

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY: PART I

OUTLINE

Purpose: To delineate the role of Scripture in Anglican theology.

I. Illumination

PART I: Terms

- A. Holy Scripture
- B. Anglican theology
- C. Canon
- D. Authority

PART II: The Bible's Place in Anglican Theology

- A. Scripture is the first of three factors making up Anglican theology.
- B. Christian tradition and reason are the other two factors.
- C. The Bible is the Church's "adequate account of Jesus and of Israel's experience of God..."

II. Engagement

- 1. How does what you've learned conform to or differ from your current faith tradition?
- 2. How large a part does the Bible play in your own faith journey?
- 3. Is any part of the Anglican perspective troublesome, confusing, or especially illuminating?
- 4. What areas or aspect would you like to pursue in greater depth?

III. Reflection

- 1. The Bible is authoritative and foundational in Anglican theology.
- 2. Scripture is one of three factors of Anglican theology.
- 3. Scripture is the authoritative witness to the acts of Almighty God in our salvation history.
- 4. Scripture is essential in shaping our ethical behavior.
- 5. The Bible as canon has informed and shaped other canon and doctrine in our theology.
- 6. Regular, dedicated and critical study of the Bible is necessary to grasping the fullness of our theology.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY: PART I

I. Gathering

Hymns

- We limit not the truth of God, *The Hymnal 1982*, #629
- Word of God, come down on earth, *The Hymnal 1982*, #633
- God has spoken to his people, *The Hymnal 1982*, #536

Collect for the Day

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Introduction

Throughout the long history of the Anglican Church, there have been many debates spanning the political, social and theological spectra. Frequently, these debates have called to question just how we regard the Holy Scriptures in our particular denomination. Do we take the Bible seriously and follow it? If we appear to deviate from what it says, why do we do so with seeming impunity?

These are reasonable and relevant questions for anyone contemplating the Anglican faith. As you study and live into our Episcopal approach to Christianity, you will discover that we live with various tensions in our Church, especially as we seek to embrace and minister to our diverse membership. This lesson will affirm and delineate the role of Scripture in our faith.

II. Illumination

PART I: Terms

- **Holy Scripture/Scripture:** The Bible
- **Anglican theology:** The theology to which we Episcopalians adhere.
- **Canon:** The texts of central importance to our faith.
- **Authority:** An entity's (i.e., the Bible's) rightful place or jurisdiction within a body (i.e., a church).

PART II: The Bible's Place in Anglican Theology

The very first question we want to address is where Holy Scripture sits in our doctrine. This is answered by saying that Scripture is the first and foundational of three factors that make up our theology; the other two are Christian tradition and reason.

For Anglicans, the Bible is authoritative for Christian belief because the Church of today is “in continuity with Israel and the early Church, and that is in essence the same community at a later period. This community’s classic and normative experience of Jesus and God in the history of Israel (as revealed in the Bible) still gives our faith its basic shape today” (Bennett & Edwards 283). The Bible’s authority will be discussed more fully later.

Christian tradition is the record of the church’s efforts to understand and convey the faith of the Bible “in terms of the view of reality current in every period of its history” (Bennett & Edwards 283). The more successful of these efforts “remain authoritative for us today as examples of the way biblical faith can be rephrased in the thought forms of a later age and also can be extended to comprehend situations and knowledge” not envisioned by biblical writers (Bennett & Edwards 283).

The application of reason in our theology is not meant to suggest that we plug into “some timeless logic.” Rather, it means that we express our Christian belief in terms of the understanding of reality and in the thought forms of our own times. “The task of theology is mediating between the historic faith of the church and society’s constantly revised construction of reality” (Bennett & Edwards 284).

To sum up, the Bible is the Church’s “adequate account of Jesus and of Israel’s experience of God, (and) ...furnishes the principles that are to be extended to fit new situations” (Bennett & Edwards 284). It is also the standard against which these extensions must be tested. Tradition is the history of the “apt extensions” that have been made through the centuries and also provides the models for making further “apt extensions.” Reason is our society’s construction of reality to which our biblical faith must be extended. All three are required to produce a theology adequate to meet Anglican standards (Bennett & Edwards 285).

Having identified the Bible as the first essential component of our Anglican theology, we will expand upon its authority from five perspectives: (1) as the Word of God; (2) as inspired by God; (3) as sufficient for leading us to salvation and nurturing our awareness of God; (4) as the primary source document of our faith; and (5) as canon within the Anglican Church. It is through these perspectives that we should see that the Bible truly serves as the anchor and guiding light of our faith. We will also take a look at the interpretation of scripture in the next lesson.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY: PART I

II. ENGAGEMENT

1. How does what you've learned conform to or differ from your current faith tradition?
2. How large a part does the Bible play in your own faith journey?
3. Is any part of the Anglican perspective troublesome, confusing, or especially illuminating?
4. What areas or aspect would you like to pursue in greater depth?

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY : PART II

OUTLINE

Purpose: To delineate the role of Scripture in Anglican theology.

I. Illumination

PART I: Bible's Authority from Five Perspectives

- A. Scripture as the Word of God
- B. Scripture as Inspired by God
- C. The Sufficiency of Scripture
- D. The Primacy of Scripture
- E. The Bible as Canon

PART II: Biblical interpretation

- A. Rabbinic Interpreters
- B. The Early Church
- C. The Medieval Church
- D. The Reformers
- E. The Anglicans
- F. Our Reading of Scripture within the Community of Faith

II. Engagement

- A. How does what you've learned conform to or differ from your current faith tradition?
- B. How large a part does the Bible play in your own faith journey?
- C. Is any part of the Anglican perspective troublesome, confusing, or especially illuminating?
- D. What areas or aspect would you like to pursue in greater depth?

III. Reflection

- A. The Bible is authoritative and foundational in Anglican theology.
- B. Scripture is one of three factors of Anglican theology.
- C. Scripture is the authoritative witness to the acts of Almighty God in our salvation history.
- D. Scripture is essential in shaping our ethical behavior.
- E. The Bible as canon has informed and shaped other canon and doctrine in our theology.
- F. Regular, dedicated and critical study of the Bible is necessary to grasping the fullness of our theology.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY: PART II

I. Gathering

Hymns

- We limit not the truth of God, The Hymnal 1982, #629
- Word of God, come down on earth, The Hymnal 1982, #633
- God has spoken to his people, The Hymnal 1982, #536

Collect for the Day

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

II. Illumination

PART I: The Bible's Authority from Five Perspectives

1. Scripture as the Word of God

For Anglicans, the Bible is considered the Word of God; but we do not view this in an inerrant, literalist sense. The Church of England never claimed the inerrancy of Scripture, even during the Reformation, and the more modern Anglican Church does not hold that the Bible is literally the “words” of God in every detail. As stated in the catechism, “We call them (the Holy Scriptures) the Word of God because God inspired their human authors and because God still speaks to us through the Bible” (BCP 853). The Bible is viewed as divinely inspired but a very human product, the work of numerous human authors, constructed over a thousand years or more, and conditioned by the cultural assumptions of their age. It is a highly pluralistic document, containing the personal views of different writers, and shaped by the particular situations in which they were written. Consider, for example, the seeming conflict between the Apostle Paul and James, Jesus’ brother, over the role of works in Christian doctrine; two different slants that, when studied carefully, richly inform our faith.

Essentially, then, the Bible contains the Word of God in the sense that it speaks to us of Jesus Christ, but does so as conveyed by God through human beings. Reginald Fuller says that this is something we should embrace. The Word of God expressed through human words is analogous to the doctrine of the Incarnation, wherein the eternal Word of God became incarnate as a first century Jew—Jesus. It is analogous to the sacraments, wherein “God uses the frail elements of water, bread, and wine to communicate the redemptive presence and action of his Word to us.” It is also analogous to the Church, a very human institution that is always in need of reform. In sum, with the Bible, as with all the other means God uses for our salvation, the same applies: “God in his wondrous condescension stoops to use human and earthly means to accomplish his saving purpose” (Fuller 80). “As the incarnate Word is the sacrament of God...so the Bible is the sacrament of God’s word, his offer of salvation through his eternal Son and Word” (Fuller 80).

2. Scripture as Inspired by God

The notion that Scripture is inspired by God is a belief inherited by the Christian Church from Judaism. While some have interpreted this to mean that God “guided the pens of the human writers or dictated

his words to their minds,” more indirectly it is viewed that God was the ultimate, not the immediate, cause behind the writing of Scripture. While it was human beings who wrote the Bible, God was the primary cause of its being written.

Some Anglican scholars have argued for the abandonment of the doctrine of inspiration, essentially because it is often associated with the notion of inerrancy. Others argue, however, that it should be retained. First, it is found in the Anglican Catechism (American Book of Common Prayer 853), which says that the Old and New Testaments were “written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.” Second, it doesn’t have to imply inerrancy—“the primary work of the Holy Spirit is not to guarantee inerrancy, but to produce an authentic witness to the salvation event in Jesus Christ. A sacramental understanding of the Bible as the word of God would seem to require the doctrine of inspiration...in the sense that the human words proclaim the Christ event with the power to evoke faith. To produce faith is precisely the work of the Holy Spirit” (Fuller 81).

Third, we share the doctrine of inspiration in our ecumenical dialogue with the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Lutheran Churches, all of which affirm the doctrine. This is important because it evidences our relationship with and commitment to the larger Church.

The claim to inspiration applies to both Old and New Testaments. Also, the inspiration of Scripture is not a once-for-all event. When read in church, the Holy Spirit uses Scripture “ever anew to proclaim the living word of salvation.” The work of the Holy Spirit is not restricted to the original writing, which produced the authoritative witness of the salvation event. “That witness has constantly to be rekindled in the community of the faithful, particularly in the context of the liturgy. The word of God is not a static, dead document: it constantly recurs as event, and has to be apprehended through the Spirit” (Fuller 82).

3. Sufficiency of Scripture

Next, let us consider the sufficiency of Scripture. Here the question is whether the Bible adequately contains what is necessary for obtaining salvation in Jesus Christ.

In the Anglican view, the Bible does contain all that is necessary for us to obtain salvation. Article VI of the Thirty Nine Articles states explicitly: “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation...”(BCP 868). As Fuller so effectively puts it: “No other book, however primitive or inspiring, can add anything to the witness of these acts of God, however much it may contribute to our understanding of them. This is because the saving acts of God took place once-for-all, and with the events there is also a once-for-all authoritative witness. This witness is the work either of those who had themselves directly witnessed those events...or of those who were in immediate contact with that witness, who...were “so completely created by apostolic witness and formed by apostolic obedience that they are veritably carried across into the company of the original disciples of Jesus and invested with the authority of their mission.” (Fuller 83)

4. The Primacy of Scripture

When talking about the primacy of Scripture, what we mean is that Holy Scripture is the norm of our faith; it is the norm by which the other norms of our Church (the creeds, tradition, confessions of faith) are judged (Fuller 83). In calling it the norm, we are not saying that the Bible is an absolute prescription for a ready-made theology; rather, it offers a model of procedure “whereby we too in our own day and age can move from the fundamental message...to our own problems and questions” (Fuller 84). Bear in mind that our faith is “primarily not the acceptance of a series of propositions but the acceptance of the gospel as the good news of the mighty acts of God for us and for our salvation” (Fuller 83-84). Theological propositions have only secondary importance and represent the attempt of the faith to understand itself.

Paul, for example, starts out with the apostolic message and “draws out its implications for controverted points of interpretation as in 1 Cor. 15 where he deals with the resurrection from the dead.” Paul’s doctrinal conclusions are influenced by and limited at times to the world view of his day. Thus, while not rigidly prescriptive, the Bible serves more like a series of guidelines from which we may proceed to formulate our doctrine (Fuller 84).

The Bible is also the norm for ethical behavior. Modern Anglicans do not see it as a code book of law, but “specific ethical commands of the Bible are illustrations of the kind of behavior God requires in specific situations. They are derived from what God has done for us in his saving acts” (Fuller 84). We encounter situations today not covered by specific edicts in the Bible, so we have to go beyond the confines of the canon. But we need to ask, “What kind of imperative does the indicative of the gospel imply?” (Fuller 84)

The Old Testament has also been a “characteristic source” regarding ethics for Anglicans, particularly as embodied in the teachings of the prophets, such as Amos and Isaiah. Anglican concern for and involvement in the cause of world hunger, for example, may be rightly claimed to be biblically based.

5. The Bible as Canon

Closely associated with the idea of Scripture as the norm of our faith is the idea of the canon: the list of books recognized as belonging to the normative writings of our faith. For Anglicans, all books of the New Testament are canonical and the Old Testament books of the Hebrew Bible are considered canonical. The additional books of the Greek Bible, called the Apocrypha, are valued and used in our modern day lectionaries. However, they occupy a secondary position in our theology and amplify rather than establish doctrine.

It is interesting to see how the New Testament canon has informed and shaped all Christian theology including our own Anglican theology. The structure of the New Testament canon is first, the Gospels, followed by Acts, then the Epistolary writings, and finally, Revelation. “The fact that four Gospels come first means that the incarnation together with the Trinity is, for Anglicanism, fundamental to the faith (and this ...involves faith in the God of the Old Testament, which precedes the New Testament in the canon). The structure of the Thirty-Nine Articles reflects this pattern, for the Articles begin with the Trinity and the incarnation” (Fuller 85). Paul’s letters to the Colossians and Ephesians place the doctrine of salvation in an “ecclesial perspective”: “The Colossian-Ephesian doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ of which he is the head is of particular significance to Anglicanism” (Fuller 86).

Other examples of where the Bible as canon has informed our Church doctrine include the Letter to the Hebrews, which has played a long and essential role in our theology, especially in the doctrine of the Eucharist. “It was Hebrews’ insistence on the once-for-all character of Christ’s sacrifice that gave Cramner the warrant for his exhortation to the Prayer of Consecration in the Communion Service of 1549-1552: ‘...who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world’ “(Fuller 86). This emphasis is repeated in Article XXXI. Fuller has a great deal more to say about this aspect of Scripture, which is worth exploring, but this brief treatment illustrates how richly the Biblical canon informs and is imbedded in the particular Anglican canon.

PART II: BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Introduction

Interpretation is a fundamental activity, not only in the communities of faith that were formed in response to Scripture, but also in the communities of faith that recorded and preserved the words of the Bible. The history of Christianity, the history of Judaism, the history of the formation of the Bible itself, is the history of interpretation. All our words about Scripture are acts of interpretation, without the status of revelation or authority. The text of the Bible itself is a response to fundamental encounters with the living God, and it is to this living God that the text bears witness. Through a process of interpretation, and ongoing encounters with this living God, the Bible took on its present form. And this whole is greater than the sum of its parts, enabling these words to address the human spirit in all its diverse cultural and personal expressions.

As Anglicans, we share this attentiveness to the words of Scripture, and this reverence for the God who speaks in Scripture—the God who continues to speak in all the world to all of humankind. We also share a reverence for tradition, the ongoing history of the reception of this word. We honor the history of new encounters with the living God who addresses us in Scripture and in our specific lives and in our specific circumstances. We are also particularly conscious of ourselves as both reasonable and fallible interpreters of scripture, and of the distinction between Scripture and our interpretation.

Rabbinic Interpreters

The older brother of the Church, the synagogue, had a profound reverence for the vitality of the word of the God who spoke—of the God who speaks in Scripture. Each Sabbath, in the setting of confession of faith, prayer, and praise, Scripture was read and heard—and interpreted to the worshippers. For the devout, there were other gatherings for the study and interpretation of Scripture. This study and interpretation was carried out in the context of the life of the community, and of the life of individuals. One term that has survived for these gatherings is the “house of midrash.” Midrash is a close examination—inquiry—of Scripture, led by a respected master of the tradition, and related to present issues or events that concern the community. Recent discussions of midrash have emphasized the authority of this “oral Torah” to transform the original meaning and even intent of the text. Violence in the text, for example, gives way to the kindness and ethical responsibility that undergirds the life of the community—the “requirement to be compassionate.” But behind this authority, midrash was always the ongoing dialogue about interpretation within the life of the present community. Though midrash often dramatically transformed the plain meaning of the text, midrash never had—or intended to have—the status of the “written Torah” that is its ongoing basis. The records preserve broad dialogues about the specific qualities of a righteous life—a life that is our proper honor to the God who made us and who calls us into fellowship in new and unexpected ways.

The Early Church

The path that led to modern Christianity was laid out by teachers whose interpretation began with the crucifixion and resurrection of the Messiah. Their treatment of Scripture bound the story of the crucified one into the ancient stories of God’s works among the people of God. At every point, in a variety of ways, they established connections between the words and stories in the Law and the Prophets and the new stories of the crucified one. Paul engages the discussion of the specific qualities of a righteous life in the light of the stories of the crucified one. The proclamation of Christ crucified was the proclamation of a theology of grace that made reconciliation with God the starting point, and not the result, of our efforts to be righteous. In the process, the plain meaning of the text was dramatically transformed. In the light of this proclamation, the story of the Jerusalem Council in Acts abolishes observances of the Torah that are fundamental to widespread definitions of righteousness according to the Torah. The

Gospels bring together the words and sayings of Jesus, in close dialogue with the stories in the Law and the Prophets, as new stories in the history of the work of God in the history of the people of God. In the light of this new proclamation of the risen Messiah, subtle themes in the book of Isaiah—the God who comes as a healer and the suffering servant who will come—become the foundation for a substantial rereading of Scripture.

The Medieval Church

The Church Fathers were educated teachers who read Scripture within the world of Hellenistic intellectual circles in the Roman Empire dominated by a new understanding of Plato. In these intellectual circles in Alexandria and Rome, the universe from top to bottom, from God to matter, is a unified whole. Everything in the universe finds its fulfillment in communion with God, and everything in the universe is striving toward communion with God. This reading of nature was extended to the reading of texts as material and verbal signs that communicate and mediate this divine reality. For these readers, the text had two levels of meaning. The *literal* sense described the events, with all the moral and intellectual dilemmas they present. The *spiritual* sense described the divine truth that they disclosed. Every text of Scripture was read in the light of the movement of the universe from bondage toward communion with God, now understood in terms of the crucified, resurrected, and exalted incarnation of God, Jesus Christ.

The Medieval Church intentionally preserved this repository of faith from the early Church, and read Scripture in dialogue with these traditional readings. Their literary readings substantially elaborated the “spiritual” readings from the earlier period. In a literal reading of the Exodus, the ancient Israelites left the land of Egypt in the time of Moses. In an *allegorical* reading, it refers to the redemption done by Christ. In a *moral* reading, it refers to the conversion of the soul from sin to grace. In an ultimate reading (*anagogic*), it refers to the final liberation of the soul from corruption to glory. This rich elaboration of the spiritual meaning of the text never displaced the literal (or historical) reading of the text, with all its untamed meanings and implications.

In many ways, Thomas Aquinas is the culmination of this tradition. He carried forward this tradition in the language of Aristotle, which provided a constructive emphasis on the material universe, drawn irresistibly toward God, the unmoved mover. This language also allowed a constructive dialogue with the scientific understanding of the natural world. Aquinas’ reading of Scripture had a corresponding emphasis on the literal meaning, with all its ambiguities and limitations—and all its qualifications of the carefully wrought spiritual meanings. In particular, Aquinas’ reading of Scripture was at its root an encounter with the living God that underlies and transcends all these words and texts, and not a pure exercise in textual authority.

The Reformers

The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century was, at one level, a reaction to the accommodation of the Church to the power and policies of the various European states—and the power and privilege that the Church shared with the rulers of these states. The gospel of the reformers in Germany and Switzerland was dominated by the Pauline proclamation of the grace of God. The grace of God is the beginning and the presupposition of our life in the presence of God, not the result of a life of virtue and piety i.e. we are “justified by grace through faith.” This proclamation of grace is entrusted to the Church, but it is not the property of the Church. Scripture is fundamentally a witness to the mystery of the grace of God, not a founding text for the prevailing political order undergirded by official doctrine. The mystery of the living God and the reality of the grace of God transcend the prevailing order and transform our understanding of the words in the text of Scripture. For Martin Luther, the word of God is “in-lettered” in the human voices we hear in Scripture, as God is incarnate in the human being Jesus Christ. For John Calvin, the words of Scripture are “mean and lowly words”—the rhetorical accommodation

of the divine word to the capacities of its human hearers. In their interpretation of Scripture, the reformers worked from the historical meaning of the text, rather than the traditional body of spiritual readings from the fathers and doctors of the Church. The emphasis on “scripture alone” was a rejection of the authority of this repository of faith, as well as a preference for a reading of the Bible as a whole. Under the rubric of “scripture interpreting scripture,” the reformers made the mystery of divine grace and its capacity to transform human life the central principle of interpretation.

The reformer’s emphasis on “scripture alone” never displaced their profound awareness of their confessional model for interpretation and of their own finitude as interpreters of the word.

The Anglicans

From the beginning of the Anglican tradition, the reading and hearing of Scripture has been integrally connected with our worship—“the rule of prayer is the rule of faith.” In a portent of the reformation of the Church of England, the Scripture lections in the Latin mass were read in English. For Richard Hooker, who articulated the spirit of the new Anglican tradition, the “medicine of grace” that comes through Jesus Christ is communicated in the Word and in the Eucharist. This is the context in which Scripture is read and interpreted. This emphasis on the grace of God in the life of the Church lay behind a tendency to avoid narrow definitions and overly precise formulations that created needless divisions. This tendency was dramatically expressed in the approach to Scripture in the official English translations. There is a dramatic typographic distinction between the text of the Scripture and the interpretive comments within the texts and in the margins. In addition, there are marginal notes that provide other possible translations, or a literal translation of the Greek or Hebrew original. This had the express purpose of discouraging the use of a particular translation of Scripture as a weapon in theological controversy.

In our reading of Scripture, as in our common prayer and worship, we are brought into the presence of a God who ever calls us into communion. This is the beginning and end of our interpretation of Scripture.

Our Reading of Scripture within the Community of Faith

Within the community shaped by our common worship, we also carry forward the old tradition of meeting for the purpose of reading and coming to terms with scripture. There we learn the power of the voices and the power of the stories within the text to address us directly at our deepest level. The voice that is heard in the text of scripture is the voice of the Living God that we worship. In all our worship and all our study, we bear witness to the God whose voice is heard in Scripture, whose voice is heard in the cloud of witnesses that preceded us, and whose voice is heard ever-fresh in our own life and circumstances.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, has summed it up. “The hearing of God at one point does not exhaust God’s speaking.... God names God in Scripture as the unconditioned and uncaptured, apprehended as such only in the upheavals and new beginnings of the history of those God encounters in grace and freedom.”

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY : PART II

III. ENGAGEMENT

To be sure, we have covered a lot of fairly dense material articulating and describing the authority of Holy Scripture in our Church's theology. We've seen the Bible's place as one of three factors governing our theology, and examined its authority from five perspectives. Let us now step back and reflect a bit on what we've covered. To begin our reflection, let us start by considering the following questions:

1. How does what you've learned about the Anglican perspective on the Bible conform or differ from your current faith tradition/from the faith tradition you've come from?
2. How big a part does the Bible play in your own faith journey?
3. Is there any part of the Anglican perspective on the Bible particularly troublesome, confusing or positively illuminating to you? (Here, the purpose is to help potential newcomers to our faith discern whether the Episcopal Church is genuinely a good fit for them, particularly at the fundamental doctrinal level.)
4. What areas or aspects of what we've covered would you wish to pursue in greater depth?

IV. REFLECTION

Through the foregoing we have learned the following:

1. Holy Scripture is indeed the authoritative and foundational source of our Anglican theology.
2. Holy Scripture comprises the first of three factors making up our theology, the others being Christian tradition and reason.
3. Holy Scripture provides the authoritative witness of the acts of Almighty God in our salvation history, and is essential to proclaiming the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ.
4. Scripture is also essential in shaping the norms of our ethical behavior.
5. The Bible as canon has been instrumental in informing and shaping all other canon and doctrine of the Anglican faith.
6. Regular, dedicated and critical study of the Bible is necessary if one is to grasp the fullness of our Anglican theology.