

feet. But two postulates (both Scriptural) are needed to support our view. First, that the Holy Spirit is given, not for enjoyment, but as equipment for God's work; secondly, that the Holy Spirit trains the individual in the body of believers. Hence the value we set on groups for Bible study and corporate prayer. It must be added that many clergy need to trust both the Holy Spirit and their people enough to allow such groups to be led into activities and adventures that they themselves would never have thought of.

(d) The Priesthood of all believers. The greatest obstacle, apart from the disunity of the Church, to bringing men and women to-day into living touch with God is that the Church appears to them to be no more than a venerable institution and not a vital fellowship. In the community of the Church, because it is a human as well as a divine society, there will be different functions—Bishop, priest, deacon and layman—but the standard of holiness and responsibility is the same for all. In particular, the responsibility for introducing others to Christ is the same for the unordained as for the ordained. (Incidentally, this carries with it the right of the laity to take equal share with the ordained ministry in the councils of the Church, in matters of doctrine, discipline and worship.) This is a crucial issue to-day, both in Church and State. In both there is a progressive denial of any effective voice in the direction of affairs. In the State, this tendency springs from a low valuation of the ordinary man's idea of citizenship and its responsibilities; in the Church, from a low valuation of his potentiality as a man of God. In our parishes, we haven't begun to call forth the enormous untapped resources of consecrated, imaginative and practical lay-witness. Until we do, we shall go on producing that horrid person, "the ecclesiastical layman," instead of what the world so desperately needs, "a secular form of sanctity" (Maritain).

Let the words of Bishop Ken tie all this together: "I die in the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole Church, before the division of East and West. I die in the Communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all papal and puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross".

II

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EVANGELICALISM, used as a term to denote a particular school of thought, is to be distinguished from Catholicism and Modernism (or Liberalism). The following is a description of each:

By Evangelicalism is meant the effort in each generation to represent the Apostolic experience of Christ, guided solely by the record of that experience recorded in the New Testament. By Catholicism is meant the particular way the Christian religion has been developed by the Church in history; and by Modernism is meant the effort to express the Christian religion in the light of present-day knowledge and experience without hindrance of any kind from traditional views.¹

Two principles seem to give Evangelicalism its distinctive character:

¹ From *Evangelical Thought and Practice*, p. 9, by the present writer.

(1) The Bible only as the authority for faith and practice ; and (2) The doctrine of *justification by faith*, the key doctrine of Scripture.

1. The Bible only as the authority for faith and practice. This principle, from its very nature, can only have appeared after the passage of some time in Church history. We can most obviously see it in action in the Reformation in the sixteenth century. It was by the direct study of the Scriptures that the reformers were led to criticize current Church teaching and practice. What they saw going on all around them had little resemblance to what they read in the New Testament. But criticism of the Church for departure from Scriptural standards had been made on many occasions prior to the sixteenth century. The Paulicians in the seventh century ; the Waldenses in the twelfth, and the Wycliffites in the fourteenth, are examples. This fact shows that there has practically always been a Bible *versus* Church tension in Christianity. Such a tension is clearly of a kind which can be understood as a question of the conflict of authorities—Written Word or Living Church ; or as the contrast between the inner, spiritual aspect of belief and its outward, institutional aspect. As we read early Church history we see the development of the Church in its institutional and credal aspect as part and parcel of its life in the world, and seemingly essential to it. But very soon the outward form of the Church in its Ministry and Worship, and the Creeds as standards of the Faith, began to be regarded as sacrosanct, and given a status as if of Dominical institution. A type of thought had developed which regarded the Church in all its visible aspects as the thing given by God for the salvation of the world, and so possessing final authority in religion. The study of the Scriptures, on the other hand, led to conflict with this kind of thought, and to the charge that "ecclesiasticism" had been substituted for the religion of Jesus Christ.

This same process has continued to the present day ; and the evangelical is one who judges the Church by what he reads in the Bible. This attitude was the one adopted by the English, as well as by the Continental, Reformers ; and the Book of Common Prayer, drawn up on the principle enunciated in Article VI, is an evangelical book of worship and doctrine. Anglicanism, it is true, retained much of the outer trappings of the medieval Church ; but there is no doubt about the nature of the doctrine intended to be taught in the Church of England by the Reformers—it was to be Biblical through and through. That the retention of the outer trappings has been a constant source of confusion as to the real intention of the Reformers is indeed proved by subsequent history, and is reflected in the contention that the Church of England is both "Catholic" and "Protestant", the former term usually being given all the positive connotation, and the latter being reduced to mean merely "non-papal". The Anglican Evangelical prefers to think of the Church of England as essentially *evangelical*, with a universal outlook on the Church in history which prevents it becoming a "sect". He might add to the principle of "Bible Only", the thought of being guided by the experience of the Church Universal down the ages—he is a "Bible and Church" Christian, and in this order.

2. The placing of the Bible in the supreme place of authority is

followed in evangelical thought by declaring *justification by faith* to be the key-doctrine of Scripture; that is to say, the doctrine which explains the whole religion of the Bible. All the evangelical movements in history are based on this view. Martin Luther elaborated upon the doctrine, and so did Calvin. It is expressly present in the Anglican Article XI, and it is given much space in the Westminster Confession. The doctrine itself can shortly and authoritatively be given in St. Paul's words from the Epistle to the Romans, chapter iii, verses 23, 24: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus". Evangelicals take this to mean that forgiveness is found through the personal acceptance of Christ's Sacrifice on Calvary; and this acceptance is not dependent on Church membership, but rather true membership of the Church of Christ is dependent on it.

The distinctively evangelical position in ecclesiastical polity springs from this estimate of the supremacy of the doctrine of Justification by Faith. Thus we find in Evangelicalism: (a) Emphasis upon evangelism. The evangelical is first and foremost an evangelist; he seeks to bring men and women to a personal decision for Christ—this is the experience of *conversion*. The ordinances of the Church—Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion—sacred as they are, do not "work" if personal faith is absent. The evangelical rejects the "ex opere operato" principle of Scholastic theology. This rejection is expressed in Article XXV (Of the Sacraments) by the phrase: In such only as worthily (lat. *digne*) receive the same; and in Article XXVII (Of Baptism): They that receive baptism rightly (lat. *recte*). (b) The reduction of ritualism and ceremonialism to a minimum. Since the Church services are regarded as occasions for the kindling and fostering of faith in the hearts of the people, they are made to be as *personal* as possible. The meaning of this is clearer when contrasted with the idea that the Church services are "works" of the Church, performed by the priests, at which the people attend. In the evangelical view every encouragement should be given for the people to participate, rather than to be mere spectators. (c) A strong desire for co-operation and union with all evangelically-minded Christians of whatever denomination. A "Fellowship in the Gospel" ought to be enjoyed by all Christians; but those tests which depend on outward history (such as possessing, or not possessing, episcopal orders) are regarded as of lesser importance than the test of possessing and preaching the Apostolic faith of the New Testament. And finally (d) A strong witness against the teaching and practices of the Roman Catholic Church on the grounds of departure from Scripture by that Church. To the evangelical, Rome is utterly condemned as an apostate Church, and no compromise is possible.

In conclusion, as we review Evangelicalism as a whole, we may feel that it appears in history as a corrective movement only. For this reason some hold it cannot be the whole Catholic Faith. But, when dealing with the revelation of God, we must be most careful of all not to add to, or subtract from, that revelation; and this is precisely the function of Evangelicalism. In this way it can claim actually to be preserving the Faith which is truly catholic.