

ANGLICAN DISTINCTIVES IN THE LAST TWO CENTURIES

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Introduction: The Anglican *Via Media*

Defining Anglicanism is a tricky business. According to Paul Avis, while describing Anglicanism “as a synthesis of catholic, protestant and liberal elements is correct,” it “does not get us very far. It is not sufficient to bring out the distinctive character of Anglicanism.”¹ Why? Because both the Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic church have incorporated catholic, protestant, and liberal (“scholarly” is what Avis means here) elements as well. That is, because to some degree Christians now share these things in common, Avis claims that they cannot function as Anglican distinctives.²

Furthermore, Avis maintains, “All shades of Anglican churchmanship can be found subscribing to the view that the Anglican faith is both catholic and reformed at the same time [sic] hospitable to intellectual enquiry. But the conclusions that they draw from this commitment are rather different.”³ Hence the divisions within Anglicanism on matters such as the ordination of women, intercommunion with other Christians, and doctrinal radicalism – with all sides appealing to the catholic-protestant-scholarly synthesis.⁴ Because this standard definition fails to distinguish both within and without Anglicanism, Avis argues (first in the form of a question) that “the distinctiveness of Anglicanism lies not in the ingredients – which are not unique to

¹ Paul Avis, “What Is ‘Anglicanism’?,” in *The Study of Anglicanism*, ed. Stephen Sykes, John Booty, and Jonathan Knight, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 468.

² Ibid. I **disagree** with Avis’ preliminary conclusion here, because it is a mistake to ignore how the particular combinations of catholic, protestant, and liberal elements have come about in each denomination over the course of history. However, I agree with where he takes his argument.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Anglicanism – but in the nature of the mixture.”⁵ And the nature of the Anglican mixture is that of a *dialectical ethos* which seeks to “reconcile opposites and to transcend conflicts.”⁶

It would be better to say that the distinctiveness of Anglicanism lies not *only* in the ingredients but *also* in the nature of the mixture. Thankfully, Avis himself moves in this direction later in his essay, claiming that

[t]he Anglican ideal... appeals to Scripture, tradition, and reason, but does so in the acknowledged context of our modern pluralistic situation. As a result, these three sources or criteria are combined in a dynamic way in order to serve as mutual qualifiers, checks and balances, not merely to contradict and relativize each other but also to generate innovative thinking in dialogue with the Church’s cultural and ideological context.⁷

He then rightly explains the link between the catholic-protestant-scholarly synthesis and Richard Hooker’s “three-legged stool” of authority. That is, broadly speaking, Anglicanism is *catholic* in its appeal to *tradition*, *protestant* in its appeal to *Scripture*, and *scholarly* in its appeal to *reason*.⁸ And this twofold synthesis – of approach and authority, one might say – can itself be used to transcend various binaries. Therefore, Anglicanism is distinct, not only in its catholic-protestant-scholarly synthesis, but also in its ability and proclivity to use this synthesis to synthesize other positions and approaches.⁹

This, then, is my working definition of Anglicanism’s distinct *via media*, and I believe it to be in agreement with Alister McGrath’s argument that the Anglican *via media* has the ability

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 469. Avis quotes Vidler, who says that “Anglican theology is true to its genius when it is seeking to reconcile opposed systems, rejecting them as exclusive systems, but showing that the principle for which each stands has its place within the total orbit of Christian truth, and in the long run is secure only within that orbit or [...] when it is held in tension with other apparently opposed, but really complementary principles.” A.R. Vidler, *Essays in Liberalism* (London: SCM, 1957), 166 ff.

⁷ Avis, “What Is ‘Anglicanism’?,” 471.

⁸ Ibid., 472–75.

⁹ For an example of apparently contradictory positions and approaches which can and have been synthesized by an Anglican theologian, see the section on E.L. Mascall below.

to transcend the binary of fundamentalism (avoidance of the world) and liberalism (accommodation to the world).¹⁰ He maintains that

[t]here is a real need for the reconstruction of a *via media* that avoids the increasingly outmoded dialectic between “Catholic” and “Protestant” and address the *real* issue of today: the failure of both liberalism and fundamentalism to provide a relevant and responsible form of Christianity for today’s world. One collapses into the world, the other refuses to have anything to do with it. If ever a *via media* was needed it is now.¹¹

Why is Anglicanism uniquely able to provide this new *via media*? Because “Anglicanism already possesses a concern both for the fundamentals of the faith, without being ‘fundamentalist’ and for generous toleration, without being ‘liberal,’ as those two terms are now widely understood.”¹² This comprehension – a “generous orthodoxy,” in the words of Hans Frei – is precisely possible due to the catholic-protestant-scholarly synthesis.¹³

In my previous essay, I argued that Anglicanism is a *distinct via media* – something more than a confused mixture which is neither Protestant nor Catholic. It is a particular way of following Jesus Christ in the world, and it has been a distinctive *middle* way at least since the arrival of St. Augustine and other evangelists on behalf of Pope Gregory the Great in Kent in 597.¹⁴ That is, Anglicanism as a distinct *via media* did not *begin* in the sixteenth century, but rather the sixth.

In this essay, I argue that Anglicanism did not *end* in the sixteenth century. Rather, various thinkers and movements have faithfully developed Anglican distinctives ever since the English Reformation. I will limit my discussion to the last two centuries of Anglicanism, first

¹⁰ Alister E. McGrath, “Reconstructing the Via Media,” in *The Renewal of Anglicanism* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1993), 87–113. Note that McGrath defines liberalism differently than Avis. McGrath speaks of liberalism as a dogmatic accommodation to the world, whereas Avis uses “liberal” to mean “scholarly.”

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹² *Ibid.*, 111.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ John R. H. Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, 3rd ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1994), 12–13.

describing how the Oxford Movement, C.S. Lewis, and E.L. Mascall exemplified the distinct Anglican *via media* described above. Then, I will conclude by discussing how the 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10 and the 2008 Jerusalem Declaration are *faithful developments* of the Anglican *via media*.

The Oxford Movement

The nineteenth century Oxford Movement exemplified the distinct Anglican *via media* in its appeals to the traditions and authority of the early Church, without losing sight of either the importance of Scripture or scholarly inquiry and debate. Its origin is usually traced to John Keble's "National Apostasy" Assize Sermon in Oxford on July 14, 1833, after the inciting incident of the government's suppression of ten Irish bishoprics.¹⁵ But, as Nichols helpfully summarizes, the origins of the Oxford movement were not just political, but also theological and cultural. The increasingly tenuous relationship between Church and State, the growth of the Latitudinarian movement, and the rise of Romanticism all contributed to the Oxford Movement's following emphases: (1) the sacramentality of nature and human life; (2) "the significance of Tradition as the context for reading Scripture;" (3) "the visible apostolic Church with its concrete and determinate faith, mission and order;" and (4) "the importance of the distinction between Church and State."¹⁶

To be clear, I believe that the Oxford Movement's emphasis on the Church's independent authority, *vis-à-vis* the State, was theologically necessary and beneficial (I am somewhat of an Anabaptist on these issues). However, I do not believe it was quintessentially *Anglican*, given the close relationship between Church and State that had existed in England since at least Pope

¹⁵ Aidan Nichols, *The Panther and the Hind: A Theological History of Anglicanism* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 115.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 114–19.

Gregory and King Ethelbert's correspondence in the sixth century!¹⁷ However, on this issue it is important to remember that the political landscape had recently changed with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, which meant

the abandonment once and for all of the theory of Hooker and the Elizabethan Settlement that Church and State were really one, and that those who chose to withdraw from the national Church did so at their own risk and could hardly complain if they lost some of their privileges. From now onwards it came to be an accepted thing that a man could be a perfectly good citizen without belonging to the Church of England, or indeed to any Church at all.¹⁸

The Oxford Movement took advantage of this increasing *distance* between the Church and State, for the sake of the Church. Although, perhaps this was but an interesting mirror image of the previous Anglican use of the *closeness* between Church and State, for the sake of the Church. But, I digress.

In its synthesis of catholic, protestant, and scholarly concerns, the Oxford Movement exemplified the distinctly Anglican *via media*. The life and work of John Henry Newman demonstrate all three concerns. After all, he experienced an evangelical conversion at age fifteen, drifted toward intellectual liberalism in his twenties, and died a Roman Catholic Cardinal!¹⁹ Furthermore, his “theory of developments in religious doctrine” – first expounded in an 1843 sermon, and then in the 1845 *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* – explained the proper link between Scripture and tradition.²⁰ Because Scripture “begins a series of

¹⁷ Of course, the close relationship between Church and State – especially during the Middle Ages – was not an English anomaly. My point is that the Oxford Movement was, on this issue, a bit of a departure from the English norm.

¹⁸ Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, 330.

¹⁹ Gerald R. McDermott, “Anglican History and Doctrine Class Notes” (Unpublished, Fall 2016).

²⁰ John Henry Newman, “Sermon XV. The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine,” in *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford Between A.D. 1826 and 1843* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 312–51; John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 6th ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).

developments which it does not finish...it is a mistake to look for every separate proposition of the Catholic doctrine in Scripture.”²¹ He continues:

The question, then, is not whether this or that proposition of the Catholic doctrine is *in terminis* in Scripture, unless we would be slaves to the letter, but whether that one view of the Mystery, of which all such [propositions] are the exponents, be not there; a view which would be some other view, and not itself, if any one of such propositions, if any one of a number of similar propositions, were not true.²²

Therefore, Scripture ineluctably leads to an organically developing body of Christian doctrine.

And this body of doctrine is the lens through which the Christian Church must read Scripture. In this way, Newman holds the catholic appeal to tradition and the protestant appeal to Scripture in tension.²³

As a Roman Catholic, Newman reflected upon the essence of the Oxford Movement.²⁴ According to Newman, as Nichols summarizes him, the Oxford Movement believed that “the Church of England was called to represent a theology that was Catholic but not Roman, a theology marked by what [Newman] called ‘calmness and caution,’ though not encouraging ‘lukewarmness and liberalism.’”²⁵ Obviously, Newman’s own path took him away from the Anglican expression of these ideals and toward Rome. But this was arguably due to Anglicanism’s actual failure to live up to its ideals. Newman became convinced that the Church of England was overreacting in its fear of all things Roman, causing it to abandon aspects of its catholic heritage. However, despite this failure in praxis, the ideals of the Oxford Movement are distinctly Anglican in both position and ethos.

²¹ Newman, “Sermon XV. The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine,” 335.

²² *Ibid.*, 336.

²³ Newman maintained this tension beautifully in his preaching. See John Henry Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997); Geoffrey Rowell, Kenneth Stevenson, and Rowan Williams, eds., *Love’s Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest for Holiness* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 405–11.

²⁴ As Nichols notes, Newman did so in the preface to *Via Media*, the re-issue of *Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church*. Nichols, *The Panther and the Hind: A Theological History of Anglicanism*, 121.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

C.S. Lewis

Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) also exemplified the distinct Anglican *via media*, especially in his combination of High Church spirituality with learned and literary discourse on the fundamentals of the faith. Though he was “disregarded and even despised by many of his Oxford colleagues, [sic] for doing popular theology which they thought both pedestrian and unskilled,” his theological works, such as *Mere Christianity* and *The Weight of Glory*, are treasured to this day.²⁶ Though he was a layperson, he practically functioned as a teacher of the Church, and was concerned with explaining the Christian faith clearly and reasonably to inquiring minds. And yet, alongside his emphasis on the connection of all members of Christ’s Body to Christ himself, Lewis also acknowledged the appropriate distinctions between clergy and laity.²⁷ Therefore, he had a distinctly Anglican ecclesiology.

Lewis was also Anglican in his approach to liturgy. He was conservative and traditional, but for the sake of better participation by the people. Why do so many people get upset at liturgical innovations? According to Lewis, it is because

[n]ovelty, simply as such, can have only an entertainment value. And they [the people] don’t go to church to be entertained. They go to *use* the service, or, if you prefer, to *enact* it. Every service is a structure of acts and words through which we receive a sacrament, or repent, or supplicate, or adore. And it enables us to do these things best – if you like, it “works” best – when, through long familiarity, we don’t have to think about it. As long as you notice, and have to count, [sic] the steps, you are not yet dancing but only learning to dance.²⁸

Although Lewis did not have to worry about quite the same liturgical language barriers as Thomas Cranmer, they shared an Anglican vision for the value of the laity’s “long familiarity” with the liturgy. Nevertheless, both men also found room in their thinking for the necessity of

²⁶ McDermott, “Anglican History and Doctrine Class Notes.”

²⁷ Rowell, Stevenson, and Williams, *Love’s Redeeming Work*, 634.

²⁸ C.S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (New York: Harvest, 1964), 4.

liturgical revision. For, in Lewis' words, "If you have a vernacular liturgy you must have a changing liturgy: otherwise it will finally be vernacular only in name. The ideal of 'timeless English' is sheer nonsense. No living language can be timeless. You might as well ask for a motionless river."²⁹ However, he thought it best that "necessary change should have occurred gradually and (to most people) imperceptibly," so as to maintain the tension between long familiarity and necessary revision. This is an example of an Anglican synthesis of catholic (the liturgical tradition) and protestant (the laity's comprehension) concerns. Lewis' combination of the use of "ready-made prayers and one's own words" is another example.³⁰

E.L. Mascall

Eric Lionel Mascall (1905-1993) is an excellent example of the Anglican ethos, especially in his efforts to transcend various false binaries by focusing on the Incarnation.³¹ Of course, the doctrine of the Incarnation can itself become a part of a false binary. As an example, consider Nichols' false dichotomy between the Tractarian focus on the Incarnation and an Evangelical emphasis on the Atonement.³² But Mascall overcame this false binary, along with several others, precisely by virtue of the doctrine of the Incarnation. As he explains it,

[W]hat has chiefly convinced me of the supreme significance of the doctrine of the permanence of Christ's manhood as the central principle of Christian theology has been the extent to which that doctrine has made it possible to get beneath – or should one rather say "above"? – the either-or level, and to see the two contrasted elements as mutually involved in a synthesis in which one can say "both-and."³³

²⁹ Ibid., 6.

³⁰ Ibid., 9–13.

³¹ E.L. Mascall, *Christ, the Christian and the Church: A Study of the Incarnation and Its Consequences* (London: Longmans, 1946).

³² Nichols, *The Panther and the Hind: A Theological History of Anglicanism*, 122–23.

³³ Mascall, *Christ, the Christian and the Church: A Study of the Incarnation and Its Consequences*, vii.

Although he immediately follows this explanation with the reassurance that he is not a Hegelian, he is most certainly an Anglican in this approach to Christian theology.

In *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, Mascall attempts to transcend the following false binaries:

- (a) The contrast between “imputation” [of righteousness] and “impartation” (Chapter V).
- (b) The contrast between “realized” and “futurist” eschatology (Chapter VI).
- (c) The contrast between the idea of the Church as the ark of salvation and the universality of grace (Chapter VIII).
- (d) The contrast between the Eucharist as the re-presentation of Calvary and as the participation in the worship of heaven (Chapters IX to XI).
- (e) The contrast between personal devotion and the liturgical and corporate life of the Church (Chapters VIII and XII).
- (f) The contrast between “faith” and “mysticism” (Chapter XII).
- (g) The contrast between “rational theology” and “revelation” (Chapter XIII).³⁴

Especially in his use of the Incarnation to transcend false binary (d), Mascall exemplifies the Anglican synthesis of catholic, protestant, and scholarly concerns. But his transcendence of the other binaries is also an example of the Anglican ethos to use its catholic-protestant-scholarly synthesis to synthesize other apparently contradictory positions and approaches.

A Distinctly Anglican Realignment?

Despite Alister McGrath’s cogent argument in 1993 (mentioned above) that Anglicanism should embody a *via media* between fundamentalism and liberalism, large swaths – though, crucially, not the numerical majority – of the Anglican Communion in the modern West have drifted toward the latter end of the spectrum. This shift or “sea-change,” in the words of Stephen Noll, has created a crisis revolving around both the fundamentals of the faith and issues related to human sexuality.³⁵ Although “[t]he presenting cause of this sea-change, as is widely known, is

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Stephen Noll, “SEA CHANGE IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION: GAFCON and Communion Governance, with an Afterword from the Conference,” *Stephen’s Witness*, October 28, 2013, <http://www.stephenswitness.org/2013/10/sea-change-in-anglican-communion.html>.

the acceptance and promotion of homosexuality and the redefinition of marriage,” the underlying question is about the authority of Scripture.³⁶

A thorough discussion of the recent fracturing and realignment within the Anglican Communion far exceeds the scope of this present study. Instead, I merely want to describe how two important documents from the current era of the Anglican realignment – the 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10 and the 2008 Jerusalem Declaration – both exemplify the faithful development of Anglican distinctives. I believe that they are two recent examples of an Anglican approach to reforming the Church.

The 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10

Stephen Noll puts it well when he describes the 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10 as “the Rubicon for the Anglican Communion. Those who step over that line will have divorced themselves from biblical Christianity, from historic Anglicanism, and from the vast majority of Anglicans worldwide.”³⁷ Despite the unfortunate developments in The Episcopal Church USA, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Church of England itself after the 1998 Lambeth Conference, Resolution I.10 on Human Sexuality stands out as a faithful development of Anglican distinctives.

It is, first, a *development*, because Anglicans had never before, to the best of my knowledge, been forced to declare their views on human sexuality in such an explicit manner. However, it is here important to acknowledge the validity of John Henry Newman’s distinction between “explicit” and “implicit” knowledge when it comes to the question of the development

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Stephen Noll, “CROSSING THE RUBICON: Lambeth Resolution I.10, the Church of England, and the Anglican Communion,” *GAFCON.org*, November 28, 2016, <https://www.gafcon.org/news/crossing-the-rubicon-lambeth-resolution-i10-the-church-of-england-and-the-anglican-communion>.

of doctrine.³⁸ Newman maintains that “there is good reason for saying that the impression made upon the mind need not even be recognized by the parties possessing it. It is no proof that persons are not possessed, because they are not conscious, of an idea.”³⁹

Applied to the issue at hand, Newman’s distinction means that the traditional position made explicit in 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10 was nevertheless implicit (and sometimes, it must be noted, *explicit*, though to a lesser extent) throughout the entire Anglican and Christian tradition. The Resolution itself says as much:

The Holy Scriptures and Christian tradition teach that human sexuality is intended by God to find its rightful and full expression between a man and a woman in the covenant of marriage, established by God in creation, and affirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ. Holy Matrimony is, by intention and divine purpose, to be a life-long, monogamous and unconditional commitment between a woman and a man.⁴⁰

In its explicit appeal to both Scripture and Christian tradition, the Resolution satisfies both the protestant and catholic concerns of the Anglican synthesis. I believe that the Resolution also satisfies scholarly concerns, and is, therefore, a genuinely *Anglican* development, because it acknowledges the reality of homosexual orientation:

We also recognise that there are among us persons who experience themselves as having a homosexual orientation. Many of these are members of the Church and are seeking the pastoral care, moral direction of the Church, and God’s transforming power for the living of their lives and the ordering of relationships. We wish to assure them that they are loved by God, and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ. We call upon the Church and all its members to work to end any discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and to oppose homophobia.⁴¹

³⁸ Ian Ker, “Foreword,” in *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, by John Henry Newman, 6th. ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), xxiii.

³⁹ Newman, “Sermon XV. The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine,” 321.

⁴⁰ “Section I.10 - Human Sexuality,” *AnglicanCommunion.org*, 1998, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library/lambeth-conference/1998/section-i-called-to-full-humanity/section-i10-human-sexuality?author=Lambeth+Conference&year=1998>.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

However, although it urges pastoral sensitivity based upon a relatively modern notion of sexual orientation, the Resolution does not abandon the traditional position. Therefore, although it confesses a lamentable lack of unity regarding homosexuality, Resolution I.10 is nevertheless a *faithful* Anglican development, because it refuses to allow the scholarly element of the Anglican synthesis to override the concerns of both Scripture and tradition.

The 2008 Jerusalem Declaration

The Anglican dialectic is only able to function properly when Scripture – as read through the interpretive lens of the tradition – remains the *norma normans non normata*, the “norming norm which is not [itself] normed.” For this reason, the 2008 Jerusalem Declaration is also an example of faithful development of Anglican distinctives.

First, it is a *development* because it seeks a change in the way that the Anglican Communion is structured. In the words of Stephen Noll, the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (GFCFA), which produced the Jerusalem Declaration at the 2008 Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON), seeks “a genuinely conciliar form of Communion governance” as an alternative to “the Lambeth bureaucracy.”⁴² In doing so, the GFCFA is moving away from the Anglican “Instruments of Communion” – the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference (held since 1867), the Primates Meeting (established in 1978), and the Anglican Consultative Council (first met in 1971).⁴³ In fact, the Jerusalem Declaration claims that “the

⁴² Noll, “SEA CHANGE IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION.”

⁴³ “Instruments of Communion,” *AnglicanCommunion.org*, accessed December 8, 2016, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/structures/instruments-of-communion.aspx>.

manifest failure of the Communion Instruments to exercise discipline in the face of overt heterodoxy” is one of the three primary reasons for the emergence of GAFCON.⁴⁴

At this point, the Jerusalem Declaration admittedly sounds more like a departure than a development. Nevertheless, it is a *faithful Anglican development* because it seeks to reform the Anglican Communion by calling it back to the distinctly Anglican catholic-protestant-scholarly *via media*. As the Declaration itself makes clear:

Our fellowship [GFCA] is not breaking away from the Anglican Communion. We, together with many other faithful Anglicans throughout the world, believe the doctrinal foundation of Anglicanism, which defines our core identity as Anglicans, is expressed in these words: The doctrine of the Church is grounded in the **Holy Scriptures** and in such **teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church** as are agreeable to the said Scriptures. In particular, such doctrine is to be found in the **Thirty-nine Articles of Religion**, the **Book of Common Prayer** and the **Ordinal**. We intend to remain faithful to this standard, and we call on others in the Communion to reaffirm and return to it.⁴⁵

While this does involve a *shift* in the acknowledged nature of the Anglican Communion’s unity (“we do not accept that Anglican identity is determined necessarily through recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury”), the Jerusalem Declaration is by no means a *departure* from a distinctly Anglican position and ethos. Instead, it is a poignant call for the portions of the Anglican Communion that have fallen into error (by allowing the “liberal” element of the

⁴⁴ The other two reasons are (1) the emergence of a “false gospel” within the Anglican Communion, and (2) “the declaration by provincial bodies in the Global South that they are out of communion with bishops and churches that promote this false gospel.”

Notably, because the “overt heterodoxy” includes the defiance of 1998 Lambeth Resolution I.10 by The Episcopal Church USA and the Anglican Church of Canada, the Jerusalem Declaration includes the following “tenet of orthodoxy,” which hearkens back to the 1998 Resolution:

8. We acknowledge God’s creation of humankind as male and female and the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between one man and one woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy and the basis of the family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard and call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence for those who are not married.

See “The Complete Jerusalem Statement,” *GAFCON.org*, June 29, 2008, <https://www.gafcon.org/resources/the-complete-jerusalem-statement>.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* **Emphasis added.**

Anglican synthesis to dominate, at the expense of Scripture and tradition) to *return* to the “doctrinal foundation of Anglican identity.”⁴⁶

Admittedly, the GFCA’s call for reform and return involves the relatively drastic steps of acknowledging (1) the Jerusalem Declaration as a “contemporary rule” and (2) the GAFCON Primates Council as a functional and orthodox alternative to the Lambeth Conference. However, just as the English Reformers took drastic steps in the sixteenth century to maintain a distinctly Anglican path, the GFCA is taking drastic measures in the twenty-first century to keep to the same path. The former did so without jettisoning the riches of the catholic tradition. The latter are doing so without jettisoning the riches of the Anglican tradition (such as the 1662 BCP, the Ordinal, and the Thirty-nine Articles).

Conclusion

I have attempted to demonstrate, albeit briefly, that, just as Anglicanism did not begin as a distinct *via media* in the sixteenth century, it did not end in the sixteenth century, either. Rather, as my five examples from the last two centuries of Anglicanism have shown, a distinctly Anglican catholic-protestant-scholarly synthesis remains today. However, if Anglicanism is to thrive in the future, it must not maintain this synthesis in an exclusive manner.

Therefore, I end this paper with the same ecumenical exhortation as my previous essay. If Anglicans believe that Christ’s prayer for Christian unity (John 17:20-23) will be answered, they should endeavor to share the riches of their tradition with other Christians – including the ability and tendency to synthesize various concerns without abandoning orthodoxy. Our prayer should not be that the Church will become more Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, or

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Protestant. Rather, it should be that the Church will increasingly reflect its true identity as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.