

Lord. **Amen.**

The Minister takes the child into his arms, or by the hand, and says to the Godparents,

Name this child.

And then, repeating the name of the child after them, the Minister dips him in the water or pours water upon him, saying,

N, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Then the Priest shall say (as he makes the sign of the Cross on the forehead of the baptized Child),

We receive *this Child* into the congregation of Christ's flock, and sign *him* with the sign of the Cross, to represent that from this time forward *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified and courageously to fight under his banner against sin, the world and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant until the end of *his* life. **Amen.**

And he shall continue,

Beloved in Christ, now that *this Child* is born again and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits; and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that *this Child* may lead the rest of *his* Christian life according to this good beginning.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. **Amen.**

We truly thank you, most merciful Father, that it has pleased you to regenerate *this Infant* with your Holy Spirit, to receive *him* as your *own Child* by adoption, and to make *him* a member of your holy Church. **Amen.**

We humbly implore you to grant that being buried with Christ by baptism into his death, *he* may also be made partaker of his resurrection; so that, serving you on earth in newness of life, *he* may finally, with the rest of your holy Church, be *an inheritor* of your everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Here the Minister shall address the Parents and Godparents concerning their responsibilities and duties through an appropriate sermon or address, or through the reading of the following exhortation.

T*his Child* has promised by you, who have stood in his place, to renounce the devil and all his deeds, to believe in God, and to serve him. It is your duty before God to see that *he* shall be taught, as soon as *he* can understand, what a solemn vow, promises and profession *he* has made through you. Also it is your duty to urge *him* to hear Christian teaching and sermons, to learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, together with all other things that a Christian ought to know and believe for the salvation of his soul. Further, you must seek to ensure that *he* is brought up to lead a godly and Christian life, always remembering that Baptism represents to us our profession as Christians. This is to follow the example of our Savior Christ, and to be made like unto him; that as he died and rose again for us, so we, who are baptized, should die to sin and rise again unto righteousness, continually putting to death all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily advancing in all virtue and godly living.

Finally, it is your duty to see that *he* is brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him after he has been instructed in the Church Catechism and has learned the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments.

Here the Service of Morning or Evening Prayer, or of Holy Communion, will resume.

The Order of Confirmation

The Order of Confirmation or Laying on of Hands upon those that are baptized and have come to years of Discretion (12 and above)

All who are to be confirmed stand before the Bishop. He or some other Minister reads this Preface:

The Church in its wisdom has ruled that no baptized young person shall be confirmed unless he can both say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments and also answer questions taken from the short Catechism. By this rule, what Godfathers and God-

mothers promised for Infants at their Baptism can be personally accepted and confessed by the same persons, who have now come to maturity as young persons. Also they can promise faithfully to observe all things belonging to the profession of the Christian Faith.

Here the Bishop may direct that there shall be read, in order to show the Apostolic use of the laying on of hands, these portions of Holy Scripture: Acts 8:14-17 and 19:1-7.

Then the Bishop asks those who have come to Confirmation:

Do you here, in the presence of God and this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow made in your name at your Baptism; and do you personally ratify and confirm the same, acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things, which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook on your behalf?

Every one shall reply,

I do.

Then the Bishop says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

Answer: Who has made heaven and earth.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

Answer: Always and for ever.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Answer: And let our cry come unto you.

The Bishop continues in prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, by whose grace these your servants have been born again of water and the Spirit, and have received forgiveness of all their sins; confirm and strengthen them with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and daily increase in them your plentiful gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of guidance and strength; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, Lord, with the spirit of your holy fear, both now and for ever. **Amen.**

Those to be confirmed kneel before the Bishop who lays his hands upon the head of each one

saying,

Defend, Lord, this your servant N with your heavenly grace, that he may continue to be your child for ever; and grant that he may daily increase in the fruit of your Holy Spirit until he comes to your everlasting kingdom. **Amen.**

Then the Bishop shall say,

The Lord be with you.

Answer: And with your spirit.

All kneel.

Let us pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. **Amen**

Almighty and ever-living God, who make us both to will and to do those things that are good and acceptable unto you, the majestic Lord; we humbly pray for these your servants upon whom, after the example of your holy apostles, we have now laid our hands, to assure them, by this sign, of your favor and gracious goodness towards them. Let your fatherly hand, we ask, ever be over them; let your Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Almighty and everlasting God, be pleased, we pray, to direct, sanctify, and govern our hearts and bodies so that we will keep your laws and obey your commandments; and grant that through your most mighty protection we may be preserved in body and soul, both here and for ever, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you, for ever. **Amen.**

All those who have received Confirmation should prepare themselves to receive Holy Communion.

The Great Charge

Recovering the Principles of Biblical Preaching

In the second epistle to his young protégé, Timothy, St. Paul gave a solemn charge that should resonate loudly with North American Anglicans in the early Twenty-first Century:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Tim 4:1-4)

For many of us Anglicans who label ourselves orthodox, conservative, or traditionalist those words from the pen of St. Paul immediately catch our attention and probably prompt most of us to think of heterodox bishops and the like. Yet the Apostle's words should also prompt a close examination of ourselves. Orthodox Anglicans are struggling to survive; there are relatively few still within The Episcopal Church or the Anglican Church of Canada and those in the extra-mural jurisdictions find themselves more often than not in survival mode, dependent on the support of those fleeing heterodox dioceses and parishes. Even in those parishes that look to be doing well, there are few that are truly thriving and living out Our Lord's Great Commission to evangelize the lost and to make disciples of them. And is it any wonder? Nowhere in his solemn charge to Timothy does St. Paul call him to the role of parish administrator, social worker, or liturgist – he charges this young man with the duty of preaching the Word.

Over the last century Anglicans have lost the commitment to strong Biblical preaching that was so prevalent in our forefathers: Bishops Ridley and Latimer or George Whitefield and Charles Simeon to name only a few. The Biblical model of preaching expressed in our formularies, the Prayer Book, the Articles, the Ordinal, and The Homilies, has been in most places replaced by light-weight fluff

in comparison to the spiritual food that nourished generations of the past. It should be no surprise that we are left in survival mode. Church history bears out the fact that a dearth of God's Word inevitably leads to both ecclesiastical and moral decline. As the preaching of the great expositors of the Early Church, men like Chrysostom and Augustine, fell into decline so did the Church, and it was with the recovery of the evangelical preaching tradition during the Reformation that the Church began to thrive and fulfil its mission once again. John Donne

wrote that "if there be any discounting or slacking of Preaching, there is the danger of losing Christ."

Contemporary Anglicanism has been heavily influenced on one front by the Liberals who have downplayed the historical ministry of the Word by destroying the very authority of the Word itself. But that has not been the only attack. The later fruits of the 19th Century Anglo-Catholic movement have led to an unbalanced emphasis on the Eucharist, which has resulted in a demphasis on the importance of strong Biblical preaching. The end result has been the well-known

ten-minute homily. Even those of us distant from either the Liberal or Anglo-Catholic tradition can find it exceptionally easy to become lazy in our preaching. In parishes fed primarily by those fleeing liberalism, expectations are often set all too low. Many of these laypeople are overjoyed simply to hear a sermon that does not teach heresy. Yet this is the spiritual equivalent of a diner being please by the observation that the meal he's just ordered isn't poisoned.

In his book, *On Preaching*, former Archbishop of Canterbury Donald Coggan astutely observed that, "We shall rear a generation of Christians accustomed to the Eucharist but foreigners to many of the great truths of the Christian faith. They have never had the opportunity of listening, Sunday by Sunday, to a steady, intelligent, interesting exposition of the things most surely believed among us. They have been fed with snippets, little bits and bits, nice thoughts for the day, but noth-



By the Rev'd William Klock, vicar of Christ Church, Portland, Oregon, a mission of the Reformed Episcopal Church. He is a 1997 graduate of Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia. His own sermon archive of both text and audio sermons can be found at www.christchurchportland.org.



ing, or practically nothing, from which bones and spiritual tissue can be built” (p. 9).

It is critical that Anglicans recover their homiletic heritage. The people of God cannot live without the words of God. St. Paul also wrote to Timothy that the words of Holy Scripture are “able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (3:15) and that they are “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (3:16-17). St. Paul also warns that if we ignore this charge in our churches, our people will be as “children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness” (Eph. 4:14).

To recover from our current homiletic slump will require that all take action. Our priests and deacons must commit themselves to a Biblical model for preaching, our bishops must ensure that our clergy are properly trained and then commit to ordaining men who are ready and fully able to fulfil this greatest of all pastoral duties, and the laity must demand solid spiritual food and hold local parish clergy as well as bishops accountable.

What is Biblical preaching? Biblical preaching seeks to convey the Word of God rather than the words of men. To be truly Biblical preaching must be driven by the text. This means that our preachers need to avoid using Scripture as a pretext. All too often preachers determine what it is that they want to say in advance and then bring Scripture into the sermon to support their topic. Topical preaching isn't always a bad thing, in fact the lectionary is arranged thematically, but the preacher needs to address topical or thematic preaching with great caution to ensure that Scripture is the focus of the sermon.

Our preachers need to take St. Paul's charge to Timothy and make it their own. Charles Simeon, the great 19th Century preacher, did just this. In his introduction to *Evangelical Preaching*, an anthology of Simeon's sermons, John Stott writes of the great preacher:

“His over-riding concern was so to expound Scripture that his congregation would receive it undiluted and uncontaminated by worldly wisdom. To him ‘Biblical exposition’ meant opening up some part of Scripture so that the people

could feed upon it. ‘My endeavour,’ he wrote to his publisher, ‘is to bring out of Scripture what is there, and not to thrust in what I think might be there. I have a great jealousy on this head: never to speak more or less than I believe to be the mind of the Spirit in the passage I am expounding.’ Those words seem to me to be the clearest statement ever made of the expositor's goal. Would that more Preachers could wholeheartedly echo and endorse it today!” (p. xxxiii)

In fact, Simeon established a test and insisted it be applied to his own work. In capital letters he wrote in the preface to *Horae Homileticae*, “Does it uniformly tend TO HUMBLE THE SINNER? TO EXALT THE SAVIOUR? TO PROMOTE HOLINESS? If in any one instance it loses sight of any of these points, let it be condemned without mercy” (p. xxi). Preachers need to understand that to preach is to communicate God's inspired text faithfully so that God's voice is heard and his people understand and obey. Simeon was right in condemning any sermon, even his own, that failed to faithfully communicate God's own Word. Every sermon must communicate the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, and the mercy of our Saviour and move us to greater spiritual maturity and holy living. This is the clear agenda of Scripture itself. The preacher's agenda is to communicate the same.

The craft of the preacher is to move beyond mere intellectual exposition of Scripture to application. The frequent objection to expository preaching is that many see it as little more than a theological lecture. Returning to 2 Timothy, St. Paul exhorted him to “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; *reprove, rebuke, exhort.*” Biblical preaching not only explains the text; it shines the narrow beam of Scripture's spotlight into the lives of God's people to address the specifics of daily life. Its distinctive is that, in being rooted in the text, it ensures that the spotlight is generated by the Word itself rather than the personality, agenda, or desires of the preacher himself.

The question then for North American Anglicans is, “Where are the Timothy's of this generation?” Where are the men who have steeped themselves in Holy Scripture and prayer and are able and ready to unflinchingly present God's truth to his people from our pulpits?

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