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Archbishop Cranmer's Immortal Bequest: The Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England: An Evangelistic Liturgy

SAMUEL LEUENBERGER

1. Introduction

Theological studies in England and the U.S.A. brought me into contact with the Anglican Church and its liturgy, the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662).[1] All important types of services[2] like baptism, confirmation, holy matrimony, burial of the dead, holy communion and the services of making, ordaining and consecrating bishops, priests and deacons[3] are contained therein.

The liturgies in this prayer book had a special attraction for me because of a certain discovery: I noticed that legitimate elements from the Early Church have been integrated with their aesthetic qualities intact without neglecting the most important factor: the liturgies, particularly Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Holy Communion (the chief services)[4] are permeated through and through with a genuine reformed theology having revivalistic elements. It was because I came to a living faith through the witness of evangelical circles in the Anglo-Saxon world, that the import-ance of a revivalistically-oriented liturgy was so relevant to me. It is often the case that liturgy and ceremony are rejected by evangelically-minded churches. This fact became for me a challenge to show through the *Book of Common Prayer* that liturgy and revivalistic theology can go along together without contradicting one another. It became a concern to me to present the *Book of Common Prayer* authorized in 1662 as one of the most precious gems among Christian liturgies.

2. What is the source of the revivalistic elements in The Book of Common Prayer?

The object of my study is, among other things to point out the source of its evangelical and revivalistic elements, and the personalities instrumental in the integration of a revivalistic commitment into the *Book of Common Prayer.* We should not forget that the *Book of Common Prayer* has undergone a process of growth, which shows interesting stages.

In 1549 the most important of the English reformers, Thomas Cranmer

(1489-1556), presided over the publishing of the first version[5] using for this purpose elements from the 'Sarum Missal' (11th cent.) and from Lutheran liturgies (Hermann's Consultation). This prayer book of 1549 already had quite a few Reformation features, but there were still Roman Catholic elements contained in it making this 1549 prayer book a compromise. The compromise is clearly shown in certain passages of the Holy Communion Service.[6] In the great prayer of consecration Mary and the saints play a rôle, as does an intercession for the departed.[7] Bread and wine are consecrated through a formula which calls down upon the elements the Holy Spirit (*epiclesis*),[8] while the priest makes a sign of the cross.[9]

The Morning and Evening Prayer services both lack a confession of sin and an exhortation. The formula for baptism demanded the Roman Catholic ceremony, using salt and oil and also included an exorcism.[10] Also those vestments which had come into existence in connexion with the doctrine of transsubstantiation continued to be used in the Holy Communion Service, the so called mass vestments or eucharistic vestments. Archbishop Cranmer's was criticized by important reformed theologians, whom Cranmer had invited to help him with a further Reformation on English shores.

These theologians were Petrus Martyr Vermigli (1500-1562), Martin Bucer (1491-1551) and John Hooper (1495-1555). All three were outspoken revivalists and they deeply affected Cranmer's theology. Before turning to them I want to clarify the term revivalistic.[11] By the term I mean a certain theological attitude which emphasizes conversion and the appropriation of salvation through a personal decision for Jesus. It is also typical of a revivalistic outlook to stress the necessity for calling believers together for cordial fellowship, to put a strong emphasis on missionary activity, and to proclaim the reliability of Holy Scripture as having the power to convict of sin. A revivalistic mentality emphasizes penance, rebirth, sanctification and witness to the living Lord, time and time again.

One should note that although the terms revivalistic or revival were not in use during the sixteenth-century, in fact it was on the basis of the Reformation theology of that time that revivalistic thinking first developed in the Anglo-Saxon world, two hundred years before the classical revivals took place in England and North America. The prime emphasis of Reformation theology is *Sola Scriptura* (Holy Scripture alone as opposed to Scripture and tradition), and surely the best foundation for the development of a revivalistic commitment—is the preaching of the good news in the Bible itself, as set forth by Peter and Paul. It was during the Reformation that the soil was again prepared in which a revivalistic persuasion could grow and flourish.

In 1547 Cranmer called Peter Martyr Vermigli[12] to England in order to aid him in furthering the process of the Reformation. An Augustinian monk, he worked in several monasteries as a teacher of theology. He was a man deeply influenced in his thinking by the great Church Father, Augustine.

In the years 1537–1540 he had lived in Naples, where he had experienced a fundamental change in his theological attitude. For it was at this time that a kind of evangelistic circle had begun to develop within the Roman Church.[13] People from higher social levels were very active in this Neapolitan revivalistic movement, like Vittoria Colonna, Juan Valdes, Flaminio and many others. The main emphases of this evangelistic circle were the following: the depravity of man, Scripture's superiority to the tradition of the church, the repudiation of ceremonial forms being used in a mechanical and superficial way, the church being first of all not a juridical organization, but a fellowship of born-again believers, sanctification, and ecumenism.

Martyr was so deeply influenced by this group as to become a reformed theologian, and as such was no longer welcome in Italy. In 1542 he fled to Strasbourg. Five years later in 1547 he took up an invitation to go to England, spending the first three months in Lambeth Palace as a guest of Archbishop Cranmer. It is likely that during this time he shared with Cranmer the revivalistic concerns which he had received from the evangelistic circle in Naples. Later Cranmer submitted his 1549 prayer book to Martyr for his opinions. As a reply Martyr wrote a small book with a constructive criticism of this, Cranmer's first liturgical edition.

Martyr's chief work was a long essay on the subject of holy communion with the title 'Defensio'. Many thoughts in the *Defensio* developed out of numerous profound discussions with the archbishop. I want to look now at the most significant concerns of Martyr's eucharistic ideas, which had a bearing upon the first revision of the prayer book.

For him the Augustinian theological tradition with its emphasis on the *Verbum Visibile* (the Visible Word) was of great importance. He fought vehemently against the conception that through participation in the eucharist one receives more than the Word of God as delivered in the lesson and the sermon.[14] Consequently he stood up against the recitation of any consecration formula for a transformation of the elements, as if, due to the recited formula, they could then release a special power of blessing in an objective sense. According to him Jesus does not give His blessing due to a recited formula. He bestows His blessing upon those who exercise a living faith, and it is this faith which needs time and again to be reanimated. For the development of this theology, he adduced a certain element of Aristotelian ethics, the conception of the relation of analogy and proportion. This conception implies that there exists a relation of analogy between the material and the spiritual realms. This analogy between the sensual-material realm and the spiritual realm of God's truth does not function automatically. The Holy Spirit with the Word of Scripture needs to operate in such a way that the correct relationship between the two spheres can come into existence.[15] The main result of this conception of analogy and the relation of proportion is to maintain a qualitative difference between the two spheres, namely the sphere of creation and the sphere of the Creator. Confusion of these two spheres

should be avoided by all possible means. The phenomenon of idolatry and paganism is usually the outcome of just such a confusion.[16] This conception has serious consequences for Peter Martyr with respect to holy communion: there could be no such thing as an external consecration of the elements. As we receive holy communion in a concrete way through the bread and the wine, so we should receive Jesus inwardly in our hearts and He should change us into new men.[17] He denied the physical presence of Jesus in the elements. For Jesus is with his glorified Body in Heaven. Therefore we should seek Jesus above and by no means in the elements.[18] According to the principle of the non-confusion of the two realms, the terrestrial and the heavenly, the following maxim needs to be applied: *Finitum non capax Infiniti* (the finite cannot encompass the infinite). According to Martyr the churchgoer is ensnared by the sensual and visible things when he wants to find Jesus in the elements, for the elements as the visible Word cannot offer more than the read or preached Scripture.

Just as Martyr taught at the University of Oxford so Bucer[19] exercised his influence in Cambridge, from 1549 to 1551. Bucer also had considerable contact with Cranmer and like Martyr he wrote a critical commentary, the so called *Censura*,[20] on the prayer book of 1549. In his *Censura* Bucer gave many suggestions as to how the *Book of Common Prayer* could become a faith-awakening liturgy, and I want to mention some of the most important.

First, what is said in the liturgical services in the form of pleadings, thanksgivings, or praises must be spoken from the bottom of the heart[21] with an attitude of living faith. Bucer exhorts the clergy to read the prayers, psalms, and lessons with an attitude of devotedness.

Participation in holy communion should by no means become a farce with people receiving it in a purely mechanical way without an attitude of forgiveness towards their enemies.[22]

Dangerous ceremonial elements, such as consecration with the sign of the cross should be abolished. He also strongly rejected the intercession for the departed because of its implication of purgatory. So too with the doctrine of rebirth of the very young in the baptismal formula, and also the exorcism contained therein. Bucer in addition, in the baptismal formula, criticises the substitutional confession of faith of the god-parents for the child. In matters of faith, according to Bucer, there is no substitute for faith.[23] He stresses that candidates for confirmation should answer the call of God into the fellowship of salvation which had previously been addressed to them upon the occasion of their baptism. He believed that only those who had shown signs of rebirth should be admitted to confirmation.[24] He also stressed the necessity of fellowship among believers in which the people can share their faith, and in order to get to that point they are to read the Holy Scriptures regularly. Bucer was a great believer in the importance of following the Bible reading plan in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

John Hooper[25] studied from 1547 to 1549 under Heinrich Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli, in Zurich where he digested Bullinger's theology in a

unique way. He looked upon the simplicity of Zurich's church service as being normative and accordingly developed a theology of *Purus Cultus*,[26] pure worship. Hooper received his most challenging impulses from Bullinger's theology of the Decalogue and the covenant. He understood the Ten Commandments as an epitome[27] of the whole of Scripture and he strongly emphasized the connexion between the Decalogue and the covenant. Each believer is a covenant partner of God and his obligation in the covenant is the keeping of the Ten Commandments. This is also true for the New Covenant through Christ. He stressed the Ten Commandments as having the power to convict man of his sinfulness (*usus elenchticus*). The person who has been convicted of his sinfulness should then first come to a personal decision for Christ, and second be challenged to live a life of sanctification within the context of the same Commandments. For Hooper a very important factor in sanctification was concern for the salvation of others, which should find its expression in missionary zeal through witness and confession to lead others to a living faith in Jesus.[28] In this connexion he emphasized the importance of the family cell,[29] where faith was to be planted through the missionary activity of the parents toward their children. This theology, animated by Bullinger, took an unusual turn in Hooper with his development of ideas about the Decalogue into a theology of a *Pura Vita*, a pure life. Time and again in his Decalogue theology he stressed the infallibility of God's Word, and that the Scripture interprets itself. Thus all doctrines need to be tried by Holy Scripture, which is itself the *Pura Doctrina*, the pure doctrine.

Hooper had the great privilege to be court preacher to King Edward VI, who let himself be deeply impressed by both Hooper and Cranmer.[30] Hooper spent three months with the archbishop at Lambeth Palace from January till March 1552, and seems to have exercised a considerable influence upon him.

Hooper's theology became one of the cornerstones of puritanism and we shall see later the significance of puritanism with regard to the 1662 authorization of The Book of Common Prayer.

3. Cranmer's acceptance of the revivalistic concerns of his theological advisers finds expression in the Book of Common Prayer 1552

The prayer book of 1552 is the fruit of Cranmer's many talks with Martyr, Bucer and Hooper. Most of the suggestions of these important reformers had been taken seriously by Cranmer and so the resulting revision of the 1549 prayer book was very worthwhile and in fact a Reformation and revivalistic masterpiece of liturgy: The Book of Common Prayer as authorized in 1552.[31]

I want to take a look at these revivalistic elements.

a) Morning Prayer[32]
The elements for the structure of traditional Anglican Morning Prayer—Psalms, Lessons, and Prayers—were to a large extent borrowed from the

monastic offices of the breviary, especially from Lauds and Prime. Evening Prayer[33] has the same structure, for which the elements were borrowed from Vespers and Compline. But the really new elements, which are of the utmost importance, consist of twelve introductory biblical sentences,[34] which express the radical depravity of man. These sentences are from Ezek. 18:27; Ps. 51:3; 9; 17; Joel 2:13; Daniel 9:9, 10; Jer. 10:24; Ps. 6:1; Mt. 3:2; Luke 15:18, 19; Ps. 143:2; and 1 John 1:8, 9. By this arrangement the principle of '*Scriptura sui ipsius interpres*' (self-interpretation of Scripture), as emphasized by Hooper is put forward: an uncompromising attitude towards the Bible characteristic of revivalistic thinking. They concentrate on the sinfulness of man, show the way to forgiveness through penance, and are followed by an exhortation. Exhortations are a phenomenon which is peculiar to the Reformation and to revivalism; there are exhortations in some Lutheran liturgies, but Cranmer gave to his exhortation in Morning Prayer a particularly revivalistic accent. What is an exhortation? It is a speech which while both admonishing and appealing to the heart of the listener, sets forth the Gospel of salvation. An exhortation includes a challenging character: with strong words it challenges the churchgoer to confess his sins before God Almighty, for forgiveness cannot be attained in any other way and pardon is necessary in order to be able to praise God. In Morning Prayer it comes across clearly that the exhortation to repentance and confession of sin is based on Scripture:

> Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart; . . .

It was Peter Martyr who had pushed strongly for the use of exhortation in the prayer book.

It is also interesting to observe how the revivalistic mentality manifests itself from a stylistic point of view.[35] Important nouns are modified by adjectives through apposition, enhancing their power to appeal to the heart and to summon men to be serious and honest. Quoting again from the same exhortation:

> . . . and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them [the sins] before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly penitent and obedient heart . . .

We can observe how the noun heart is modified by these differing adjectives—humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient—in specific ways so that the challenge to confession becomes more emphatic and obliging. This stylistic feature is frequent in the three main services, and although this style probably originated with Bucer,[37] the archbishop made use of it in his

own way. Another feature of this revivalistic style to which Bucer contributed is the modification of verbs by adverbs, in order to indicate that spiritual activities like confession, repenting, believing, and so forth should never function in a superficial way. Take for example the absolution following the confession of sin:

> He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.[38]

b) Holy Communion

The Decalogue stands almost at the beginning of the eucharistic liturgy and probably owes that position to John Hooper. They are intended to convict the hearer of his sinfulness.

After a prayer for the reigning sovereign, and after the Creed and sermon, there follow twenty offertory sentences from Scripture, so called because the offering is collected subsequent to their reading. These Biblical sentences[39] clearly demonstrate the self-interpretation of Holy Scripture and sanctification by means of good works which originate in a living faith.

The prayer following these offertory sentences is called the 'Prayer for Christ's Church militant here in earth'.[40] This prayer is full of those revivalistic elements of which we have spoken from a stylistic point of view:

> . . . And grant that all they that do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity, and godly love . . . Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and Curates, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments: And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive thy holy Word; . . .

One should notice the attitude demanded from churchgoers in respect to the Word of God:

> . . . that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear, and receive thy holy Word; . . .

Of special interest are the three exhortations,[42] one of which was written by Peter Martyr. The first is an emphatic admonition not to neglect holy communion, when God himself as the host is inviting his people to His banquet in order to commemorate the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. Very revivalistic too is the crescendo in the invitational call in the second exhortation:

> . . . I bid you in the name of God, I call you in Christ's behalf, I exhort you, as ye love your own salvation, that ye will be partakers of this holy Communion.

The first exhortation[44] puts the emphasis on the searching of the conscience in order to avoid an unworthy reception of the communion. There is a strict warning that a man can be damned if he comes to the Lord's Table without repentance, or with an attitude of envy and jealousy. Finally the third exhortation is a repetition of the previous two. In deeply moving fashion these three exhortations prepare the churchgoer for confession.[45] The confession demands repentance, which should come from the bottom of the heart:

> We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings . . .

The absolution is supported by four Biblical sentences called the Comfortable Words,[46] which follow, and there again we notice the principle of the self-interpretation of Holy Scripture. The 'Comfortable Words' are from Matthew 11:28; John 3:16; 1 Timothy 1:15; and 1 John 2:1.

After the words of institution follow the words of distribution which make clear—in a revivalistic way—that the bread and wine should never be received without an inner engagement of faith:

> Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.[47]

The Communion liturgy as a whole, when systematically analysed, contains all the important elements typical of revivalistic preaching and evangelism. An enumeration of some of the most important theological elements includes: The depravity and frailty[48] of man, guidance to the point of personal recognition of sinfulness and to repentance,[49] the appropriation of salvation through penance and rebirth,[50] the importance as a whole of Holy Scripture and of the Ten Commandments,[51] sanctification connected with the searching of the conscience, the pure worship,[52] the importance of the soul,[53] warning and the threat of judgement,[54] the contrast between a transitory world and everlasting treasures,[55] the earthly life as a pilgrimage, the true church as the fellowship of all believers,[56] and the outward expression of faith through evangelistic missionary activity. In a similar enumeration of some of the essential features of a revivalistic style we see the direct, energetic, and exhortative verbal appeal, a manner of speech appealing to the heart, graphic illustrations, utilization of the Bible, and repetition.

The intention of the Holy Communion Service was to bring the churchgoer to penance through conviction of sin and then to a living faith, so that he might be able to receive Jesus as the visible Word with a sincere and thankful heart. But this reception of Jesus into the heart of the believer was not an end in itself; the ultimate goal was for the believer to be prepared to glorify God by means of thanksgiving and praise. Therefore the *Gloria*[57] is found at the end of the communion liturgy.

4. The miracle of the Book of Common Prayer 1662 and how it came about

In the period between 1552 and 1662 great battles had to be fought. That the prayer book of 1552 was not done away with, but rather prevailed, remains God's miracle.

I want to look now at those circumstances which could so easily have brought this precious prayer book to naught.

The Catholic queen, Mary Tudor, came to power after the death of King Edward VI. During what became a reign of terror the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* was strictly forbidden, the great reformers John Hooper and Thomas Cranmer were executed (in 1555 and 1556 respectively), while Peter Martyr managed to escape to the continent.

After the death of Mary Tudor in 1558 Elizabeth I became Queen of England. Although Elizabeth stood up for Protestantism she did not want to lose the Catholics, who had become powerful during the reign of Mary. Therefore she did not stand up for a Reformation of the early puritan type; her sympathies lay with the prayer book of 1549[58] as opposed to that of 1552, since it favoured a liturgy of theological compromise. During the reign of Elizabeth a very important man appeared on the scene, Bishop Edmund Grindal (1519–1583).[59] Theologically a successor of John Hooper, he stood up for his convictions, in particular the principle of *Sola Scriptura*. During Queen Mary's reign of terror he had lived on the continent and there he had become well acquainted with the refugee congregations, which of necessity functioned without any established denominational structures. Grindal enjoyed good contact with Martyr in Strasbourg and also, through the mediation of Hooper, with those theologians who followed the teachings of Bullinger during the reign of Edward VI. Motivated by a vision of living congregations loyal to the prayer book, Grindal became a progressively stronger advocate of the puritans, first in his position as Bishop of London, and later as Archbishop of Canterbury. He was convinced that true life can grow in a congregation only through the faithful reading of Scripture, and believed that there should also be an exchange of ideas over the Scripture among the parishioners, under an experienced minister. In order to reach that point Grindal began to organize Bible seminars for clergy and for laymen, the so called prophesyings.[60] His idea was that living cells could grow in such seminars which could then be used for evangelization within the official congregation. These prophesyings were an established institution under Zwingli and Bullinger in Zurich. Grindal ordained many ministers who had been supervisors of refugee congregations on the continent during the reign of Mary Tudor. Those puritanically-minded clergymen with their strict Biblical orientation became a living seed within the Church of England. Pastors who had shepherded refugee congregations understood what was really essential for the survival of a congregation. Therefore they did not emphasize the external, formal and juridical sides of church

life, but they stressed the importance of the life and activity of the Holy Spirit.

Queen Elizabeth was hostile to the puritans. Grindal however both fearlessly and frankly stood up for them against her, even daring to admonish his Queen for being a hindrance to the spread of the Gospel. He never let himself be intimidated by her threats but constantly followed the Biblical principle of obedience to God, and not to man.[61]

That the English Church did not lose all its Puritans in the intensified persecution under Elizabeth's successors is particularly due to the influence of the uncompromising Archbishop Edmund Grindal. Among his successors as archbishop there were no further real supporters of the puritans, and for that reason many puritans sought their spiritual food outside the established church in independent congregations.

James I, Elizabeth's immediate successor, strongly persecuted the puritans. In spite of an inimical attitude on the part of the government and a majority of the clergy a most noteworthy phenomenon stood out: at the famous conference for the revision of the prayer book, the Hampton Court Conference of 1604,[62] Reformation and puritanical concepts prevailed even though puritans were in the minority.

Under Charles I (1625–1649) the persecution became even stronger and it was not until the Civil War and afterwards under Cromwell (1649–1658) that puritans could worship unhindered.

In 1661 another conference took place for the revision of the prayer book, the Savoy Conference.[63] Those forces which sought to bring about a restoration of the 1549 prayer book, although they were in the majority, again did not prevail. At this Savoy Conference a prayer book was accepted which basically contained only a few insignificant additions to the *Book of Common Prayer* authorized in 1552. In 1662 this version was sanctioned and is still today the prayer book ordained by Parliament for the Church of England. From a human point of view the preservation of the Reformation and revivalistic concerns in the prayer book of 1662 is to be explained as the fruit of the early puritanism of John Hooper and Edmund Grindal. But this preservation of the 1552 prayer book in the version of 1662 is nevertheless God's miracle. When one takes into consideration all the resistance to puritanism from both church and government it is clear that the High Church wing should have gained the victory with a prayer book similar to that of 1549.

That early puritanism had played an important rôle with respect to the preservation of the Reformation and revivalistic spirit needs further explanation through a deeper reflection on puritanism. The most important elements which are peculiar to the concept of revivalism are also characteristic of puritanism. But the statement that 'Puritanism is revivalistic' is only true in one direction. It would not be true to say 'Revivalism is puritanical.' There have been quite a few important revivalistic theologians, for example some pietists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Germany, who stood up for universalism

(J.A. Bengel, Michael Hahn and other Swabian Fathers), and even some who were involved with the occult, like Ch. Oetinger and J.F. Oberlin.[64]

The vital early puritan principle of *Pura Doctrina* is done away with although those pietists stood up for revival and evangelism. We see that there are revivalistic theologians who are not puritanical in the sense of sticking to *Sola Scriptura*.

Within the Oxford Movement of the last century there were also outspoken revivalistic theologians,[65] like G.H. Wilkinson, A.H. Stanton and R.M. Benson, who propagated High Church practices in liturgy. They emphasized the sacraments and had a high regard for altar and crucifix. Their liturgy was characterized by a conception of Christ's real presence in the elements of bread and wine, and the principle of *Finitum capax Infiniti* was highly esteemed. Under Robert Aitken (1800–1873) and G.H. Wilkinson (1833–1907) a High Church revival in Cornwall became famous. Puritanism with its often rigid esteem for *Purus Cultus* could not have agreed to such a conception of liturgy.

In early puritanism we have the power house for the growth of a revivalistic spirit and at the same time the disciplinary force that controlled an evangelistic mentality through the restraints of *Pura Doctrina, Purus Cultus* and *Pura Vita*. It is thanks to this discipline of early puritanism that excesses could be avoided.

Because this prayer book can be used also for family devotions, there is a power still available which has the potential to start revival within the cell of the English nation in spite of any apostasy in the church.

The achievements[66] in the 1552 prayer book such as the elimination of a consecration formula with *epiclesis*, of the prayer for the departed and of the indirect veneration of Mary and the saints are preserved in the 1662 Prayer Book. All those points which could have become a source of an unsound and magical devotional life were done away with.

Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I as well as Charles II and powerful archbishops such as John Whitgift tried everything in order to silence the representatives of revivalistic theology. The history of the *Book of Common Prayer* from the beginning till the final version of 1662 is a dramatic illustration of what Paul writes us in 2 Timothy 2:8, 9:

> Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:
> Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

5. *The Alternative Service Book 1980* in the service of Pluralism and Ecumenism

The last chapter of my study is concerned with *The Alternative Service Book*[67] which has been in use since 1980. Since 1966 experimental liturgies have been preparing the English people for its introduction, and in the last decade these have had such an influence that the old prayer book has largely

fallen out of use, although it is still the official prayer book of the Church of England. Unfortunately the Anglo-Catholic movement of the last century, with its vehement denial of the principle of *Sola Scriptura*,[68] has had a major influence on this new prayer book. Once the principle of *Sola Scriptura* is out of the way the door is wide open to heretical doctrine. The twentieth century attack which resulted in this attempted liturgical revolution has been led by men such as Bishop John Robinson (1919-1983) whose series of books had a marked effect upon the laity.[69] The greatest failing of *The Alternative Service Book 1980* is that it lacks the Reformation character. Man is no longer seen as being born in trespasses and sin: therefore the confessions are much shorter. The main emphasis is man's guilt with respect to his neighbour: the old prayer book stresses man's guilt with respect to God. The exhortations have been done away with and thereby the revivalistic flavour has also been excised. The possibility of damnation is not mentioned, as it was in the old prayer book, and God is not understood as a judge. Universalistic tendencies[70] become obvious, while the difference between being a believer and an unbeliever is totally obscured.

From a formal point of view one has to notice that the sequence of the liturgical elements in The Order for Holy Communion is almost identical with present day Roman Mass. The canon has been restored, the *epiclesis* reintroduced.[71] Also there are many alternatives for certain liturgical elements, and these many alternatives smuggle in pluralism. There are different confessions of sin[72] and absolutions to choose from: the one confession of sin reflects a more conservative biblical theology while the other reveals a modernistic conception. These many alternatives as representative of different theological ideas express a relativistic notion of truth.

It is very difficult for the churchgoer to develop roots in such a prayer book, and this is probably deliberate. The people are being trained for an unlimited openness, in preparation for acceptance *of the new world church*, without resistance.

It seems to me that the strong adaptation of the eucharistic liturgy and of other formulas to the form of the Roman church has to be understood as a liturgical preparation for the planned Super-church. The highest principle will be unity and not truth. In that cause anything that legitimately and Biblically could cause separation has been avoided. However the proclamation of Biblical doctrine does always, both rightly and inevitably, differentiate believer from unbeliever, and truth from error, while *The Alternative Service Book 1980* is masterful in avoiding any such scandal. This new liturgical book is therefore a very serious sign of apostasy within the Church of England.

6. Summary
How timeless in its relevance and important in its message is a liturgical prayer book which, with revivalistic power, maintains the everlasting truths of Scripture in their true position amidst life's daily storms. *The*

Book of Common Prayer which has illuminated Christian worship in England for the last five centuries, is just such a liturgy.

SAMUEL LEUENBERGER is a minister of the Swiss Reformed Church, Schlossrued, Switzerland.

NOTES

1 *The Book of Common Prayer 1662*, Pocketbook edition of the Oxford University Press, Oxford 1969. [Hereinafter cited as *BCP 1662*].
2 *Ibid.*, p. 3; on this page one finds the table of contents.
3 *Ibid.*, pp. 633–676.
4 *Ibid.*, pp. 37–64.
5 *The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI*, Everyman's Library, No. 448, London 1968. [Hereinafter cited as *BCP 1549* or *BCP 1552*].
6 *Ibid.*, pp. 212–230.
7 *Ibid.*, p. 222.
8 *Ibid.*, p. 222.
9 *Ibid.*, p. 222.
10 *Ibid.*, p. 240.
11 Otto Riecker, 'Das evangelistische Wort', Dissertation, Heidelberg 1935.
12 M.W. Anderson, *Peter Martyr, a Reformer in Exile*, Niewkop 1975.
13 E.M. Jung, 'On the nature of Evangelism in 16th century Italy', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XIV, No. 1 (Jan. 1953). See pp. 511–527.
14 S. Corda, *Veritas Sacramenti*, Zurich 1975, p. 153.
15 J.C. McLelland, *The Visible Words of God*, Edinburgh 1957, p. 84.
16 S. Corda, p. 152.
17 *Petrus Martyr, Defensio Doctrinae Veteris et Apostolicae de Sacrosanto Eucharistiae Sacramento*, Froschauer, Zurich 1559, p. 763.
18 *Ibid.*, p. 656.
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21 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
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26 John Hooper, *Early Writings*, The University Press, Cambridge 1842, p. 542.
27 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
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29 *Ibid.*, p. 32; see also William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism*, New York 1938, pp. 62 & 92.
30 *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation*, Vol. I, Cambridge 1856, pp. 23–24.
31 *The First & Second Prayer Books of Edward VI*, Everyman's Library, No. 448, London 1968.
32 *Ibid.*, pp. 347–355.
33 *Ibid.*, pp. 356–360.
34 *Ibid.*, pp. 347–348.
35 Samuel Leuenberger, *Archbishop Cranmer's Immortal Bequest, The Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England: An Evangelistic Liturgy*; Grand Rapids 1990, p. 153.
36 Although we still deal with *The Book of Common Prayer 1552* I quote from the exhortation of Morning Prayer of the *BCP 1662*, because the *BCP 1662* has no more

vestiges of Middle English. The 1552 and the 1662 prayer books are almost identical, but it is easier to read the King James English than Middle English. See *BCP 1662*, p. 38.

37 G. Cuming, *The Godly Order*, London 1983.
38 *BCP 1662*, p. 39.
39 *Ibid.*, pp. 298–301; *BCP 1552*, pp. 380 & 381.
40 *BCP 1662*, pp. 301–303; *BCP 1552*, p. 382.
41 *BCP 1662*, p. 302; *BCP 1552*, p. 382.
42 *BCP 1662*, pp. 303–308; *BCP 1552*, pp. 384–386.
43 *BCP 1662*, p. 306; *BCP 1552*, p. 383.
44 *BCP 1662*, pp. 303–305; *BCP 1552*, pp. 382–384.
45 *BCP 1662*, p. 309; *BCP 1552*, p. 386.
46 *BCP 1662*, p. 310; *BCP 1552*, p. 387.
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48 Samuel Leuenberger, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–153.
49 *Ibid.* pp. 154–156.
50 *Ibid.* p. 178.
51 *Ibid.* pp. 167–168.
52 *Ibid.* pp. 68–72.
53 *Ibid.* p. 73.
54 *Ibid.* pp. 73–74.
55 *Ibid.* pp. 74–75.
56 *Ibid.* pp. 75–79. See p. 188 and especially note 225 on p. 359.
57 The 'Gloria' is an ancient hymn which originated in the East during the fourth century. It was introduced to the Latin tradition by Hilarius of Poitiers (c. 368).
58 Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal*, London 1979, p. 87.
59 *Loc. cit.*
60 *Ibid.*, pp. 207 & 234; see also G.R. Potter, *Zwingli*, Cambridge 1976, pp. 223–234.
61 W. Nicholson, ed., *The Remains of Edmund Grindal*, Cambridge 1843, pp. 377–379 & 386–387.
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63 *Ibid.*, pp. 314–335.
64 Walter Nitsch, 'Emanuel Swedenborg und sein geschichtlicher Einfluss bis in unsere Zeit', in *BIBEL UND GEMEINDE* (Vierteljahrszeitschrift des Bibelbundes), April—June, D-Waldbronn 1983, pp. 162–173.
65 Dieter Voll, *Hochkirchlicher Pietismus*, Munich 1960.
66 The First & Second Prayer Books of King Edward VI; compare especially these points within the different communion liturgies of 1549 and 1552. The contrast is clearly revealed on pp. 222 & 389.
67 *The Alternative Service Book 1980*, Hodder & Stoughton, London 1980.
68 Max Keller, *Die Lehre der Kirche in der Oxfordbewegung, Struktur und Funktion*, Gutersloh 1974.
69 See J.A.T. Robinson, *Liturgy Coming to Life*, A.R. Mowbray, London 1960;
   J.A.T. Robinson, *On being the Church in the World*, SCM Press, London 1960;
   J.A.T. Robinson, *Honest to God*, SCM Press, London 1963;
   J.A.T. Robinson, *The new Reformation?*, SCM Press, London 1965.
70 Wigand Siebel, 'Origenismus in der Katholischen Kirche', *DIAKRISIS*, Bielefeld, February 1982, pp. 8–10.
71 *The Alternative Service Book 1980*, pp. 131, 134, & 137.
72 *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 146, & 165–166.