

confessing sins over a goat then sent into the wilderness (cf. Lv. 16: 20-23) is firmly attested for the fourteenth/thirteenth centuries BC in the Hittite rituals of Uhhamuwa and Ashkhella<sup>58</sup> by which (respectively) plague or death are warded off by presenting to a deity and then driving forth a sheep or a sheep and a woman captive to carry off plague/death into enemy lands. Again, the humanitarian provision sometimes found in Leviticus (e.g. 5:7, 11; 12:8) allowing a smaller sacrifice from a poor person is reflected at this same epoch in Hittite data, where a poor person may offer one sheep rather than nine.<sup>59</sup> And what is blemished is no more popular there<sup>60</sup> than in (e.g.) Leviticus 22: 17 ff. To banish all such usages and concepts for another 700 years or more until the Exile or after is both futile and erroneous.

*e. The wilderness journeyings.* Various features in the account of this period correspond directly to known features and phenomena of the regions concerned, e.g. water-supplies, mud-flats, season incidence of quails, etc.<sup>61</sup> Israelite numbers may seem high,<sup>62</sup> but are internally consistent;<sup>63</sup> whatever their origin, they are hardly just arbitrary. Such details as the use of long silver trumpets (Nu. 10: 1-10), a rectangular encampment around the tabernacle (Nu. 2), and ox-wagons (Nu. 7: 3, 6, 7) again make sense in a fourteenth-twelfth century BC context.<sup>64</sup> Itineraries like that of Numbers 33 are no more 'late' than the Syro-Palestinian route-lists of Papyrus Anastasi

<sup>58</sup> ANET, p. 347b, or Friedrich, *Der Alte Orient* 25/2 (1925), pp. 10, 11-13.

<sup>59</sup> Goetze, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 6(1952) p. 101, and Kronasser, *Die Sprache* 7(1961), p. 152.

<sup>60</sup> E.g. ANET, pp. 207-210 (especially §§7, 19); on excluding foreigners as in Lv. 22:25, cf. ANET, p. 208, § 6.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. NBD, pp. 1328-1330, and cf. remarks of Manley, *Book of the Law*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>62</sup> On possible interpretations, cf. (e.g.) J. W. Wenham, *T B* 18 (1967), pp. 27-40.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Finn, *Unity of the Pentateuch*, pp. 264-274.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. NBD, p. 847; also in Harrison, *IOT*, pp. 622-623.

I (thirteenth cent. BC), or Old Assyrian merchants' itineraries to Asia Minor as early as Abraham.<sup>65</sup>

*f. Literary and linguistic aspects.* The combination of several literary genres in one work, as with Exodus and Numbers (narrative, covenant/laws, poems, lists, genealogies, etc.) is characteristic of the ancient Near East and cannot determine authorship.<sup>66</sup> In linguistic matters, it is not good enough to dub a word or construction 'late' merely because it occurs (even solely) in passages termed 'late' on a priori grounds; and much so termed is now attested early, or for long timespans — examples and essential principles are accessible elsewhere.<sup>67</sup> The entire text and contents of the pentateuchal books are ripe for re-study in the full context of the world in which they were written.

#### Abbreviations used

ANET J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, 1950-69).

AO/OT K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* (Tyndale Press, London, 1966).

IOT *Introduction to the Old Testament*, (a) by E. J. Young, 3rd ed., 1964, (b) by R. K. Harrison, 1970 (both Tyndale Press, London).

JAOS *Journal of the American Oriental Society*.

JNES *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.

NBD J. D. Douglas et alii (eds.), *The New Bible Dictionary* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1962 and reprs.).

NPOT J. B. Payne (ed.), *New Perspectives on the Old Testament* (Word Books, Waco, 1970).

PCI K. A. Kitchen, *Pentateuchal Criticism and Interpretation*, Notes of Lectures, Dec. 1965 (TSF, London, 1966 and repr.).

RHA *Revue Hittite et Asianique*.

T(H)B Tyndale (House) Bulletin.

TSFB *Theological Students' Fellowship Bulletin*.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. respectively ANET, pp. 476-8, and refs. in AO/OT, p. 50 n. 75.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. (e.g.) AO/OT, pp. 125 f. for but two examples of many.

<sup>67</sup> See AO/OT, pp. 139-146, for relevant principles.

## Evangelicalism: a Historical Perspective

A Skevington Wood

*The word 'evangelicalism' is certainly one of the most misunderstood in the theological vocabulary; even evangelicals, who ought to know better, are capable of confusing it with 'evangelism'. It has, however, a noble pedigree, the description of which may help to avoid contemporary confusion about the meaning of the word. In the present article Dr Wood examines the history of the usage of the word and of a number of its congeners which throw further light upon its meaning. Dr Wood is a Metho-*

*dist minister, until recently on the staff of the Movement for Worldwide Evangelization and now a tutor at Cliff College. He is the author of a number of important works in church history, including the life of Thomas Haweis and studies of the Methodist Revival and of John Wesley.*

'When we don't know where we are,' a Cambridge don once remarked, 'it is sometimes a good idea to take a backward look and discover where we once

were.' Then he added sardonically: 'I have the feeling that in Cambridge we haven't known where we were for the last 200 years.'

Whether or not this is a correct assessment of Cambridge, it is certainly a correct assessment of the importance of the backward look, claims Professor Robert McAfee Brown, who recounts the story in his book on *The Spirit of Protestantism* (1961). We cannot understand twentieth-century evangelicalism purely in terms of the twentieth century. We need to look back and remind ourselves of what we once were, and why. Only then shall we be in a position to consider our role today. Much current misunderstanding of evangelical attitudes on the part of those who belong to other schools of thought arises from a failure to appreciate what might be described as our evangelical pedigree. Even some who themselves espouse the cause are nevertheless unfamiliar with its historical antecedents. It is useful to inspect once again the rock from which we were hewn and the quarry from which we were extracted.

### Evangelical

It is too easily assumed that evangelicalism is a comparatively recent innovation. It is equated with American fundamentalism at the outset of the present century or American revivalism in the last. At the earliest it is traced to the eighteenth-century awakening under the Wesleys and Whitefield. Even when its essential connection with the Reformation has been established, any claim to further antiquity is immediately dismissed on the score that Protestantism itself represents a total departure from the past. Dr J. V. Langmead Casserley, for example, endeavours to explain how, in his view, the Catholic tradition was regrettably fractured by the Reformers. He argues that they took an unprecedented step in founding entirely new churches 'called after the name of Christ indeed and dedicated to His glory but certainly not founded or contemplated by Him in the days of His flesh', with 'new ministries differing both in origin and principle from that of the ancient Church'.<sup>1</sup>

On this theory, the Reformation amounted simply to a revolt against the church universal. And insofar as the papacy claimed that allegiance to the see of Rome was a necessary condition of inclusion in the church of Jesus Christ, the Reformation may indeed be regarded in a revolutionary light. Such assumptions prompted Jacques Maritain to deplore 'that immense disaster for humanity, the Protestant Reformation'.<sup>2</sup> The evangelical, however, prefers to agree with Philip Schaff that the Reformation took 'a deeper plunge into the meaning of the Gospel than even St Augustine had made', and demanded

that final loyalty must be accorded to this gospel and the One who is both its subject and object, namely Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>3</sup> The church is the fellowship of those who belong to Christ, irrespective of other affiliations. As a consequence, the Protestant believes that fidelity to the organizational expression of the church in any particular communion is measured by its degree of fidelity to the gospel. These were the presuppositions which determined the classic breach with Rome at the time of the Reformation. In no sense did the pioneers of reform regard themselves as innovators setting up a new church. It was Rome that had left the old paths and thus disqualified itself.

Because of major misunderstandings, a reappraisal of the historical significance of evangelicalism is overdue. 'Evangelical' and 'Protestant' are emotive words today, capable of arousing profound feelings either of sympathy or of antagonism. But the image behind the language may be a complete distortion. There is an evangelical Protestantism falsely so called from which moderate conservatives today would wish to dissociate themselves. Yet all too often in the eyes of others the degenerate deterioration is confused with the original and authentic stock.

In his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1938) Sigmund Freud supplied numerous instances of words being forgotten, twisted, or misplaced because of emotional undertones.<sup>4</sup> He quoted a piece of dialogue from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene 3 between the poet Cinna and a citizen of Rome. 'Cinna Truly my name is Cinna. *Burgher* Tear him to pieces! He is a conspirator. *Cinna* I am Cinna the poet! not Cinna the conspirator. *Burgher* No matter; his name is Cinna; tear the name out of his heart and let him go.'

The name 'evangelical' by derivation refers to the distinctive doctrines of the gospel. In this sense it was applied to John Wyclif, the morning star of the Reformation, who was dubbed 'the evangelical doctor'.<sup>5</sup> The Reformation proper was touched off by Martin Luther's rediscovery of the gospel and he himself is rightly regarded as the father of Protestant evangelicalism. The first three chapter headings in Canon James Atkinson's survey of Luther and the Reformation in the Paternoster Church History series refer successively to 'Luther's Discovery of Evangelical Theology', 'Luther Teaches Evangelical Theology', and 'The Papacy Repudiates Evangelical Theology'.<sup>6</sup> 'Luther sensed that the Church had grown further and further away from the Gospel,' Atkinson comments, 'and had lost it in favour of a powerful secular institution and a humanized philosophy-cum-theology. He made nothing new yet

<sup>3</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Creeds of Christendom* (1877), vol. I, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (Penguin ed., 1938), p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> John Stacey, *John Wyclif and Reform* (1964), p. 73.

<sup>6</sup> James Atkinson, *The Great Light: Luther and Reformation* (1968), pp. 11, 30, 38.

<sup>1</sup> J. V. Langmead Casserley, *No Faith of My Own* (1950), p. 85; cf. Kenneth Hamilton, *The Protestant Way* (1956), p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Three Reformers: Luther, Descartes, Rousseau* (rev. 1929), p. 13.

made everything new. He simply restored the Gospel. He innovated nothing but renovated everything.<sup>7</sup> Luther complained that under the papacy the gospel lay 'idle in the dust beneath the bench'.<sup>8</sup> It was his mission to restore and reinstate it.

Hence the Reformers styled themselves *evangelici* (gospel men) within the church, as distinct from the *pontifici* who still retained their allegiance to the pope and Scholastic theology.<sup>9</sup> The title 'evangelical' was assumed by Luther and his followers before his excommunication and enforced secession from the Roman communion. Originally it stood for the supremacy of the gospel within the existing church, despite the apostasy and corruption of Rome. 'Luther's Reformation sought to establish the Church once more upon the foundation of the gospel,' explains Professor Jaroslav Pelikan, 'and so to root the unity of the Church in the redemptive action of God rather than human merit and human organization.'<sup>10</sup> Luther's aim was to unite the church in the gospel. But Rome was patently unready for reorientation, and when Luther was anathematized by the pope, he was compelled to assume the role of a somewhat reluctant dissident.

Since the Reformation the term 'evangelical' has been used to describe the Protestant churches in general, as basing their doctrine on the gospel, and the Lutheran churches in particular. Erasmus employed the designation as early as 1529—the precise year when the parallel title 'Protestant' originated.<sup>11</sup> In 1531 William Tyndale alluded to 'the evangelical truth' when expounding the Gospel of John.<sup>12</sup> In the following year Sir Thomas More in his confutation of Tyndale identified both Tyndale and Barnes as evangelical.<sup>13</sup> By 1619 the *Arraignment of Barnevelt* could speak of 'the reformed evangelical religion'.<sup>14</sup>

In the eighteenth century the word was applied to those who preached the doctrines of the revival. How soon after Wesley's conversion this occurred is not clear. H. M. Larnier thought it was roughly

'in the middle of the century'.<sup>15</sup> In his *Life of Colonel Gardner*, published in 1747, Philip Doddridge deplored the antinomian tendencies of some 'who have been ignorantly extolled as the most zealous evangelical preachers'.<sup>16</sup> In 1759 Thomas Haweis wrote to Samuel Walker of Truro and mentioned William Talbot, Vicar of Kington. 'Talbot took his living with a view to doing good before he could be at all said to be evangelical,' he declared.<sup>17</sup> In these instances the name appears to have been used in its broadest sense of conformity to the gospel, as it had been since the Reformation.<sup>18</sup> All who were involved in the eighteenth-century awakening were called evangelical, as they were also called Methodists. Thus in the early stages Methodists were known as Evangelicals and Evangelicals were known as Methodists; the terms were virtually interchangeable.

Later, however, the label 'Evangelical' was attached to a group within the Church of England distinct from the Methodists—whether Wesleyan, Whitefieldite or whatever—who eventually left the establishment. By 1770, as the theological controversy over predestination reached its unfortunate zenith, A. M. Toplady could write to John Wesley: 'You complain that the Evangelical clergy are leaving no stone unturned to raise John Calvin's ghost.'<sup>19</sup>

The crucial issue, however, was not in fact theological. It is an over-simplification to define Anglican Evangelicalism as merely the Calvinist wing of the revival. Rather, as Canon Charles Smyth so effectively demonstrated, 'the fundamental divergence between Evangelicals and Methodists came over the problem of Church order'.<sup>20</sup> To quote William Jones of Nayland: 'We have the character of Methodism complete: it is Christian godliness without Christian order.'<sup>21</sup> The curious paradox is, of course, that Methodism, having broken free from the restraints of traditional church order, proceeded, under the genius of John Wesley, to evolve a highly developed and vigorous system of its own.<sup>22</sup> Although the actual divergence did not become generally apparent until the last two decades of the century, it is clear that quite early

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> *Works of Martin Luther*, ed. Henry Jacobs (1915-1932), vol. II, p. 150 ('An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate' (1520)).

<sup>9</sup> *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, ed. C. M. Jackson *et al* (1908-1912), vol. IV, p. 291.

<sup>10</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *Obedient Rebels* (1964), p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> He wrote 'Against those who vaunt for themselves the Title Evangelical'. There is a further reference in a letter to Andomar on 10 April 1531 (James Anthony Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus* (1894), p. 406, Ep. mclxxxv).

<sup>12</sup> William Tyndale, *Exposition of St. John* (1531), p. 92. 'He exhorteeth them to proceed constantly in the evangelical truth.'

<sup>13</sup> Thomas More, *Confutation of Tindall* (1532) in *Works*, ed. William Rastell (1557), p. 353.

<sup>14</sup> *The Arraignment of John van Olden Barnevelt* (1619) p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> *A Dictionary of English Church History*, ed. S. L. Ollard and G. Crosse (1912), pp. 211-212.

<sup>16</sup> Philip Doddridge, *The Life of Colonel Gardner* (1747), p. 162.

<sup>17</sup> Edwin Sidney, *The Life and Ministry of Samuel Walker* (1838), p. 479.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. L. E. Elliott-Binns, *The Early Evangelicals: A Religious and Social Study* (1953), p. 132.

<sup>19</sup> Augustus Montague Toplady, *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley: relative to his pretended Abridgment of Zanchius on Predestination* (1770), in *Works* (1825), vol. V, p. 348.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Smyth, *Simeon and Church Order: A Study of the Origins of the Evangelical Revival in Cambridge in the Eighteenth Century* (1940), p. 255.

<sup>21</sup> William Jones, *The Life of George Horne*, prefixed to his *Works* (1830), p. cvii.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. A. Skevington Wood, *Thomas Haweis* (1957), p. 15.

in the revival the really vital issue was recognized. On 20 March 1761 Wesley wrote to James Rouquet: 'The grand breach is now between the regular and irregular clergy.'<sup>23</sup> Thus the differentiation was unmistakably drawn between Methodists and Anglican Evangelicals. Although the term evangelical came to be more narrowly associated with a party inside the Church of England, its wider reference to all who accept the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel as revealed in the Word of God has never disappeared.

### Orthodox and apostolic

Having established the historical connotation of the term evangelical, let us proceed to examine a series of collateral designations which will help to clarify its import. The first of these is *orthodox*. 'Evangelicals are orthodox in doctrine, and enthusiastically orthodox,' declared Canon Elliott-Binns.<sup>24</sup> He had Anglican Evangelicals in mind, but what he wrote applies to all. Yet orthodoxy is not regarded as an end in itself: the ethical consequences of right belief constitute a major concern which has a peculiar relevance to our permissive society today. Nor is orthodoxy equated with arid rectitude. We take Wesley's point that the mere holding of impeccable theological opinions is 'at best a very slender part of religion'.<sup>25</sup> Yet in an age when experiments in unorthodoxy appear to be carried to unwonted and unwarranted lengths, there is wisdom surely in recalling the values which are safeguarded by orthodox belief. According to Dr James I. Packer, orthodoxy 'expresses the idea that certain statements accurately embody the revealed truth-content of Christianity and are therefore in their own nature normative for the universal Church'.<sup>26</sup> Such a conception is rooted in the New Testament insistence that the gospel has a specific content (1 Cor. 15: 1-11; Gal. 1: 6-9; 1 Tim. 6: 3; 2 Tim. 4: 3, 4). It further implies that no truly Christian fellowship can exist between those who accept it and those who repudiate it (1 Jn. 4: 1-3; 2 Jn. 7-11). It was as a result of conflict with heresy—especially that of the Gnostics—that Irenaeus sought to define a rule of faith by which right doctrines could be tested. To this orthodox belief the church was unanimously committed. She believes these basic items, Irenaeus could declare, 'just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth

. . . For the faith being ever one and the same, neither does one who is able at great length to discourse regarding it, make any addition to it, nor does anyone who can say but little, diminish it.'<sup>27</sup>

Another word by which evangelicalism may be explicated is *apostolic*. It traces its lineage from the apostles' teaching referred to in Acts 2: 42. Here is the content of orthodoxy. The true apostolical succession is one of doctrine, not of ministry. 'In the government of the Church', declared John Calvin, 'nothing is more absurd than to disregard doctrine, and place succession in persons.'<sup>28</sup> And in his reply to Cardinal Sadolet's invitation to the senate and people of Geneva to return to the Roman fold, Calvin challenged the pope to make good his claim to stand in the succession of Peter by maintaining the purity of the gospel.<sup>29</sup> The English Reformers consciously aimed to secure 'a perfect and apostolical reformation'.<sup>30</sup> They might differ from their Continental brethren in matters of worship and government, but were entirely at one with them in the substance of doctrine. Hence John Philpot, Archdeacon of Winchester—later one of the Smithfield martyrs—could explain in his examination before Edmund Bonner: 'I allow the Church of Geneva and the doctrine of the same; for it is *una, catholica, et apostolica*, and doth follow the doctrines that the apostles did preach; and the doctrine taught and preached in King Edward's days was according to the same.'<sup>31</sup>

John Wesley maintained a similar position in his letter to the editor of the *London Chronicle* in 1761, answering a *Caveat against the Methodists* issued by the Romanist Richard Challener. Wesley was quick to point out that it really amounted to a warning against Protestants. If the true church, as the Bishop-Coadjutor asserted, has 'a perpetual succession of pastors and teachers divinely appointed and divinely assisted, then this has never been lacking in the reformed churches, for they convert sinners to God—a work none can do unless God Himself doth appoint them thereto and assist them therein'.<sup>32</sup> So Wesley contended that 'their teachers are the proper

<sup>27</sup> *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (1866-1872), vol. V, p. 43. *Against Heresies* i. 10. 2.

<sup>28</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, E. T. Henry Beveridge (ed. 1949), IV. ii. 3.

<sup>29</sup> *The Library of Christian Classics*, vol. XXII *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, ed. J. K. S. Reid (1954), p. 243, *Reply by John Calvin to the letter by Cardinal Sadolet to the Senate and People of Geneva* (1539).

<sup>30</sup> *The Reformation of the Church: A Collection of Reformed and Puritan Documents on Church Issues*, ed. Iain Murray (1965), p. 53. Cf. John Hooper's letter from the Fleet Prison in which he contrasted the 'superstitious and blind church' with 'that perfect and enlightened Church of the apostles' (*ibid.*, p. 57).

<sup>31</sup> John Philpot, *Works* (1842) (Parker Society), p. 153. The reference is found in an article by Gervase Duffield in *The Churchman* (vol. 77, no. 1, pp. 19-29) to which I am indebted at this and other points.

<sup>32</sup> Wesley, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 137.

<sup>23</sup> *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. John Telford (1931), vol. IV, p. 143.

<sup>24</sup> L. E. Elliott-Binns, *The Evangelical Movement in the English Church* (1928), p. 91.

<sup>25</sup> *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, 3rd edition, ed. Thomas Jackson (1829-1831), vol. VIII, p. 249. *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists* (1748).

<sup>26</sup> *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Everett F. Harrison, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Carl F. H. Henry (1960), p. 390.

successors to those who have delivered down through all generations the faith once delivered to the saints'.<sup>33</sup>

### Primitive

Another word, often employed by Wesley, may be added to our list of evangelical correlatives: it is *primitive*. Wesley never tired of appealing to the Scriptures and to the early church. Primitive Christianity—before the rot set in—was his ideal and criterion. This was altogether in the spirit of the pioneer Protestant reformers, as Gordon Rupp has been showing us afresh.<sup>34</sup> They were considerably influenced by Renaissance humanism, with its motto '*ad fontem et originem*'.<sup>35</sup> The new stress on historical sources sent them back to the Bible and the primitive church. It was from this study that they came to realize how far Rome had deviated from true doctrine. The Reformation was at heart a return to early Christianity. Its aim was to restore the church to its pristine purity.

When the Reformers spoke about 'our church', as over against the corrupt Roman system, they were not referring simply to a sect or a denomination. They meant the renewed church of Jesus Christ which stood in the direct line of descent from the apostles and the primitive period, and its local manifestation in a particular congregation. It was in this one church that reform was to be accomplished. Even the enormities of papal government did not deter the Reformers from their purpose to effect renewal from within. There was no thought of setting up a new church, as if that were at all possible in the light of New Testament principles. The Reformers were satisfied to appeal directly to the gospel and indirectly to the primitive church.

That is made clear in the title of the Second Helvetic Confession, drawn up by Heinrich Bullinger in 1566, which Walter Hildebrandt characterized as 'the quintessence of the entire development of the reformed faith'.<sup>36</sup> 'A confession and simple exposition of the true faith and catholic articles of the pure Christian religion . . . to witness to all the faithful that they persist in the unity of the true and ancient Christian Church, and that they are not sowers of any new or erroneous doctrine, and consequently also that they have nothing in common with any sects or heresies whatsoever.'<sup>37</sup>

The English Reformers were equally emphatic on this point. Thomas Cranmer looked to 'the old

Church', and distinguished between this and the external organization of Rome which mistakenly 'accounted itself to be the Holy Catholic Church'.<sup>38</sup> John Jewel could conclude his *Apologia* (1562)—recognized as a classic statement of the evangelical position within the Church of England—with these words: 'We have searched out of the Holy Bible, which we are sure cannot deceive us, one sure form of religion, and have returned again unto the primitive Church of the ancient fathers and apostles, that is to say, to the ground and beginning of things, unto the very headsprings of Christ's Church.'<sup>39</sup> Another contemporary, Thomas Cooper, Bishop of Lincoln, contrasted the fidelity of the primitive church with the vagaries of succeeding centuries. 'St Paul spake with a loud voice and a strong spirit: Woe be to me, if I preach not the Gospel. The same was the voice of all the old fathers and godly men in the beginning. They were occupied in nothing but either in teaching and confirming truth, or in reproving and defacing falsehood and heresy; but after six hundred years the prelates of the Church well near clean lost their voices.'<sup>40</sup>

This appeal to the primitive church as preserving and proclaiming the truth of Scripture, involved the recognition that the historical creeds served to safeguard evangelical doctrine. Luther accepted the three so-called ecumenical creeds of the ancient church, not because they had been adopted by Councils but because they conformed to Scripture.<sup>41</sup> In 1538 he wrote a short exposition of these symbols, explaining that he did so in order that he might yet again testify to the fact that he held to 'the real Christian Church, which up until now has preserved these symbols and creeds, and not to that false, arrogant church which is indeed the worst enemy of the real Church.'<sup>42</sup> The Apostles' Creed is regarded as 'truly the finest of all', since 'briefly, correctly, and in a splendid way it summarizes the articles of faith'.<sup>43</sup> Referring to the over-all teaching of the creeds, Luther affirmed: 'This is my faith, for so all true Christians have believed and so the Holy Scriptures teach us.'<sup>44</sup> Luther advised a Christian who was under fire for accepting the article about the virgin birth to reply: 'I have here a little pamphlet called the creed, and it contains this article. This is my Bible: it has stood for a long

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Cranmer, *Works* (1844-1846; Parker Society), vol. I, p. 476.

<sup>39</sup> John Jewel, *Works* (1845-1850; Parker Society), vol. IV, p. 1084; cf. John E. Booty, *John Jewel as Apologist of the Church of England* (1963), p. 207.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Cooper, *An Answer to an Apology for Kirche*, ed. J. T. Müller (1869), p. 300.

*Private Mass* (1562) ff. 12v-13r, in Booty, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (ET, 1966), p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav J. Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (1955- ), vol. 34, p. 201. *The Three Symbols or Creeds of the Christian Faith* (1538).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Luther's Works*, vol. 37, p. 372. *Confession Concern-*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Gordon Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation* (1969), p. xxii.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Duffield in *The Churchman*, vol. 77, no. 1, p. 20.

<sup>36</sup> Walter Hildebrandt and Rudolf Zimmermann, *Das Zweite helvetische Bekenntnis* (1938), quoted by Arthur C. Cochrane in his edition of *Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century* (1966), p. 222.

<sup>37</sup> *Bekenntnisschriften und Kirchenordnungen der nach Gottes Wort reformierten Kirche*, ed. Wilhelm Niesel (1938), p. 1.

time, and still stands without being disproved. I stand by this creed: I was baptised in this faith and I shall live and die by it.<sup>45</sup>

The sequence of Calvin's *Institutes* (1536) in their original form is based on the Apostles' Creed, which was regularly recited in the worship of the Reformed congregation in Geneva. Calvin valued it 'because it states the leading articles of redemption in a few words, and may thus serve as a tablet in which the points of Christian doctrine most deserving of attention are brought separately and distinctly before us'.<sup>46</sup> Everything contained in it is 'sanctioned by the sure testimony of Scripture'.<sup>47</sup> The Second Helvetic Confession even went so far as to denounce as heresy whatever was not in accord with the creeds approved by the four great Councils of the church, together with that known as Athanasian.<sup>48</sup>

Whilst the writings of the Fathers were constantly tested by the touchstone of Scripture and on occasion found wanting, they were not rejected by the Reformers when they remained faithful to the biblical norm. Luther claimed that his theology was derived directly from the Word of God, and was independent of patristic corroboration. Nevertheless, he constantly referred to the Fathers, particularly to Augustine, as supporting his views. Calvin was equally replete with allusions. Indeed Dr G. S. M. Walker declared that 'his admiration for the patristic period, *ante papatum* as he puts it, was as unbounded as that of any Anglican'.<sup>49</sup> So steeped was he in early Christian literature that when discussing the true mode of fasting he made an unacknowledged reference to the works of John Cassian.<sup>50</sup> He told Cardinal Sadolet that in attacking the papacy he was 'armed not only with the virtue of the divine Word, but also with the aid of the holy fathers'.<sup>51</sup> He refuted the insinuation that the Reformers relied exclusively on their own judgment and could find in the whole history of the church not even one individual to whom deference was due. 'Although we hold that the Word of God alone lies beyond the sphere of our judgment, and that the fathers and councils are of authority only insofar as they agree with the rule of the Word, we still give to councils and fathers such rank and honour as it is proper for them under Christ to hold'.<sup>52</sup>

Cranmer was convinced that a consensus of patristic thought would corroborate the theology of the Reformation and reveal that the errors of Rome were in fact simply the corruptions of the

mediaeval period. When all the Fathers concurred in their exposition of any passage in Scripture, Cranmer was ready to regard such unanimity as flowing from the Spirit of God. Yet, of course, he recognized that the Fathers were always to be subjected to the tribunal of Scripture as they themselves invariably desired to be.<sup>53</sup> Jewel's verdict deserves quotation: 'They were learned men, and learned fathers; the instruments of the mercy of God and vessels full of grace. We despise them not, we read them, we reverence them, and give thanks to God for them. They were witnesses unto the truth, they were worthy pillars and ornaments in the Church of God. Yet they were not meant to be compared with the Word of God. We may not build upon them: we may not make them the foundation and warrant of our conscience: we may not put our trust in them. Our trust is in the name of the Lord'.<sup>54</sup>

### Catholic

The terms apostolic and primitive pave the way for the next correlative of evangelicalism to be considered, namely, *catholic*. This is perhaps the most controversial claim of all. Yet the Reformers resolutely refused to surrender the note of catholicity to the Romans. They contended that historically the doctrines of the Reformation had been held by the universal church prior to the period of papal distortion. None was more jealous of this than Luther himself. Hence Professor Pelikan is able to assert: 'Martin Luther was the first Protestant, and yet he was more Catholic than many of his Roman Catholic opponents'.<sup>55</sup> This is the paradox which lies at the heart of the Protestant Reformation. Calvin was no less concerned to stake a claim for catholicity. According to a distinguished French historian, Imbart de la Tour, his aim was 'to restore, in the midst of Protestantism and to some extent in opposition to it, the catholic idea of universality and authority'.<sup>56</sup> He envisaged 'a new catholicity solely founded on the Word of God'.<sup>57</sup> So when he met Castellio's objections to the inclusion of the Song of Songs in the canon of Scripture, he took his stand on 'the universal census of the universal Church'.<sup>58</sup>

The Reformers intended by the description 'catholic' a reference to universal doctrine. 'The Catholic Church standeth not in the multitude of persons,' affirmed Jewel, 'but in the weight of truth'.<sup>59</sup> Here was the link between the early church and the Reformation. 'Surely we have ever judged the primitive Church of Christ's time and the apostles, and of

ing *Christ's Supper* (1528).

<sup>45</sup> *D. Martin Luthers Werke, kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. J. F. K. Knaake et al. (1883- ), Bd. 37, p. 55.

<sup>46</sup> *Institutes* II. xvi. 18.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Reformed Confessions*, p. 247.

<sup>49</sup> *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol. 16, no. 4, p. 372.

<sup>50</sup> *Institutes*, IV. xiii. 18; cf. John Cassian, *De Institutis Coenobiorum*, 5. 23.

<sup>51</sup> *Theological Treatises*, p. 240.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

<sup>53</sup> Cranmer, *Works*, vol. II, p. 33.

<sup>54</sup> Jewel, *Works*, vol. IV, p. 1173.

<sup>55</sup> Pelikan, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup> Pierre Imbart de la Tour, *Les origines de la réforme* (1905-1935), vol. IV, p. 53.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>58</sup> B. J. Kidd, *Documents of the Continental Reformation* (1911), p. 635.

<sup>59</sup> Jewel, *Works*, vol. III, p. 266.

the holy fathers, to be the Catholic Church: neither make we doubt to name it Noah's ark, Christ's spouse, the pillar and upholder of all truth: nor yet to fix therein the whole mean of our salvation.<sup>60</sup> Hence Nicholas Ridley could assure his interrogator that he recognized the catholic or universal church which is the bride and body of Christ: 'this Church I believe, according to the Creed: this Church I do reverence and honour in the Lord.'<sup>61</sup> But, he added, 'the rule of this Church is the Word of God'.<sup>62</sup> Hugh Latimer could speak similarly to John White, Bishop of Lincoln: 'Your lordship often doth inculcate the Catholic Church, as though I should deny the same. No, my lord, I confess there is a Catholic Church, to the determination of which I will stand; but not the Church which you call Catholic, which sooner might be termed diabolic. And whereas you join together the Romish and Catholic Church, stay there, I pray you. For it is one thing to say Romish Church, and another thing to say Catholic Church.'<sup>63</sup> There were thus two types of catholicity: Roman and Reformed. It is no part of the evangelical position to reject the second.

It may be surprising to some to learn that a Puritan like John Owen could write *On the Nature of the Catholic Church* — 'peculiarly, and properly' so called, he added.<sup>64</sup> In its visible form it is 'comprehensive of all who throughout the world outwardly own the gospel', 'with a confession of one Lord, one faith, one baptism' which comprises 'a sufficient foundation for their love, union and communion'.<sup>65</sup> 'It is, then, the universal collective body of them that profess the Gospel throughout the world which we own as the Catholic Church of Christ.'<sup>66</sup> Owen then went on to express the view that the Church of England at that period, measured by its standards received from the Reformation, was 'as sound and healthful part of the Catholic Church as any in the world'.<sup>67</sup> Despite all that he himself endured at the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities after the Restoration, being deprived of his office as Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, Owen could nevertheless still assert that 'it is a most perverse imagination that separation is the only cure for Church disorders'.<sup>68</sup>

This adherence to the notion of catholicity further emphasizes the fact that the evangelical position is

not to be regarded as an innovation. So far from dissociating itself from the past, it would find its rightful place in the mainstream of the church universal. This continuity was not altogether interrupted by what Luther described as 'the Babylonian Captivity of the Church', during the era of papal dominance.<sup>69</sup> Recent research has disclosed the unexpected strength of what Professor James H. Nichols calls 'the evangelical undertow' in the Middle Ages.<sup>70</sup> Studies like Obermann's *Forerunners of the Reformation* (1966) indicate that the renewal of the church was brought about by the crystallization of tendencies already apparent in the preceding centuries.<sup>71</sup> The action of Luther, explains Dr Visser 't Hooft, was not 'an arbitrary breakaway from a sacred tradition', but rather 'the restoration of a deeper and invisible continuity of faith'.<sup>72</sup>

The definitive reformed statements of faith in the sixteenth century are impressively unanimous in stressing the continuity of the church. The Second Helvetic Confession, which we have already identified as one of the major documents, begins its chapter on the church in this fashion: 'Because God from the beginning would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2: 4), it is altogether necessary that there always should have been, and should be now, and to the end of the world, a Church.'<sup>73</sup> The Heidelberg Catechism provides the following reply to the question 'What do you believe concerning the Holy Catholic Church?' 'I believe that, from the beginning to the end of the world, and from among the whole human race, the Son of God by His Spirit and His Word, gathers, protects, and preserves for Himself, in the unity of the true faith, a congregation chosen for eternal life.'<sup>74</sup>

### Reformed

The two correlatives of evangelical which conclude our survey are more predictable: namely *Reformed* and *Protestant*. To set them in that order is to observe the historical sequence in which they originally appeared. In the days of Luther, the church was reformed before it became known as Protestant. The Reformation, moreover, had to do primarily with the church, its doctrines and practice, and is not to be presented as if its political implications took precedence. It has been approached of late in

<sup>60</sup> John Jewel, *An Apology, or Answer in Defence of the Church of England* (1564), Sig. G. viii; cf. Booty, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>61</sup> John Foxe, *Acts and Monumentis*, ed. S. R. Cattley and G. Townsend (1837-1841), vol. VII, p. 412.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Hugh Latimer, *Remains* (1945; Parker Society), pp. 289-290.

<sup>64</sup> *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold (1850-1855), vol. XV, p. 78. *A Discourse Concerning Evangelical Love, Church Peace, and Unity* (1672).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>69</sup> *Works of Martin Luther*, vol. II, p. 170. *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520). The biblical sacraments 'have been subjected to a miserable captivity by the Roman curia, and the Church has been deprived of all her liberty' (p. 177).

<sup>70</sup> James H. Nichols, *Primer for Protestants* p. 34.

<sup>71</sup> Heiko Augustinus Obermann, *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought* (1966), pp. 32-43.

<sup>72</sup> W. H. Visser 't Hooft, *Anglo-Catholicism and Orthodoxy* (1933), p. 72, quoted in Daniel T. Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity* (1942), p. 76.

<sup>73</sup> *Reformed Confessions*, p. 261.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.

terms of the constitutional changes involved, the rise of nationalism, and its sociological and economic repercussions. In his contribution to the second volume of *The New Cambridge Modern History*, of which he is the editor, even so distinguished a historian as Dr Geoffrey Elton regards the main-spring of the Reformation as political.<sup>75</sup> For this misjudgment he has been suitably taken to task by Gordon Rupp.<sup>76</sup>

Two applications of the word *Reformed* must be noted. In its first and general connotation it indicates that which is associated with the Reformation touched off by Luther, with its rediscovery of the gospel through a recognition of the supremacy of Scripture. The heart of this biblical realization of what is essential to the Christian faith and to the Christian community lay in the 'article of a standing or falling church'—justification by faith.<sup>77</sup> For Luther, this was not simply the head of a doctrinal catalogue, but the criterion by which all belief was to be assessed. Dr Harold J. Grimm has effectively shown how the basic tenets of the Reformation emerged. 'This doctrine of justification by faith and not by works, which became the fundamental principle of Protestantism, he (Luther) had found in the Bible and not in the textbooks of the mediaeval Schoolmen. Therefore he turned from the works of men to the Word of God and enunciated the second evangelical principle which formed the basis of Protestantism: the recognition of the Bible as the sole authority in religious matters. When, finally, he came to the conclusion that the ecclesiastical hierarchy as it had developed in the Middle Ages hindered rather than aided the Christian in his personal, direct approach to God, he formulated the third fundamental principle of the Protestant Reformation: the universal priesthood of believers.'<sup>78</sup> This, then, is the original and definitive meaning of the adjective *Reformed*: it stands for all those evangelical doctrines rehabilitated from the Scriptures in the crisis of the sixteenth century.

The second and subsidiary use of the term *Reformed* dates back only to the seventeenth century and is not apparently found earlier.<sup>79</sup> During the Thirty Years War it became customary to classify the Protestants or *Evangelici* into two groups—the *Reformed* and the *Lutheran*. In the sixth article of the Peace of Westphalia this distinction was clearly drawn. Hence the title *Reformed* has come to be assumed by Presbyterians in particular, and more generally by those who hold to the emphases of Calvin and Melancthon. In this more restricted

sense, not all evangelicals can be called *Reformed*, but in the original and determinative significance of the term, of course, they can.

The very derivation of the word *Reformed* suggests that in the sixteenth century the visible church was not abandoned in despair. It was the aim of the Reformers to reshape it from within. None of them regarded the church, with all its aberrations and abuses, as irremediably corrupt. They cherished the hope of renewal. The papacy might arrogate to itself prerogatives which belong to Christ alone and the Reformers might therefore identify the pope with antichrist, as in fact they did. Despite these abominations, however, the Reformers did not write off the church as beyond redemption. That would have been to deny the power of God.

In his commentary on Galatians, Luther raised the question of how Paul could still address as churches those who had been led astray from the gospel of grace into an excessive legalism.<sup>80</sup> Similarly the Corinthians, many of whom had been perverted by false apostles and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, were nevertheless addressed as the church which is the body of Christ.<sup>81</sup> Luther went on: 'So today we still call the Church of Rome holy and all its sees holy, even though they have been undermined and their ministers are ungodly. For God "rules in the midst of His foes" (Ps. 110: 2), AntiChrist "takes his seat in the temple of God" (2 Thes. 2: 4), and Satan is present among the sons of God (Jb. 1: 6). Even if the Church is "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" as Paul says to the Philippians (2: 15), and even if it is surrounded by wolves and robbers, that is, spiritual tyrants, it is still the Church. Although the city of Rome is worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, nevertheless there remains in it Baptism, the Sacrament, the voice and text of the Gospel, the sacred Scriptures, the ministries, the name of Christ, and the name of God. Whoever has these, has them: whoever does not have them, has no excuse, for the treasure is still there. . . . Wherever the substance of the Word and the sacraments abides, therefore, there the holy Church is present, even though AntiChrist may reign there; for he takes his seat not in a stable of fiends or in a pigsty or in an assembly of unbelievers, but in the highest and holiest place possible, namely, in the temple of God (2 Thes. 2: 4).'<sup>82</sup>

The implications of this and other similar passages in Luther cannot be escaped. Neither those who subscribed to the Augsburg Confession, nor those who followed Calvin and the tradition of Geneva, nor yet indeed those who originally effected the reform of the English Church, had any other intention than to revitalize the church from within. They

<sup>75</sup> *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. II, ed. G. R. Elton (1958), p. 228.

<sup>76</sup> Gordon Rupp, *Protestant Catholicity* (1960), p. 20.

<sup>77</sup> *Articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*: Schmalkald Articles II in *Die Symbolischen Bücher der Evangelische Kirche*, ed. J. T. Müller (1869), p. 300.

<sup>78</sup> *Luther's Works*, vol. 31, p. x. Introduction to *Career of the Reformer*.

<sup>79</sup> Duffield in *The Churchman*, vol. 77, no. 1, p. 24.

<sup>80</sup> *Luther's Works*, vol. 26, p. 24. *Lectures on Galatians* (1535).

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.



sought to re-form its doctrine and structure in conformity with the Word of God. According to Dr Geddes MacGregor, 'the possibility, even, of a separate Church or purer sect was as repugnant to their thinking as it would be to any modern Roman Catholic. What the reformers wanted was the secure establishment of the Catholic Church Reformed'.<sup>83</sup> Dr MacGregor deplors the fact that Protestantism subsequently lost 'the passion for the health of the one indivisible Church without which Luther and Calvin would have lacked motivation for their holy and courageous enterprise'.<sup>84</sup> He quotes a seventeenth century tract which lamented this decline. 'To call us Calvinians and the Reformed churches Calvinian Reformed Churches, is to disgrace the true churches of Christ and to symbolize with the papists.'<sup>85</sup> It goes on to say that 'one ought not to join with the papists in giving the names of sects unto the Reformed Churches'.<sup>86</sup>

The watchword of the Reformers was *ecclesia reformata sed semper reformanda*—the church reformed yet always in the process of being reformed. Reformation was never regarded as ultimate. It is a continuous process. Unless it is constantly being effected, it lapses into deformation. Reformation cannot be a finished product: it is always going on. 'The Reformation was not completed in the sixteenth century; it is never completed,' writes Professor John T. McNeill. 'We may for the sake of comfort try to transform Protestantism into a closed system; but it breaks out again. It has no "infallible" voice to silence other voices in decrees that are "irreformable". Protestantism cannot be static.'<sup>87</sup> 'Blessed Reformation!'—that is the cry of partisanship. 'Yea, rather', added the Latitudinarian Faringdon, 'blessed are they that reform themselves.'<sup>88</sup>

Blaise Pascal, in a perceptive phrase, referred to the grandeur and misery of the Reformation heritage. The grandeur lies in the noble stand for scriptural truth that was made in the sixteenth century. The misery arises from the sad fact that the work of the Reformation has been arrested if not reversed in so many of those churches which own allegiance to its name. We have failed to maintain our own reform, and are thus incapable of bringing renewal to the church as a whole. Professor Arthur C. Cochran asks a shattering question, and yet one which evangelicals dare not refuse to consider: 'Could it be that the *ecclesia semper reformanda* is better understood today in the church of Vatican Council II than in the churches which are heirs to the Refor-

mation?'<sup>89</sup> Whatever answer is given to that specific enquiry, it remains a tragic fact that so many of those communions which derive from the Reformation now need to be reformed themselves.

### Protestant

The term *Protestant* is anathema in many circles today. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that never before in history has Protestantism had such a bad press. It is too literally construed as being purely a matter of protest, and although demonstrations of every other sort are part of the accepted political scene today, any hint of religious militancy is immediately suspect. Of course, to place a merely negative construction on Protestantism is not only to misconceive its nature but also to ignore its historical antecedents.

The term Protestant originated in Germany at the Second Diet of Spires in 1529. A strong majority supporting the papacy had revoked a previous act of toleration towards the followers of Luther. By way of reaction, six princes, with the backing of fourteen imperial cities, entered their protestation against what they considered to be a retrograde measure. A longer statement, the *Instrumentum Appellationis*, made it clear that the evangelical minority took their stand, as Luther himself had done, on the Word of God. 'This Holy Book is in all things necessary for the Christians; it shines clearly in its own light, and is found to enlighten the darkness. We are determined by God's grace and aid to abide by God's Word alone, the Holy Gospel contained in the biblical books of the Old and New Testaments. This Word alone should be preached, and nothing that is contrary to it. It is the only truth. It is the sure rule of all Christian doctrine and conduct. It can never fail us nor deceive us. Whoso builds and abides on this foundation shall stand against all the gates of hell, while all merely human additions and vanities set up against it must fall before the presence of God.'<sup>90</sup>

As Professor Roland H. Bainton has rightly pointed out, 'the emphasis was less on protest than on witness'.<sup>91</sup> That indeed is the primary etymological significance of *protestatio* in post-Augustan Latin and, according to Dean Inge, 'it is ignorance which seeks to restrict the word to the attitude of an objector'.<sup>92</sup> A positive testimony to the supremacy of God's Word lies at the heart of Protestantism.

There is a sense, however, in which the necessity for a distinct Protestant voice is conditioned by the existence of that which occasioned its first declaration of evangelical rights. To that degree T. S. Eliot

<sup>83</sup> Geddes MacGregor, *The Coming Reformation* (1960), p. 18.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *The Protestant Credo*, ed. Vergilius Ferm (1953), p. 116.

<sup>88</sup> Anthony Faringdon, *Sermons*, vol. III, p. 117.

<sup>89</sup> *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, p. 87, n. 15.

<sup>90</sup> R. N. Flew and R. E. Davies, *The Catholicity of Protestantism* (1950), pp. 13, 14.

<sup>91</sup> Roland H. Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (1952), p. 149.

<sup>92</sup> William Ralph Inge, *Protestantism* (1927), p. 1.

was justified in asserting that 'the life of Protestantism depends on the survival of that against which it protests.'<sup>93</sup> The purpose of Protestantism was to recall the church to the magisterial centrality of the Word. When once again the church is prepared to place itself under the sovereign judgment of Scripture and incessantly seeks to reform itself according to that criterion, the need for the protest of Protestantism will disappear. The one holy catholic and apostolic church will have regained its evangelical fullness and become what God intends it to be. This must always be the end we have in view. As Professor Kenneth Hamilton (himself an evangelical) has put it in the closing sentence of his fine book *The Protestant Way* (1956): 'The Protestant protest will be made perfect when it is no longer "Protestant", but merged in the wider protest of a Catholic Church no longer "Catholic".'<sup>94</sup> That is, as they say, a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Authentic evangelicals have no love either for party names or party stances. We do not seek to monopolize the title evangelical as a narrowly exclusive label. We prefer to regard it as descriptive of what the whole church must inevitably be if it is aligned to the biblical pattern in doctrine, worship, and spirit. The term evangelical is meant to be a universal, and not the particular designation merely of a group. When we recover the historical perspec-

tive, we shall realize the vast sweep of the name we cherish, and see our place in the wholeness of the church which is Christ's body here on earth. It is this reinvigorating breadth of outlook which we are in danger of forfeiting under the strain of contemporary pressures. It was Robert Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln—a leading participant in the Savoy Conference and the man who drafted the preface to the 1662 Prayer Book—who reminded the sectaries of his time in memorable words that the Church was not to be confined to the narrow 'pingle' of a room in Amsterdam.<sup>95</sup>

Much of the foregoing has hinged on the doctrine of the church. Evangelicals refuse to dogmatize about the details of its government and ministry, but they are fully united in the conviction that it is the focus both of revival and reformation. These represent the supreme requirements of our time. We find ourselves in agreement with the conclusion of Dr Geddes MacGregor concerning the church: 'If it is a purely human institution, it will decay and die. If it is—as we believe the Church to be—the very handiwork of the living God, it may indeed decay through human sin; but He who created it will revive it, and for us this is only another way of saying that the next Reformation is coming.'<sup>96</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Thomas Stearns Eliot, *Notes Toward the Definition of Culture* (1948), p. 75.

<sup>94</sup> Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>95</sup> Robert Sanderson, *Works*, ed. W. Jacobson (1854), vol. I, p. 80.

<sup>96</sup> MacGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 46.