ANGLICAN WAY

Formerly Mandate, the magazine of the Prayer Book Society

Volume 36
Number 2

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Reflections FROM THE Editor's Desk

Roberta Bayer, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor, Patrick Henry College, Purcellville, Virginia*

It is a challenge to re-appropriate the doctrine and worship of the Anglican Church in its fullness after the recent theological revolution. As readers are aware, the mainline Episcopal Church in the USA broke with past Christian teaching in changing the Book of Common Prayer and revising doctrine in order to accommodate modernity. But as declining membership within the American Church illustrates, there was a conservative reaction, of sorts. Former members of TEC have created alternative ecclesial institutions; there are many dioceses within the Continuing Church movement, and more recently the Anglican Church of North America has been formed under the leadership of Archbishop Duncan. But it would be stretching a point to suggest that these alternative ecclesial institutions have the kind of doctrinal coherence and consensus to last. I have asked three recent converts, all in their early 20s, to give their reasons for converting to Anglicanism, and their comments in this issue indicate something of what they seek in an Anglican Church today.

Some people have inquired as to why *Anglican Way* has taken issue with the work of the late Robert Webber, as Webber was a respected member of Wheaton College faculty and his work has been a means of introducing evangelicals to liturgical worship purportedly within the Anglican tradition. My comments below may shed some light on that subject.

As a point of historical theology, Fr. Dunbar noted in the last issue that Gustaf Aulen is not a good guide to the theology of the Atonement, and in this issue he argues that there is greater consistency between Scripture, ancient and medieval theology and the 1928 Confirmation service than that found in the 1979 BCP. If he is correct, then the mainstream contemporary assumption that the Cranmerian Books of Common Prayer are less true to the teaching of Scripture and received doctrine than contemporary liturgical developments is wrong on this point.

Bart Gingerich reports in this issue on a recent Pew Forum study that found one-third of young adults under the age of 30 in the United States are unaffiliated with any religion. These young adults are called 'nones' because when asked their religious affiliation on a survey, they check 'none'. According to the study, 'nones' are self-absorbed, vague and unformed in belief and adherents of what sociologists call Moralistic Therapeutic Deism. They know nothing about how God's existence has been defended in the history of Western Christian thought and unsurprisingly this is because the churches which they attended as children have ignored the intellectual side of their

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We need your gifts in order to carry out your mandate to defend the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer.* You may send a contribution in the enclosed envelope.

Please give generously.

Please read our redesigned website: www.pbsusa.org *Contact Dr. Bayer at editor.mandate@gmail.com or from the PBS website*

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Anglican Way
Volume 36, Number 2
Editor: **Dr. Roberta Bayer** • Assistant Editor: **Sydney Nichole Thomas** • Design/Layout: **Electronic Quill**
The Officers for the Year 2013 are:
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Anglican Way is published four times a year by the Prayer Book Society, a non-profit organization serving the Church of God.
All gifts to the P.B.S. are tax deductible for U.S. citizens.
Editorial and all other correspondence: P.O. Box 137, Jenkintown, PA 19046-0137. Phone 1-800-PBS-1928.
Postmaster: Please send address changes to the above address.
Visit the websites of the Society: www.pbsusa.org & www.anglicanmarketplace.com.

education. Untutored in doctrine, subject to the categories of feeling and irrationality found in popular culture, they have left the faith. Bart argues that doctrinal formation is necessary to bring young people back into the Church.

In an age when Christians have decided that *doing* is of more importance than *understanding*, Anglicans need to consider what tools are at their disposal to teach the faith of the Church. The students who have contributed to this issue have found those tools in the study of some of the greatest works of Western, Christian philosophical and ethical literature, in the study of Christian art, and in the Book of Common Prayer. Contemplation of the divine, who is the foundation of the truth and beauty and order in this world, is the highest end of man—Plato, Aristotle and the greatest pagan minds taught this. And so does Christ, whose life ensures that the vision of God constitutes man's final reconciliation with God. Jesus points to this fact numerous times, not least in the daily routine of Mary and Martha, when he remarks to Martha, whose dinner preparations have nearly undone her, that her sister, Mary, who was sitting at his feet listening to his teaching "has chosen the better part."

In an age when Christians have decided that *doing* is of more importance than *understanding,* Anglicans need to consider what tools are at their disposal to teach the faith of the Church.

In the third century after Christ, St. Augustine of Hippo wrote that the study of philosophy serves as a preparation for the Gospel, *praeparatio evangelii.* At the very least, philosophy inspires men to search and seek diligently for the causes and reasons that undergird and define the whole of reality. The demanding logic of intellectual inquiry even forced the Church to explain and define, rationally and coherently, what it accepted on authority and faith. Thus her theology was born and grew into prayer and liturgy for the benefit of her flock.

None of the Magisterial Reformers of the Church were more aware of this need than the Anglicans. Archbishop Cranmer and his friends were determined that the theology of the Church should generate right thinking about and praying to the God of man's salvation. What was known of God was to be remembered, embraced, and followed always in the lives of all Christian people. Thus, there was a time, for example, when young people in the Anglican Church were expected to memorize the Collects—each, in its own way, a small incorporation into the life of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in prayer. Paul Russell discusses their historical importance in his article.

Once also, all students approaching Confirmation were required to memorize the Creeds and to study the Catechism. (There is an amusing and memorable scene to that effect in the old movie, *Life with Father.*) Mistakenly, pastors today consider the Collects too difficult to discuss in sermons, and the Creeds too theologically abstruse, and so they neglect the hard work of introducing catechumens to the serious business of remembering, knowing, and loving God.

In light of the absence of doctrinal instruction within churches and the growing number of 'nones,' the remarkable young people who have contributed to this issue, Erik Landstrom, Benjamin Garner, Matthew Maule, Bart Gingerich and Sydney Thomas, former students at the college where I teach, are searching for a church with strong doctrinal teaching. For the present they have found in Anglicanism a refuge, but I suspect that their desire to remain Anglican will be very dependent upon whether they will find a parish which sustains sufficient intellectual rigor. Each one is seeking to reconcile his academic study of the great works of the Western Christian Tradition with the truth of the faith and his faith amidst the challenge of modernity.

Each believer, if serious about his faith, is forced to reconcile his faith with the post-modern world in which he lives. The difficulty lies in embracing a tradition, any church tradition, having emerged from a traditionless society. This is true of Anglicanism, Roman Catholicism, and even Orthodoxy in America. Consequently, the most obvious reaction to the conflict between traditional Christianity and modern culture is either an attempt to revive a theological tradition in its fullness, or on the other hand, to create a new theology and worship which fuses the new with the old.

Creating a new theology through an imaginative theological reconstruction of the past characterizes the project of Robert Webber, whose works are discussed by Sydney Thomas in this issue. When a Church goes into decline, as has happened with Anglicanism in recent decades, its less reflective adherents think that renewal means the alignment and adjustment of traditional doctrines to the norms and mores of contemporary culture. It is assumed that novelty will inspire and excite an otherwise moribund and bored worshipping culture. As Sydney Thomas points out in her article, Robert Webber has taken just such a route and so reduces Anglicanism to the categories and expectations of *the prevailing culture—such as it is.*

Modern pluralism begets doubt about the universality of received truth, and *so* there is a very strong desire and necessity to re-appropriate a tradition or traditions, in order to assure oneself that one's faith is not simply a construct of one's own imagining. The romantic nostalgia for a more stable past that one sees in Webber is very strong in young people whose lives have been shaped by social fragmentation, a moral vacuum, and the utilitarian aesthetic of modern life. At some level, nostalgia for a past in which the Church recognized the goodness, truth, and beauty of the Divine is a sign of some sanity. But nostalgia and romanticism can never replace the present demand for a philosophical confrontation of nihilism and insouciance in the present. What the thinking Christian is called to do is to descend into the cave of man's madness and ignorance and lead him slowly, compassionately, patiently, and lovingly out of the darkness and into the light.

Such an enterprise requires a conviction that grows in knowing and understanding. That is why it is extraordinarily important to reflect upon modernity and Christianity together. It seems so easy to bemoan and decry Christianity's disappearance; it is quite another thing to assume responsibility for it. God, after all, hasn't gone anywhere. Amidst the instability, secularity, and anti-rationalism of our age, he can, as always, be found, loved, adored and obeyed. We can lament the culture that surrounds us—its ugliness and technological obsessions—but that is no excuse for self-righteousness. God, after all, is pure existence and essence, always present to those who seek him. So perhaps we ought to take these times as a sign for deeper devotion, a more faithful pursuit of the knowledge and love of Him.

Christians are called upon to defend the faith anew in each era they are called to inhabit. The real difficulty is found in comprehending the characteristic traits of contemporary society. For that reason coming to terms with what has been written by sociologists, scientists, and philosophers about contemporary pluralism and reality is not destructive of faith, but helpful. Our society will not hinder the growth of God's kingdom *if* it is reflected upon, held up to the light, its truths and fallacies addressed through the learning of the past and the more insightful reflections of the present. Books written by someone like Peter Berger, who is able to describe accurately some aspects of the sociological and religious characteristics of modern life, can prompt reflection. They make modernity *a means of rational contemplation*—to use a word which has fallen out of use.

Now back to Anglicanism. Renewal within it will be possible only if its adherents are catechized in worship and true doctrine. To be immersed in the doctrine and worship of one of the ancient Christian traditions allows the faithful to so order their hearts and minds that they may be better enabled to live a Christian and Godly life. The Christian life should be one of prayer, study, and charity towards others. Prayer and study—the contemplation of the Divine—generates purer love for God which then overflows into the hearts of others. Study is necessary to understand modernity and its roots. Prayer is necessary to make us more faithful followers of Christ. Charity requires that we teach others who God is, and what he asks of us, with *the Lord God in [our] hearts…ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh [us] a reason of the hope that is in [us] with meekness and fear. (1 St. Peter iii. 15)*

Renewing the faith of the 'nones' requires that we submerse ourselves within the doctrinal teachings and practice of the Faith once delivered, so that we might teach others. For contemporary Anglicanism (or other branches of Christ's Church for that matter) to address the present crisis there must not be accommodation to the modernity of the 'nones' but a clear alternative, namely the faith once delivered. Those tools are, as we know, found in the traditional Books of Common Prayer, the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, and the traditional formularies. Believing in their content will not be enough. Faith must seek understanding, and understanding is acknowledged in the ability to explain and defend that teaching to others through an historical understanding of the intellectual foundations of the faith. One's own curiosity about the foundations of doctrine, in order to understand the faith, can reignite a passion and desire for God in others, and by his Grace, curiosity and searching within the hearts of our neighbors, who seeing the faith and hope that is in us, will want the treasure that God alone affords.

Mere Anglicanism 2014 Conference

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News from the Anglican Way

The Anglican Way welcomes news of meetings and conferences from all branches of Anglicanism.

BOOK REVIEW

Ways of Loving, Simon Holden CR,
Mirfield Publications (2013). £5.
www. Monastery-stay.co.uk/shop

The Community of the Resurrection (CR) is an Anglican monastic community committed to a life of prayer and engagement in church and society. It exists largely as a retreat house. It offers classes on theology and prayer, and has a publishing wing, Mirfield Publications. Recently CR published *Ways of Loving* by Simon Holden, which is a short treatise, or pamphlet, about the nature of Divine Love. In eight short meditations on the creative and redemptive power of God's love, Holden describes why God's Love is the foundation of Creation, friendship, the Church, and prayer. This pamphlet is an introduction to basic Christian teaching about the interconnectedness of our knowledge of Creation, the relationships in which we live, and the life of prayer and devotion to God Himself.

The eight chapters deal with God's love as expressed in the Universe and creation, in the Incarnation, and in the love of others. Holden discusses the difficulties which everyone experiences in fulfilling the command to love our nature. He concludes by describing the Church as a community in love, the Eucharist as the communion of love, and the transformation of love after death. Wisely but simply stated, it is a reminder that 'God is love and those who abide in love abide in God.' (1 *John* 4:7)

Love is not a sentiment. Of course we speak of love sentimentally, but to love God and to love another as ourselves, the two Great Commandments, will not be accomplished by sentiment. It requires *knowing* the appropriate measure of love appropriate to everything. Rational discernment, assisted by God in grace, is at the very heart of Christian morality; false love, or passion, is irrational and disordered, but the love of God is neither a passion nor irrational. Love stands at the basis of all reality, in which we participate either wisely and knowingly or unwisely and foolishly, as this pamphlet reminds the reader.

Other instructional books by Simon Holden published at Mirfield include *Ways of Believing* and *Ways of Praying.*

Georgia Anglican/Episcopal Men's Conference

The Georgia Anglican/Episcopal Men's Conference will be held September 7–9, 2013 at St. Luke's Church, 7 Ewing Street, Blue Ridge, Georgia. Speakers invited include the Rev'd Dr. Peter Walker, Professor of Biblical Studies, Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, Pennsylvania, the Rev'd Dr. Foley Beach, Rector, Holy Cross Anglican Church, Loganville, and the Rev'd Dr. Simon Vibert, Acting Principal (Dean) and Director of School of Preaching, Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford, Oxford England.

Inquiries may be made to St. Luke's Episcopal Church (706-632-8245).

What Is the Goal of This Conference?

The goal is to prepare men for the Church in the 21st Century. Objectives include:

- Learning how Orthodox Anglicanism defines Christianity.
- Exploring challenges to our beliefs.
- Discovering how a practical faith can make a difference.

Who May Attend?

Anglican/Episcopal men from throughout the state of Georgia and surrounding states are welcomed. Men of other denominations are also welcome.

What Is the Cost?

The registration fee is $65 if booked by August 15, $70 thereafter. The fee includes a barbecue on Friday night and a bagged lunch and supper on Saturday.

The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar, President, Prayer Book Society, and Rector, St John's Episcopal Church, Savannah, Georgia

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY

The Reverend G. G. Dunbar, Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church, Savannah, Georgia

Children, Confirmation, and Communion

Introduction

The classical Anglican pattern of Christian initiation, as found in the Prayer Books from 1549 to 1928, was comprised of four elements: Baptism (normally, in infancy), followed, when the baptized have come to "years of discretion" (conventionally seven to fourteen), by instruction in the Catechism, Confirmation and admission to Communion. One of the leading features of newer liturgies has been the restructuring of this pattern of Christian initiation. Although liturgists do not consider this restructuring to be complete because certain benighted vestiges of older patterns still persist to their thinking, they have changed much in the 1979 Prayer Book.

First of all, the 1979 BCP makes Baptism in principle a complete sacramental initiation into the Church, so that all the baptized are admitted to Communion, whether little children or adults, with or without a profession of faith. Second, Confirmation is given a marginal role at best in Christian initiation. The rite called Confirmation is now a reaffirmation of baptismal vows, with laying on of hands by the bishop. Certain elements that once belonged to it (anointing with oil of chrism, and prayer for the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit), have been annexed to Baptism. A rubric inserted into the draft at the insistence of the House of Bishops states that "those baptized at any early age are expected, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism, and to receive the laying on of hands by the bishop." (p. 412) This vestige of the older pattern, however, should be read closely: "expected" does not mean "required": and it is not a requirement for admission to Communion. Another vestige is the name "Confirmation," which was retained for "political reasons," but which liturgists continue to recommend be omitted.1 Its placement in the 1979 BCP is significant as well, as a rite it is not found in association with either Baptism or the Eucharist, but among the "pastoral offices." One of the chief architects of the 1979 Prayer Book referred to this service as "unfinished business."

Contributing to the marginalization of Confirmation is the movement for "open communion" (that is, the admission to the Eucharist of those who have not been baptized), spurred by concerns about inclusion. Undergirding these changes is the assumption that the classical Anglican pattern of initiation lacks a coherent rationale. Any response to such thinking must begin with a rediscovery of the distinctive history and rationale of Confirmation, which this paper attempts to provide.

The Ancient and Medieval Inheritance

In the ancient church, new Christians—chiefly adults, of course, although no doubt with their families, including little children—were initiated into the Church (after a period of preparation as catechumens) in unitary liturgies centered on Baptism and the Eucharist. By the early middle ages, however, infant Baptism was almost universal, and the other elements of initiation into the Church were often detached from it, and followed later, often at an interval of years. One of the lesser rites associated with Baptism was a ceremony of anointing, consignation, and laying on of hands which from the 5th century onward became known as Confirmation.

Over the course of the Middle Ages, its administration, reserved to the bishop, was detached from Baptism, and came to be considered a Sacrament itself, required of the Baptized before they were admitted to Communion, commonly after they had attained "years of discretion" (conventionally ages seven to fourteen), and were capable of the moral discernment necessary for making their first confession (required annually of all Christians from the fourth Lateran Council of 1215). It was this pattern, inherited by the 16th century Reformers, which became the basis of the classical Anglican pattern of Christian initiation, with instruction in the Church Catechism taking the place of first Confession.

Already, in late antiquity, the separation of Confirmation from Baptism had stimulated reflection on its theological rationale. The most influential account is attributed to Saint Faustus of Riez, a fifth century abbot at the great island monastery of Lerins, and bishop of the Provencal town of Riez. An orthodox Nicene catholic, who was for a time exiled by the Gothic king, who was an Arian, Faustus wrote a treatise on the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and then, in the 470's, a treatise on Grace that played a role in what has been known since the seventeenth century as the "semi-Pelagian" controversy.

Like other monastics of Southern Gaul, he took Augustine's side against the Pelagians. He followed Augustinian reasoning insofar as he denied the capacity of the human will to respond to God without the assistance of Grace. Yet Faustus resisted Augustine's teaching on predestination, since it seemed to leave no role for human agency, for human effort, for the disciplines of prayer and of spiritual warfare. In the end, at the Synod of Orange in 529 led

1. Marion Hatchett, "Unfinished Business" in Leaps and Boundaries: the Prayer Book in the 21st century, p. 19.

Mission Statement

The Society is dedicated to the preservation, understanding, and propagation of the Anglican Doctrine as contained in the traditional editions of The Book of Common Prayer.

by Caesarius of Arles, the church affirmed the priority of grace in moving the will toward the good, but was silent on predestination—a position that has been called "semi-Augustinian." Yet in the sermon for Pentecost which supplies the rationale for Confirmation, Faustus seems already to have struck a balance between the priority of grace on the one hand, and the necessity of human striving, of human agency in the spiritual warfare, on the other.

> As the military order demands, that when the emperor receives someone among the number of soldiers, he not only signals the engagement but also furnishes the fighter with fitting arms, so with the baptized that blessing is a defense. You have given a soldier; give also military aid. What does it benefit if some parents bestow a great ability on a child unless they also take pains to provide a tutor? Thus the Paraclete, the guard of those reborn in Christ, is consoler and tutor. Therefore the divine word says, "Unless the Lord guards the city, in vain do they keep watch who guard it" (Ps. 127.1). Therefore the Holy Spirit, who descends upon the waters of baptism by a salvific falling, bestows on the font a fullness toward innocence, and presents in confirmation an increase for grace. And because in this world we who will be prevailing must walk in every age between invisible enemies and dangers, we are reborn in baptism for life, and we are confirmed after baptism for strife. In baptism we are washed; in confirmation we are strengthened. And although the benefits of rebirth suffice immediately for those about to die, nevertheless the helps of confirmation are necessary for those who will prevail. Rebirth in itself immediately saves those needing to be receive in the peace of the blessed age. Confirmation arms and supplies those needing to be preserved for the struggles and battles of this world.

Faustus' rationale was remembered in the formula: "in baptism we are reborn for life; and we are confirmed after baptism for strife." In Confirmation the baptized receives an increase of grace and strengthening by the Spirit for the spiritual warfare of the soldier of Christ. He understands Confirmation in relation to the Church militant here on earth, for which it prepares us. Confirmation, in short, is a rite a Christian maturity, and it is in those terms that it was also discussed by the 12th century scholastic theologian Thomas Aquinas.

In the reasoning of Thomas Aquinas, it is axiomatic that grace does not destroy but perfects nature. For this reason, the Holy Spirit accommodates himself to the various conditions or states of the human creature. The Sacraments themselves are examples of this gracious accommodation to human weakness: for they are invisible spiritual gifts of grace conveyed through material signs visible and tangible to embodied human creatures. Thus the sacramental grace of the Holy Spirit is closely related to the stages of development of the human personality, or subjectivity—to the development of the powers of memory, reason, and will, whereby we may come to know and love God as our highest good. So when treating of Confirmation, Thomas makes use of a "biological analogy," arguing by analogy from spiritual to corporal life. After citing 1 Corinthians 13:11, "when I became a man, I put away childish things," Thomas writes that in the spiritual life, as in bodily life, there is a moment of birth (generation) and a moment of "increase, by which someone is led to a mature age. Therefore men receive a spiritual life through Baptism, which is a spiritual regeneration, and in Confirmation men receive as it were a certain mature age of spiritual life." (*Summa Theologiae* 3:72, 1)

Looking to the contemporary situation, the liturgists constructing the 1979 BCP have followed neither Patristic nor Thomistic theology. On the one hand there is the possibility of Confirmation, yet inconsistently, the baptized is treated as fully Christian at the moment of Baptism, making Communion open without restriction or without a public profession of the faith. Thus what has been lost from the medieval synthesis is the rationale for Confirmation, the idea that Christians grow in grace and g in understanding of the Faith. Thus the new liturgy is marked by a changed anthropology or idea of the human personality; the modern liturgists follow the ideas of modern psychology rather than the Aristotelian and Augustinian understanding of the human soul.

The Reformation Critique

The Protestant Reformers approached the rationale for Confirmation offered by Thomas Aquinas with somewhat mixed feelings. They disagreed with the medieval theologians that Confirmation was a *Sacrament* because it lacked explicit warrant of Scripture, either as an action commanded or a grace promised by Christ. As the Lutheran Martin Chemnitz wrote, in the doctrine maintained by the Roman church at Trent, upholding Confirmation as a Sacrament, "the antithesis of Baptism and Confirmation is perpetual, so that whatever effects are attributed to Confirmation are by that very fact denied to and drawn away from Baptism" (*Examination of the Council of Trent, On Confirmation*, 3 (1566)). John Calvin could be quite scathing (as indeed, was his wont):

> They have feigned that the power of confirmation is to confer, for the increase of grace, the Holy Spirit, who was conferred in baptism for innocence; to confirm for battle those who in baptism were regenerated to life. This confirmation is performed with anointing [here follows a description of the rite]. All beautifully and charmingly done! But where is the Word of God, which promises the presence of the Holy Spirit here? They cannot show us one jot. How will they assure us that their chrism is a vessel of the Holy Spirit? We see the oil—the gross

and greasy liquid—nothing else. Augustine says, "let the word be added to the element, and it will become sacrament". Let them, I say, bring forth this word, if they would have us see in the oil anything else than oil." *Institutes* IV.19.5

The claim for Confirmation, he considers, is made at the expense of Baptism, and so

> . . . it is an overt outrage against baptism, which obscures, indeed, abolishes, its function; it is a false promise of the devil, which drags us away from God's truth. Or, if you prefer, it is oil, befouled with the devil's falsehood, which deceives and plunges the simple-minded into darkness" IV.19.8

Yet for all his strictures about Confirmation as a Sacrament, and the rationale of Faustus of Riez, Calvin allows for, indeed recommends, what he asserted was the true ancient practice of Confirmation:

> In early times it was the custom for the children of Christian after they had grown up to be brought before the bishop to fulfill that duty which was required of those who as adults offered themselves for baptism. For the latter sat among the catechumens until, duly instructed in the mysteries of the faith, they were able to make confession of their faith before the bishop and people. Therefore, those who had been baptized as infants, because they had not then made confession of faith before the church, were at the end of their childhood or at the beginning of adolescence again presented by their parents, and were examined by the bishop according to the form of the catechism. . . . But in order that this act, which ought by itself to have been weighty and holy, might have more reverence and dignity, the ceremony of the laying on of hands was also added. Thus the youth, once his faith was approved, was dismissed with a solemn blessing. . . . I warmly approve such laying on of hands, which simply done as a form of blessing, and wish that it were today restored to pure use". (*Institutes* IV.19.4)

It is commonly said that Calvin's account of ancient practice is mistaken: nonetheless, the idea of a public confession of faith after instruction and examination in the Catechism by those baptized as infants and come to "years of discretion" is consistent with the ancient idea of Confirmation as a rite of Christian maturity. He continues to understand the nature of the human personality in the older way. A self-conscious profession of faith is a necessary element in Christian initiation. What Calvin takes away from Confirmation as a Sacrament, he quietly restores with his advocacy of Confirmation as a rite of Christian maturity.

Calvin vociferously defends on biblical grounds the *pattern* inherited from the Middle Ages of baptism administered to infants, but communion reserved for

As many of you as have been baptized into CHRIST have put on CHRIST.

Diocese of

Parish of

Presented for Confirmation

by me

Confirmed

at

on

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of CHRIST, let us go on unto perfection: And this will we do, if GOD permit.

First Communion

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS.

those who come to years of discretion. At that time his argument was addressed to Anabaptists, radical reformers who denied the validity of infant baptism, but it addresses the late 20th and early 21st century concern of those who advocate administering communion as well as baptism to children (paedo-communion). Infants may be baptized without the faith and repentance of which it is the sacrament, because they are baptized into "future repentance and faith, and even though these have not yet been formed in them, the seed of both lies hidden with them by the secret working of the Spirit." (IV.xvi.20) The child will grow into understanding of his baptism as he matures. Meanwhile, since all are born sinners, and need forgiveness and pardon from birth, they are not deprived of the comfort that Baptism brings.

Calvin knows perfectly well that the ancient practice was paedo-communion, "but the custom has deservedly fallen into disuse":

> For if we consider the peculiar character of baptism, surely it is an entrance and a sort of initiation into the church, through which we are numbered among God's people: a sign of spiritual regeneration, through which we are reborn as children of God. On the other hand, the Supper is given to older persons who, having passed tender infancy, can now take solid food. (IV.xvi.30)

Thus Calvin silently adopts the "biological," Aristotelian and Augustinian analogy of corporal and spiritual life which we observed in Thomas Aquinas' account of Confirmation.

Notably, Calvin defends this position on Biblical grounds. (IV.xvi.30) From the New Testament he cites the teaching of 1 *Corinthians* 11, in which those

coming to the Lord's Supper must be capable of "discerning the body and blood of the Lord, of examining their own conscience, of proclaiming the Lord's death, and of considering its power. . . . A self-examination ought, therefore to come first, and it is vain to expect this of infants." Indeed to do so would be to put them at risk of condemnation: "why should we offer poison instead of life-giving food to our tender children?" He also cites the institution narrative's command, "do this in remembrance of me," and St. Paul's teaching that those who partake of the Supper "proclaim the Lord's death till he comes." (1 Corinthians 11:25) Since infants are not capable of the acts of understanding, memory and proclamation required for the Lord's Supper, they should not receive it. But discernment of Christ's Body, understanding, memory, and proclamation of Christ's saving work, are not required of those baptized, so even infants may receive baptism.

Calvin also cites the example of the Old Testament, whose teaching on circumcision had already provided him with the rationale for infant baptism. But the feast of Passover, the Old Testament type of the Lord's Supper, "did not admit all guests indiscriminately, but was duly eaten only by those who were old enough to be able to inquire into its meaning." The allusion here is to Exodus 12:26ff: "and it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover. . . ."; an instruction that developed into the Haggadah recited at the Passover seder. Something similar is said of the conjoined Feast of Unleavened bread in Exodus 13:8," and thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt." No such instructions are recorded about circumcision. The inference Calvin makes is that the partaker in these sacred meals must be able to understand their significance.

Beyond purely exegetical arguments, however, Calvin shares with Thomas a view that the gift of the Holy Spirit are given according to the mode and capacity of the receiver, and in particular to the stages of development of human subjectivity. If grace precedes all human memory, reason, and will (as infant baptism emphatically indicates), it does not abolish them either. Memory, reason, and will cannot be left out of Christian initiation: it is as we participate, consciously and willingly, in God's saving purpose, that it comes to fruition in us. Here then is the necessity of Catechism and Confirmation before admission to Communion.

The Anglican Reform

Calvin's recommendations (which first appeared in the 1543 edition of the *Institutes*) are not original to him. Similar ideas for the scriptural reform of Confirmation had been expressed by Luther and Melancthon in the early 1520's, and the compiling and publishing of catechisms for children and adolescents had already begun. This is the background for the reformed rites of Confirmation that appear in the first English Prayer Book of 1549, and (with some further changes) in 1552 and (eventually) 1662.

In answer to a questionnaire circulated in 1536, while the theological conservatism of Henry VIII prevailed, Cranmer denied any scriptural warrant for the institution of a sacrament of confirmation by Christ, or in the example of his apostles, or for the use the chrism. As to its efficacy, he says that "the bishop, in the name of the Church, doth invocate the Holy Ghost to give strength and constancy, with other spiritual gifts, unto the person confirmed; so that the efficacy of this sacrament is of such value as is the prayer of the bishop made in the name of the church." Cranmer's position is that, properly speaking, Confirmation is no Sacrament of Christ, but an ecclesiastical ceremony with prayer.[2]

Thirteen years later, with the theological and liturgical reform which Henry VIII had muffled now in full gear under the reign of his Protestant son, Edward VI, the Prayer Book of 1549 provided for a rite that follows the prescription Calvin had given in 1543: public examination of the children by the Bishop in the Catechism, which includes a public confession of faith, in the renewal of the promises of Baptism, and a laying on of hands with prayer. Moreover a rubric at the end of the service secured the place of Confirmation as a prerequisite for admission to Communion: "And none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."[3]

The ceremony consists in the laying on of hands (a ceremony used by the apostles). There is no anointing, the consignation is transferred to Baptism, and in 1552 the formula itself took on a new form: "Defend, O Lord, this 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." Thus, general form of the older rite remains, together with the ancient prayer for the sevenfold gift of the Spirit (based on the list in Isaiah 11). Its language, very slightly modified, asks God to "strengthen . . .with the Holy Ghost the Comforter" those who had already received remission of sins and spiritual regeneration in baptism, and to "daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace," which are the gifts of the Spirit necessary for Christian maturity: *wisdom, understanding, counsel*, "*ghostly strength*" (fortitude), *knowledge*, godliness, and holy fear. Though accepting much of the critique of confirmation found among other reformers, and their positive program for its reform, Cranmer does not altogether abandon the rationale of Faustus and the medieval doctors.

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2. Cranmer: *Works: Miscellaneous Writings and Letters* (Parker Society, 1846), p. 86.

3. In the American colonies, where there were no Anglican bishops in residence before the Revolution, and few could manage the journey to England to be confirmed, this instruction was modified. It seems the terms of the rubric were applied to permit the admission to communion of those instructed in the Anglican church catechism.

The introductory rubrics to the rite of Confirmation provide an extensive rationale for the service:

> This order is most convenient to be observed for diverse considerations. First, because that when children come to the years of discretion, and have learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in baptism, they may then themselves with their own mouth, and with their own consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same: and also promise that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe and keep such things, as they by their own mouth and confession have assented unto.

This is Confirmation, the occasion for those baptized as infants to "ratify and confirm" the promises of faith made at their Baptism. Self-conscious appropriation of a personal faith cannot be left out of Christian initiation.

The second "consideration", however, speaks of confirmation in the older sense, as the "confirming and strengthening" of those in spiritual combat, membership in the Church militant:

> Secondly, forasmuch as Confirmation is administered to them that be Baptized, that by imposition of hands and prayer they may receive strength and defense against all temptations to sin and the assaults of the world, and the Devil: it is most meet to be ministered when children come to that age, that partly by the frailty of their own, partly by the assaults of the world and the Devil, they begin to be in danger to fall into sundry kinds of sin.

This is, in modified form, the rationale of Faustus of Riez; confirmation of being "armed for the strife." The Prayer Books ascribe to Baptism the making of a "soldier of Christ" who is signed with the sign of the cross" in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to remain Christ's faithful soldier and servant all his life long." Yet there is still a place, it seems, in Confirmation, in virtue of the Church's prayer, for the soldier to be strengthened and "armed for the strife," with gifts of the Holy Ghost for the battle that is his by Baptism. Though Confirmation is not properly speaking a Sacrament of Christ, yet it nonetheless functions very much like a Sacrament, an outward sign of an inward grace, and a means of receiving it.

For Richard Hooker, writing after the dust had settled, there is recognition that the post-Reformation practice of the Church of England differed from that of the early Christian centuries, but he understood these changes as a faithful re-interpretation of Apostolic tradition under changed circumstances:

> Sometime the cause of severing Confirmation from Baptism was in the parties that received Baptism being infants, at which age they might be very well admitted to live in the family; but because to fight in the army of God [note the reference to the rationale of Faustus of Riez!], to discharge the duties of a Christian man, to bring forth the fruits and do the work of the Holy Ghost, their time of ability was not yet come (so that Baptism were not deferred), there could be stay of their Confirmation no harm ensue, but rather good. For by this means it came to pass that children, in expectation thereof, were seasoned with the principles of true religions before malice and corrupt examples depraved their minds, a good foundation was laid betimes for direction of the course of their whole lives, the seed of the Church of God was preserved sincere and sound, the prelates and fathers of God's family to whom the care of their souls belonged saw by trial and examination of them a part of their own heavy burden, discharged, reaped comfort by beholding the first beginning of true godliness in tender years, glorified him whose praise they found in the mouths of infants, and neglected not so fit opportunity of giving every fatherly encouragement and exhortation. Whereunto imposition of Hands and prayer being added, our warrant for the great good effect thereof is the same which Patriarchs Prophets Apostles, Fathers, and men of God have had for such particular invocations and benedictions as no man I suppose professing truth of religion will easily think to have been without fruit. " (*Laws*, Keble edition, vol. 2, pp. 344–345.)

Conclusions

Though not without complexity, the history and rationale of Confirmation as an element of Christian initiation is not without coherence either. From Faustus to Thomas to Calvin and Cranmer there is a recognition that the Spirit gives himself according to the development of moral discernment within the individual, and at the age of discretion a child attains to a new level of spiritual maturity. Faustus' insight "in baptism we are reborn for life; and we are confirmed after baptism for strife" informs Reformation theology. This also clearly indicates the theological distinction between the Church universal to which we become members at Baptism, and the Church militant here on earth, the visible Church to which we owe allegiance and obedience now. Without a conscious, willing and confessed faith full sacramental initiation into the fellowship and communion of Christ's Body, we have not taken advantage of the fullness of Christ's promise for his Church.

The author acknowledges gratefully his dependence upon the papers of R. D. Crouse and W. J. Hankey in the Atlantic Theological Conference report on Christian Initiation, published by St. Peter's Publications, Charlottetown, P. E. I.

Traditional Prayers and the Prayer Tradition

The Book of Common Prayer as an Example of Christian Worship

The history of Christian worship is an area of theological scholarship that has made great advances over the last several centuries. We know the history of all language traditions in the Church much more fully than we did before. This allows us to better understand what the Christian past can tell us about its nature and about what we can reasonably expect to result from the things that we choose to do.

To begin with, the Christian liturgical tradition is multi-form as far back as we can see. Though, logically, Christian worship must have begun, at least as far as the Eucharist is concerned, with the group centered around the 11 surviving disciples in the period right after Easter Sunday, we have no record of actual Christian worship practice before the church had already begun to perform its liturgy in multiple languages. The scholarly search for a pristine example of unadulterated Christian worship failed due to a lack of data to examine. Every indication leads us to the conclusion that it was not until several generations after the legalization of Christianity in the Roman Empire that the Church began to write its worship services down. As a matter of fact, we have every reason to think that full worship services were not written down until some centuries after that process began.

What this means is that, by the time we have worship services to examine, we are looking at the product of centuries of development within distinct language traditions. There is no such thing as "Christian" worship that survives for us to examine. There is only Greek or Syriac or Latin or Ethiopian or Coptic or Armenian worship (to call the role of the earliest traditions). These traditions all have certain central elements in common but they also have characteristics that are, as far as our information shows, original and distinct. The obvious conclusion to draw from this is that the Church lives in distinct cultures in ways that make sense to the Christians who belong to those cultures. There is no way to abstract the Church from its varied natural habitats and there is no way to abstract something that can be called "pure Christian liturgy" from the practical, varied history of the Church.

What does this mean, as far as the Book of Common Prayer is concerned? Before the decision was made in England to translate the Church's liturgy into English, the Crown had already commanded in 1543 that worship in England be regularized and standardized on the basis of the Sarum Rite, that is, the liturgy in use in the Cathedral of Salisbury (Sarum).[1] This was also the period, of course, in which the Roman Catholic Church, at the Council of Trent (1545–1563), did much to flatten out the existing variety of worship in the churches over which the Pope held sway and in which the Protestant churches, as they moved their liturgies into local languages, reshaped and, sometimes, wrote from scratch their new worship texts. The Book of Common Prayer, when seen against the backdrop of the period in which it was produced, firmly straddles the two poles of Latin Christendom in the sixteenth century. It is based largely on a pre-existing liturgy, as the Roman Catholics were doing on their side, and it moves into the language spoken by the people, as the Protestant traditions were doing on their side. The Book of Common Prayer is firmly within the Latin Christian stream in all of this. So, is the Book of Common Prayer traditional or is it innovative? What can it show us about the nature of the nascent English language Anglican tradition?

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The most characteristic aspect of Latin Christian liturgy, the larger tradition in the midst of which the Book of Common Prayer arises, is the Collect. No other Christian liturgical tradition has collects. There are Latin collects that survive from the 300s, close to the time at which the Church in Rome began to celebrate its main service in Latin. (This fell during the 380s, much later than people usually realize.) Because many of the collects in the Book of Common Prayer are direct translations of these very early and characteristic Christian prayers, I consider the Book of Common Prayer, itself, to be deeply rooted in the Latin liturgical tradition. The collect for Easter day, for example, is translated into English from the Sarum Missal:

> Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

On the other hand, some of these collects were written directly by Archbishop Cranmer. An example is the collect for Ash Wednesday:

> Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee,

1. P 23 in Gordon Jeanes, "Cranmer and Common Prayer," 21–38 in Charles Hefling, Cynthia Shattuck (ed.), *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The shape of these two prayers (the address to God, the description of Him based on certain of His characteristics, the petition to Him based on those characteristics and the closing formula) are closely parallel and are both good representatives of the classical form of the Latin collect. If we take these two prayers as a focused example of the nature of the Book of Common Prayer and its place in the Tradition, I think we can draw certain conclusions.

In the parts of Latin liturgy that are the most characteristic, the collects, the Book of Common Prayer is very traditionally "Latin." Cranmer's translation of the Sarum Rite rooted the Book of Common Prayer's liturgy in traditional Latin soil but, like all of the liturgies remade during the Reformation period, including the Roman Catholic Tridentine Mass, the Anglican Book of Common Prayer also gained new material. It is a very important point that not all of the "new" material in the Book of Common Prayer was new in form. The new collect for the season of Lent, with its emphasis on penitence rather than fasting, reflects very well the reformed theological sensibilities of Archbishop Cranmer, but the shape and expression of the prayer that he wrote are entirely traditional.[2]

Because of the particular character of the liturgical changes that many Western churches underwent in the 1960s and 70s, almost all Western Christians assume that "change" means innovation. There is no logical reason for this to be true. All of the parts of Latin Christianity underwent great liturgical change in the sixteenth century but not all of these changes were innovative. In the same way, many Christian bodies in North America during the twentieth century underwent great liturgical change (the number of Eastern Orthodox bodies moving their worship into English, which had never been done before, is a very good example), but not all of those changes were innovative, either. If we focus just on the question of the collects in the Book of Common Prayer, choosing them because collects are uniquely characteristic of Latin Christianity, we can see that it is possible to view the Book of Common Prayer, even at the time of its creation, as a very traditional expression of the Latin Christian liturgical tradition designed to meet new circumstances and new theological emphases.

Certainly, we cannot properly understand the Book of Common Prayer unless we realize what it preserves (and how) and what kind of changes it actually embodies. If we are to come to an intelligent conclusion about how best to protect and proclaim the Book of Common Prayer in the present and in the future, we must, first, understand its own nature properly. Some parts of the Book of Common Prayer are immensely old. Some of the newer things in it are immensely old in form but more recent in content. Does this make them traditional or non-traditional? Now, we have begun to think about the right questions!

2. cf. Massey Hamilton Shepherd, Jr., *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary,* (New York: Oxford University Press 1950), 124.

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Bargaining with Pluralism

Webber's Reductive Method

Sydney Nichole Thomas

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In the last issue, I briefly noted the sociologist Peter Berger's influential typology of liberal theology, which he describes in his 1979 work, *The Heretical Imperative*. Berger proposes that theological responses to the modern situation can be characterized as being of three types: deductive, inductive, and reductive.[1] Deductive theology tends to reassert the authority of religious tradition in the face of modern secularity. Inductive theology, by contrast, turns to human experience as the ground of all religious affirmations. At the far left of Berger's typology is reductive theology, which translates the religious tradition into terms acceptable to modern secularity.

Today I particularly wish to focus on reductive theology as expressed by one of its late Anglican proponents. Berger posits in *The Heretical Imperative* and in his earlier book, *Rumour of Angels* (1969), that modernity brings about an adversary relationship between the Christian religion and the dominant secularity of society. The reductive mind responds to this changed situation by seeking to translate the essential message of Christianity into modern terms. Berger proffers as an example the work of the Lutheran theologian Rudolf Bultmann, who interpreted in existential terms

1. Peter L. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities of Religious Affirmation*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1980), 91.

what he believed to be the essential Gospel message. Bultmann crafted a theology without reference to heaven and hell, the resurrection, or the second coming, because he was sure that no man surrounded by modern scientific advancements could hold these incredible claims, an "ancient mythology," as he called it.[2] Yet Bultmann believed that God's word to man was hidden within the Biblical mythology, and must be released through the process of demythologization, a method of interpretation for the modern church. In such a fashion, Berger writes, the reductive theologian perceives the faith tradition as no longer affirmable "except by way of a comprehensive translation into the categories of modern consciousness."[3]

Six years after Berger set forth his typology, the Anglican theologian Dr. Robert E. Webber wrote the well-known *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail* (1985), in which he described his conversion from Baptist roots to the Episcopal Church. Webber became a Wheaton professor and authored over 40 books on Anglicanism, proposing throughout his work a synthesis of ancient and contemporary Christian resources. His vision for this synthesis, an "ancient-future faith," is developed in later works such as *Ancient-Future Faith, Ancient-Future Evangelism, Ancient-Future Time, The Younger Evangelicals*, and *The Divine Embrace*.[4] Webber's ancient-future faith is an example of what Peter Berger would call reductive, because it seeks to salvage Christianity by placing it within the contemporary pluralistic framework.

Let us consider Dr. Webber's work from within Berger's typology. The question that drives Webber's project is, "Where do we go to find a Christianity that speaks meaningfully to a postmodern world?" In *Ancient-Future Faith* (1999), he explains his fundamental assumption that varying expressions of Christianity are determined by the culture into which they are born.

> Throughout history Christians have always struggled to incarnate the faith in each particular culture. Consequently, a style of Christianity successful in one era changes as another era begins. Those who remain committed to the old style of faith subsequently freeze that style in the particular culture in which it originated. This process accounts for much of the diversity we have in the faith today and allows us to understand that the differences among Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant groups are largely due to the cultural styles in which they have become embedded.[5]

Webber is searching for a viable Christianity in today's culture, relevant to the rising generation. He critiques "Enlightenment Christianity," noting that an individualistic view of the self, propositions, rationalistic claims of certainty, and the like are increasingly unfashionable today. "The Christian faith incarnated into the modern culture, with its philosophical assumption of a mechanistic world understood through empirical methodology, is eroding," he says. "The cultural revolutions are in the process of ushering us into a new era." The new postmodern era emphasizes mystery, holism, narrative, and a subjective understanding of God. Such a generation is "more attracted to an inclusive view of the faith than an exclusive view, more concerned with unity than diversity, more open to a dynamic, growing faith than to a static fixed system, and more visual than verbal with a high level of tolerance and ambiguity."[6]

Having diagnosed the situation (though one could quarrel with such sweeping historical generalizations), Webber portrays post-modernity as a thoroughgoing improvement upon what preceded it. The shift, "instead of necessitating a new theology, makes the historic and traditional theology of the church relevant once again."[7] Interestingly, he perceives elements of ancient Christianity as increasingly attractive to a postmodern audience, citing the postmodern longing for mystery, experience of worship, and holistic spirituality. In this discussion it becomes clear that while Webber appeals to historic Christianity, he does so upon the grounds of its perceived cultural relevance and appeal, rather than its truth or reasonableness.[8] Christianity must be palatable to today's generation, a generation with a taste for old things, which is seeking a faith characterized by unity and openness. Webber believes that this relevance is essential to Christianity's survival—mere "historical restitutionism" will not suffice.[9]

"We are able to communicate classical Christianity within a postmodern view of reality in such a way that its truth value remains consistent with the original," Webber writes, supporting his claim with the assumption that classical Christianity was shaped in a secular and relativistic society much like our own. In *Ancient-Future Faith,* Webber argues that ancient and contemporary theologies share a mutual concern with unity and openness. "The early tradition of the

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2. Certain aspects of Christianity are "incredible to men and women today because for them the mythical world picture is a thing of the past." See Rudolf Karl Bultmann, "The New Testament and Mythology," in *The New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*, ed. Schubert M. Ogden, (USA: Fortress Press, 1984), 3.

3. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative,* 89. Reductive theology in its most extreme forms becomes a secular theology such as most political, liberationist, black, and feminist theologies, which aim to translate biblical teaching into modern teaching and thereby to serve a fully secular, political agenda.

4. In 2006, Webber also organized the "Call to an Ancient-Evangelical Future," which challenges evangelicals to restore the primacy of the biblical narrative and explore ecumenical implications for the church.

5. Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World,* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 13.

6. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith*, 27.

7. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith,* 22.

8. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative,* 102.

9. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith*, 30.

faith dealt with basic issues," he writes, and it "was concerned with unity, open and dynamic, mystical, relational, visual, and tangible."[10] In *Ancient-Future Worship* (2008), he instructs liturgically-minded readers, "Put yourself into the ancient mind-set that allows for narrative, mystery, and typology." This "moves us away from our dependence on modern modes of thinking and corresponds more with a postmodern mind-set."[11]

First, is Webber correct in his assessment of ancient Christianity? His assessment is vague. Webber betrays a lack of critical distance from postmodern thought, never providing a historical basis for his sweeping claims that the first five centuries were marked by the categories of narrative and experience, by a "story-formed understanding of God's work in history."[12] The historical record of Patristic debates makes it far more plausible that the early church was concerned, not with tolerance and ambiguity, but with right doctrine.

Webber has bargained away, in the mode of reductive theology, historical accuracy. Second, he has bargained away coherence. He takes the Patristics in a highly selective manner, focusing on what is useful to his argument, ignoring the whole of the patristic corpus central to the Anglican Reformation. Webber leaps over the Reformers. He exchanges the substitutionary atonement followed by the Reformers, for example, for Gustaf Aulen's 'Christus Victor' theory.[13]

But the picking and mixing does not stop with doctrine. In *Ancient-Future Worship*, Webber encourages Evangelicals to blend contemporary worship styles with elements from the Book of Common Prayer and the Roman Missal. Our aim in the twenty-first century is "to recast our worship toward the full narrative of God's story."[14] By blending the Roman Catholic, Evangelical, and Charismatic traditions, Webber celebrates the convergence of traditions as an ideal future synthesis. He clearly hopes to promote an imaginary, primitive form of Christianity through the convergence of these traditions, thereby denying respect to each one.[15]

Most obviously, the Evangelical and Charismatic traditions understand justification as received through faith alone. The Roman Catholic teaching is distinct from that of the other two regarding the role of the priest and tradition. Charismatic teaching differs from Evangelical and Roman Catholic teachings on the gifts of the Spirit. Can all of this diversity be explained as reflecting a specific cultural context? Webber's attempt at primitive purity is incoherent and a sop to modern pluralism which demands we avoid hard questions about the nature of that truth which endures from generation to generation.

Translating Christianity into pluralistic categories may have short-lived gains, but the rendition is rough at best, and almost certainly distorts and diminishes the Christian teaching of all historic traditions rooted in the ancient Church.

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10. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith*, 7, 27.

11. Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 131.

12. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship,* 172.

13. On this topic see Gavin Dunbar's article, "The Victory of Christ and the Mystery of the Cross," in *Anglican Way* 36, no. 1 (2013): 4–6.

14. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith,* 17. Also called the Three Streams movement, this convergence theory was articulated as early as the 1950s, notably in the 1984 essay, "Three Streams, One River," by Richard Lovelace.

15. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship,* 89. However, Lord Merlin Sudeley argues that if we made a complete and honest archaeological revival of primitive worship practices, they would seem strange and severe today. See "Would the Liturgy and Customs of the Early Church be Unpopular Today?" in *Faith and Worship*, (The Prayer Book Society UK, Easter 2013), 48.

The Rise of the "Nones"

(and How Anglicans Can Respond)

Barton Gingerich

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American churches are losing their young people. This trend was evidenced most recently in a 2012 Pew Forum study titled "'Nones' on the Rise: One-in-Five Adults Have No Religious Affiliation." The summary of the 80-page report posits, "The number of Americans who do not identify with any religion continues to grow at a rapid pace. One-fifth of the U.S. public—and a third of adults under 30—are religiously unaffiliated today, the highest percentages ever in Pew Research Center polling."

Researchers use the label of "nones," or "religiously unaffiliated," to clarify that these young people are not falling into hardened agnosticism or atheism. Instead, they often describe themselves as "spiritual, but not religious," perhaps echoing the common mantra that "Christianity isn't a religion, it's a relationship." As Ross Douthat argues in his latest book *Bad Religion,* America suffers not from a lack of spirituality but rather an influx of self-determined, self-actualizing heresies. Mainline Protestantism, once a bastion of orthodoxy and counterweight to spiritual outliers on the American religious landscape, has compromised on its Christian convictions and has

suffered an exodus in membership. Post-Vatican II Roman Catholicism likewise hemorrhages baptized members, even though the statistics are buoyed by the influx of Latin American immigrants. This is not simply a crisis in denominational loyalty. Non-denominational evangelicalism, once the refuge for dissident revivalist Protestant voices, is also starting to suffer membership loss. Youth raised in the mega-church culture seem almost as likely to leave the faith as any other kind of Christian. Even America's largest religious group, the Southern Baptist Convention, is starting to see its membership numbers plateau.

The Pew Forum cites four hypotheses for the rise of the nones: political backlash (especially against the "Religious Right"), delayed marriage, broad social disengagement (or the "bowling alone problem"), and secularization. The National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR) has engaged this question with more depth and promises fruitful answers to concerned church leaders. The NSYR, encapsulated in Christian Smith's 2005 tome *Soul Searching* and Kenda Creasy Dean's 2010 book *Almost Christian*, offers helpful insights to the problematic world of youth ministry.

Smith et al. noticed that this faith crisis is not simply one of popularity, but of kind. High schoolers, while calling themselves Christians at graduation, drop the label during the rigors of college. But their earlier convictions were not those of Christianity, but of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD). Smith and his colleague Melinda Lundquist Denton identified the core tenets of MTD:

1. A single god exists who created and ordered the cosmos.
2. This god wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other. Thou shalt not be a jerk.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy, which means feeling good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem. In Smith and Denton's words, God is seen as "something like a combination Divine Butler and Cosmic Therapist: he's always on call, takes care of any problems that arise, professionally helps his people to feel better about themselves, and does not become too personally involved in the process."[1]
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.

Even youth raised in church, Christian families, and Christian schools enunciated the precepts of MTD. Theirs was not a vocabulary (and thus not a consciousness) of the Incarnation, the Trinity, atonement, the resurrection of the dead, revelation, virtuous ethics, or the attributes of God.

How has this catechetical nightmare come about? Anyone in the church who works with the young can report that there is no dearth in strategies, funds, and gimmicks to attract and somehow retain the next generation of Christians. Youth ministers—including Anglicans—need to find the root causes for this rise in apostasy: current approaches fail to produce a common pattern of faithful Christian formation and commitment.

Kenda Dean has argued for a multi-layered assessment. First of all, many evangelical churches tend to separate youth from the rest of the congregation. The youth pastor—often an immature, goofy ecclesiastical parasite—manages an intricate cornucopia of entertainment, replete with video games, exciting music, comedic sermons, and attention-grabbing stunts (such as eating live goldfish). To be sure, the latter represent excesses. Nevertheless, once youth graduate high school or college, they are suddenly expected to join in with the rest of the grown-ups for a completely different kind of worship. Perplexed by this foreign (and often boring) order of service, young adults leave the church. Of course, many adult ministries engage in "juvenalization" in order to keep the younger hip members while impoverishing content for adults. But the fact remains that the Millennials are the most media-saturated generation this world has ever seen—even the wealthiest mega-churches can barely provide sufficient entertainment for connoisseurs.

Commodified evangelicalism describes the Christian life as exciting, radical, fun, compatible with the "American Dream," emotionally satisfying, and an all-around cure for personal ills. Expectations remain low. Radical individualism lies regnant throughout much of the theology taught to youth today, even by the would-be reformers. There is also the belief that the young lack the patience or interest for serious, intentional study of deep theological truths, much less the uncomfortable times of correction and exhortation. Perhaps. On the other hand, what else should people be doing in church?

According to the Pew Forum study, home life determines future faith commitments more than church structure and style. Even though children spend more and more time in the classroom, family remains the most powerful conduit for passing on religion. But what religion? There is the rub: parents who label themselves as Christians actually teach, believe, and practice MTD just like their children. At least the succeeding generation has the honesty to recognize inconsistency. As Dean said in a lecture at the 2012 C3 Conference, "Kids don't practice because we misunderstood what we've taught them."[2]

Anglicanism has all the tools and aims necessary to meet these challenges. The Anglican way is

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1. Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: the Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 165.

2. "C3 Conference Discusses Cultural Engagement," The Institute on Religion and Democracy, (March 6, 2012), http://www.theird.org/page.aspx?pid=2324.

supposed to be completely intergenerational—all ages participate in the sacramental life of the Church, local and universal. Common Prayer and Holy Communion do not mesh well with age-segregated services for good reason. The elderly, middle-aged, and young are all "invited to come to the feast." Ancient liturgy forms the young person's conception of worship on a noncognitive level. Why tailor worship to the desires of an irreverent culture and age?

The Book of Common Prayer assumes that catechesis is both a churchly and parental responsibility. The shorter daily offices for families in the Prayer Book demand that entire households are engaged in intercession, thanksgiving, Scripture reading, confession, and praise on a regular basis. Happily, families can engage in celebration or contrition during various church seasons, "redeeming the time." The Anglican catechism in historic prayer books is short, and easy to master with regular instruction.

Parents must lead in the discipleship of their children. Traditionally, family life sees the highs and lows of human character. Thus, it presents the best opportunities to graciously apply Law and Gospel in appropriate ways for young Christians. Priests may only see the best behavior on Sundays; it can be the rest of the week that truly forms a child's dispositions and character. As such, parents need to be growing in the wisdom, knowledge, and admonition of the Lord themselves if they are to teach their children the truths of the catholic faith. Families also need to be spending time together so that children can mimic the goals, behaviors, habits, and embodied beliefs of their forbears (a daunting thought, but this is what the family does!). The frenzied life of the contemporary age is a dangerous Siren song. Parents would rather renege on their duties, all with society's encouragement: make sure children are influenced most by their peers, tightly schedule organized activities, and plop the troublesome offspring in front of various screens.

The assumption behind rejecting this individualism and entertainment is the orthodox catholic sacramental vision, especially regarding baptism. For Anglicans—like the rest of Christianity for 1500 years—baptism marks entrance into church membership. This directly counters the individualism of credobaptism, which conflates originality and uniqueness with authenticity. The idea of taking on a heritage received from your forbears—and entering into that regardless of cognition and volition—is foreign if not abhorrent to most of nondenominational evangelicalism. Thus, catechism too often pivots on enticing offspring into "making a decision for Christ." Children raised in stable Christian homes may even envy the radical, attention-grabbing testimonies of repentant sinners and their former libertine lifestyles.

For the Anglican, however, regeneration (the new birth granted in baptism) should not be confused with conversion, which in turn may happen gradually or rapidly in life. If a child is baptized and therefore a Christian, parents must expect him to act like a Christian. Of course, the parent needs to embody sanctification as well if he wants to avoid being a hypocrite. And it is in corporate liturgy and common churchly life in which *everyone* learns to live in a truly Christ-like manner. There are no guaranteed techniques for keeping people in the fold. On the other hand, it is quite apparent that current popular attitudes remain deeply flawed.

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Educated for Prayer

Matthew Maule, Marketing and Member Services Associate, Christian Service Charities

> The endless cycle of idea and action
> Endless invention, endless experiment,
> Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;
> Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;
> Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.[1]

> O God of peace, who hast taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be our strength; By the might of thy Spirit lift us, we pray thee, to thy presence; where we may be still and know that thou art God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

My journey into the Anglican way was that of a ship struggling through tempestuous seas to reach a harbor. I was raised in an independent Baptist church that abhorred any notion of sacraments, liturgy, or spiritual authority. I was taught that salvation was achieved through my putting my trust completely and only in Christ's work on the cross. *I* was responsible for endowing the Christian life with meaning—baptism was merely *my* declaration of belief, communion was *merely* my attempt to remember Christ's death, faith was *my* response to God. None of these were to be seen as God's gracious gifts designed to bring me into closer communion with him. I was the arbiter of my fate and my eternal destiny rested in my hands.

Again and again, in the pulpit, on the radio, at summer camps, I was asked "are you sure you are going to heaven when you die? Have you trusted 100% in

1. T. S. Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays: 1909–1950* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1971), 96.

Christ?" Children I grew up with were "saved" again and again; they were then re-baptized since the previous occasions were meaningless. The message of "Christ Alone" was always combined with the necessity of making a "personal decision for Christ." The Christian life became a Sisyphean endeavor of trying to find meaning in myself and my response to God.

Then I attended college and everything became much more difficult. My college strove to instill in its students both contemporary evangelical faith and the classical liberal arts; the tension was soon reflected in my soul. I read Plato and Aristotle, St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and that conflict grew. Plato taught me that, "Education, then, is a matter of correctly disciplined feelings of pleasure and pain. But in the course of a man's life the effect wears off, and in many respects it is lost altogether."[2] There exists an external order to which I must submit my feelings and in which I find purpose. St. Augustine taught me that participating in that order is what it means to be virtuous, to be human.[3] Formerly, I had seen myself as imposing meaning on the world around me. These writers educated me, led me out of myself, into the world outside of me—the world that gave *me* meaning.

But, as I did not yet know how to reconcile reason and the faith I had been taught, I began to turn away from faith and tried fill the void with learning. This continued for 2 years until God sent me two guides. The first was a fellow student who had been on much the same path; through quiet conversations and gentle leading, and through his example as a learned man of strong faith, he turned my search for reason back to the search for faith.

At the same time, I discovered the 1928 edition of the Book of Common Prayer at a school retreat led by one of my professors. I began using it morning and evening; two weeks later, on Easter Sunday, I worshiped at my local Anglican parish (Church of Our Savior at Oatlands) and have been there ever since.

The Anglican way is a way of education through submission. The word "education" has its roots in the Latin *ex ducere*—to lead out. The Anglican way leads a person from the cave that is himself to the Son of God. I heard the "comfortable words our Savior Christ saith . . . 'Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.'" Meaning could be found, not by my will's imposition on the world, but in the Word of God and his gifts of word, sacrament, and the Church. As an Anglican, I submit myself to, and acknowledge my dependence upon, those three gifts for the maintenance of my faith.

The chief jewel of the Anglican way is the Book of Common Prayer. It assists the Church, and even a person outside the Church in my case, in the education of the soul by leading it from itself to fuller communion with Christ. As sinners, we do not know how to pray as we ought; the apostles themselves asked Christ to teach them how to pray. If prayer informs belief, then surely modes of prayer do as well. Growing up in churches that practiced only private or extemporary prayer reinforced the idea that meaning springs from the autonomous individual. Plato writes that allowing free innovation in education (he is addressing the rules of children's games) results in:

> [N]o permanent agreed standard of what is becoming or unbecoming either in deportment or their possessions in general; they worship anyone who is always introducing some novelty or doing something unconventional to shapes and colors and all that sort of thing. In fact, it's no exaggeration to say that this fellow is the biggest menace that can ever afflict a state, because he quietly changes the character of the young by making them despise old things and value novelty.[4]

One need only look at the rise of heterodoxy and the cult of personality in contemporary evangelicalism to see Plato's warning fulfilled.

The Book of Common Prayer, in its very title, points to the communion of believers in Christ stressed by the apostles and Church fathers. This communion is both historic and authoritative. I soon began to see that I could not truly become a person until I ceased being an individual and opened myself to that authority and teaching. Rather than endlessly inventing and experimenting in an attempt to bring meaning into my life, I could submit to the prayer book and find my soul oriented to God.

Through the Church, with its prayer book and sacraments, that orientation of the soul ceases to be a striving of the will and becomes, in stillness and quietness, an opening of the soul to the working of grace where faith and reason unite in contemplation of Love incarnate.

2. Plato, *The Laws*, III.

3. "So that it seems to be that it is a brief but true definition of virtue to say, it is the order of love[.]" Augustine, *City of God*, XV.22.

4. Ibid., 797b-c.

The Beauty that Beckons

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Beauty is vital to the human soul. As creatures made in the image of a beautiful God, we find that our natures respond to beauty profoundly. Beauty feeds our spirits by granting us a glimpse of the eternal through the temporal. It teaches us to love what is good and true by shaping our senses after divine order. In turn, it teaches us to love God Himself more fully as we learn to recognize and delight in what is truly lovely. For nearly all her history, the Church has recognized the importance of beauty and her duty to love, safeguard, and express it. In recent decades, however, the prevalent strain of modern evangelical Christianity has largely abandoned this pursuit. Several generations of Christians have emerged who have little concept of beauty's value in the Church, myself once included. When however I finally recognized the Church's crucial role in creating and defending beauty, both the Church and my own identity within her became clearer. I saw how the saints before me had preserved this beauty in church architecture, liturgy, vestments, and art. Through their faithful efforts, my faith found renewed strength and purpose. As I reflect on my journey into the folds of the historic Church, I see how beauty ultimately drew me to her threshold. In time, beauty's gracious insistence would compel me step through and embrace the catholic faith as preserved in Anglican tradition.

Indeed, many evangelicals would see an emphasis on beauty as a distraction from what is most important—that is, the winning of souls for heaven. With their fixation on the world to come, these Christians tend to slight the beauty of the present world. They fail to see it properly as a foretaste of God's own beauty. What results is a grave incongruity: these Christians imagine faith, hope, and love to issue from a fundamentally impoverished soul. There is perpetual outreach to make coverts and bring them to love God but all while neglecting the beauty which fosters a full and proper love. Though undeniably well-intentioned, the evangelical movement undercuts itself in the end.

This neglect of beauty does ultimately feed an aesthetic, however—the utilitarian "aesthetic of conversion." These evangelical congregations are content to operate out of windowless, cinderblock buildings so long as the gospel is being taught; church leaders are comfortable preaching in flip flops; the order of service is casually composed. Indeed, if the highest goal of the church is to make converts for the next world, there is little cause for beautiful architecture to create a place of belonging here in the present world. If the climax of the service is the sermon, there is little cause for beautiful vestments which celebrate the miracle of the Eucharist. Moreover, if the elements of the Eucharist are nothing but symbols, there is little cause for a beautiful liturgy which prepares the saints to receive the elements. With its utilitarian purposes, modern evangelicalism easily dispenses beauty as superfluous. At best, it affixes beauty as an ornament to the service to make its aims more palatable to the masses.

My first encounter of beauty in the Church would shake this outlook decisively. In the spring of 2010, I embarked on a singing tour of Europe with my college chorale, performing in numerous cathedrals throughout Munich, Salzburg, Vienna, and Venice. Amid the spires and stonework of these ancient houses of worship, I first recognized the Church as a thing of grace, order, and dignity. She was indeed beautiful. The architecture, liturgy, and vestments were interwoven with a precision and intention that transported the soul beyond the actual space into the eternal. Our chorale had the privilege of singing as part of the Mass on multiple occasions, so I found myself joining in this expression of beauty even as one experiencing it for the first time. The flood of beauty was overwhelming, and I was forced to reconsider the liturgical tradition. My evangelical upbringing had led me to assume that ritual equaled lifelessness and that a liturgical church was necessarily a dead church. In these cathedrals, however, the force of beauty—beauty not in spite of ritual, but *through* ritual—was so vivacious that I had to reconsider.

It was several months after returning from Europe that I first attended an Anglican church (Church of Our Savior at Oatlands, Virginia). Once again, I saw the grace of beauty at work. Here was not the majesty of a European cathedral, but the simple beauty of a faithful parish housed in an old, redbrick building, rich in history, nestled in the Virginian countryside. I attended these services for some time but merely as an observer. As the months progressed, however, I came to see that I could no longer seek Anglicanism merely as an aesthetic experience. To do so was to slip into the trap of spiritual consumerism—the very utilitarianism I was trying to shake. Participation in the Anglican liturgy (specifically the 1928 Book of Common Prayer) demanded more than a passive speaking of words, and I could not explicate the beauty of the Anglican service from Anglicanism itself. Here in this tradition of English worship was the catholic faith both preserved and bequeathed, and out of this good and true heritage sprung forth its beauty. The Book of Common Prayer was not a collection of prayers and services that people had "beautified" to make more appealing. There was no utilitarian motive present at

all; beauty itself was the reason. The dignity and grace of Anglican architecture and liturgy was the natural outgrowth of Anglican doctrine, seen especially in its sacramentalism. In time, I would come to understand Anglicanism not simply as another flavor of Christianity but as an authoritative heritage of faith. It was not a boneless fiber I could bend to fancy or an aesthetic experience merely to consume. It was a defined method of being, a deliberate life of love to both God and neighbor, a specific way of gratitude, a special manifestation of grace—and it was good, right, and proper that I should enter into it.

In the end, I was won over by this simple revelation: Anglicanism was beautiful and strove to convey beauty because its doctrine compelled it naturally. The grace of God was seeping through the seams of Creation, and the historic Church was celebrating, reinforcing, and illuminating this through its expressions of beauty. Thus, I began a long study of the Prayer Book and historical Anglicanism. After much contemplation and discussion with friends (to whom I am much indebted), I gratefully stepped into the Anglican heritage, ultimately to be confirmed last autumn.

It was beauty that beckoned me deeper into the faith, exposing the deficiencies of modern evangelical Christianity and pushing me to seek out historic Christianity as preserved in Anglicanism. Though there was no point in which I relinquished my childhood faith, Anglican doctrine both illuminated and strengthened this gift of faith. Anglicanism gave me a proper understanding of the sacraments and the sacramental nature of the world—that is, how heavenly grace is being continually conferred through the physical substance of creation. In this, Anglicanism opened my eyes to the inscrutable love of God. I never doubted His love as such, but it was not something I fully recognized until coming under the historic faith. The workings of divine love are so much more distinct to me as I participate in the Eucharistic feast every Sunday, and my eyes now recognize the sacramental nature of the world even as I live day to day. This continues to be the chief blessing of Anglicanism, and the culmination of beauty's gracious pull upon me.

My Journey to the Anglican Church

Ben Garner, Technical Assistant, Mars Hill Audio

In the thirteenth century, St. Bonaventure wrote a work entitled *The Mind's Journey to God.* What follows is an account of my own mind's journey over the past few years. The journey is far from complete; the mind journeys on, never to reach its goal short of the glories of heaven. This account details in particular the aspects that led me to the Anglican Church.

I begin the story of my mind's journey with my arrival at Patrick Henry College, the institution at which I would spend four years studying. Like many—if not most—of us at school, I arrived on campus replete with experience from the evangelical realm of Christianity. My father was a Southern Baptist minister for much of my childhood, so I was very well-versed in all things Baptist, but quite ignorant of any other church traditions.

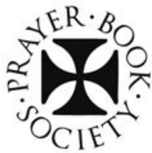
Throughout high school I began to develop a distinct apathy towards anything "religious," and I calculated that, given my current trajectory, once I got through college I would probably fall away from the faith, never to give it much thought thereafter. Attending PHC proved to be just the encouragement I needed to pay a bit more attention to my spiritual life. I was surrounded by young people my age who were extremely enthusiastic about their faith. But as I struggled to improve my faith, to be enthusiastic, I found it increasingly difficult. I learnt more about virtue from Plato and Aristotle than I did from college worship, and my soul was lifted far more by Beethoven and Rachmaninoff than it was by many of the hymns and praise songs we were singing in chapel.

During my sophomore year I encountered the writings of Soren Kierkegaard, which is a dangerous thing to happen to a confused college student intent on figuring out Christianity. I immediately fell in love with his thought, and even flattered myself to think that, in a way, I was following in his footsteps; standing outside the realm of American Christianity and crafting my own Christianity for myself.

I later realized that I had only substituted one subjective, individualistic Christianity for another. If all Christianity is subjective, it is a desperate, lonely theology, based mainly on despair. I thought that there must be Truth out there; Truth that I was not forced to hold subjectively, as simply my own perception of Truth.

At the same time, however, I was also coming to the understanding that Truth cannot be thought of as strictly objective, any more than it can be thought subjective. To make Truth simply an object is to make God Himself an object. It is to summon Him to questioning; to demand of Him to give His reasons for His Being, and to think of Truth in these terms, I finally realized, is entirely backward. Truth is God and God, not man, is the measure and judge of all things; the Lord of Truth calls *us* to the witness stand and demands of us that we give our reasons.

Even less are we here to shop around, as if we were in a supermarket of worldviews or values, putting each one to the test and then selecting the best one we can find. To approach Truth in this manner is to



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hear the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind, saying: "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me." Another verse in the same vein, often-quoted but I think perhaps often-misunderstood, is this one: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." It is the glory of God which is our standard; beauty itself weighs us in the balance.

It was out of these discoveries about the nature of Truth that I began to understand the necessity of the Church in this modern age. It offered me a refuge from endless subjectivity. One of the questions that also brought me to understand the need for a church was one that had puzzled me for some time: the question of salvation. How did it work, and what was salvation really all about?

I found the standard formulations I was accustomed to hearing growing up to be lacking; these generally tended towards a mixture of two views. The first is to view salvation as a thing, an object. This view implies that our salvation is something that we "get" or "receive" at a certain point in time, and from then on we "have" salvation. But this view of salvation as an object makes it merely a sort of Golden Ticket to hand to God at the end of your life to gain admission into heaven.

The second view was no better. This view portrayed salvation as something that happened to you at a certain point in time; it was, in effect, an event, an event that would change the rest of your life, but a single event nonetheless. My salvation began long ago, and it will not be finished until the bridegroom finally embraces his bride at the marriage feast of the Lamb. It was accomplished by Christ, and the Church is the Bride of Christ.

If we are to be rescued from this modern age, this increasingly individualistic and self-centered society, then we must be separated from it. In fact, we need an ark that will carry us above the floodwaters and deliver us safely to the other shore. The Church, I would like to suggest, is an ark and was given to us for just such a purpose.

For a long time now, American Christianity of the kind in which I was raised has emphasized the individual aspects of Christianity at the expense of the visible role of the Church. My prayer for myself, for all of you and for those who come after us, is that we would never cease exploring, never stop seeking out truth, but that the end of all our exploring would be to arrive back where we started. As T. S. Eliot, the Christian poet, expressed it: "We shall not cease from exploration/And the end of all our exploring/ Will be to arrive where we started/ And know the place for the first time." Back to a Church, built by Christ Himself on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, and that we would know it as if for the first time.

What I was taught as a child is true, only Christ can save us. But the Church is the Bride of Christ, and we would do well to attend to the tangible aspects of our salvation, the means through which Christ might choose to save us. I found an Ark capable of bearing me safely above the flood of modernity in the Anglican Church. May we all find such safety and salvation in the Ark of the historic and apostolic Church.

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