

Synopsis of the 1947 Report

The aftermath of the Second World War was a watershed in the life of the Church of England: a time for rebuilding, and exploring what part the churches might play in that, looking at tensions both within and beyond the Church of England.

In 1946, Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher commissioned a report, **CATHOLICITY: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West**, which was published the following year. (Fisher subsequently asked both Anglican evangelicals and the Free Churches to respond.)

The group behind the 1947 report was chaired by Dr Michael Ramsey, van Mildert Professor of Divinity in Durham, with Dom Gregory Dix (Nashdom Abbey), and the Revd Fr A. G. Hebert, SSM, as secretaries. Other members were the Revd E. S. Abbott, Dean of King's College, London; the Revd H. J. Carpenter, Warden of Keble College, Oxford; the Revd Dr V. A. Demant, Canon and Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral; T. S. Eliot; the Revd Dr A. M. Farrer, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford; the Revd F. W. Green, Canon and Vice-Dean of Norwich Cathedral; the Rt Revd E. R. Morgan, Bishop of Southampton; the Revd R. C. Mortimer, Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology in the University of Oxford and Canon of Christ Church; the Revd A. Reeves, Rector of Liverpool and Canon Diocesan of Liverpool; the Revd C. H. Smyth, Canon of Westminster, Rector of St Margaret's and Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; and the Revd Dr L. S. Thornton, Community of the Resurrection.

Archbishop Fisher posed the following questions:

- (i) What is the underlying cause – philosophical and theological – of the contrast or conflict between the Catholic and Protestant traditions?
- (ii) What are the fundamental points of doctrine at which the contrast or conflict crystallizes?
- (iii) Is a synthesis at these points possible?
- (iv) If a synthesis is not possible, can they co-exist within one ecclesiastical body, and under what conditions?

2017 is the 70th anniversary of this report, which inevitably reflects the understanding of its authors. This, though shaped in a different age, was open to fresh developments in Biblical and Patristic study and to the new ecumenical situation brought about by an international need for post-war rebuilding. To some extent, the report foreshadowed developments in the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent ecumenical openness which led to ARCIC and its documents. It also identified significant dangers in attempting to bring together Christians of different traditions – Protestant, Liberal and Catholic.

It might seem that the 1947 report inhabits a theological world very different to our own. It deals with issues that no longer top the theological agenda: the relationship between Scripture and Tradition; the nature of the episcopacy, grace and free will; authority, creation and the Fall; natural and revealed theology. Today, our agenda is dominated by apologetics, mission, the relationship between science and belief, and between community, politics, church and world.

From the first, the 1947 report was challenged regarding its representation of differences in doctrine. It needs to be seen alongside the response by the Free Churches, *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, edited by R. Newton Flew and Rupert E Davies, which challenges in some detail the presentation of Protestantism in *Catholicity*. (A report by Anglican Evangelicals, 'The Fullness of Christ', published in 1950, does not comment on the 1947 report.)

What the authors of *Catholicity* did not envisage were radical developments in the study of Scripture and the Early Church which challenge their faith in 'the wholeness of the primitive tradition'. Some of

us taking part in this symposium learnt our theology at a time when it seemed impossible to know what to believe about the historicity of Scripture, and therefore its place in preaching; when we found it hard to see the ongoing relevance of traditional formulations of doctrine to the life of the modern church, assailed by new challenges from science, secular morality, the rise of feminism; and the rapid numerical decline in both the membership and priesthood of the Church of England.

The purpose of this, the first of what we hope might become a series of symposia, is twofold. First, we want to explore the circumstances since 1947 which affected, often adversely, the Catholic voice in the Church of England. We shall consider this both socially and theologically. Second, we want to look clearly at where we are now. What are the questions, beliefs, and unresolved issues for Anglo-Catholics in 2017, especially for our ordinands? How do these relate to young students more generally? And what are the issues for Catholic mission? We do not intend to address comprehensively the content of what a contemporary Catholic voice might stand for: that might be part of a future discussion. Our purpose now is simply to encourage a developing conversation.

For those who have not read the 1947 report 'Catholicity', we attempt here to summarise the key elements of its thinking. In some instances, we quoted essential sections *verbatim*.

Stephen Tucker and Robert Gage

A SUMMARY

1. The Report starts from a presumption of the 'Primitive wholeness of the Christian faith' as a balanced collection of theological principles. The fragmentation and destabilising of this balanced wholeness has led to the various divisions in the church, each representing a distortion of, or overemphasis on, one particular element within that primitive balance.

2. Unity today can only be built on a recognition of that primitive unity, not by a patching together of the present fragments.

'We shall in this Report seek first to describe this primitive wholeness of Christian faith, thought and life; then to examine the chief ways in which distortion and division have occurred; and finally to consider true and false methods of synthesis.'

PRIMITIVE UNITY

3. Such unity is based on a way of life which included belief, worship and morals – in other words, 'sanctification in the truth'. (John 17:17)

4. The primitive Church is seen as part of the eschatological event of redemption, prepared for in the life of Israel, and inaugurated by the birth, life, death, resurrection of Jesus, and gift of the Spirit. That 'event' created a unity into which we are called.

5. The visible Church, or New Israel, is both the body of Christ and a group of sinful and fallible members. Paradoxically, the Kingdom of the future and Church of the present are one thing – the place where we will fully become what we already are.

6. This unity or wholeness is manifested in an outward order in which the spiritual and the bodily are not separate. Its component parts are:

a. The ongoing office of the apostles and their successors, whose task is to teach, rule and ordain.

b. Baptism, which brought regeneration and inaugurated eternal life, remission of sins and sanctification – a new creation which makes us members of the holy common people of God, the eternal church.

c. The Eucharist, which combines sacrifice, fellowship, communion meal, adoration, intercession, commemoration, and thanksgiving; a memorial of concrete facts and their application to every Christian, making the local part of the universal.

d. Out of all this come the contents of the New Testament, which presupposes and interprets the faith and 'the Way' from within which it is written. 'To abstract them from the setting and life and belief which produced them (in other words, to oppose 'Scripture' and 'Tradition') is wholly artificial and arbitrary.'

7. 'The apostolic 'writings' reflect and presuppose at every point the abundant many-sidedness and tension of the life of the Apostolic Church and its 'Tradition' of *kerugma* and practice: indeed, they are themselves first received and valued as one important part of it. They are ultimately 'canonised' in the second century, as 'inspired Scriptures' beside and above the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures, which were the only Bible of the primitive Church: canonised rather as an authoritative witness to and standard for the maintenance of 'Tradition', than as an independent theological authority in themselves.

8. The ability of the early Church to contain the many-sided fullness of Apostolic truth is seen in its eventual acceptance of so diverse a collection, where all alike was equally authoritative and 'inspired'. Only a Church which was not afraid of 'tensions', which could discern without prejudice the 'wholeness' of the revelation in Christ, would have dared to set side by side four differing Gospels, the Epistles of St Paul and St James, the apostolic history of Acts and the eschatology of the Apocalypse, and to acclaim them all as normative.

9. Thus, according to the Report, the first principle of unity is the acceptance of the Church as a Divine fact prior to the individuals who comprise its membership; the acceptance of its outward order as a part of its being; and the recognition of the authority of 'Tradition' together with that of Scripture.

10. There are clearly several tensions implicit in this primitive unity: between the temporal and eternal character of the church; between its once-for-allness and its growth; between the divine nature of the church and the sinfulness of its members; between the present activity of the spirit and the recognition of tradition. These tensions can give rise to traditionalism and modernism, ecclesiasticism and sectarianism.

11. Again, there is a tension between the Church's apartness from the world and its mission to the world – a world sunk in sin. Yet we all receive the light which enlightens everyone who comes into the world; we are created by God; there is a natural law which we can discover; we pray for statesmen, and we see a positive significance in civilisation– and yet we all need redemption, for without Christ we cannot be saved.

12. 'The main burden of our Report is that the problem of re-union is that of the recovery of the 'wholeness' of Tradition. Of course, there is a sense in which 'wholeness' cannot apply to a national Church, or the Church of any particular generation. The outlook of the tenth century differs from that of the twentieth: there are diversities of cultures as there are diversities of gifts. But there is one Spirit; and it is possible for there to be in diverse Churches and cultures the same wholeness or integrity of the Christian Tradition as is exemplified in the apostolic age. It is this wholeness that has become damaged in our divisions, and re-union means the recovery of it. The movement for the restoration of

visible unity is at present endangered by the advocacy of patchwork remedies, on the part of those who have hardly seen what the problem really is. The immediate duty of Christians, therefore, is to become aware of the loss of 'wholeness' which characterises the present state of Christendom.'

THE BACKGROUND TO THE WESTERN SCHISMS

13. Fragmentation and loss of wholeness, anticipated in the Chalcedonian schism, begins most seriously in the division between the Orthodox and Western Church. The Reformation exposed fissures already apparent in the late medieval church: legalism, clericalism, theological rationalism, individualistic piety, and isolation of the crucifixion as the sole means of redemption. The Western tradition which split up in the sixteenth century was already a defective tradition. 'The wholeness to which Christians today need to return is not that of the West in isolation from the East; nor yet will it be attained by the mere juxtaposition of Eastern and Western traditions. None the less, to make contact with the Orthodox East and understand its mind is not to run away from the Western problem, but rather to dig in the direction of its roots.'

ORTHODOX PROTESTANTISM

14. Its positive truths include: the gospel of the living God in direct and personal action; the appeal to authority of Bible as primary source of salvation; the necessity of faith or personal response (not works or correct belief); the participation of the laity in the life and government of the church; the importance of preaching; the revival of the prophetic spirit.

15. But some forms of Protestantism contain radical errors: the loss of the idea that man was made in the image of God and that, though defaced, the image remains in fallen man and is restored by baptism; and a deep pessimism about the human condition, identified as total depravity, whereby man's rational nature, his capacity for culture, for a certain achievement of natural justice and civilisation, his very humanity, contain no trace of the lost 'Image of God'. This leaves no 'point of contact' to which the redeeming action of God can address itself without violence. Salvation is of the sovereign, freely-electing grace of God alone; and therefore the so-called 'good works' done before Justification are themselves sinful, as proceeding from a radically sinful nature, and merit eternal damnation as much as so-called 'evil works' done in the same state. This idea leads underlies the thesis of the arbitrary predestination of 'the elect' to salvation by the sovereign will of God, and the doctrine of 'Justification by Faith alone'. Even in the 'justified', the image of God is not effectively restored by 'imputed righteousness'. The doctrine of a judgment of individual men by God therefore becomes irrational and tyrannous, and the Christian conception of God is altered.

16. Underlying all this is the assumed antithesis, anticipated in mediaeval thought, between 'nature' and 'grace'. In the Reformation, there is an affirmation of the reality of 'grace' by denying that of 'nature'. There is also a rejection of scholastic Natural Theology and the doctrine of Natural Law, as based on philosophy and not on the Gospel. Reformed thinkers saw Western theology as unduly rationalistic in its endeavour to express the things of the Spirit in universally valid and rational terms. This led to a fear of metaphysics and rational thinking, a mistrust of natural theology, an isolation of the doctrine of redemption, no theology of the created order, a loss of sacramental theology, the separation of matter and spirit, an overemphasis on inwardness, a division of piety from politics, a lack of ascetic and mystical theology, and a retreat from history (i.e. the period between the gospel and the believer).

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH AND OF AUTHORITY

17. Emphasis on the church as the place where, through grace, the Word is preached and sacraments celebrate, loses sight of a continuity with the Word made flesh, alive in a historically continuous society, despite the failings of its members. The Reformation understanding presents a pattern which

puts the individual before the church,i.e. Christ – individual – church. The Catholic pattern holds to Christ – church – individual.

18. 'Protestantism has not really come to terms with the reality of history as the scene of the continuous presence of Divine life that flows from the Incarnation. Partly through a belief that history is intrinsically sinful, partly through the doctrine of *sola fide*, partly through a distorted idea of 'inwardness', and partly through the identification of Rome with anti-Christ, classical Protestantism was unable to conceive of the Church as a Divine life in the context of an imperfect and sinful society.'

19. The main issue concerning authority seems to be this: the Church is commissioned to declare the true doctrine with authority, through its proper organs, and to point out what is false; but this authority is rightly exercised only when the Church embodies the Apostolic Tradition in its fullness and balance, and is itself in subjection to the Gospel of God. The Protestant reformers rebelled against a Church which had too long exercised its *magisterium* without due conformity to these essential conditions; and in the place of the authority of the Church they set the authority of the Scriptures.

20. This raises the question as to how the Scriptures are to be interpreted. Lutherans tended to interpret them in the light of a particular doctrine. Calvinists tended to treat Scripture as a self-contained Divine volume, and to overlook its interrelation with the Tradition to which it bears witness. There were, further, the many Protestant Confessions, all professing to give an authoritative interpretation of Scripture, and all lacking a clear conception as to who possessed the authority to interpret Scripture, and why. There was also the frank appeal to the individual's private judgment, whereby he might interpret the Scriptures as he would. 'In all these ways the Authority of the Church was disappearing, and the notion of such Authority has indeed become virtually eclipsed in modern Protestant Christianity.'

21. 'It is not enough to appeal, as the reformers appealed, to 'the Bible' or 'the Gospel'. It is necessary, in appealing to the Bible, to appeal also to the Tradition of the primitive Church as the context in which the Bible had its origin and meaning. And it is necessary, in appealing to the Gospel, to remember that the Gospel involved a series of historical events, an interpretation of those events, and an apostolate commissioned with authority to teach both the history and its true interpretation. It is grievously misleading to appeal to Bible or Gospel without appealing also to the apostolic Church as the witness and keeper of both; and a distorted form of appeal to Christian beginnings underlies the eclipse of the doctrine of the Authority of the Church amongst Protestants. This is not to say that the employment of this doctrine in the history of Catholicism has been free from abuse. Far from it. But the doctrine itself is a part of apostolic Christianity, and its right exercise can only be recovered by a return to the fullness of the apostolic Tradition.'

THE RENAISSANCE AND LIBERALISM

22. The Renaissance emphasised the dignity of man, freedom and the progress of history towards enlightenment. From a Christian perspective its positive elements are: a devotion to truth for its own sake; reverence for man in the image of God; the truth and beauty of God and the positive aspects of human culture; a renewal of Biblical and Patristic scholarship. Its weaknesses arise from the lack of a sense of our profound dependence on the creator and our need for salvation, which results in a belief in man as man and the identification of the kingdom with human progress.

23. The achievements of 19th century Liberalism include: the critical study of the Bible and the acceptance that Genesis need not be taken literally and is consistent with evolution and natural selection. Its weaknesses include the loss of a sense of the Bible as a living word; a new, scientific

understanding of nature that puts God at a distance; the loss of belief in God as Judge; the rejection of those aspects of Jesus' teaching which seem to be incompatible with modern ideas. Man becomes the centre of the picture. There is a new emphasis on feeling and 'God consciousness' and a decline in the sense of evil; a growth of moralism and a decline of metaphysics; a neglect of the being of Christ and a focus on him as a good man and symbol of potential divinity in us all. God is seen only as a loving father, and redemption is replaced by spiritual progress.

24. Renaissance and modern Liberal religion resemble the humanistic aspect of the Catholic faith with the Evangelical aspect forgotten. And though tolerance is seen as a key liberal virtue, it is capable of being highly intolerant of those who disagree with its key elements.

25. It is one thing to recover the positive insights of Liberalism within a Catholic and Evangelical faith: it is another thing to take the common and popular sentiments of Liberalism as a norm of Christian broadmindedness wherein we can all 'get together'.

THE POST-TRIDENTINE PAPAL COMMUNION

26. The easy way in which the Reformers, almost from the first, simply 'wrote off' the Papacy even as a possibility illustrates clearly the extent to which they ignored from the outset both the New Testament doctrine of the 'universal' Church as an inherent part of the Gospel, and the inherence of the Divine-human society in the 'here-and-now' of history.

27. If such an institution as the 'universal Church' is to exist as more than a sentiment and an ideal—as a concrete substantial reality within human history in our highly organised modern society—then some such central institution would seem to be more than just a convenience. It is at least a pragmatic necessity, as is shown by the obvious temptation of the modern 'oecumenical movement' to try to provide a substitute for it. To cast away so lightly an institution with such deep roots in Christian history, and with such immense claims on European gratitude and veneration, was to prove oneself blind to the profounder realities of what is meant by 'the universal Church'.

28. Why has the papacy not become a focus for unity? For centuries this is largely explained by its involvement in the power politics of Europe. In the 19th century it became identified with the *ancien regime*. Only in the 20th century have these problems significantly faded. The Council of Trent focused its efforts on a great system of reasoning about Revelation, rather than the Biblical Revelation in itself, presented as the 'teaching of the Roman Church' that the convert is required to accept. At the same time, the Roman Catholic Church is presented as the only church, and equated with the *Regnum Dei* itself.

29. 'It would be difficult to devise anything more likely to repulse the instructed Protestant at the outset. It is a sheer perversion when the process of Christian salvation can be represented as fulfilled by a merely mechanical human obedience to a human jurisdiction acting in the name of an absentee Christ. This gross misunderstanding of the system was undoubtedly present in the Middle Ages, and the evident survival of something of the same mentality in post-Tridentine Catholicism has appeared to most Protestants still to justify outright their forefathers' original protest. The reconciliation here can only come from a deeper apprehension of the paradox of the Divine life imparted and lived through the necessities of living in an imperfect earthly society.'

FRAGMENTATION AND SYNTHESIS

30. The tripartite divisions in Western Christianity expose a series of opposed conceptions: the splitting apart of stresses within historic Catholicism, summarised here:

Salvation by faith – Salvation by works

Grace – Reason, morals, feeling

Revealed theology – Natural theology

Christus pro nobis – *Christus in nobis*

Justification – Sanctification

Man as sinner – Man as *imago Dei*

De servo arbitrio – *De libero arbitrio*

Man in contradiction to God – Man in continuity with God

Salvation as the deliverance of mankind from out of the world – salvation as the transformation of mankind and the world in a new Creation.

Creator and creature incommensurable--Creature and Creator mutually necessary

Christ as Saviour – Christ as pattern

History as sin – History as Divinely ordered progress

Political pessimism – Politics as the coming of the Kingdom

God transcendent – God immanent

31. 'This table represents not only two kinds of theological position, but also two kinds of religious attitude towards life amongst ordinary folk. We have seen also that modern Catholicism does not succeed in the task of re-integration of the truth, for modern Catholicism is itself a product of the long history of dissociation.'

32. In Protestantism there is an inherited inability to take the visible Church with due seriousness. But Catholics have too often slipped into an identification of the visible Church with the Kingdom of God, and have forgotten the Church's ultimate subjection to the sovereignty and judgment of the Divine Word. If others have neglected the objectivity of the faith as a body of teaching handed down, Catholics have too often been unmindful of the meaning of faith in the Pauline sense. The authors of the Report are well aware of the share of their own school of thought in these sins of distortion and omission.

33. 'One result of our divisions has been that a number of theological conflicts have been fought with such faulty presuppositions as to become really battles in a fog. Thus there has been the conflict about the doctrine of Sacrifice in the Eucharist, in which the upholders of an inadequate conception of sacrifice in terms of immolation have fought against those who, not without reason, were repelled by the idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist altogether. Another instance has been the conflict between a narrowly vicarious conception of priesthood, and an individualistic and unscriptural interpretation of a priesthood of all believers. Yet another instance has been the conflict between a forensic doctrine of the Atonement, and an exemplarist view of our Lord's death which, in reaction, rejects the apostolic teaching that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures". Nor can we forget the conflict between a fundamentalist view of the authority of Scripture which belittles the human factor in the Bible, and a Liberal view which virtually ascribes inspiration only to those portions which the individual himself finds inspiring.'

34. 'In every case, conflict has arisen from the loss of an original wholeness and a resulting distortion of categories. There is a wholeness of Atonement which includes our Lord's Life, Resurrection and Ascension, as well as His Death. There is a wholeness of sacrifice which includes far more than an act of immolation. There is a wholeness of priesthood which sets the priesthood of the ministry within the royal priesthood of the Church. And there is a wholeness of Scriptural authority, neither Fundamentalist nor Liberal, which sets Scripture in the context of Tradition. In none of these instances

can a process of finding the Highest Common Factor of rival positions achieve the needed synthesis. In so far as progress has been made towards a synthesis in recent years, it has been made, not by exercises in Highest Common Factor, but by going behind the rival doctrines to something which they all, in various ways, misrepresent.'

35. The danger is that we should drift into false methods of theological synthesis which contain within themselves the seeds of fresh disunity.

a. It is misleading to seek a synthesis by way of fastening broken pieces together. For when the unity of truth is broken, it often happens that the result is not a number of fragments of truth, but a number of conceptions which are each misleading, erroneous and heretical. We do not arrive at truth by fitting errors together.

b. It is widely assumed that a synthesis can be reached by taking the agreed elements in 'our common Christianity', and omitting the matters upon which there has been deep disagreement. But to do this is to accept our common *distorted* versions of Christianity as a basis, without attempting to cure us all of our distortions. From the Highest Common Factor of several erroneous quotients, we get, not a true solution, but a result more erroneous still.

c. Another popular method is to separate matters of faith and matters of order, and to treat the latter as secondary. But its weakness is that a sharp division between faith and order is itself the product of a disintegrated theology and was unknown to the primitive Church. To build upon an antithesis between faith and order is therefore to promote not unity but further dissociation. Indeed, every attempt at synthesis must watch lest it take as its basis some misleading presuppositions which belong to some passing phase of Christian thought, and in consequence make confusion worse confounded.

36. The true way of synthesis is not to take our contemporary systems or 'isms' or Church traditions and try to piece them together, either as a whole or in selected items, but rather to go behind our contemporary systems and strive for the recovery of the fullness of Tradition within the thought and worship and order and life of each of the sundered portions of Christendom.

37. The divisions in Christendom are bound up with cleavages in social and religious habit, and in politics and culture, as well as in theology, and the hope is often expressed in discussions on re-union that, while theology has its clarifying effects upon life, life may have its clarifying effects upon theology, so that the bringing together of Christians in a common organisation may help the solution of theological differences.

38. 'Sinking our differences' lightly means tearing up the roots; and 'closing our ranks' too readily means abandoning the elements of dogma which remain imbedded in the various traditions, and substituting a vague and undogmatic faith which is at the mercy of those very secular notions which Christians are uniting to combat. For where the elements of dogma, and the patterns of life moulded by it, have become weakened, the way is opened for pragmatist, nationalistic and man-centred ideas of religion to worm their way in. And they do. The idea of unity in the truth of the Gospel is displaced by the idea of a unity, Christian in name, but nationalist-secularist in its motive and its assumptions.

THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

39. Within the Church of England a drastic theological reconstruction is taking place. The study of the Bible and of early Christianity is leading to the correction of many familiar presuppositions, including

those which have been held by our own school of thought.

40. The fruits of this Anglican way can be seen in our own history. In spite of party conflicts, there has been a true Anglican unity, a blending of the old traditions with a desire to interpret the faith in terms of contemporary life, a piety in which a love for the Church's forms mingles with a sturdy sense of personal responsibility, an ability to avoid sectionalism and to touch the life of the English people widely.

41. In the stricter field of theology there has been a like fruitfulness. Work has been done to which the word 'synthesis' can justly be applied. One instance is the treatment of Holy Scripture. Here, Anglicans have been able to do what neither Roman Catholics nor continental Protestants were free to do. In Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort their successors, we see a treatment of the Bible which is free from the assumptions both of post-Reformation systems and of modern rationalism, and does justice both to the divine and to the human elements in the Bible, both to the unity of Scripture and Tradition and to the modern perplexities consequent upon the revolution in historical method in the nineteenth century.

42. Yet the possibilities of synthesis within the Anglican ideal are still largely unrealised. Often the various parties have jostled side by side, unreconciled and openly antagonistic. The three chief schools have represented not only certain positive elements of truth, but also the post-mediaeval lop-sidedness and distortion of those elements. It is by no means true that their mere juxtaposition produces the theological synthesis which is needed.

43. Today [1947] it is only too apparent that, notwithstanding the genuine achievements of Anglican synthesis, the forces of disintegration are strong. There are those who, virtually omitting the doctrine of the Church from its place in the Gospel, replace it by a doctrine of the spiritual vocation of the English community. There are, on the other hand, those content to practice an introverted and pietistic ecclesiasticism under the name of 'Catholic' churchmanship. There are those who, intent upon the idea of Christian leadership in the march of progress, have twisted the Gospel into a sort of pragmatist panacea for human ills, instead of a Gospel of God's *truth*, which makes its demands upon mankind just because it is true. There are, on the other hand, those eager to preach Divine Redemption who ignore the doctrine of Creation which is its groundwork. The fullness of our tradition is often far to seek, and it is idle to be content that the Church of England includes a 'rich variety', if that variety represents distortion and fragmentation of the truth.

44. The Anglican Communion is wont to refer to the *Lambeth Quadrilateral*. It is upon the Quadrilateral that it insists as the condition of Anglican fellowship and the basis for the re-union of Christendom. But there are two ways in which the Quadrilateral can be used. It can be used as a set of separate items, necessary for re-union partly for reasons of principle and partly for reasons of expediency. It can also be used as a symbol of the undivided wholeness of the primitive Tradition that lies behind. And it is only in the latter sense that it points the way towards unity in the truth.

45. It is not, however, as four items, but as a symbol of the fullness of Tradition that the Quadrilateral can point towards unity within the Anglican Communion, towards synthesis in theology, and towards the healing of schism in the Church at large. Thus the appeal to *Holy Scripture* and the *Creeeds* will mean the recovery of the pattern of the Biblical faith in God as Creator, Redeemer and Judge. Appeal to the *sacraments of the Gospel* will mean recovery of the primitive fullness of Christian initiation by Baptism into Christ and the sealing with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation and the primitive fullness of the Eucharistic life. Appeal to the *historic Episcopate* will mean recovery of the true place of the Bishop in the Church, not as organiser of a vast administrative machine, but as guardian and exponent of the faith, the bond of sacramental unity, and an organ of the Body of Christ in true constitutional relation to the presbyters and people. In itself, the Quadrilateral is a bony skeleton: clothed in the flesh and blood of the fullness of the Tradition it may be used by God to bring unity in the truth.

