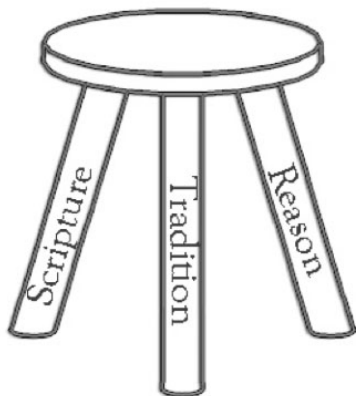


Tuesday Teaching Series
Series #11: The Roots of Lutheranism & Anglicanism
Session #5: Anglican Principles
Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Anglicanism is both Catholic and Protestant (*Via Media*).

To understand this, we must recall the history of the church in England. As we learned 2 weeks ago, the Christian Church in Britain dates back to Roman times and is mentioned by Origen and Tertullian as early as the 3rd Century AD. The Church of England (*Ecclesia Anglicana*) dates itself back to St. Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, in 597, and continued in communion with the See of Rome and the pope until King Henry VIII. The Protestant Reformation began during Henry's reign, but he greatly opposed the reforms taking place on the rest of Continental Europe led by Luther, Calvin, and others. His book, *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (Defense of the Seven Sacraments) earned him the title "Defender of the Faith" (*Fidei Defensor*) by Pope Leo X. However, when Henry requested of Pope Clement VII an annulment from his wife Catherine of Aragon because she did not produce a male heir after nearly 24 years of marriage, the pope refused, because the sitting emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (and based in Rome) was Charles V, Catherine's nephew. So, Henry declared that he was the head of the church in England and in 1534 issued the *Act of Supremacy* formally separating the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church. During the short reign of Henry's successor, Edward VI, the Church of England adopted a number of Protestant reforms including the rejection of transubstantiation, allowing clergy to marry, and the removal of ritual images (*Act of Uniformity*, 1552). In 1553, his half-sister Queen Mary I, a devout Roman Catholic restored communion with the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church. That lasted until 1559, when her half-sister, now Queen Elizabeth I reissued her father's *Act of Supremacy*, thereby reestablishing the independent Church of England, but also by the *Act of Uniformity* allowed for an ambiguous understanding of the Eucharist—to satisfy both Catholics and Protestants—and reinstalling Catholic ornaments. This was known as the *Via Media*. Because the Church of England did not split over theological reasons, it has maintained many of the practices and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church, including the system of governance and style of worship. But, like Protestant churches, the Church of England worshipped in the vernacular and affirmed that salvation comes from God's grace, not from the deeds of the believer. In the 1830s, there was a revival of Catholic (Roman) devotional and practice, inspired by the work of scholars from University of Oxford in England, who argued against the increasing secularization of the Church of England, and sought to recall it to its heritage of apostolic order, and to the catholic doctrines of the early church fathers. Eventually this developed into what has become labelled the Anglo-Catholic wing of the church.

What do Anglicans believe?



The Three-legged Stool

- Scripture is the normative source for God's revelation and the source for all Christian teaching and reflection.
- Tradition passes down from generation to generation the church's ongoing experience of God's presence and activity.
- Reason is understood to include the human capacity to discern the truth in both rational and intuitive ways. It is not limited to logic as such. It takes into account and includes experience.

Each of the three sources of authority must be perceived and interpreted in light of the other two. The Anglican balance of authority falls if any one of the legs is not upright. It has been associated with the Anglican affinity for seeking the mean between extremes and living the *via media*. It has also been associated with the Anglican willingness to tolerate and comprehend opposing viewpoints instead of imposing tests of orthodoxy or resorting to heresy trials. This balanced understanding of authority is based in the theology of Richard Hooker (c. 1554-1600) and may be further traced to the teaching of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).

The Episcopal Church is:

- Creedal
 - Nicene Creed
 - Apostles' Creed
 - Athanasian Creed
- Sacramental
 - 7 Sacraments (some will say 2 sacraments + 5 sacramental rites)
- Affirming (officially) of the first Seven Ecumenical Councils
- Trinitarian

We promise (Baptismal Covenant):

- To love God first, and our neighbor as ourselves.
- To continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in the prayers.
- To persevere in resisting evil, to repent and return to the Lord.
- To proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.
- To seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves.
- To strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

Resources

“Religion, power, and Parliament,” <http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/Library/SLT/history/elizabeth/acts.html#uniformity2>

“Knowing our History” in *My Faith, My Life: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church* by Jenifer Gamber (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2006)

“Authority, Sources of Anglicanism,” <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary/authority-sources-anglicanism>