



Latimer Focus

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Rev. Dave Clancey

Editorial

Not many people like hearing themselves speak. Let me clarify - what I mean is that not many people like listening to recordings of their own speech, hearing the intonation and tone of their voices.

When people hear recordings of themselves for the first time they invariably utter something like 'I had no idea I sounded like that!' Something similar happens when someone repeats or articulates our views or ideas. We then get to hear what they've heard from us - we get to listen to our own voice. It can be a great way to hear if we've been able to communicate properly; it allows us to understand how others have heard us; although it can lead to a similar response - 'I had no idea I sounded like that!'

In recent weeks an interim report has been released by the Working Group set up by the archbishops to find a structure for our church which will allow for the blessing of same-sex relationships. There are many good things about this: the Group have reported in a timely manner; they have released an interim report which allows for comment and feedback; the report is clear and concise; and is a genuine attempt at a way forward. They are to be thanked for their hard work.

The Working Group sought comment and input from many people in our church about their views on the blessing of same-sex relationships, and their report reflects this. For those of us who are conservative on these issues, it allows us to hear our own voice reflected back, and gives us opportunity to consider how we have been heard. This is not the space for detailed discussion of the report, but there are two features of the report which are worth observing.

The first is an observation of how our 'position' is perceived. Early on in the report, the following statement is made:

It rapidly became clear that there were not just two theological convictions or integrities but a widely-held range of beliefs about marriage, same gender relationships, and blessing of same gender couples who had been civilly married, about social justice, the unity of the Church, forgiveness, redemption and grace. What was equally clear is that the Christian people holding these very differing beliefs had prayerfully and diligently studied the scriptures and were invariably driven by their desire to do what was pleasing to God.¹

For a long time the discussion about blessing same-sex relationships has focused on 'two integrities' - i.e., those who wish to see blessings in our church and those who don't. This report shifts from this binary approach to instead propose a spectrum of beliefs. It states:

The mandate talks of two integrities but it is more than that - there is a spectrum of views and so there needs to be a range of possible ways forward.²

There's no doubt that all of us will place ourselves somewhere on a spectrum when it comes to our degree of understanding or engagement with this particular issue. And our experiences, character, and belief structures will impact how we engage as well.

But the talk of 'spectrum' also opens up the idea that there are 'ends' of the spectrum, and that there is a middle of the spectrum. Though the report doesn't mention it, presumably one end of the spectrum are those who want full recognition and

¹ Background and Mandate, *Interim Report of the Motion 29 Working Group*, p 4-5.

² Recommendations, *Interim Report of the Motion 29 Working Group*, p 9.

inclusion of those in committed same-sex relationships, (i.e., not only blessing, but marriage and ordination), and at the other end of the spectrum are those who want no recognition or inclusion (i.e., the church should stay as it is). That's how spectrums work. Consequently, the 'middle' are those who want not everything, but not nothing (which is precisely what the report proposes).

Are we therefore those who are advocating for exclusion and rejection? Are we trying to say to people who are same-sex attracted that there is no place in the church for them? I pray we are not.

Let's reflect on this a little. Is that second end of the spectrum our voice? It is certainly true that the Latimer Fellowship as a whole would want the church to stay as it is. But are we therefore those who are advocating for exclusion and rejection? Are we trying to say to people who are same-sex attracted that there is no place in the church for them? I pray we are not. We want to be a fellowship who are saying that all people are welcome. For the church is the place where the gospel of the Lord Jesus is proclaimed and lived out: where sinners find forgiveness, the broken find healing, the marginalised find welcome. Where all of us come to Christ and hear from him that we are sinners and broken, and he is willing to forgive and restore us.

The church is the place where we seek to proclaim and live out this gospel, where Christ both defines our sin and distributes his solution. All Christians, whatever their sexual orientation, are to heed God's call for holiness and to gather to his Son in humility,

thankfulness and praise. Therefore we welcome everyone, and together live under God's word which defines sin and calls us to discipleship. I pray that all non-Christian gay and lesbian couples would be welcome in our churches, and that they hear the call to repent and believe every bit as much as non-Christian heterosexual couples who are 'happily married' with 2.4 kids. In this debate, the 'other end' of the spectrum from inclusion is not actually exclusion. If our position is being heard as exclusion then we are being misunderstood, and we need to work harder to clearly express what we believe Jesus' call to discipleship looks like.

And that's the underlying concern in this language of spectrum of beliefs. For the idea of a spectrum implies extremes at either end (and consequentially a moderate middle). To be clear, the Working Group never uses this language in their report, but I am just as aware that this language is being used in the wider discussion in our church. We are told that there are those on either extreme, and some in the middle. But is the second end of the Spectrum actually an 'extreme'? We're told it is, but let's pause and reflect on this. This 'extreme' is what all office holders - from archbishops to vestry members - have signed up to. This 'extreme' is the current doctrine of our church which states that marriage is between a man and a woman and that all sexual activity outside of such a marriage is to be repented of. This 'extreme' is the settled and enshrined doctrine of our church and has been since the establishment of our denomination. To say nothing of all other Protestant, Roman and Orthodox branches of the Christian church. Let's be honest - it's not an extreme. It's the centre. It's normal, mainstream, traditional, orthodox, historic Christianity. And should be spoken of as such.

A second observation worth reflecting upon (albeit more briefly) is how our ‘conviction’ is understood in the Report. At the heart of the Report is the desire expressed by General Synod that our church should be one where same-sex blessings are undertaken. This desire requires an ecclesiastical structure which will allow such blessings to take place (or not) and an environment where the theological convictions of those performing those blessings (or not) are safeguarded.

The heart of the matter is expressed thus: “In order for each viewpoint to safely co-exist within this Church each needs to acknowledge that the other must have freedom of conscience and action that aligns with their theological convictions.”³

According to the report a conviction is protected so long as a priest or bishop doesn’t have to do anything that they don’t want to. Again, let us reflect on this. One conviction believes that the church should permit the blessing of same-sex marriages, and that their conviction is protected as long as they are given permission to undertake such blessings. What of the other conviction? The report assumes that this other conviction is protected so long as priests and bishops don’t have to undertake such blessings.

But is this the ‘conviction’ of conservative Anglicans? I would suggest it isn’t. It is certainly valuable to have protection from having to undertake blessings when one believes they are wrong (and one area where the report could be strengthened is by providing more assurance with regard to the protections and requirements of the Human Rights Act). But the heart of the conviction

The heart of the problem is therefore shown: One structure may be able to hold together the different actions of individuals, but it cannot hold together two convictions that are themselves mutually exclusive.

for conservative Anglicans is not so much that they themselves shouldn’t undertake such blessings, but that such blessings should not be undertaken in the Anglican church at all! The Report has collapsed a broader conviction about what our church should do, down into the simple actions of individuals. This holds true for one conviction but cannot hold true for the other. The heart of the problem is therefore shown: One structure may be able to hold together the different actions of individuals, but it cannot hold together two convictions that are themselves mutually exclusive.

The Motion 29 Interim Working Group Report allows us to hear how we have been heard. Because it is an interim report, it also allows us to be heard again. Evangelicals need to keep talking with compassion, clarity, and conviction - to their clergy, to their Standing Committees, to their Bishops - about their thoughts and concerns with regard to the report, so that the Working Group might continue to seek to provide a structure in which the conviction of Evangelicals can be upheld. Above all, we need to be speaking to the Lord of the church that he might cause us all to stand firmly on his Word.

³ Section E1, *Interim Report of the Motion 29 Working Group*, p11.



Rev. Mark Hood

Putting the fat pastures of the soul to work – Thomas Cranmer’s bold biblical program

Our protestant heritage: Celebrating the 1517 Reformation with Latimer Fellowship. Mark Hood’s address to the Latimer Lunch, March 2017

GOING BACK TO GO FORWARD

At our church last week, we had speaking to us the newly appointed CEO of the Christian ministry Hagar come to speak to us. She said that coming into her role, one of her first moves was to go back to the original impulse, instinct and motivating driver for the ministry. She wanted to honour the foundations laid and understand the direction set, such that she might better chart the course of the organization going forward.

In this 500th year anniversary of the Reformation we’re aiming to do something similar. We’re returning to our protestant heritage as Anglicans, in order that our own labours might be energised and enhanced and focused as we go forward with the gospel in our churches, city and nation.

This going back in order to go forward is itself a characteristic Reformation move. The latin slogan *ad fontes*, or ‘back to the sources’ captures the sense. It captures something of why Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenburg, Germany in protest against Roman Catholic indulgences. He had gone back to the Bible and learned there that heaven could not be bought with money.

Going back in order to go forward was one of the key drivers at work in the English Reformation, especially among Anglican reformers that are obviously near and dear to us here in Christchurch - Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer (with public squares carrying their names). Today I want to go back to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer’s great desire and bold agenda to have God’s people putting Holy Scripture to work in daily life.

THE STATE OF THE BIBLE TODAY?

By way of warming up to this topic, I wonder what report you would give of the state of the Bible today? What is the status of the Bible in our churches? In our families? In our one to one ministries? In our groups? What is the state of the Bible amongst our clergy? With our Bishop and this Diocese? With our Archbishops and this Province?

What is the state of the Bible in New Zealand today? In our schools and our city? Our nation and its leaders?

What is the state of the Bible today?

In Cranmer’s day of the 1530s the people did not have a Bible. Being in Latin, it was well beyond most, if not all, people. One writer suggests¹ the life of Christianity in Cranmer’s early years was characterized by fear: fear of having to work off your sins in purgatory after one died, of which church teaching on indulgences thrived; fear of the priest – who could give or withhold forgiveness and was taught to be *the* channel of sacramental grace; fear of Christ, who was depicted in those doom pictures above the sanctuary as a terrible judge more than a compassionate Saviour. Fear that was built, at least according to this writer, on an ignorance of the Bible. In contrast, praise God that we have the Bible in English, and a much clearer picture of the compassion of Jesus. But what is the state of the Bible in NZ? This was the kind of question that drove Cranmer’s bold agenda. Before we come to that agenda, it is worth picking up a brief sketch of his life.

¹ From Fear to Faith: A Sermon preached by David Samuel, Director of Church Society, 1989. From http://archive.churchsociety.org/crossway/documents/Cway_034_Samuel.pdf (cited 17/3/17)

CRANMER: LABORING FOR THE BIBLICAL FAITH

Historian Ashley Null sketches Cranmer's life in this way²: Thomas Cranmer was born in 1489 and baptised into the medieval catholic church. He studied at Cambridge, receiving a Doctorate of Divinity in 1526, and served there as a don. As a theologian, Cranmer was influenced by Erasmus' emphasis on going back to the original sources for the Christian faith, in particular, to the Bible and the Early Church Fathers.

In the late 1520s, the authority of Scripture was at the centre of the pressing English political matter, namely Henry VIII's desire for an heir, and hence his determination for a divorce. Arguing on the basis of Leviticus 20 which forbids a man marrying his brother's wife, Cranmer found grounds for Henry's divorce. As a result, he was elevated by the King. First he was sent to Germany as ambassador in 1532. He was soon brought back to England and made chief shepherd of the English church, and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1533.

While Cranmer was in Germany he found a wife of protestant convictions and came under the influence of Luther's protestant teaching. It was in Germany where the soon to be Archbishop learned his clearly protestant understanding of justification, that God's salvation is by grace alone through faith in Christ alone.

Under Edward VI from 1547, Cranmer laboured to gradually instil protestant foundations in the church of England. He did this by bringing in an English Bible, by introducing the preaching of biblical doctrine in the Homilies, through the Anglican formularies and the 39 Articles, and especially by leading the English

church to pray Biblical prayers through his books of Common Prayer in 1549 and the final revision in 1552.

The question is sometimes asked, how do you change what people believe and affirm about God? Perhaps Cranmer learned from Augustine's disciple, Prosper of Aquitaine, who is credited with the latin phrase *lex orandi, lex credenda* meaning the law of praying is the law of believing. In other words, change what people pray and you'll effect what they believe and how they live. Cranmer introduced the Bible in the vernacular in every sense of worship.

At the same time, Cranmer was far from perfect. His doctrine of the godly prince, which we might summarise as what the king does will be godly, returned to haunt him. He had to revise this position in order to oppose Mary taking the throne after Edward's death in 1553. In addition, Cranmer's wavering on protestant doctrine in the face of pressure is well recorded and known.

However, ultimately his protestant convictions did lead to him standing against Catholic doctrine and Queen Mary, and as a result, he was burned for his Reformed faith on the 21st of March, 1556.

Ashley Null concludes if we would understand the theological origins of our Anglican Communion, it is essential for us to comprehend Thomas Cranmer's theology³. We benefit enormously in going back to this man and to his thinking, for the sake of our going forward in Anglican mission and ministry today.

For our purposes, in delving into Cranmer's theology, we'll confine ourselves to arguably the most foundational, his understanding of the Bible.

² Ashley Null on Thomas Cranmer, from <http://acl.asn.au/resources/dr-ashley-null-on-thomas-cranmer/> (cited 16/3/17)

³ <http://acl.asn.au/resources/dr-ashley-null-on-thomas-cranmer/> (cited 15/3/17)

THE FAT PASTURES OF THE SOUL

At Cranmer's urging, the Great Bible was authorised and published in England in 1538 with revisions in '39 and '40. From that point the English Bible was read aloud in 'the vulgar tongue' in English churches. Stephen Neill describes how the people eagerly crowded into St. Paul's Cathedral all day long to listen to the Bible being read⁴. Imagine having the situation where crowds pack in and hang off the hearing of God's word!

This was something Cranmer not only encouraged, but urged. In his preface to that Great Bible, which you can easily find online⁵, we hear his protestant convictions about the Bible.

Citing passages including Ps 119, Luke 12 and Mt 4 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God', Cranmer understands God's word to be powerful and nourishing. Urging people to hear it he says 'the word of God is light, it is food and it is fire'⁶.

Indeed the food metaphor is one he frequently uses to refer to Holy Scripture.

In the scriptures be the fat pastures of the soul, therein is no venomous meat, no unwholesome thing; they be the very dainty[or refined] and pure feeding.⁷

Like green pastures to a hungry sheep are the scriptures to a man or woman - able to nourish the soul, feed a person with wholesome food and a substantial diet.

As well as food, the scriptures are the vital instrument of salvation for every home. He writes:

For as mallets, hammers, saws, chisels, [and] axes...[of the carpenter

and craftsman] be the tools of their occupation; so be the books of the prophets, and Apostles, and all holy writers inspired by the holy ghost, the instruments of our salvation. Wherefore let us not [hesitate] to buy and [procure] the Bible, that is to say, the books of holy scripture; and let us think that to be a better jewel in our house than either gold or silver.⁸

FEEDING ON GOD'S SUFFICIENT WORD

For Cranmer, the Bible is God's true word which sets forth God's glory and man's duty. It contains everything we could possibly need for our justification and salvation, and whatever is false that we don't need, the scripture rebukes so we might know we don't need it. If anything is to be corrected and amended or exhorted or comforted, the Scripture provides it⁹. You might say Cranmer has a doctrine of the 'abundant sufficiency' of Holy Scripture. God's word contains all that is needed for any person. It also contains everything needed for every person.

He urges every person, from the highest station to the most lowly, to be reading the Bible.

Here may all manner of persons, men, women, young, old, learned, unlearned, rich, poor, priests, laymen, lords, ladies, officers, tenants, and mean men, virgins, wives, widows, lawyers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen, and all manner of persons of what estate or condition soever they be, may in this book learn all things what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning almighty God, as also concerning themselves and all other.

⁴ Stephen Neill, *Anglicanism*, Oxford University Press (1978): 58

⁵ The Preface to the Great Bible found at www.bible-researcher.com/cranmer.html (cited 10/3/17)

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Homily 1 'On Holy Scripture' at churchsociety.org/issues_new/doctrine/homilies/iss_doctrine_homilies_01.asp (10/3/17)

*Briefly, to the reading of the scripture none can be enemy, but that either be so sick that they love not to hear of any medicine, or else that be so ignorant that they know not scripture to be the most healthful medicine.*¹⁰

He intends that all people feed on God's word and grow as a result. His expectation is that this word is powerful and fruitful and abundant and necessary.

In the opening paragraph of the Book of Homilies, attributed to Cranmer, called an 'Exhortation to the Reading and the Knowledge of Holy Scripture'¹¹ he exhorts:

*Unto a Christian man, there can be nothing either more necessary or profitable, than the knowledge of Holy Scripture... as drink is pleasant to them that be dry, and meat to them that be hungry; so is the reading, hearing, searching, and studying of Holy Scripture, to them that be desirous to know God, or themselves, and to do his will.*¹²

Notice his agenda here.

READ, MARK, LEARN AND INWARDLY DIGEST

He doesn't want just a superficial hearing of the word that we are familiar with, when a teacher reads a verse in order to springboard onto their own topic. Cranmer wants the import of the word to be at work in the life of the Christian. He expects Mr and Mrs Average Christian to be reading, hearing, searching, studying. Just like the language of the Collect in Advent: 'Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest', where we pray, in effect, Lord help us take your word on board.

HE WANTS THE SCRIPTURES TO BE UNDERSTOOD AND DEPENDED ON IN DAILY LIFE

Maurice Elliot tells of the time of Cranmer's first wife and child dying during childbirth. 'Distraught, he turned to the pages of the Bible for solace and discovered there all the spiritual comfort he so desperately wanted'¹³. So that we hear in the Great Bible preface:

*'You who stand in front of your enemies and are wounded, come to the Scriptures and find medicine, you who have lost your dear and wellbeloved causing you to mourn: where can you find a fortress against your assaults? Where can you have salves for your sores but from holy scripture?'*¹⁴

HE WANTS THIS WORD TO BE AT WORK

And so he sets up the lectionary system of reading through the whole Bible, so that every word of God might be available to the people of God. And he instigates and establishes the preaching of biblical doctrine through the Homilies, so that even church leaders can feed on and grow from scripture.

Along the same lines, Peter Adam's helpful study¹⁵ concerning Cranmer's (arguably most significant) legacy, the Book of Common Prayer, we find how Cranmer sought to make church gatherings richly and deeply biblical. He wanted ordinary Christians to be soaked in and to come out of church dripping with Bible.

Peter Adam draws our attention to four dynamics that make the BCP a comprehensively Biblical book including:

¹⁰ The Preface to the Great Bible. *Op.cit.*

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² Homily 1 On Holy Scripture, *op.cit.*

¹³ Maurice Elliot, "Cranmer's Attitude to the Bible: 'Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum'

[Your word is a lamp unto my feet' Ps 119]" Churchman 109/1 1995.

From http://archive.churchsociety.org/churchman/documents/Cman_109_1_Elliott2.pdf (cited 10/3/17)

¹⁴ Preface to the Great Bible. *Op.cit.*

¹⁵ Peter Adam, *The very pure word of God: The Book of Common Prayer as a model of Biblical Liturgy.* The Latimer Trust (June 25, 2012).

- The BCP is formed by Biblical truth and focused on the gospel of Christ
- That it precludes and corrects un-Biblical and anti-Biblical doctrines and practices (such as the substitution of the language of altar for holy table, or table).
- That the Bible is to be both read and preached and is the chief instrument of ministry (so in the 1552 Ordinal the Bishop gives to those ordained not a pattern or chalice, but a Bible).
- The BCP provides responses to God that express Biblical truths and use Bible words, for example the Words of ‘the Grace’. Or, ‘May your word live in us...and bear much fruit to your glory.’

Cranmer’s agenda through Bible reading, the preaching of the Homilies, and through praying the liturgy of the BCP, is to see God’s word actively at work in the daily life of God’s people.

ESTABLISHING GOD’S PEOPLE IN BIBLICAL AND PROTESTANT TEACHING

Ashley Null says one of the masterstrokes of the English Reformation was to establish the preaching of Protestant doctrine.

Most people don’t realise that the first liturgical change Cranmer made was to insist on good solid biblical preaching in every Sunday church service. To ensure that, he and others gathered together a set of Homilies that were to be read in course throughout the year.

Certainly, Cranmer’s opponents saw the same. When the Homilies were introduced in 1547, Stephen Gardiner appealed against the protestant doctrine of Cranmer and the reformers. But with Edward VI now on the throne, Cranmer’s reform patiently progressed.

We might ask, what are the chief doctrines Cranmer sought to instil in the English Church? Many writers notice that of the two books of Homilies, it’s the first six homilies in Book One that lay the theological foundations, from which applied theology flows the remainder.

I believe Null captures the essence when he says¹⁶ that justification is the key doctrine at work. Martin Luther spoke of justification as the article by which the church stands or falls. Cranmer’s agenda is to have God’s people delighting in the biblical doctrine of justification.

We asked earlier what is the state of the Bible in NZ? A more searching question on account of Cranmer’s agenda, might be: what is the state of justification among Christians in our churches and around our nation?

JUSTIFICATION IN THE HOMILIES

We can see Justification is the agenda by a quick overview of Homilies 2-6¹⁷.

Homily Two speaks about the misery of all mankind under sin. Miserable that none of our works can bring us to God. That we are right to run to God who is full of mercy.

Homily Three, on the salvation of mankind, follows with extensive teaching on justification.

That justification comes only by God’s grace and mercy.

That justification is according to the merits of Christ alone, not our own merits.

And that justification is embraced by a true and lively faith.

We can hear Luther’s echo in this homily: ‘every man is constrained to seek for *another righteousness* or justification, to be received at God’s own hands and Christ’s merits which

¹⁶ Ashley Null on Thomas Cranmer, *op.cit.*

¹⁷ Homilies 2-6 and more are available in many places including through the Church Society website: http://www.churchsociety.org/issues_new/doctrine/homilies/iss_doctrine_homilies_intro.asp

we embrace by faith for our perfect and full justification.’

Homily four, five and six then elaborate on what it means to receive justification by faith alone, and how that faith never remains alone (an echo of Calvin). Good works always spring out of a true and lively faith and include loving God, all mankind, doing good to all and avoiding all evil.

Here is a thoroughly doctrinal agenda put to work in the service of having Christian people love God and live for him. An agenda which begins and continues and endures by being soaked in the Scriptures.

For we Christians today, having God’s people to be well versed in justification is, I suggest, a high bar, a difficult expectation for believers. Cranmer the pastor even anticipates Mr Average Christian complaining about the expectations.

Positively he encourages: ‘He that labours to serve God shall find in the scriptures all God’s promises of eternal life exhorting him on to diligent labour.’

And he carefully outlines how to read plainly, humbly prayerfully, letting the clear parts interpret the hard parts.

He also pushes provocatively:

*He that is so weak that he is not able to brook strong meat, yet he may suck the sweet and tender milk, and defer the rest until he wax stronger, and come to more knowledge. For God receiveth the learned and un-learned, and casteth away none, but is indifferent unto all. And the Scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and easy for every man to use and to walk in, as also of high hills and mountain, which few men can climb unto.*¹⁸

He pastorally leads us along to and in the scriptures, as well as carefully urges us to turn from teaching which is obviously not from the Bible:

*let us reverently hear and read Holy Scripture, which is the food of the soul. Let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the New and Old Testament, and not run to the stinking puddles of men’s traditions, devised by men’s imagination, for our justification and salvation. For in Holy Scripture is fully contained what we ought to do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to love, and what to look for at God’s hands at length.*¹⁹

This is not to say he is against learning from Church traditions. Indeed Cranmer regularly quotes church fathers like Augustine, Chrysostom and Gregory Nazianzus at length. In particular, he’s against doctrine that runs counter to what we find in the Scriptures.

He wants to see Christ formed in the heart of the believer and the word of Christ leaned upon and trusted in. Once more, it is that great aim of seeing that word at work. Let me conclude our focus on Cranmer by quoting at length from his Homily On Holy Scripture:

And, moreover, the effect and virtue of God’s word, is to illuminate the ignorant, and to give more light unto them that faithfully and diligently read it; to comfort their hearts, and to encourage them to perform that which of God is commanded. It teacheth them patience in adversity, in prosperity humbleness; what honour is due unto God, what mercy and charity to our neighbour. It giveth good counsel in all doubtful things. It sheweth of whom we shall look for aid and help in all perils; and that God is the only giver of victory in all battles and temptations of our enemies, bodily and ghostly. (1 Sam 14, 2 Chron 20, 1 Cor 15, 1 Jn 5)

¹⁸ Homily 1. On holy Scripture. *op.cit.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

And in reading of God's word, he not always most profiteth, that is most ready in turning of the book, or in saying of it without the book; but he that is most turned into it; that is most inspired with the Holy Ghost; most in his heart and life altered and changed into that thing which he readeth; he that is daily less and less proud, less wrathful, less covetous, and less desirous of wordly and vain pleasures; he that daily, forsaking his old vicious life, increaseth in virtue more and more. And, to be short there is nothing that more maintaineth godliness of the mind, and driveth away ungodliness, than doth continual reading or hearing of God's word, if it be joined with a godly mind, and a good affection to know and follow God's will. For without a single eye, pure intent, and good mind, nothing is allowed for good before God. And, on the other side, nothing more darkeneth Christ and the glory of God, nor bringeth in more blindness and all kinds of vices, than doth the ignorance of God's word. (Isa 5, Mtt 22, 1 Cor 14)²⁰.

Do you hear his confidence in God's word here? Do you hear his expectation of the transforming power of the gospel? Do you hear how he anticipates that this will change lives and change the nation?

Having gone back to Cranmer, now let's turn and think about us going forward here and now.

THE STATE OF THE BIBLE?

We began by asking what is the state of the Bible in NZ? We pressed further with the question: What is the state of justification in our churches?

I have to say, in my first 12 months, I've had a range of experiences when it comes to the Bible and to Christian doctrine. Let me share some of these with you.

- I've experienced Christians in our church who love the Scriptures.

- I've noticed when it comes to hearing God speak there are a range of ways we look for that to occur- in the Bible yes, but equally in direct words of prophecy, for example when a group leader says: 'let's now be silent and wait on God to speak.'
- Its not uncommon to hear that, if there hasn't been a word of prophecy or a sense of God speaking directly, that (it is claimed) 'He didn't speak to you'.
- Its certainly common for Christians I speak with that we expect to go deeper with God through experience in singing and through worshipful services and moments in camps. Often this deeper experience is practically sought out through personality profiling more than biblical holiness.
- I've had a guy tell me, 'Don't give a book, I'm not a reader - can you give me something in a video?' But the same guy loves and hungers to grapple face to face with doctrine. We've had some wonderful times together at our young adults dinner after church.
- Some have suggested to me that it is an uncommon practice to read and preach a homily at funerals in NZ. Is this true?
- In our public Anglican meetings, I'm glad to say we do read the Bible. Though I notice, we rarely reflect upon this. And sometimes we even downgrade God's word. Along these lines our lectionary has the unusual tendency of omitting the hard words of Scripture, this week, for example, from Jeremiah.
- And from outside the church, when I met a young 14 yr old kiwi and spoke to her about the Bible, she asked, 'What's that?'
- All this suggests to me that we really could benefit from hearing and picking up the driving agenda of Thomas Cranmer to see the Bible at work in God's people.

It's one thing to profess a high view of the Bible. But another to see it at work in the

²⁰ Homily 1. On holy Scripture. *op.cit.*

hearts and lives of God's people. Such a reality shows we believe it to be powerful to save.

At my College graduation, we were charged on this same point. "In 20 yrs time..." the speaker said, "my question won't be do you believe in the Bible? My question will be, are you using the Bible in your ministry practice? In your family? In your hospital visits? And in your church programs?"

He was urging us to take up Cranmer's agenda of putting God's word to work in our day and time.

If the fellow cited earlier is right, that ignorance leads to fear, then we have certainly got our work ahead of us.

If Cranmer is right that our chief trouble is our wayward heart²¹, then only the powerful gospel can address this. We need our people to be feeding on God's word and sacraments, to be learning the chief gospel doctrines, and growing in the good news to such an extent in order to develop a true and lively faith which rests in Christ and is eager for good works.

So what of growing the influence of the Bible in our churches and our nation?

- This is difficult, especially if our church leaders and vestries and elders are committed to hearing from God in other ways. It's going to require careful pastoral preaching and application to show how, for example in the midst of grief, the Bible is full of comfort.
- This is difficult also because it expects much from our people. Personally, in my preaching I am careful about using words like justification because I don't want to leave anyone behind. Cranmer's pushing me to expect more of our hearers.
- Certainly, we need to be encouraging those leaders in positions of responsibility to be fostering ways and means to promote reformation doctrines like

justification by grace alone through Christ alone by faith alone to God's glory alone. One observation coming from the English Reformation is the pivotal role of the few who lead in bringing major change. We ought not be indifferent to church leadership and so egalitarian that we underestimate the influence of leaders and their decisions.

- As Protestant Anglicans, we ought to be praying the Bible, singing its doctrines, responding with scripture responses. Doing what we can to have our people routinely soaked in and dripping with Bible. Services these days have far less Bible than they used to in Anglican churches.
- Speaking personally, in our preaching ministry, too often generic application (or no application) is tacked on at the end. Or we preach an academic argument with an academic application. We must have pastorally applied preaching!
- I wonder what are some other ways to grow the influence of the Bible in our churches and in our nation? We are right to praise God for those (remaining few) who labour to teach the Bible in schools; or those who have a teaching ministry on Christian camps.
- What are some other ways to grow the influence of the Bible?

As is Cranmer's genius, his whole enterprise is accurately summarised and turned into a prayer set down for the 2nd Sunday in Advent. What a fitting way to conclude:

Faithful God, you caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and always hold firmly to the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

²¹ From Ashley Null: 'According to Cranmer's anthropology, what the heart loves, the will chooses, and the mind justifies. The mind doesn't direct the will. The mind is actually captive to what the will wants, and the will itself, in turn, is captive to what the heart wants. The trouble with human nature is that we are born with a heart that loves ourselves over and above everything else in this world, including God. In short, we are born slaves to the lust for self-gratification, i.e., concupiscence. That's why, if left to ourselves, we will always love those things that make us feel good about ourselves, even as we depart more and more from God and his ways. Therefore, God must intervene in our lives in order to bring salvation.' <http://acl.asn.au/resources/dr-ashley-null-on-thomas-cranmer/>



Tara Stenhouse

Reformation Women – whole lives transformed by the power of God’s word

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It’s easy to limit our interest in the Reformation to the high-profile leaders, teachers, and protesters, like Luther, Calvin, or Cranmer. Yes, there’s so much to learn from them, from their teaching and writing, from their zeal and courage. But as they taught the Scriptures and encouraged people in the pews to read the Scriptures for themselves, as their writings were copied and passed on to others, the ripple effect was massive. Many lives were changed. The lives of men, women and children, the lives of the wealthy and the poor, the lives of the healthy and the sick. Marriages, parenting, home life, working life, church life—all were transformed by the Biblical truths that were being discovered.

I’ve loved hearing about some of these transformed lives as I’ve read two books over the last few years, both focussing on women.

First Wives’ Club is a short readable book by Clare Heath-Whyte. It’s the stories of six reformation women—Katie Luther, Anna Zwingli, Argula von Grumbach, Katharina Zell, Wibrandis Rosenblatt, and Idelette Calvin—and Clare Heath-Whyte is a wonderful story-teller! Many of these women paved the way as wives of priests and monks, which was so controversial and ground-breaking at the time. Their lives showed the goodness of marriage, sex, and family life—something we easily take for granted. Their lives were often incredibly difficult. Their husbands were persecuted. They were persecuted (especially once their husbands died). Life was fragile, with many tragedies. Sickness was everywhere. Many children died well before their parents did. Finances were tight. Their husbands had busy, demanding lives, and were often away travelling.

But the whole of these women’s lives were transformed by the Biblical truths they discovered as they read the Bible for themselves. They treasured the Scriptures, and because of this they were godly servants, working hard at home and outside of home. They were loving wives and mothers. John Calvin said that Idelette was ‘the best

companion of my life’ (p.156). They were often courageous in proclaiming the gospel. They wrote letters challenging the established church (as well as letters of encouragement). They were involved in theological discussions. They opened their homes generously to other leaders of the reformation as well as to refugees from persecution. They cared for those in need, within their homes and in their churches and communities, at great cost to themselves.

Each of them trusted God in the midst of much suffering and grief, clinging to their Lord Jesus, and endured to the end. They weren’t perfect (and the author is honest about this), but they are wonderful examples of women changed by the reformation truths of the Scriptures. There’s so much to learn from them—and Clare Heath-Whyte draws out the lessons along the way.

The second book focussing on women is *Feminine Threads*, by Diana Lynn Severance. The lives of hundreds of women throughout Christian history are brought together in this one book—that’s an amazing thing in itself! You can read more about the transformed lives of other women in the Reformation period, but there are also many other stories right from Jesus’ time until today. It is densely packed, covering so many different women, with further reading if you want to chase up more detail.

So, in this year of many Reformation celebrations, why not pick up one of these books and learn more about some women whose whole lives were transformed by the power of God’s word?

Clare Heath-Whyte. *First Wives’ Club: Twenty-first century lessons from the lives of sixteenth century women*. 2014. Leyland, England: 10Publishing. (Clare has also written on women in the 18th century: *Old Wives’ Tales: Twenty-first century lessons from the lives of eighteenth century women*.)

Diana Lynn Severance. *Feminine Threads: Women in the Tapestry of Christian History*. 2011. Scotland: Christian Focus Publications.

A review of the ‘Interim Report of the Motion 29 Working Group: The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia’



15

WHAT IS THE MOTION 29 WORKING GROUP?

The Motion 29 Working group was a group of six people set up by the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia (ACANZP) following the failure of its 2016 meeting of the General Synod/Te Hinota Whanui (GSTHW) to find a common view on whether it would be right to permit the blessing in church of same-sex couples who had previously entered into a civil marriage.

The mandate given to this group by Motion 29 of that meeting of the GSTHW was ‘to consider possible structural arrangements within our Three Tikanga Church to safeguard both theological convictions concerning the blessing of same gender relationships.’¹

The reference to the ‘Three Tikanga Church’ reflects the fact that the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia is made up of three constituent parts or tikanga, Maoris, Pakeha (white Europeans) and Polynesians.

As the report goes on to say, the Working Group’s mandate was neither to consider the differing theological positions on the blessing of same-sex couples, nor to look at the teaching of Scripture in relation to this issue. Instead the Group was asked to consider:

‘...what arrangements and safeguards could be put in place to hold us together within the same ecclesial family so that no one was forced to compromise sincerely held beliefs. We were asked to find structural solutions which would hold our Church together in that unity which Christ expressed, and which He has gifted to us.’²

WHAT IS THE THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR THE REPORT?

The theological basis for the report is that the key location for the exercise of koinonia

(communion with God and God’s people) is the amorangi/diocese. In the words of the report:

‘...we think the theological concept of koinonia, centred in the ‘local church’, namely the amorangi or diocese, is the key gathering point in this Church for Christians who are in bond with the triune God and each other. Thus, partaking of the Eucharist makes each faithful Christian bound to God; and creates bonds of mutual commitment and regard to each other. Accordingly, we think maintaining and building relationality is best exercised as koinonia under the leadership of the amorangi or diocesan bishop, in consultation with his or her Diocesan Synod; as the necessary basis for implementing safeguards for the peaceful co-existence of theological convictions concerning same gender blessings in this Church.’³

WHAT DOES THE REPORT RECOMMEND?

The Working Group’s report makes six recommendations.

The first recommendation is that there should be ‘no alteration to the formularies of this Church.’⁴ This means that the church would continue to officially view marriage as being between one man and one woman and so would only conduct marriages in church on this basis.

The second recommendation is ‘enabling amorangi and dioceses to safeguard theological convictions within their episcopal units.’⁵ The word ‘amorangi’ refers to an episcopally led unit of church government consisting of Maori Anglicans. What the recommendation means is that the safeguarding of different convictions concerning the blessing of same-sex couples is something that would be the responsibility of the amorangi/diocese.

Dr. Martin Davie

¹ ‘Interim Report of the Motion 29 Working Group, The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia,’ p.3.

² *Ibid*, p.5.

³ *Ibid*, p.8.

⁴ *Ibid*, p.7.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.7.

The third recommendation is the ‘amendment of the declarations of adherence and submission to the authority of GSTHW.’⁶

The GSTHW is the General Synod/Te Hinota Whanui and the effect of the recommendation would be that clergy would no longer give their allegiance to the specific decisions of the GSTHW but to the constitution and canons of the church more generally.

The fourth recommendation is ‘allowing amorangi and diocesan bishops to authorise individual clergy within their ministry units to conduct services blessing same gender relationships.’⁷ This means that it would be up to the bishop of each amorangi/diocese to decide whether to permit clergy to perform services of blessing for same-sex couples within their ministry units.

The fifth recommendation is ‘providing immunity from complaint for bishops and clergy for exercising their discretion on whether or not to authorise or conduct services of same gender blessings.’⁸ This would mean that no one could bring a complaint under church law against a bishop or member of the clergy for their decisions with regard to the blessing of same-sex couples.

The sixth recommendation is ‘recognising Orders of Consecrated Life to allow for those with clear theological convictions to have those convictions respected and protected.’ These orders could either be traditional Religious Orders or ‘Christian Communities.’ They would be bound by ‘common bonds of affection and theological conviction’⁹ and ministry units could affiliate to them as a way of upholding particular convictions about the blessing of same-sex couples. Those appointed to lead an affiliated ministry unit

‘would have to either be a member of the Christian Community or be willing to adhere to its constitution.’¹⁰

Each order would have a bishop from within ACANZP as its visitor/ protector.¹¹

WHERE WILL THINGS GO FROM HERE?

The report will be submitted to the next meeting of the GSTHW in 2018 and the report recommends that in the meantime each amorangi/diocese considers it before 4.30 on 17 November this year.

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE LIKE THE REPORT?

Those who like the report think it provides a viable way for those with differing convictions over the blessing of same-sex couples to remain together in the same church.

The New Zealand Anglican commentator Peter Carrell, for example, hails it as ‘a beautiful Anglican accommodation.’ He writes as follows:

My verdict: a beautiful Anglican accommodation.

Why?

It gives (many) conservatives and (many) liberals what they have asked for, and makes few demands on the middle of our church.

I do not want to have to submit to the authority of General Synod (because it has approved something I am not happy with)? *I will not have to do that because the declarations will change.*

I wish the blessing of a same sex partnership to be able to take place in an

⁶ *Ibid*, p.7.

⁷ *Ibid*, p.7.

⁸ *Ibid*, p.7.

⁹ *Ibid*, p.12.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.12. Presumably a member of a Religious Order could also lead a ministry unity, but the report does not specify this.

¹¹ *Ibid*, Appendix 4, pp.23-4.

Anglican church? *In most, but likely not all, dioceses/hui amorangi permission will be given for priests to conduct such blessings provided the local vestry is agreeable to that happening.*

I feel I would have to leave the church if it approved a blessing formulary (because that would mean our church had formally changed its doctrine on marriage). *There will not be such a change. Services of blessing will be approved at a more local level - the diocese.*

I am worried that I will be disciplined by the church if I conduct a blessing or if I refuse to conduct a blessing. *That will be ruled out, both ways.*

I am concerned that my parish, when it comes time to choose a new vicar, will be bullied by the Nomination Board into accepting a priest who will reverse my parish's policy on blessing of same sex partnerships. *That can be prevented because parishes and individuals will be able to form communities of common accord with other like-minded parishes. Bishops must respect the ethos of those communities in making their appointment, indeed the appointee must come from within the community to which the parish belongs.*

I do not particularly care one way or another whether my vicar does or does not conduct blessings of same sex partnerships. *Nothing needs to be done. Keep cool and carry on as you are!*

I want to be part of a parish which not only teaches celibacy outside of (heterosexual) marriage but which supports those who choose to be celibate and look for the

support of their community of faith in being obedient to God in this way. *That is not only possible, it is specifically provided for by the proposal: like-minded parishes including common commitment to teaching and discipline may group together in structured communities of faith, supported by a bishop.*

Thus in a number of ways this is a beautiful, comprehensive Anglican accommodation of the wide range of views on human sexuality held within ACANZP.¹²

In spite of the enthusiasm of Peter Carrell and others there are seven serious problems with this report which mean that it would be unwise for ACANZP to accept its recommendations or for those in the Church of England to see it as a model to imitate.

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS REPORT?

In spite of the enthusiasm of Peter Carrell and others there are seven serious problems with this report which mean that it would be unwise for ACANZP to accept its recommendations or for those in the Church of England to see it as a model to imitate.

The first problem with this report lies in the fact that the last meeting of the GSTHW was unable to reach agreement about a theological understanding of same-sex relationships. The meeting could not agree about whether same-sex relationships were a godly way of life and whether they could be regarded as a form of Christian marriage.

¹² Peter Carrell, 'Beautiful Anglican Accommodation - Down Under's Way Forward, *Anglican Down Under*, 11 July 2017, text at <http://anglicandownunder.blogspot.co.uk/2017/07/beautiful-anglican-accommodation-down.html>. Italics in the original.

The two ‘sincerely held beliefs’ that blessings should be permitted, and that they should not, are antithetical and no church can uphold them both simultaneously. One or the other of them has to be rejected. They cannot both be ‘safeguarded’ at the same time.

Given this lack of agreement it is surprising that this new report suggests a way forward which involves ACANZP permitting the blessing of same-sex relationships. How can the church permit this development when it is not agreed about whether such relationships are godly?

The second and related problem is that although the report is intended to safeguard ‘both theological convictions’ with regard to the blessing of same-sex relationships it does not in fact do so.

One of the two sets of theological convictions which the report was meant to ensure was safeguarded involves the belief that the blessing of same-sex relationships is something that is contrary to God’s declared will and which the Church therefore cannot permit. What the report recommends goes against this belief. Individuals and groups within ACANZP will be able to continue to hold this belief, but the church as a whole will have disregarded it.

To suggest, as Peter Carrell does, that the fact that a decision to permit same-sex blessings will be made at a diocesan level means that the ACANZP as such will not have changed its position is misleading. For a diocese to be able to make such a decision ACANZP as

a whole will have had to have changed its position. A diocese will only be able to permit the blessing of same-sex couples because of a prior decision by ACANZP as a whole to allow them to be performed.

It is, of course, true that if the report had recommended not permitting such blessings then those who believe that they should be permitted would have had their views disregarded. This points us to the fact that the Working Group was given an impossible task. The two ‘sincerely held beliefs’ that blessings should be permitted, and that they should not, are antithetical and no church can uphold them both simultaneously. One or the other of them has to be rejected. They cannot both be ‘safeguarded’ at the same time.

The third problem is that what the report recommends is incoherent. On the one hand it recommends that there should be no change in the formularies of ACANZP so it would continue to uphold the biblical and traditional belief that marriage is between one man and one woman and would only marry people on the basis. On the other hand it recommends that it should bless same-sex civil ‘marriages’ that have been previously entered into elsewhere.

The issue here is that either ACANZP believes that same-sex civil marriages really are marriages, in which case its formularies are meaningless and its refusal to conduct such marriages in church is an act of arbitrary discrimination against same-sex couples, or it believes, in accordance with the Bible and the Christian tradition, that they are not marriages. If the latter is the case what is it doing blessing as marriages relationships which it does not believe are marriages?

It could be objected that it would not be ACANZP that was blessing them, but individual clergy, but since clergy act on behalf of the Church such an objection is not convincing. What clergy do in an official capacity the Church does through them.

The fourth problem is that what is recommended will not bring peace to ACANZP. This is because those who are supportive of same-sex relationships will feel that leaving the formularies unchanged and not permitting same-sex couples to be married in church will still mean that the church is discriminating against LGB people. They will continue to press for what they see as full equality for LGB people and those with the opposite convictions will continue to oppose this.

It is also because the report is silent about the key issue of the ordination of people in same-sex relationships. The previous report to GSTHW, *A Way Forward*, suggested that those in same-sex relationships should be permitted to be ordained. GSTHW was unable to agree on this and the current report is silent about it. However, this does not mean that the issue has gone away. It is still on the table and will be a source of future conflict.

The fifth problem is that the report does not address the fact that many traditionalist Anglicans will have a serious conscientious problem over remaining part of a diocese, and in communion with a bishop, who have departed from Apostolic teaching and practice with regard to issues of sexual morality, issues which they see as first order matters because they involve people's eternal salvation (see 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:18-21, Revelation 22:15).

As they see it, the apostles in the New Testament summon the Christian community to be visibly separate and thus 'differentiated' from all sexual compromise, disassociating itself from all sexual immorality and from false teaching (see 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, Ephesians 5:6-8, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8). What is proposed in the current report would seem to disregard this summons.

The report allows people to associate together in religious orders or other Christian communities on the basis of their convictions about sexual morality. What it does not allow them to do is disassociate themselves from a diocese or a bishop that has moved in an ungodly direction.

A sixth problem is that the report makes no provision to guarantee the existence of such groups within ACANZP in the long term. Conservative communities within ACANZP will not be allowed to ordain their own bishops or other clergy and so they will be totally dependent on the continued existence of conservative bishops within the dioceses of ACAZNP who will be willing and able to ordain a continuing supply of conservative clergy. There is nothing said in the report about how to ensure that this will be the case.

A seventh problem is that like its predecessor *A Way Forward*, this report ignores entirely the teaching of the Anglican Communion about marriage and human sexuality as set out in Lambeth 1.10 and what impact any change in the doctrine and practice of ACANZAP would have on its relations with other churches in the Communion. It also ignores entirely the question of what effect such a change would have on wider ecumenical relationships.



Rev. Dr. Peter Carrell

A response to Dr. Martin Davie's review

I thank the Editor for this opportunity to respond to Dr. Martin Davies' critique of the Motion 29 Working Group Report (M29WGR). Space does not permit a response to each of his points. Here I focus on four matters relevant to a warmer appreciation of M29WGR than Davies gives.

The first fault Davies finds is expressed with this question:

How can the church permit this development [blessing of same-sex relationships] when it is not agreed about whether such relationships are godly?

If we were an ideal church, a church of one heart and mind, we would reach agreement and then permit such blessings (or forbid them and cease discussing the matter ever again). But we are not that church. It is difficult to see us agreeing in the foreseeable future on whether such relationships are godly. We are not an ideal church and Davies expects too much from our reality as a church divided on this matter. M29WGR offers a way forward to live with that division as one, real, less than ideal church.

We are not an ideal church and Davies expects too much from our reality as a church divided on this matter. M29WGR offers a way forward to live with that division as one, real, less than ideal church.

Another shortcoming is this:

The two 'sincerely held beliefs' that blessings should be permitted, and that they should not, are antithetical and no church can uphold them both simultaneously. One or the other of them has to be rejected. They cannot both be 'safeguarded' at the same time.

Actually, real churches do safeguard antithetical beliefs. Our church is one of them. For instance, recently, Bosco Peters has argued (and not been refuted) that our church has a canon permitting remarriage of divorcees in contradiction to the Doctrine of Christ (as enshrined in our Constitution and upheld by the 1928 Church of England Empowering Act. The *A Way Forward* report is clear that our church's doctrine of marriage is that it is life-long).¹ Underlying this argument is the simple fact that what Jesus teaches in the gospels (which we profess to uphold) is antithetical to permission to conduct the marriage services of divorced persons (which we have agreed to at General Synod Te Hinota Whanui). We have also found a way to be a church in which most believe that women may be ordained as deacons, priests and bishops yet some believe the opposite. Another real church we might mention in contradiction of Davies' point is the Roman church to which Paul wrote, urging acceptance of antithetical positions on food (Romans 14:1- 15:7).

On a related matter, thirdly, that of Davies' encouraging dissociation from bishops who do not uphold biblical teaching on sexual immorality, we might carefully ask ourselves why we have not done that already, since every bishop of our church, for some decades, has supported the remarriage of divorcees. Neither the Church of England nor the Church of Rome through these decades has taken such a progressive view, accepting our Lord's teaching that such remarriage constitutes adultery. Here I am not arguing

¹ Bosco Peters, <http://liturgy.co.nz/open-letter-to-anglican-leaders-is-marriage-after-divorce-possible> ; also, <http://liturgy.co.nz/jesus-and-divorce>.

whether we or they are right or wrong; rather I am arguing that we have been able as evangelicals to live with bishops who have upheld a position on human relationships which is viewed as “sexual immorality” by other, respected churches, if not by conservatives in our church.

Kiwi conservatives have neither allowed the views of other churches to dictate whether we would continue in fellowship with our bishops, nor have we demurred from our synodical decision about remarriage of divorcees. We have recognised that whatever our own understanding of our Lord’s teaching on this matter, an accommodation which permits priests to respond pastorally to changing social circumstances for our parishioners has been a reasonable step to take. In making this observation there is no presumption that the question of remarriage of divorcees is an equivalent issue to the blessing of same sex relationships. Rather, against the backdrop of the possibility of schism, it is important to reflect carefully

on why schism might take place for one controversial matter and not for another.

Finally, when Dr. Martin Davies makes this observation, “what is recommended will not bring peace to ACANZP,” I return to my observation that we are not an ideal church. The question pertinent to our situation is not whether M29WGR will bring peace to our church but whether it will bring more peace than any other proposal. We should remember that M29WGR has been arrived at after the “peace” failures following GS 2014 and 2016, and is the outcome of an extensive consultation to which conservatives contributed qualitatively and quantitatively. From the perspective of “peace,” other than schism, can we do better than M29WGR?

Dr. Martin Davies has brought to our attention seven faults with M29WGR. It would be easy to conclude that M29WGR is fatally flawed. It would be much fairer to M29WGR to ask whether we could make a better proposal for our real, less than ideal church.



Rev. Bob Glen: A Tribute

Rt Rev. Henry Paltridge

BOB GLEN died Saturday 19 August 2017 in Henderson, Auckland.

Bob's daughter, Mary Welsh, wrote to the Latimer Fellowship soon after her father's death: *"He died on Saturday 19th August which I see coincided with the giving of the William Orange Memorial lecture, which is entirely fitting – Dad was an Orange Pip, he would have appreciated this."*

What follows is taken largely from John Meadowcroft's book, 'Out of St Martin's'. *'Bob's home parish was St Barnabas, Fendalton where the curate during his teenage years was Harvey Teulon, who was influential in bringing him to personal faith in Christ. His faith was nurtured in the Christchurch Boys' High School Crusader (now ISCF) group.'*

While studying history at the University of Canterbury Bob's links with William Orange & other 'Pips' developed. *"Bob was a member of the Evangelical Union & through the Anglicans in the Union, was introduced to St. James, Lower Riccarton & the ministry of Carl Tanner, where he attended the Evening Service, in those days packed with young people." At that stage a common pattern was for the 'Orange Pips' to attend William Orange's Sunday afternoon bible class & go to their own churches in the evening. "These studies ceased after Mr. Orange was appointed precentor & Canon at the Cathedral. Roger Thompson had been recently appointed Vicar of St. Martin's, Spreydon. Bob began to go with the group, which had migrated from St. James in 1949, to the Bible Class, which Roger had established along the lines of William Orange's Sumner studies."*

Bob was to have a bible teaching ministry in Tanzania & New Zealand. *"Bob graduated MA in History & went to Teachers' College for a one year graduate course. After teaching at Gisborne Boys' High School, Bob went to England for two years at Cambridge University graduating with a BA in Theology. Following this distinguished academic career Bob spent 1957-8 at the CMS College in Kent. He returned to Christchurch in 1958, where he was ordained for the Diocese of Central Tanganyika."*

From 1960-65 Bob served with NZCMS in the Diocese of Victoria Nyanza in Tanzania, under the leadership of Bishop Max Wiggins. After his marriage to Marian they moved to St. Philip's Theological College, Kongwa where Bob served as Principal from 1965-73. While there he compiled a Church History Atlas with a special focus on East Africa & wrote several Swahili textbooks on the same subject. Many of the recent past and present Bishops of the Anglican Church of Tanzania were trained by Bob Glen! In his history of the NZCMS 1892-1972, Kenneth Gregory wrote that in 1968 St. Barnabas, Fendalton sent a gift to the College towards building a crèche, where clergy wives could leave their children, while they attended lectures. Ken Gregory had explained the important reason for the project:

"The training of the wives is an extremely important part of the syllabus, for they have to take up positions of leadership, not to mention learning how to run a home on truly Christian lines." (Page 248)

The William Orange Memorial lecturer, Dr. Mark Thompson, on 19 August 2017 speaking about the Reformation indicated its impact on clergy homes as models for Christian communities. It is little wonder that an avid church historian like Bob Glen would ensure that future clergy wives would be well trained.

Returning to New Zealand, Bob taught at the Bible College of NZ (now Laidlaw College) from 1975-94. In 1992, he edited & contributed to a symposium of essays on "Aspects of the work of the Church Missionary Society from 1814-1892" entitled *Mission and Moko*, published by the Latimer Fellowship. The Glens were at a theological college in Singapore from 1995-97.

Bob Glen was a great teacher, always ready with an apt illustration, so living out the ministry of the Lord Jesus! *"Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables, without a parable he told them nothing."* (Matthew 13.34)



Rev. Dr. Bob Robinson

Books Worth Reading

JOHN CALVIN, A PILGRIM'S LIFE

Herman Selderhuis (IVP, 2009, 304 pp, £9.99, ISBN 9781844743759)

This book (by a leading Dutch academic Reformation historian) offers something new: a biography drawn exclusively from Calvin's own prolific writings. This is Calvin as found in Calvin himself rather than in the often uncritically admiring accounts of others; the volume really does display John Calvin, the man. Other biographies usually describe him as reluctant to disclose his emotions but Selderhuis shows that Calvin's letters, for example, offer many accounts of his feelings. He comes across as both humble and humbled to the point of frequent despair and even depression, distressingly sharp in his criticisms of the many he disagreed with, and even willing to agree with the torture of those accused of actions contrary to the Word – and so on. Calvin's own words make clear his struggles with God and with the way God governed both the world and his own life. These struggles appear to come from a view of God's sovereignty that seems rather close to fatalism; life is, he believed, like a steeplechase and it is God who plans and places the obstacles in our way (7). So, the death of friends and even his wife and child are God pointing out Calvin's own sins (so Calvin says). He could and did publically name those who suffered fatally from God's hand for missing Sunday church. But at the same time this is a Calvin who can burst into tears as he writes from his heart to friends and opponents. We also see Calvin as a man of prayer who could be kind to those in need. Selderhuis writes clearly and with a dry humour; he is clearly a Calvinist himself – and very sympathetic towards his subject – but he does not endorse the Calvin who displays bad temper, pettiness and huge misjudgement during the Servetus affair and other political miscalculations. Nonetheless, he and we admire Calvin's God-

centred theological vision and, of course, as the great preacher, expositor and theologian that he was. One of the helpful qualities of this biography is that it unfolds Calvin's developing theology in terms of his lived humanity and his sixteenth century context rather than – as often happens – under abstract headings (sometimes delivered in acronyms). Selderhuis offers one other reminder for his fellow Calvinists: "If there is a militant tendency or a willingness to fight among Reformed believers [and] if they go out looking for a battle, they did not learn this from Calvin" (237). This is a bracing and refreshing read; no wonder that America's leading authority on Calvin can write that, of the many biographical studies available, "this one brings a more vivid sense of Calvin as a person than any I have seen."

MARTIN LUTHER: RENEGADE AND PROPHET

Lyndal Roper (Vintage, 2017, 592 pp, £14.99 (p-back), ISBN 9781784703448)

This impressive biography, by the (Australian) Regius Professor of History at Oxford, took her some ten years to write – partly because she worked her way through the 120 sizeable printed volumes that deliver Luther's preaching, 'table-talk' and theological and biblical writings. Roper engagingly tells Luther's life story: a German monk who defies both Pope and Holy Roman emperor; a theologian who rediscovers the gospel of salvation by faith alone; a mass-communicator who engages the new-found resource of the printing press to deliver his reformation to the whole of the known world. But Roper also makes clear that the undoubted piety of this "difficult hero" was tempered both by his coarse humour, his complex emotions (including life-long feelings of oppressive guilt and doubt) and what can only be called his

multiple hatreds: hatred of the papacy as a repressive institution, of peasants inclined to rebellion, and of the Jews. This anti-semitism (gleefully repeated by the Nazis) was more than a theological rejection of Judaism. Luther advocated the burning of the schools and houses of Jews and described them worshipping and devouring the Devil's excrement; "the devil stuffs and squirts them so full that it overflows and swims out of every place," he preached. By means of her careful placement and explanation of Luther "in the social and cultural context that formed him," she engagingly re-creates both his world and his complex personality – though not in order to excuse him either for his anti-semitism or his bitter disputes with other Reformers as he steadily lost control over the Reformation he had launched. At the same time, Roper clearly admires Luther's theological clarity and courage, his imaginative creativity and his moving and tender understanding of human love, marriage and sexuality.

Some readers might prefer the shorter and more conventional biography provided by a Princeton Theological Seminary historian, Scott Hendrix, in his *Martin Luther: Visionary Reformer* (Yale University Press, 2017, 368 pp, US\$22 (p-back), ISBN 9780300226379,). There is less of Roper's careful cultural and psychological analysis as Hendrix centres his account on three foundations: Luther as "neither a hero nor a villain," nor a "reformer in isolation"; and the insistence that Luther's attitude and behaviour should not be judged by contemporary expectations. Like Roper, he makes clear the biblical and theological convictions that drove Luther.

PROTESTANTS: THE RADICALS WHO MADE THE MODERN WORLD

Alec Ryrie (Collins, 2017, 528 pp, £19.99, ISBN 9780007465033)

The legacy of Calvin and Luther lives on and this long but readable volume provides a stimulating survey of the five centuries of Protestantism. Ryrie, also author of the well-received *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2013), arranges his material in three parts: 'The Reformation Age' (Luther, Calvin, and Henry the 8th, through to German pietism, English Methodism, and American revivalism); 'The Age of Transformation' (slavery under Protestantism, the rise of sects, religious fundamentalism and liberalism, Protestantism in Hitler's Germany and the U.S.); and 'The Global Age' of massive global Protestant growth. A glossary of "types of Protestant" is a further helpful addition. One of Ryrie's more interesting starting points is that it is "because Protestants care so deeply about God that they have been willing to fight one another and take on the world on his behalf" (2). So, because Protestants "will argue about almost anything," they have unintentionally provided three gifts to today's world: free inquiry, democracy, and apoliticism (meaning the Protestant attempt to try "to carve out a spiritual space where political authority does not apply" (3). One of the more divisive debates within the Protestant world came to be the question of slavery whose Protestant advocates appealed to a Bible that sanctioned slavery whereas abolitionist Protestants used Scripture to point to a deeper Gospel principle; this

leads Ryrie to conclude that “Protestantism’s prophets have shown from Luther’s time on” that “when the heart of the Gospel is at stake, Protestants will not even let the Biblical text itself stand in their way.” (208)

Note: the volume is published in the US as *Protestants: The Faith That Made the Modern World*.

These volumes combine to provide a welcome refresher course on our Protestant origins. Many committed Protestants may well experience conflicted emotions when reading these accounts of the Reformation and its heroes. On the one hand, there is daring courage and clarity of conviction. But we might also despair at the violence and pettiness on display over what one historian rightly calls divisive anger over “narcissistically small differences” between Reformers. Roper’s book draws attention to Luther’s fellow German Reformer, Andreas Karlstadt, who repeatedly tried to persuade Luther and others towards *Gelassenheit*: the calm “letting go” of secondary differences than can obscure the clarity of the biblical Gospel as recovered by Luther and Calvin. Together the volumes remind us that the only people God calls to lead his church are *simul justus et peccator* – those who are both saints and sinners at the same time.

Latimer's Curate: How the Anglican Church will turn me into a bigot!

As *Latimer's Curate*, some might say I am already a bigot due to my personal beliefs concerning marriage and human sexuality. But as far as I'm concerned, they misconstrue my true motivation.

My views don't merely arise from personal preference, but from the teaching of Scripture and the formularies of our church. So, whatever you might think of my Anglican convictions, they are not solely determined by my degree of bigotry (though, I'm sure I have some), but by the public teaching of our Church which still retains its apostolic character.

For me, the public nature of the Church's doctrine is an important protection, not only for our congregations, but also for the ministers who serve them.

Now, I'm sure that such qualifications will not satisfy my more trenchant critics, but I do believe there is an important principle to uphold here. In all my ministry, I have only ever sought to preach and teach the Christian faith as our church has received it. That is to say, while I might have all kinds of personal opinions, I have always sought to keep them (as much as possible) from the pulpit for the sake of Christ and his Church. After all, our ministerial standards requires ministers to refrain from any "private or esoteric doctrine or interpretation" that contradicts the formularies of the church. You see, I am not aspiring to be some religious guru with great spiritual insights, but merely a servant—a servant of the Word—who faithfully ministers the doctrines of the church to which I belong. And if, at any stage, I can't do that with integrity, for whatever reason, I hope I would have the courage to hand in my license, as our oath of office requires.

Such a principle sets a high standard for ministerial integrity, but it also provides a high level of protection against personal attack. For instance, this past Easter I preached on the bodily resurrection of Christ. After the service a parishioner said, "That's your opinion!" In their view, though they respected my opinion, there were other interpretations I failed to mention. Oh well, my sermon obviously left this sceptic unconvinced. But in one respect they were quite wrong: it is not my opinion! While I'm happy to argue my corner with the best of them, as an Anglican minister, Article IV makes the position of our Church quite clear. In a similar way, if I'm accused of bigotry for encouraging a cohabitating couple to marry, my defense is that it is not just my opinion (though it is), but the teaching of the church to which I belong. When I am accused of being homophobic for not blessing same-sex relationships, again I insist, that it is not a reflection of my own personal fears and anxieties, but rather the doctrinal view of our Church, which it has always held. For me, the public nature of the Church's doctrine is an important protection, not only for our congregations, but also for the ministers who serve them.

Yet under the new proposals, I find that doctrine and ethics are to be torn asunder, and that the church's teaching on human sexuality is to be reassigned to individual conscience and personal preference. Of course, in order to do so, the Church's constitution will be quietly ignored—or made to say whatever we want it to say! But there is a further problem with the proposals that I believe will undermine the very integrity of my ministry, even if it doesn't coerce my conscience.

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For, when I now tell a same-sex couple that I am unable to bless their civil marriage, I will no longer be able to rely on the church's public teaching, but must admit that it is only a matter of personal preference—another minister might take a different view! I can hear their response now: "Oh, so you're a bigot, then?" How am I to respond to such an accusation? There can only be one response: "Yes. But in my defense, I minister in a church that respects my right to hold a personal preference, even if you consider it to be a bigoted one!" Do you see? My response to their request is no longer primarily determined by the function of my pastoral office, but instead by my own personal preferences—for better or worse. And that is how the Anglican Church will turn me into a bigot!

