensity (Institutes, Book IV, Chapter 17, Sec. 10, 650-651).

16.Bicknell, Theological Introduction, note on 497.

17.See, for example, the provisions of The Apostolic Tradition ofHippolytus (beginning of the third century), in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 101-102.

LESSON FIVE: The Minor Sacraments

1.For a discussion of the history and rite of Confirmation, see W. K. Lowther Clarke, "Confirmation," in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 443-457. See also, Procter and Frere, A New History, 602-607; and E. L. Parsons and B. H. Jones, The American Prayer Book: Its Origins and Principles (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons,

1937), 242-246. Mant's BCP with Notes, provides an interesting set of comments from various Anglican divines, as well as offering Scriptural citations warranting the various sentences of the rite, 386-394.

2.See Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 444, for Confirmation as the ordination of the laity.

3.Mant quotes Dean Comber on the minister of Confirmation: "The person who doth confirm is a bishop, to which order the ancient church did always reserve the dispensing of this rite, because the apostles only did this, Acts viii. 14; and therefore the bishops are highly obliged to take care that all in their dioceses, who need and desire it, may not want the opportunity of coming to it" (Mant, BCP with Notes, 386).

4.Bishop Sparrow, Rationale of the Book of Common Prayer, writes about the prayer for the gifts of the Spirit:

This is a prayer, that God would strengthen the baptized with "the Holy Ghost the Comforter, " whom they had in their baptism received as a sanctifier. These two ways, to omit others, we are taught in holy Scripture, that the Holy Ghost may be received: as a sanctifier and cleanser in holy baptism, Tit. iii.5, "He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost:" and after baptism we may receive Him again as a comforter and strengthener. The apostles, who received Him the first way in baptism, are promised to receive Him the second, John xvi.7; Acts 1.8: which was performed Acts ii.4, when "they were filled with the Holy Ghost" (in Mant, BCP with Notes, 390).

5. Canon XIX of the Church of Ireland (1634) makes this case for private confession, if any should scruple to receive the Holy Communion:

And to this end the people are often to be exhorted to enter into a special examination of the state of their own souls; and that finding themselves either dull or much troubled in mind they do resort to God's ministers to receive from them as well advice and counsel for the quickening of their dead hearts and the subduing of those corruptions whereunto they have been subject, as the benefit of Absolution likewise for the quieting of their consciences, by the power of the keys which Christ hath committed to His ministers for that purpose

(in More and Cross, Anglicanism, Selection 230, 38).

6.If there is any doubt about how seriously the Church takes the confidences and welfare of her people, it might be well to refer to the bishop's exhortation to those about to be ordained priests in the Ordinal. It reads, in part:

Have always therefore printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood. The Church and Congregation whom you must serve, is his Spouse, and his Body. And if it shall happen that the same Church, or any Member thereof, do take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue (BCP 540).

7.Dr. Matthew Hole, Practical Discourses on the Liturgy, writes about the absolution appointed in the Prayer Book for Morning Prayer:

It is here to be noticed that the minister does not presume to pardon or absolve in his own right, nor to publish absolution in his own name, but only in the power or name of God, saying, "He pardoneth and absolveth:" where the word "He" refers to Almighty God at the commencement of the Absolution. It is also to be noticed, that this declaration is not absolute and without limitation: it is confined to such only as "truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. " But then, as the minister pronounces pardon only to the penitent, so does he declare it to all that are so. It is not withheld from any that are qualified to receive it: but it is pronounced by authority of Almighty God. . . (in Mant, BCP with Notes, 12).

8.For a history of matrimony and the rite, see Procter and Frere, A New History, 608-622. The discussion in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 458-471, is interesting but rather scholastic. See also, Parsons and Jones, American Prayer Book, 247-253.

9.The 1662 Prayer Book of the Church of England makes a number of matters clearer in its Form for the Solemnization of Matrimony than in the shortened form of the service derived from it and found in the American Prayer Book (BCP 300-304). Especially telling is the reminder that God instituted marriage "in the time of man's

innocency," as is also the long Scriptural exhortation that concludes the order. The notes in Mant, BCP with Notes, 395-408, are uniformly fascinating, if too involved to go into here.

10.The idea of sin as the "opposite" of marriage is made clearer by God's use of the image of divorce as a punishment against Israel for her sins in Jeremiah 3:8. Sinfulness against the Lord is also symbolized by the prostitution of Gomer, Hosea's wife (Hosea 1-3).

11.Understood correctly, St. Paul's statements in 1 Corinthians 7:7-9, simply concur with our Lord in Matthew 19, and with this doctrine of married and celibate vocations. When Paul writes, "it is better to marry than to burn" (v. 9), "to burn" means "to burn with desire or need" (see Arndt and Gingrich, under purpoo). While "to burn" can mean illicit lust (e.g., Romans 1:27), here the matrimonial desire is legitimate and God-given. Strangely, Paul is often accused of being anti-love, or at least anti-sex; but here we see him arguing that the only proper reason for marriage is a God-given need of one person for another, conducive to the spiritual goals of marriage.

12.It is necessary, here, to elaborate upon the issue of homosexuality, given the propagandizing in favor of it by the secular culture. First, God is the Creator, so it is his absolute right to declare the purposes and uses of his creation. Second, homosexuality is not the only sexual behavior forbidden by God, but all sexual activity outside of a godly marriage. Third, homosexuality is equally condemned by the New Testament as the Old (see Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9). Fourth, false-love and lust are not "other forms of love," but forms of idolatry, since they worship a standard other than God's. Fifth, mankind is fallen, so God did not create men and women to be homosexual; homosexuality is part of original sin, not created human nature. Sixth, a claim that homosexuality is rooted in genetics (proved or not) is no more a justification of homosexuality than a genetic basis for alcoholism would justify drunkenness. While there might be additional temptation for such people, temptation is not a reason to sin (1 Corinthians 10:1-13). Seventh, our Lord dealt with "the genetic problem" in Matthew 9:12; being born a eunuch (genetic cause) or being

made a eunuch (social, psychological cause) is not a release from the law of marriage. Eighth, homosexuality is simply one sin among many. It is our purpose as the Church to glorify God by administering God's grace for the overcoming of all sins.

13.For a brief history of the ministry and the rite of ordination, see Parsons and Jones, American Prayer Book, 267-286; Procter and Frere, A New History, 6A&-675. For a more complicated history, see W. K. Firminger, "The Ordinal," in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 626-682.

14.St. Clement of Rome (c. 95) describes the ordained ministry and the laity in perfected Old Testament terms:

Since all this is clear, and we have gazed into the depths of Divine knowledge, we are bound to perform in due order all that the master bade us accomplish at their proper seasons. He ordered that the offerings and services should be performed at their appointed times and seasons, not at random and without order; and also by his own supreme will he himself appointed the place and the ministers of their performance, that all might be done according to his good pleasure and so be acceptable to his will. Therefore they that make their offerings at the appointed seasons are acceptable and blessed, for in following the ordinances of the master they do not err. To the high priest are given his special ministrations, a special place is reserved for the priests, and special duties are imposed upon the levites, while the layman is bound by the ordinances concerning the laity {Epistle to the Corinthians, xl, in Bettenson, Documents, 62-63). On the significance of the bishop, as a chief pastor, Ignatius of Antioch (c. 112) writes:

Let that be considered a valid Eucharist over which the bishop presides, or one to whom he commits it. Wherever the bishop appears, there let the people be, just as wheresoever Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church {Epistle to the Smyrnaeans, c. viii, in Bettenson, Documents, 64).

We can see from these sub-apostolic fathers that the ministry of the Church is representative of Christ, who is the personal perfection of the Old Testament ministry. Christ's one sacrifice for sin, once offered, ended the Old Testament sacrifices (see the tearing of the Temple veil, Matthew 27:51, proclaiming the end of that sanctuary; see

Hebrews 9:11-14; 1 Peter 2:25). Now Christ is our great High Priest, and deacons, priests, and bishops are his ministers and representatives, even when officiating on behalf of Christ and his Body in the offering of the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (see Hebrews 13:15). When St. Paul writes "they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar" (see 1 Corinthians 9:13-14), he is arguing that the New Testament ministry has replaced the Old Testament ministry, and is now to receive the ministry's share of the offerings (compare Leviticus 2:3, 6:16). This does not mean, however, that the character of the New Testament ministry is the same as that of the Old. New Testament ministers do not offer a sacrifice for sin; this work is already accomplished by Jesus Christ. The New Testament ministry is, therefore, a much higher calling than the Old Testament priesthood, since salvation is accomplished in Christ, whereas it was only promised in the Old Testament.

It may also be well to deal with a confusion in terms here. The term "priest," referred to in the Ordinal and in the Book of Common Prayer, is a linguistic shortening of the Greek word presbuteros or "presbyter," literally "an elder." Both priest and presbyter are used interchangeably by the Prayer Book (see the Letter of Institution of a Minister, BCP 569, where both terms are used). This is not the same Greek word used to describe the Old Testament "priesthood": hiereus. Jesus Christ is the hiereus, the archiereus (high priest) of the New Testament, and none other (see Hebrews 9:11). Our ministry, by Christ's commandment, administers the blessings and benefits of Christ's sole sacrificial priesthood. It is unfortunate that our English language obscures these important facts by translating both hiereus and pres-buteros with the word "priest." At the same time, the connection of the two terms in English is probably a testimony to the completeness of the conversion of the Angles and Saxons to Christianity, so that they could only understand the Old Testament ministry as a foreshadowing of the New Testament ministry founded in Christ Jesus.

15. Important insights into the Anglican understanding of the pastoral office can be gained by reading George Herbert's definition of a pastor, at the beginning of the First Chapter of The Countrey Parson, 217:

A pastor is the deputy of Christ for the reducing of man to obedience to God. This definition is evident, and containes the direct steps of pastoral! duty and auctority [authority]. For, first, man fell from God by disobedience. Secondly, Christ is the glorious instrument of God for the revoking [recalling] of man. Thirdly, Christ being not to continue on earth, but after Hee had fulfilled the work of reconciliation to be received up into heaven, He constituted deputies in His place; and these are priests. And therefore St. Paul, in the beginning of his Epistles [Romans 1:1], professeth this; and in the first to the Colossians [Colossians 1:24-29] plainly avoucheth [avows, asserts] that he fib us that which is behinde of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his Bodies sake, which is the Church.' Wherein is contained the complete definition of a minister. Out of this chartre [charter] of the priesthood may be plainly gathered both the dignity thereof and the duty: the dignity, in that a priest may do that which Christ did and by His auctority and as His viceregent; the duty, in that a priest is to do that which Christ did, and after His manner, both for doctrine and life.

16.One needs to remember that the Church is the living Body of Christ, so that some genuine historical variety is found in the outward signs of the minor sacraments, including ordination. For example, Part 1.10 of The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus reads: "On a confessor, if he has been in bonds for the name of the Lord, hands shall not be laid for the diaconate or the presbyterate, for he has the honour of the presbyterate by his confession. But if he is to be ordained bishop, hands shall be laid on him" (trans, and ed. Burton Scott Easton [London: Cambridge University, 1934; 1962 Archon reprint], 39, notes 81-82).

17.St. Jerome (c. 345-420) offers an interesting account of the setting aside of the bish op as chief pastor in the early Church:

Hence a presbyter is the same as a bishop, and before ambitions came into religion, by the prompting of the devil, and people began to say: T belong to Paul: I to Apollo; I to Cephas', the churches were governed by the direction of presbyters, acting as a body But when each presbyter began to suppose that those whom he had baptized belonged to him, rather than Christ, it was decreed in the whole Church that one of the presbyters should be

chosen to preside over the others, and that the whole responsibility for the Church should devolve on him, so that the seeds of schism should be removed [Translator's note: Jerome cites Philippians 1:1-2; Acts 20:17,28; 1 Peter 5:1-2] (In Epistolam ad Titum, 1.1,5; in Bettenson, Later Fathers, 189).

18.Apostolic Succession ought not to be reduced to a mere list of episcopal consecrators and their antecedents. This approach is liable to the condemnation given to other sorts of genealogies (see 1 Timothy 1:4; Titus 3:9), and is a product of the mechanistic cast of so much of nineteenth century thought. Bettenson offers this quote from Hegisippus (c. 175), via Eusebius, as the "first extant use of the technical term": "The Church of Corinth remained in the right doctrine down to the episcopate of Primus at Corinth. I had converse with them on my voyage to Rome, and we took comfort together in the right doctrine. After arriving in Rome I made a succession down to Anicetus, whose deacon was Eleutherus. To Anicetus succeeded Soter, who was followed by Eleutherus. In every succession and in every City things are ordered according to the preaching of the Law, the Prophets, and the Lord" (Bettenson, Documents, 67-68).

The purpose of succession, then, is the orderly transmission of lawful authority and the protection, not of the episcopate itself, but of the right doctrine and the welfare of the Church, under the authority of the Scriptures.

19.The words "clergy" and "clerical," in reference to those in Holy Orders, comes from the Greek word kleros, which means a "lot," "that which is obtained by lot or divine grace" (see Arndt and Gingrich, s.v.; and Psalm 16:7, BCP 358; Acts 1:28). Admission to the ministry is by divine call and the Church's testing of that call.

The Scriptures give us examples of the disasters that followed when someone demanded a share in the ministry, despite Gods call of someone else. In Numbers 12, Aaron and Miriam murmur against Moses, and Miriam is made a leper. In Numbers 16:1-32, Korah and Dathan assert their "right" to minister, and the earth swallowed their congregation. A plague followed later. In 1 Samuel 15, Saul makes up his own rules for sacrifice and worship, and is deprived of his kingdom.

Finally, sometimes Deborah (Judges 4 and 5) is suggested as a model for a female ministry, since she judged Israel. And yet, when we read the Scriptural account, we find that Deborah was raised up "a mother in Israel" (Judges 5:7), not a king, a general, or a priest. Her spiritual task was to recall the men of Israel to their God-given duty, not to supplant them in it.

20. For a general discussion of the form for the anointing of the sick (BCP 320), see Parson and Jones, American Prayer Book, 254-259. For a very technical discussion, see Charles Harris, "Visitation of the Sick," Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 472-540. See Procter and Frere, A New History, 625-626, for a comparison of the present form with the 1549 Prayer Book. The 1549 rite, which demonstrates the logic of the administration admirably, reads in part [spelling modernized for clarity]:

As with this visible oil thy body is outwardly anointed: so our heavenly father almighty God, grant of his infinite goodness, that thy soul inwardly may be anointed with the holy ghost, who is the spirit of all strength, comfort, relief, and gladness. And vouchsafe for his great mercy (if it be his blessed will) to restore unto thee thy bodily health, and strength, to serve him, and send thee release of all thy pains, troubles, and diseases, both in body and mind. And howsoever his goodness (by his divine and unsearchable providence) shall dispose of thee: we, his unworthy ministers and servants, humbly beseech the eternal majesty, to do with thee according to the multitude of his innumerable mercies, and to pardon thee all thy sins and offences, committed by all thy bodily senses, passions, and carnal affections . . . {First and Second Prayer Books, 264-265).

LESSON Six: The Holy Scriptures

1. Browne, An Exposition, offers a very thorough discussion of all three Articles of Religion related specifically to the Scriptures: Article VI, "Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation" (128-192); Article VII, "Of the Old Testament" (193-217); and Article XX, "Of the Authority of the Church" (478-489). Kidd's discussion is brief, but use ful (Thirty Nine Articles, see under the Articles in question). Bicknell, on the other hand, is a disappointment, appearing more interested in protecting the authority of modern scholarship than the authority of the Bible.

Benton's Church Cyclopaedia, published in 1883, when the claims of modernist scholarship

were already well known, in contrast to Bicknell, offers a wealth of information about the Scriptures, including such matters as the text and inspiration, in a brisk, scholarly and loyal manner, in articles under the titles "Bible" and "Scriptures."

2. Because the Scriptures are so important, a number of aids are available for studying them, including textbooks on the Bible and dictionaries of Biblical places, names, and words. These have to be examined very carefully for their agreement with our Articles of Religion. The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, for example, is useful in many areas of language and archaeology, but also rather technical and prone to a modernist dismissal of matters super natural. In this same cautionary category should be placed most "commentaries," books giving an interpretive reading of the entire Bible or a single book of the Scriptures. It must always be remembered that while the Bible is inspired, commentators are not, and must be weighed themselves against the Scriptures.

More helpful for most new students of the Bible is a "concordance," a list of biblical words and names, and where each can be found in the Bible. The most useful of the concordances are Young's or Strong's "analytical concordances," offering the words in the biblical languages that lie behind the English translations. Even without a gift for languages, a persistent reader of the Bible, with the help of an analytical concordance, can develop an extensive knowledge of the contents and language of the Scriptures. Also interesting is Spiros Zodhiates, ed., The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible: King James Version.

3. For more on the problem of scholarship and the Bible, see Appendix III, my paper "The 'Textus Receptus,'" presented to a joint Carolinas clericus in Spartanburg, South Carolina, on June 11, 1993.

4. Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses, III: in Bettenson, Documents, 68. We see our Lord take the same position in regards to faith and obedience as preconditions for understanding the Word of God. At the conclusion of the account of the beggar Lazarus and the unmerciful rich man (Luke 16:19-31), Christ says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." No amount of evidence is sufficient to over come militant unbelief, since such unbelief is a before-the-fact determination to exclude all evidence. It is one of the wonders of our age that a refusal to consider evidence contrary to

various secular theories should be deemed "scientific."

5. On the sufficiency of Scripture, William Beveridge, the seventeenth century divine, writes:

Wherefore, as ever ye desire to be saved, ye must be sure to be steadfast in the doctrine which the Apostles of Christ by His order and commission delivered at first by word of mouth, and afterwards in writing, that all generations might know it, by which means we are now as fully assured of what the Apostles taught, as they could be which heard them speak it, —their doctrine being transmitted to us by the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost, by which they spake and writ it in that Holy Book which we call the "New Testament. " So that whatsoever we there read, as taught by the Apostles, we are sure was their doctrine and therefore are bound steadfastly to believe it and diligently to frame our lives according to it; but what we do not find there written, we can never be sure that they taught it and therefore cannot be obliged to believe it or observe it (Sermon LI: "Steadfastness to the Established Church Recommended"; in More and Cross, Anglicanism, 93).

Obviously, and logically, the same must hold true for the work of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament as well.

6. On the Canon of Scripture, see Browne, 173-174; and Appendix III.

7. See Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses, Ill.I.i, in Bettenson, Documents, 28.

8. For more information on the English versions of the Bible, see The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, under "Versions, English." Those interested in gaining a background knowledge of Bible versions in general should also see "Versions, ancient" and "Versions, medieval and modern (non-English)."

9. On chapters and verses, see Benton, Church Cyclopaedia, "Bible," 96.

10. For a history of the English Bible, see J. Patterson Smyth, How We Got Our Bible, revised ed. (New York: James Pott, 1912; reprint. 1922). While the conclusion of this book is given over to an apology for the Revised Version, a nineteenth century revision of the King James, Smyth offers a great deal of information and samples of the various translations, which should prove interesting to most students of the Bible.

11. Smyth, How We Got Our Bible, says that the Comfortable Words are from the Great

Bible, 118. Evan Daniel, The Prayer Book: Its History, Language, and Contents, 22nd ed. (London: Wells Gardner, Darton, 1909), 371, argues that they are a separate translation. A comparison of the translations of John 3:16, which appears in both the Comfortable Words and the Gospel for Monday in Whitsun-Week in the 1549 Prayer Book; and of Matthew 11:28, which appears in the Words and in the Gospel for St. Matthias; would seem to sup port Daniel, although Smyth may be correct, if the Comfortable Words are considered a litur gical adaption ofthe then authorized translation (see The First and Second Prayer Books, 133, 184, 225).

12.See Appendix III for a further discussion of the King James Version and modern translations, and for the issue of the textus receptus (the "received text" of the Holy Scriptures).

13.In Bettenson, Documents, 28.

14.For the Muratorian Fragment, see Bettenson, Documents, 28-29. For Athanasius and other witnesses see E. F. Harrison, "The Canon of the New Testament," supplement to Young's Analytical Concordance. See also Browne, Exposition, 170-182.

15.Thomas Scott (1747-1827) gave this definition of "inspiration" in the preface to his 1788-92 commentary on the Holy Scripture, an important source of learning for the Evangelical revival of the Church of England:

By 'the divine inspiration of the Scriptures' the author would be understood to mean such a complete and immediate communication, by the Holy Spirit, to the minds of the sacred writers, of those things which could not have been otherwise known; and such an effectual super-intendency, as to those particulars, concerning which they might otherwise obtain information; as sufficed absolutely to preserve them from every degree of error, in all things, which could in the least affect any of the doctrines or precepts contained in their writings, or mislead any person, who considered them as a divine and infallible 'standard of truth and duty.' Every sentence, in this view, must be considered as 'the sure testimony of God,' in that sense in which it is proposed as truth . . . They wrote indeed in such language, as their different talents, education, habits, and associations suggested, or rendered natural for them; but the Holy Ghost so entirely superintended them, when writing, as to exclude

every improper expression, and to guide them to all those which are best suited to their several subjects (in Alexander C. Zabriskie, ed., Anglican Evangelicalism, Publication 13 [Philadelphia: Church Historical Soc, 1943], 94.

As an aside, Dean Zabriskie's book (the source of the above quote) is a fascinating background study in Anglican Evangelicalism. It also foreshadows, in its 1943 version of liberalism and modernism, what went wrong in the Episcopal Church of the following decades.

16.Joseph Henry Blunt, in the 1906 edition of his Household Theology, once a very popular book among Anglicans, describes the process of inspiration in this way:

The inspired person was actually and effectively controlled by the Divine power to such an extent, that the report or record of the communication was as substantially exact at his lips or hands as if it had been an audible word of God, or a Divine autograph. Anything thus recorded must be of the very highest authority possible, andean admit of no doubt or disbelief without calling into question the truthfulness of Godwin Zabriskie, Anglican Evangelicalism, 93-94; and note that Blunt was not a member of any Evangelical party in the Church. The view here is the ordinary Anglican view of the time, as it still should be today).

17.For "The Wicked Bible," see under "Bible" in that wonderful compendium of oddities, E. C. Brewer, The Dictionary of Fact and Fable, Intro. Alix Gudefin, Classic ed.: facsim ile of the 1894 ed. (New York: Avenel, 1978).

18.Zabriskie summarizes the key Anglican principles of Bible reading as outlined by Thomas Scott (see also note 15, above):

The cardinal principles of right interpretation of Scripture, Scott says, are three: the endeavour to discover the original and simple sense of the biblical passage; the interpretation of the passage in a manner which is consonant with the meaning of Scripture as a whole; and the care which must be taken not to lay upon the passage a meaning which is foreign to its original intention.

He goes on to quote Scott:

In explaining the word of God, we should remember that there is in every portion one

precise meaning, previously to our employing our ingenuity upon it, which it is our business with reverent intention to investigate. To discover that meaning we should soberly and carefully examine the context, and consider the portion in question in the relation in which it stands (Zabriskie, Anglican Evangelicalism, 96).

19. The imaginative guesses of the evolutionists are in their essence an effort to work backward from this fallen world to its origins, including the unfounded assumptions that nothing that is not happening now could have happened in the past, that the world has always been the way it is now, and that there is nothing that exists outside of this material world (so that there can be no supernatural explanation for anything). These are very unscientific assumptions, since the evolutionists exclude the possibility of data that does not agree with their theories even before they make any observations. Further, Darwinian theory is hampered by its formulation before the development of genetics or molecular biology, which do indicate the method of change within species, but not a method for one species to transform itself into another (or any evidence at all that such a thing has ever occurred).

The Christian does not deny the existence of the phenomena (for example, the fossils) that evolutionists study, but does disagree with their interpretations and conclusions. How old would Adam have looked, five minutes after his creation? How old was he? But it is not only Christians and Biblical creationists who question evolution as an explanation for the origin of life and species. For example, W. R. Fix, basically a pantheist, examines the improbabilities of evolution in his popular book, The Bone Peddlers: Selling Evolution (New York: Macmillan, 1984). Michael Denton, a medical doctor and scientist, takes an agnostic position in his more technical Evolution: A Theory in Crisis, Third ed. (Bethesda, Maryland: Adler and Adler, 1986). Phillip E. Johnson, a law professor and an expert in evidence, finds evolution wanting in his Evolution on Trial (Washington: Regnery Gateway, 1991).

But it must not be forgotten that many physical scientists are also Christians and Biblical creationists. The Institute for Creation Research, P.O. Box 2667, El Cajon, CA 92021, publishes or sponsors books and papers at a variety of levels of technical

difficulty, including books for children. Their work also examines the moral effect of evolutionary theory. For example, a recent issue of their publication Impact examines the evolutionary basis of the anti-Christian doctrine of inherent female inferiority (and in passing the evolutionary basis of racism) (see Jerry Bergman, "Darwin's Teaching of Women's Inferiority," Impact 249 [March 1994]).

20. Philosopher Melvin Rader, The Enduring Questions: Main Problems of Philosophy, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969), explains in his introduction that the subject matter of science is the description of facts, and an attempt to discover verifiable regularities or laws in those facts. He reserves evaluation and judgment for philosophy (4-5). While a Christian might add that some of the facts are only available through revelation and that the principles of judgment are not man-made but originate with God, his point is an important one. So called "scientific" explanations of the meaning of life (and the claim that life is founded in random chance is a judgment about the meaning of life) go beyond the limits of genuine science and become a kind of anti-theology. Christians are under no obligation to compromise with what is itself a violation of the canons of science. More than this, Christians ought not to compromise. "Theistic evolution," for example, the claim that God creates through evolution, is such an unnecessary compromise, since it is founded in a series of unwarranted, unscientific claims. God says that he created the world in a particular way, and there is no good reason to doubt him or his power to do so. God was there, before, during, and after the beginning. Darwin was not.

21. Many people today have no particular background in literary analysis or formal logical thinking. This lack may discourage them from more advanced work with the Bible. A useful but not overwhelming book with good sections on both logical thinking and reading and writing about literature is John Hodges, et. al., Harbrace College Handbook, 1 lth ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1990).

LESSON SEVEN: The Book of Common Prayer

1. The study of the Book of Common Prayer is really a combined study of the

history of the administrations and practices of the entire catholic Church throughout history and of the particular ministrations and forms of the Anglican branch of the Church (and its various nation sub-branches). Furthermore, it must never be forgotten that all true worship and spiritual administration must be founded in the teachings of Holy Scripture.

A number of helpful books have been referred to earlier in this outline of Anglican life. These include: Procter and Frere, A New History of the Book of Common Prayer; Percy Dearmer, The Parson's Handbook; Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, Evan Daniel, The Prayer Book: Its History, Language and Contents; Massey Shepherd, The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary; and Parson and Jones, The American Prayer Book; and Richard Mant, The Book of Common Prayer with Notes, Explanatory, Practical, and Historical, from Approved Writers of the Church of England.

Charles Walker's The Ritual Reason Why discusses the rationale and background of various liturgical practices from a liturgically "high" perspective, as does Anglican Services: A book concerning ritual and ceremonial in the Church of England by The present Editor of "Ritual Notes" and "The Order of Divine Service" (London: Knott, 1953).

For a more Evangelical or "low" perspective, see Nelson R. Boss, The Prayer Book Reason Why: A Text Book of Instruction on the History, Doctrines, Usages and Ritual of the Church, as Suggested by the Offices; Boston Clergy Group of the Episcopal Evangelical Fellowship, A Prayer Book Manual(Louisville: Cloister Press, 1943); and William Paret, The Pastoral Use of the Prayer Book: The Substance of Plain Talks Given to His Students and Younger Clergy (Baltimore: Maryland Diocesan Library, 1904).

Also useful in the study of the Prayer Book is the examination of previous editions, especially The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI; the 1662 Prayer Book of the Church of England (the basis of Mant, see above); the 1789 and 1892 editions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States; and the Prayer Book of the Reformed Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Very useful for the study of the 1928 American Prayer Book (used throughout this text) is Milton Huggett, ed.,

A Concordance to the American Book of Common Prayer (New York: Church Hymnal Corp., 1970).

For an accessible study of the theology of liturgy and worship, see Peter Toon, Knowing God through Liturgy (Largo, FL: Prayer Book Society Publ. Co., 1992.

Finally, it would be wrong to forget the use of music in the Church's worship. In 1550, John Merbecke (s.v. Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church) produced The Book of Common Prayer Noted, setting the Church's reformed English service to the ancient chants. Its modern equivalent is, Joint Commission on Church Music, The Choral Service: The Liturgical Music for Morning and Evening Prayer, The Litany, and The Holy Communion, According to the Use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (New York: H. W. Gray, 1927).

2.For the background of the medieval and earlier worship books (missals, sacramentaries, breviaries, pontificals, manuals, ordinals, processionals, and the "Pie" [the book to keep all the others straight]) condensed in the Book of Common Prayer, see the opening pages of F. E. Brightman and K. D. Mackenzie, "The History of the Book of Common Prayer down to 1662," in Clarke and Harris, Anglican Worship, 130-197. It is little wonder that Cranmer complained in The Preface to the 1549 Prayer Book, "that many times, there was more busines to fynd out what should be read, then to read it when it was founde out" (First and Second Prayer Books, A).

3.For a comment on the growing strength of the Commons in the history of English government under the first three Edwards, and their ultimate inclusion in a two house, rather than a three house, Parliament, see G. M. Trevelyan, History of England, Corrected 3rd ed., 3 vol. (London: Longmans, Green, 1952; reprint. Garden City, NJ: Doubleday Anchor, 1953), 257-266.

4.For a discussion of the Psalms, see "The Psalms as Liturgical Documents," in William O. E. Oesterly, "Worship in the Old Testament," in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 51-59.

5.The Daily Office Lectionary (BCP x-xlv) provides readings from the Psalms for every day of the year, but perhaps the most useful way to use the Psalms in public or

private worship is the arrangement in the Prayer Book Psalter for the monthly reading of the Psalms, dividing them into thirty daily portions for morning and evening worship.

6.A brief 1914 novel, a sort of ecclesiastical science fiction story, E. M. Green, The Archbishop's Test (New York: Dutton, 1915; reprint. New York: Morehouse-Barlow, 1960), demonstrates the power of the Prayer Book in Anglican life by recounting the story of a newly installed Archbishop of Canterbury who causes a religious revival in England simply by challenging his people and clergy to live the life outlined in the Prayer Book. The Prayer Book remains the embodiment of Anglican commitment and discipline today.

7.For a discussion of lex orandi, lex credendi, its history and recent abuses in liturgical revision, see Chapter 10, "Common Prayer,' in Peter Toon, Knowing God through the Liturgy.

8.While the details are far too numerous to enter into here, the provisions for worship in a book like Leviticus demonstrate God's interest in the manner and form of worship. Notice, too, St. Paul's concern for the proper administration of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

9.The 1789 Preface to the first American edition of the Book of Common Prayer (which was retained as the Preface to the 1892 and 1928 American Prayer Boob) explains that any differences between the English and American Prayer Books are the result of the change from life in a monarchy (with a legally established Church) to life in a republic (where establishment is prohibited). It goes on to add:

It seems unnecessary to enumerate all the different alterations and amendments. They will appear, and it is to be hoped, the reasons for them also, upon a comparison of this with the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. In which it will also appear that this Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship; or further than local circumstances require (BCP vi).

We can see that the American Church was only invoking the authority and the

limits on authority laid out in Article XX, "Of the Authority of the Church," BCP 607.

10.For more about the Prayer Book in other languages, see W K. L. Clarke, "Prayer Book Translations," in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 813-833.

11.See Dr. Toon's critique of liturgical revision in Knowing God through the Liturgy. See also T. Robert Ingram, New Liturgy, Old Heresy (Houston, TX: St. Thomas, 1981).

The 1979 Book's defenders are perhaps more damning than its detractors. Aidan Kavanagh, in "'The Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer': A Roman Catholic's Appreciation," Anglican Theological Review58 (July 1976): 360-368, wrote:

First, the Book as a whole is clearly not a mere updated revision of its predecessors since 1549. It is nothing if not a new formulary that contains some structural and phraseological traces of what has gone before but which goes quite beyond it (362).

Similarly, the late Urban T. Holmes, formerly dean of the divinity school at the University of the South, in the January 1980 issue of the Anglican Theological Review wrote:

A second illustration of the dilemma of an effective interaction between theology and religion in the Episcopal Church today is the debate over Prayer Book revision. After beginning in the 1950s with fervent protestations that no theological change was to be contemplated, or tolerated the Standing Liturgical Commission (SLC) grew progressively more silent in the face of the charges by the Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer (SPBCP) that this was indeed what was happening. No matter what one may think of the SPBCP, we know that they are correct. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer indicates a notable shift in theology from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. There is no problem with changing theology through liturgical revision; it is how Anglicans do it. But whether or not the silence of the SLC before the charges of the SPBCP was a matter of strategy or not, their failure to reveal to the church the theological implications of what was happening can hardly be considered an act of reconciliation between theology and religion. . . . The alarming possibility is that in the quest for Anglican comprehensiveness, some church people have suggested that we retain both the 1928 and 1979 Books of Common Prayer.

One can understand how the SPBCP offers this as one last desperate gamble. Others should know better. How can one church hold as "official" two documents with conflicting theologies, unless theology makes no difference.

12.In the context of the disputes over doctrine and freedom in the nineteenth century, we see the same conservative motivation in the earlier development of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The details are too involved to discuss here, but a perusal of E. C. Chorley, Men and Movements in the American Episcopal Church, The Hale Lectures (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1946), especially Chapter 14, "The Passing of the Low Churchmen," 393-424, will help put the matter in perspective. While Chorley, as the historiographer of the Episcopal Church, is not very sympathetic toward the Reformed Episcopal Church, his study if read in the light of recent events and struggles will seem very familiar to today's Continuing Churchmen, and help them to understand their Reformed Episcopal brethren better.

13.See Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church, under "ritual" and "ceremonial."

14.Apart from the specific rubrical instructions in the Prayer Book, as are necessary for the service to be conducted in decency and order, there is a great amount of freedom in Anglican worship in regards to ceremonial. Some individuals (or congregations) find more ceremonial helpful, some rather less. The definitive word on this subject ought to be the instruction found at the very end of the first English Prayer Book of 1549, in a section entitled, "Certayne Notes for the More Playne Explicacion and Decent Ministracion of Thinges Conteined in Thys Book." It reads, "As touching kneeling, crossing, holding up of handes, knocking on the brest, and other gestures: they may be used or left as every mans devotion serveth without blame" {First and Second Prayer Books of King Edward VI, 288-289).

15.The examination of a fully annotated Prayer Book, such as Mant's BCP with Notes, will demonstrate the Scriptural nature of Anglican worship.

16.For information on the quotation of hymns in the New Testament, see under "Hymns" in the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.

17.For interesting, if rather technical, book-length studies of eucharistic rites and belief, see Yngve Brilioth, Eucharistic Faith and Practice Evangelical and Catholic, trans. A. G. Herbert (London: SPCK, 1930); and Josef A. Jungmann, The Early Liturgy: To the Time of Gregory the Great, trans. F. A. Brunner, University of Notre Dame Liturgical Studies VI (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959). For excerpts from the Didache, see Bettenson, Documents, 64-66, or Bettenson, Early Fathers, 50-52. For Justin Martyr, see Bettenson, Documents, 66-67, or Bettenson, Early Fathers, 61-63. For Hippolytus, see Bettenson, Documents, 75-76, or the Easton edition of the Apostolic Tradition, 35-36.

18.For more on the life and work of Archbishop Cranmer, see Jasper Ridley, Thomas Cranmer (London: Oxford, 1962; Oxford Paperback, 1966).

19.William Law, an eighteenth century Anglican priest deprived of his ecclesiastical living for his inability in conscience to abjure the Stuarts and swear the oath of allegiance to George I, wrote the famous and influential A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life. Among his other works was The Spirit of Prayer, in which he gave these reasons to pray: . . . God, the only good of all intelligent natures, is not an absent or distant God, but is more present in and to our souls than our own bodies; and we are strangers to Heaven and without God in this world for this only reason, because we are void of that spirit of prayer which alone can and never fails to unite us with the One only Good, and to open Heaven and the kingdom of God within us.

. . . And here lies the ground of the great efficacy of prayer, which when it is the prayer of faith, has a kindling and creating power, and forms and transforms the soul into everything that its desires reach after: it has the key to the Kingdom of Heaven and unlocks all its treasures, it opens, extends, and moves that in us which has its being and motion in and with the divine nature, and so brings us into real union and communion with God (in Anne Fremande, The Protestant Mystics, intro. W. H. Auden [New York: New American Library, Mentor, 1965], 102, 108).

20.For a discussion of synagogue services and Christian participation in them, see P. P. Levertoff, "Synagogue Worship in the First Century," in Clarke and Harris,

Liturgy and Worship, 60-77.

21.See The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, under "hosanna" for its meaning: "save us, we beseech thee."

22.For a commentary on the collects, including their authorship and derivation, see Massey Shepherd, Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary. Shepherd also discusses the selection and die contents of the Epistles and Gospels. His pagination matches that of the 1928 BCP. More technical, but perhaps more interesting, is K. D. Mackenzie, "Collects, Epistles, and Gospels," in Clarke and Harris, Liturgy and Worship, 374-409.

23. See 1 Corinthians 16:1-3 for a Biblical record of Sunday collections, but notice the expectation that the major giving would be collected privately. The name "alms basins" for the basins we use to collect the congregation's offerings of money is, in a sense, a holdover from those ancient times. Originally the tithes were to be collected separately from alms deeds during the Communion time on behalf of the poor. Today, many have confused tithes and alms, but they are different offerings. The tithe is a flat ten percent of our income (increase), owed to God by right as our King and Creator. Alms are donations for the poor over and above our tithes. We ought to be certain to offer both, however they are collected in our particular parish (see Malachi 3:7-12).

Moreover, many people get uncomfortable when a religious discussion of money begins, as well they might, given the casual obedience tJiat they give God's commandment to worship him with the first fruits of their substance (Proverbs 3:9). But the worship of God with our substance is a holy duty. William Paret, explains in The Pastoral Use of the Prayer Book that "A Communion without giving was not the intention of the Church." He describes, in the light of Acts 20:35, a Communion without an offering as "... a mutilated Communion; the people were deprived of a blessing to which they were entitled" (120, 121). There is an essential error in the religious practice of a human being who will claim spiritual communion with God through the sacrifice of his Son, while at the same time withholding the physical tribute God commands.

24. See note 14 above.

25- About receiving the Communion: "When you approach, therefore, do not come forward with wrists outstretched, or with fingers spread open. Make your left hand, as it were, a throne for the right, since it is about to receive a king; and hollow your palm, and receive the body of Christ, adding your 'Amen'" (Cyril of Jerusalem, Cathechesis 23, in Bettenson, Later Fathers, 46-47.

LESSON EIGHT: The Polity of the Church

1. The text of Article XXXVII in the American Prayer Book (BCP 610) is a an edited and compressed version of the English Article of the same number. Significant differences in the English Article include the centering of authority in the Crown and a specific exclusion of the

Monarch (and, thus, civil authorities) from the ministry of Word and Sacraments. The English Article ends with the following statements: "The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England"; "The Laws of the Realm may punish Christian men with death, for heinous and grievous offences"; and "It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons and serve in the wars" (Browne, Exposition, 792). For a thorough commentary on this Article, see Browne, 792-834. The author of this outline would suggest that the American silence on the concluding matters of the English Article was due, not to disagreement, but to the differences between a monarchy and a republic, and the handling of such matters at the state rather than the federal level when the American Articles were adopted in 1801 (BCP 601).

2.The terms of the Declaration of Independence should be well known. After invoking "the Laws of Nature and Nature's God," the Congress accuses the King of "a long train of abuses and usurpations," insisting that there is a right and a duty to throw off such a govern ment. The signers establish their willingness to submit their cause to God's judgment by con cluding, "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

3.In regards to Genesis 3:16, compare God's warning to Cain in Genesis 4:7, ". . . if

thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shah rule over him." Sin will desire to rule over Cain, but he must rule over sin ("shalt" is used as in "Thou shalt not steal"). In the same way, in the new disorder of the fallen world, Eve will desire to rule over her husband, but his duty is to rule over her for good. Compare Ephesians 5:25-29, where the limit on male authority is the nature of Christ's authority over the Church.

4.For the history of the use in English of the title "father" for spiritual pastors see under "Father" in the Oxford English Dictionary.

5.Some of the difficulties with titles of respect comes from antinomianism: a rejection of any authority or rule. This is regrettable, since God's order is a network of interlocking authorities and responsibilities. To be fair, however, some of the rejection of clerical authority has its origin in clerical failure to serve the Church. The polity of religious movements formed in reaction to clerical failure tend towards the anti-clerical, or at least to keeping the pastor under the governance of the local church board. Furthermore, those who believe that peace in inter-church relations can be achieved by the mere manipulation of terms, as in the substitution of "presbyter" for "priest," should remember the example of the radical John Milton's rejection of the Westminster Assembly's efforts to bring peace in England by the adoption of a presbyterian system of polity. He wrote, "New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large" ("On the New Enforcers of Conscience Under the Long Parliament," Milton's Works, 175-176).

6.Any study of canon law must begin with the canons of your own national Church and diocese. These are the particular rules you have agreed to follow by becoming a member of your Church and diocese.

While the moral collapse of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America has made it necessary for Anglicans in this country to reorganize into a number of (one hopes) temporarily distinct jurisdictions, two historical references are very helpful in understanding American canon law. The first is a history of the early General Conventions of the Episcopal Church, and the development of the American system: Clara O. Loveland, The Critical Years: The Reconstitution of the Anglican Church in the United States of America: 1780-1789

(Greenwich, CT: Seabury, 1956). The second is a legislative history and analysis of the, American canons up to 1952: Edwin A. White and Jackson A. Dykman, Annotated! Constitution and Canons for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: Adopted in General Conventions: 1789-1952, 2nd ed. rev. by J. A. Dykman, 2 vol. (Greenwich, CT: Seabury, 1954). This set of books, usually referred to as "White and Dykman" is the basic, authoritative reference on Anglican canon law in America. There is also a "1981 edition" available, but this is much inferior, due to its being edited to accommodate the excessive claims of authority made by the Episcopal General Convention in the 1960s and 1970s.

In general, it is fair to say that the canons of a particular Church must be understood in the light of ancient canon law, especially that of the undivided Church. A useful discussion of how this principle applies to Anglicans is: Joint Committee on Discipline of the American Church Union and the Clerical Union, The Ancient Canons and an Interpretation of the Word Discipline in the Book of Common Prayer: Together with A Comprehensive Bibliography in Canon Law (Riverside, NJ: Burlington County Pub.; for New York: American Church Union and the Clerical Union, 1952).

For a look at the English background of American canon law, see John Henry Blunt, The Book of Church Law: Being an Exposition of the Legal Rights and Duties of the Parochial Clergy and Laity of the Church of England, 10th ed., revised by Walter G. F. Phillimore and G. Edwardes Jones (London: Longmans, Green, 1905). And for a discussion of the theory of Anglican canon law, see Appendix IV.

7. The importance of the congregation, as the basic unit of Christian polity, is demonstrated by Dean William Sherlock, in his A Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity (1690), pp. 35f:

The profession of the true Faith and Worship of Christ makes a true Church, and all true churches are the One Catholic Church, whether they be spread over all the world, or shut up in one corner of it, as at the first preaching of the Gospel the Catholic Church was nowhere but in Judea. Now as no Church is the Catholic Church of Christ, how far soever it has spread itself over the world, unless it profess the true Faith of Christ, no more is any Faith the Catholic Faith, how universally soever it be professed, unless it be the true Faith

of Christ. Nor does the true Christian Faith cease to be Catholic, how few soever there be who sincerely profess it. It is downright Popery to judge of the Catholic Faith by its multitudes or large extent. . . . Were there but one true Church in the whole world, that were the Catholic Church, because it would be the whole Church of Christ on earth … (in More and Cross, Anglicanism, Selection 16, 40).

8.For Clement of Rome, see Bettenson, Documents, 62-63.

9.American canon law shows, as would be expected, the effects of being formulated during the same period as the organization of the American form of republican civil government. Clara O. Loveland's The Critical Years gives a detailed account of the efforts to develop a church government both Scriptural and American, but John E. Booty, in The Church in History, The Church's Teaching Series (New York: Seabury, 1979), summarizes the effect on the American understanding of the parish in this brief remark:

The result of all the maneuvering in 1789 was a church government based upon local control by voluntary associations of persons in parishes. Dioceses and national convention possessed power in relation to and for the sake of parishes. The larger organizations functioned as agencies preserving and strengthening the unity of the church. [Bishop] White agreed that "the great art of governing consists in not governing too much"(7l).

What is so remarkable about this statement is that it comes from an Episcopalian scholar at precisely the moment when the Episcopal Church U.S.A. was reversing these principles in order to sue conservative parishes for their property in order to force them to adopt a vitiated, modernist religion. The only other comment needed here is to point out that the "voluntary" nature of association in parishes is a matter of polity only. Membership in Christ's Church is spiritually necessary for salvation, and not voluntary at all.

10.The offices of the bishop and priest are defined in the Second Office of Instruction, BCP 294. The proper relationship of the bishop and rector can be seen in 1 Peter 5:1-4. As an example of the canonical recognition of the rector's lesser ordinary authority, see Section 1 (a) Canon 45, "Of Ministers and their Duties," Episcopal Church Canons of 1952 (White and Dykman, Vol. 2, 121), which states:

The control of the worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the Parish, are vested in the

Rector, subject to the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the Canons of the Church, and the godly counsel of the Bishop. All other Ministers of the Parish, by whatever name they may be designated, are to be regarded as under the authority of the Rector.

White and Dykman comment, "The first section of this canon, which declares that the control of the worship and spiritual jurisdiction of die parish, and the use and control of the church and parish buildings shall be vested in the rector, is simply declaratory of the tradition of the Church (Vol. 2, 157-158).

11.The Anglican understanding of the authority of councils is demonstrated in Article VIII, "Of the Creeds," BCP 604, where the Nicene Creed is accepted, not simply for its connection with the Council of Nicaea, but because it "may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." It was this provision about conciliar authority, among others, that allowed the American Church to omit the text of Article XXI, "Of the Authority of General Councils," BCP 607, with the notation that "it is partly of a local and civil nature, and is provided for, as to the remaining pans of it, in other Articles." The English text of Article XXI reads:

General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered together (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God), they may err, and sometimes have erred even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary for Salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scriptures (Browne, Exposition, 490).

Notice, however, that the American explanation of the omission of this Article does not contradict its doctrinal and spiritual content. For a commentary, see Browne, Exposition, 490-500.

12.For a list of the Seven Councils, and for the special authority of the first four in the Church of England, see Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church, under "Oecumenical Councils."

The "Affirmation of St. Louis," adopted in 1977 by the Congress of St. Louis, Missouri, a meeting of faithful Anglicans in response to the doctrinal deviations of the

Episcopal Church, recognized all seven of the Councils. The "Affirmation" is a foundational document for the Continuing Church Movement.

Browne, on the other hand, accepts only six Councils {Exposition, 492-493; as do the authors of The Six Oecumenical Councils of the Undivided Catholic Church, Church Club Lectures 1893, 2nd ed. (New York: E. and J. B. Young, 1895). See the latter for elegant discourses on the Councils by prominent American Anglicans of the period. For a specific discussion of the Seventh Council, see C. B. Moss, The Church of England and the Seventh Council (London: Faith Press, 1957).

LESSON NINE: Moral Theology

1. Moral theology can be approached from a variety of directions: the nature and psychology of man (Christian anthropology); spiritual direction and the development of Christian character (sometimes called "ascetical theology"); and the theology of right motivation and behavior ("moral theology" or "Christian ethics" proper). Most writing on this subject will focus on one of these approaches, while including elements of the others. Secular works on psychology and ethics can also be useful to the advanced student of Christian morality, but in every case, whether a work purports to be "Christian" or "secular," the contents and method must be scrutinized in terms of Biblical revelation.

Two notable Anglican general studies of moral theology are: R. C. Mortimer, The Elements of Moral Theology (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1947; reprint, with corrections, 1953); Lindsay Dewar, An Outline of Anglican Moral Theology (London: Mowbray, 1968). Also worthwhile is C. S. Lewis', "Christian Behaviour," Book 3 of Mere Christianity.

Without agreeing with everything he has to say about method, or the Freudian elements of his theory, the present writer would recommend Victor E. Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy, orig. title, From Death-Camp to Existentialism, Part one trans. Use Lasch, Preface by Gordon Allport (New York:

Washington Square, 1963) for its testimony by a Jewish psychiatrist and death-camp survivor to the necessity of belief for the maintenance of life itself.

Classic and influential Anglican works on the development of a Christian life and character include Jeremy Taylor (1613-1637), The Rule and Exercise of Holy Living and The Rule and Exercise of Holy Dying, and William Law (1686-1761), A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life. More modern works in this area include S. C. Hughson, Spiritual Guidance: A Study of the Godward Way (West Park, NY: Holy Cross, 1948); and F. R Harton, The Elements of the Spiritual Life: A Study in Ascetical Theology, Intro. Mark Carpenter-Gamier (London: SPCK, 1932).

A very interesting modern study of character, but requiring careful reading, is Stanley Hauerwas, Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1975).

An example of the sort of work to avoid, except for forensic or apologetic reasons, is J. L. Houlden, Ethics and the New Testament (Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1973), where the author uses "critical" methods to set the New Testament writers against each other.

2.For a survey of historic ethical "systems," see Richard T. Nolan, Frank Kirkpatrick, et. al., Living Issues in Ethics (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1982). This popular introductory textbook in ethics gives an adequate description of the competing secular systems, and a rather weak "modernist" account of Biblical ethics, a telling irony since the main authors are seminary graduates.

3.The Greek word for "superstition" is deisidaimonia, and Paul's adjective is built on it (Arndt and Gingrich, s.v.). Festus describes Christianity with the same negative word (as a "superstition") in Acts 25:19. Daimon is the word translated as "devil" in 1 Corinthians 10:20. It is unclear what the Greeks meant by this word, since they also used it to mean "god." The Christian understanding, consistent with 1 Corinthians 10:20 is "devil" (see Zodhiates, Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible, under "daimon" 1677.

4.Article XIV, "Of Works of Supererogation," BCP 605, addresses in particular the Roman teaching of a saving merit attached to good works, so that by going beyond the requirements of God's law, after sufficient merit for salvation has been

obtained, a person may gain additional merits for the saving of others. This erroneous teaching completely misses the point of the Bible's teaching on salvation (see Psalm 49, especially v. 7, and review Lesson Three: Sin, Salvation, and Grace). If one listens to much of modern preaching, moreover, one will often hear the same false teaching: salvation by merit and a holiness beyond the holiness required by God's commandments, including the homey sounding notion of "doing a little something extra for God." But an error remains an error, whatever the name of the Church that teaches it. For a commentary on the Article, see Browne, Exposition.

5. It must be stressed, until it is understood by all men, that all "good works" begin in faith, not in a personal choice to adhere to abstract standards of morality. God is personal, and not an abstraction. Goodness is in relation to him personally, and not a matter of our will or of moral standards we would set for ourselves (and impose upon God). Good works do not bring salvation. They are the fruits of Faith and the action of God's grace in us, since a work is only good if it is done to please God in obedience to his revealed will in the Scriptures (see Hebrews 11:6). For a commentary on Article XII, "Of Good Works," see Browne, Exposition, 324-330. For a commentary on the related article, Article XIII, "Of Works before Justification," see Browne, Exposition, 331-340, and Appendix II of this outline of Anglicanism.

6.The Greek word for "conscience" is suneidesis. For an extended discussion of its origin and meaning, see under "Conscience" in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.

7.Article XVI, "Of Sin after Baptism," BCP 605-606, is meant, of course, to quiet troubled consciences, and not to encourage sin. Out of a zeal to oppose sin, the discipline of various churches has often erred in one of two directions. The first is to deny that sin is possible for the saved, thus greatly simplifying such a church's moral theology, but also inclining the average redeemed sinner to doubt his salvation. The second is to impose a discipline stricter than God's as found in the Scriptures, however foolish that may be. Both errors, however different they may appear, degenerate almost immediately into works righteousness, ignoring the fact that Christian righteousness is the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed (granted, attributed) to the members of

Christ's Church by the grace and mercy of the Father. For a commentary on the history and warrants of this important Article, see Browne, Exposition, 364-400.

8.The word translated "kill" in the King James Version is Hebrew ratsach, "to murder, pierce" {Young's Analytical Concordance, entry 9 under "kill," Exodus 20:13). See also, Zodhiates, Hebrew-Greek Key Bible, under ratsach, 1639. And see The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, section C.2, "Homicide," under "Crimes and Punishments."

9.See Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, for lists under "Corporal Works of Mercy" and "Spiritual Works of Mercy."

LESSON TEN: A Church Miscellany

1.Much of the content of this lesson falls into the category of "lore." The best way to learn the lore of any organization, including any of the branches of the Christian Church, is to spend some time sharing its life, especially since the odds and ends of that life are rarely written down completely or in one particular book. Lore must almost always be gathered, in order to be taught or understood. Some places to begin gathering Anglican lore are: Cross and Livingstone, The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, E. Cobham Brewer, The Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, A. A. Benton, The Church Cyclopaedia^ and Percy Dearmer, The Parson's Handbook. Interesting short works include: Frederick L. Eckel, Jr., A Concise Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Terms (Boston: Whittemore Associates, 1960); Carroll E. Whittemore, ed., Symbols of the Church (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1959); and Rolfe P. Crum, Foreword O. H. Hart, A Dictionary of the Episcopal Church, Sixteenth ed. (Philadelphia: Trefoil, 1960). Also interesting is Walter Lowrie, Art in the Early Church, Rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1901; New York: Revised Harper and Row ed. of 1947; New York: Norton, 1969). See for historical origins in great detail, Chapter 12, "The Development of Ceremonial," in Gregory Dix, The Shape of the Liturgy, 2nd ed. London, Adam and Charles Black, 1945; Reprint, 1964), 397-433.

2.On liturgical lights, see Gregory Dix, Shape of the Liturgy, 416-422.

3.See Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, under

"minor orders."

4. See the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia, under "Exorcism." The 1549 Prayer Book included this exorcism in the Order for Public Baptism: commande thee, uncleane spirite, in the name of the father, of the sonne, and of the holy ghost, that thou come out, and depart, from these infantes, whom our Lord Jesus Christe hath vouchsaved to call to his holy Baptisme, to be made members of his body, and of his holy congregacion. Therefore thou cursed spirite, remembre thy sentence, remembre thy iudgemente, remembre the daye to be at hande, wherin thou shalt burne in fyre euerlasting, prepared for the and thy Angels. And presume not hereafter to exercise any tyrannye towarde these infantes, whome Christe hathe bought with his precious blood, and by this his holy Bapstisme calleth to be of his flocke {First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI, 238).

Mant, Book of Common Prayer, 343, cites Dr. Nicholls, who explains that this exorcism was dropped from subsequent editions to avoid superstition and confusion with the discipline of other Churches. The exorcism was replaced with the short petitions beginning "O Merciful God," found on page 278 of the American edition of 1928. A careful reading of these petitions will demonstrate that they intend the same result as the former exorcism.

It should be further noted that the 72nd Canon of the Church of England requires a priest of that Church to obtain a license from the Bishop to perform an exorcism (Mant, 814).

5.For an extended discussion of processions, see Percy Dearmer, Parson's Handbook, 254-264.

6.See "Ember Days" in Benton, Church Cyclopaedia (where he uses Saxon Ymbren, a revolution or circuit, to explain the term); Brewer, Dictionary (where he derives the term from German quatember, a corruption of the Latin for the "four times"; and Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church.

7.For a discussion of the history and development of the ancient vestments, see Gregory Dix, Shape of the Liturgy, 398-410.

8.On stoles and related matters, see Gregory Dix, Shape of the Liturgy, 401-402.

For additional information, see Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church, under "stole."

9. See under "cope" in Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church.

10. See under "mitre," Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church. According to tradition, St. John the Evangelist and Apostle modeled the worship of the Church he led in Ephesus after the ancient worship of Israel and his vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem. According to Charlotte M. Yonge, Eighteen Centuries of Beginnings of Church History (London: Walter Smith and Innes, 1890), "He himself ministered before the Christian Altar in a mitre and robes like those of the High Priest, and these passed on as the pattern for the Christian Priesthood" (40). John's practice is especially interesting to Anglicans, since the oldest stratum of our practice is Gallican (from the Gaulish Church), which was itself an extension of the Ephesian pattern.

11.For details, see Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church, under "cassock."

12.See Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church, under "surplice." See also Gregory Dix, Shape of the Liturgy, on choir dress (408). For the appearance of ancient ministers, see Lowrie, Art in the Early Church, plates 145a and 146, mosaics from the Oratory of St. Venatius attached to the Lateran Baptistery (c. 642) and San Vitale in Ravenna (6th century), depicting clerical dress of that period.

13.See Percy Dearmer, Parson's Handbook, for a delightfully partisan discussion of ecclesiastical caps (124-125). He compares an Anglican clergyman wearing the biretta to an English soldier wearing a German pickelhaube.

14.See "High Churchmen" and "Low Churchmen" in Cross and Livingstone, Oxford Dictionary of the Church.

15.For a discussion of liturgical colors, see Percy Dearmer, Parson's Handbook, 103-117.