

WHY RITE ONE MAY BE MORE DANGEROUS THAN RITE TWO

By Peter Toon

The use of Rite 1 ought to be avoided by those who do not wish to be drawn into a relatively mild, let alone a strong, form of the revised form of Anglicanism (revisionism) espoused by The Episcopal Church since the 1970s and its chief characteristic in 2009

A Comment

The presence of services in the Episcopal 1976/79 Prayer Book using traditional language was not part of the intention of the Liturgical Commission of that period. The original plan was to abandon the received, historic, American text of 1789-1928 text, and to create a new Prayer Book along the lines of what was seen as the latest and best liturgical principles, and presenting it in contemporary language, rather than the outdated language of the seventeenth century. Thus what came be called 'Rite One services in traditional language form' were a late addition, and they were created through pressure from the Presiding Bishop (under the influence of some influential clergy and laity).

This said, we can develop various points clearly and briefly by way of making them in a relatively strong form:

1. The Commission in heeding the Presiding Bishop and House of Bishops did not simply take Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Holy Communion from the existing BCP of 1928 and place them as Rite 1 in the new Book – or recommend that BCP 1928 be retained for use as parishes desired. Rather it regarded these texts as open for modification and development. Thus, to summarize, the 1928 BCP texts were made to conform as far as possible to the Shape (very important concept then), Theology and Relations that belonged to Rite Two (i.e. the contemporary language texts, already written and approved, texts containing the innovative theology).

2. In Rite One Holy Communion a new Eucharistic Prayer was added to give the impression of choice as in Rite Two, the structure was changed to copy Rite Two, the theories of Gregory Dix on four-fold action were incorporated, the required Psalter was the inclusive, heretical language 1979 Psalter; the Church Year was the revised one of 1979; the historic Eucharist Lectionary of the BCP disappeared and the new ECUSA Lectionary was compulsory. The Reformed Catholic Doctrine of the classic BCP was thereby either much diminished or expelled.

3. Parishioners who had been poorly taught from the 1928 texts may have been satisfied with the new order in traditional language; especially when the traditional music, hymns and anthems were retained. And bishops and priests, who wanted to lead their people away from the doctrines of the BCP 1928, may also have been satisfied with the new order in traditional language for it taught their innovative doctrines in a sure even if slow way. But those through good teaching who could distinguish historic Anglicanism from the

new variety were far from content with the new wine in the old skins. As we know, many left The Episcopal Church in the late 1970s and early 1980s either for Continuing Churches, or regrettably to their living rooms and a service on TV. National membership dropped dramatically in the 1970s and 1980.

4. People have been blind to the problems of Rite One . This is because it incorporates innovations from the 1979 Prayer Book in simply being placed within its order. Rite One Holy Communion does not stand alone, it is wholly and totally dependent for much of its content on the Rite Two material (Lectionary, Collects, Church Year, Psalter, etc). The choice and editing of certain Biblical passages in the new lectionary, the more political bias of various prayers, and so on, served to keep people away from the historic, classic Anglican worship, doctrine and devotion by pretending to be 'BCP-Lite'.

5. The years between 1976 and 2008 have revealed just how deeply embedded in the 1979 Prayer Book are certain relativist and innovatory principles and teachings. The present state of The Episcopal Church, and the exodus of thousands of would-be orthodox in the last decade, demonstrate the continuing and regrettable influence of the use of the 1979 Book. It has failed to aid clergy in teaching teach their parishoners the historic teachings found in either scripture or Anglican doctrine. Consequently, in parishes which are scripturally orthodox, one notes that the 1979 has fallen out of use except to be adapted to particular needs. Now churches just do their own thing. The 1979 lacks magisterial authority (a good thing), but in the vacuum left, the church is without a magisterial teaching, which it needs to guide doctrine for clergy and parishoner alike -- a purpose

which the Cranmerian books served.

6. Regrettably there is enough in 1979 of the old religion that conservatives often do not recognize the degree to which it is subservient to innovative theology and religion. In fact Rite 1 has served innovation on two critical doctrinal and liturgical points: first the obsession with making “the baptismal covenant” of Rite II the very basis of the involvement of the Episcopal Church, *and as if entirely connected*, in the issues and politics of this world in the name of justice and peace. This tends to eclipse the classic message of personal salvation by the blood of Jesus and the dynamic doctrine of the Last Things. Second, there is a deceptive rendering of a Pauline text at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer in both Rites: the 1979 text has, “Christ our Passover IS sacrificed for us:” whereas all serious English Bibles translate the words of Paul as, “Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us.” There is a world of difference between the two renderings in terms of the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and the first is an innovation in Anglican texts.

In conclusion, and in sadness, I believe that not a few who seek to be devout Christian Anglicans, true to Catholic doctrine, are failing to be so because they use the 1979 Rite I instead of the BCP 1928 USA or the BCP 1962 of Canada, or the good old 1662 of England.

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