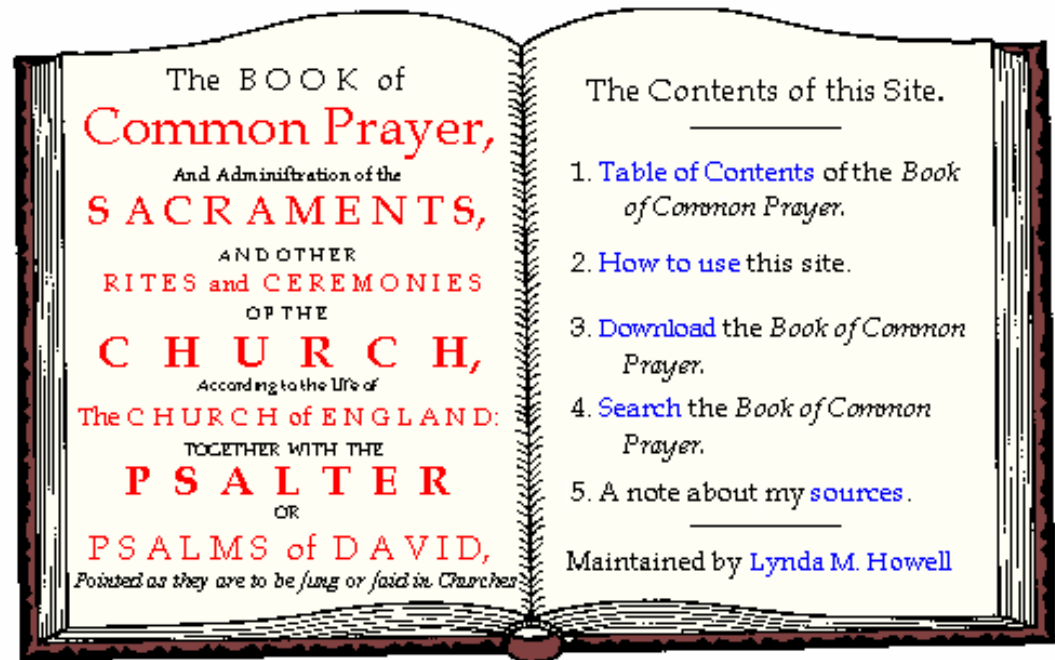


# Overview of the 39 Articles of Religion

Church of the Ascension Fall 2006

Class 07

David Laughlin



# Outline

- **Introduction to the Reformation in England**
- **Catholic Beliefs (articles 1-8)**
- **Salvation: Our Perspective (articles 9-16)**
- **Salvation: God's Perspective (articles 17/18)**
- **Church and Councils (articles 19-24)**
- **The Sacraments (articles 25-31)**
- **Church Discipline (articles 32-36)**
- **Church and State (articles 37-39)**

## XXXII. Of the Marriage of Priests.

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God's Law, either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.

**Certainly this was true in the NT (Peter had a wife. Presbyters were to have but one wife, etc.) This human teaching (not God's teaching) came about because of a certain view of celibacy that arose fairly early in the church. But even today the Roman Catholic Church could change this: it is not a part of their doctrine, just discipline.**

**More than 100 Episcopal Priests (most married) have been accepted into the RCC as Priest. Eastern Rite Priests as well may be married.**

## **XXXIII. Of excommunicate Persons, how they are to be avoided.**

That person which by open denunciation of the Church is rightly cut off from the unity of the Church, and excommunicated, ought to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful, as an Heathen and Publican, until he be openly reconciled by penance, and received into the Church by a Judge that hath authority thereunto.

**In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century those who defied the Church were also defying the State: treason was possible.**

**The judge was the Bishop or perhaps a court of the church or state**

## Matthew 18:15-20

"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>[16]</sup> But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>[17]</sup> If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a **Gentile and a tax collector**. <sup>[18]</sup> Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>[19]</sup> Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>[20]</sup> For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

# So what is behind this teaching?

## Romans 16:17

I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; **avoid** them.

## 1 Cor. 5:11

But now I am writing to you **not to associate** with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber. **Do not even eat** with such a one.

## 2 Thes. 3:14

Take note of those who do not obey what we say in this letter; **have nothing to do with them**, so that they may be ashamed.

## Titus 3:10

After a first and second admonition, **have nothing more to do with anyone** who causes divisions,

## 2 John 1:10

**Do not receive into the house or welcome anyone** who comes to you and does not bring this teaching;

## XXXIV. Of the Traditions of the Church (I).

It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, (that others may fear to do the like,) as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren.

**Very important teaching!**

## XXXIV. Of the Traditions of the Church (Ia).

It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that **nothing be ordained against God's Word.**

**Things change! To those who evangelize in foreign lands: Geography matters!**

**The key is not to ordain (order) things against the Teaching of the Word of God!**

**But within a Church the Articles taught uniformity!**



## **XXXIV. Of the Traditions of the Church (Ib).**

Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, (that others may fear to do the like,) as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren.

**Things indifferent should not be “openly broken”!**

- 1. Church**
- 2. State**
- 3. Conscience of the weaker**

## XXXIV. Of the Traditions of the Church (II).

Every particular or **national Church** hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, Ceremonies or Rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, **so that all things be done to edifying.**

**Things that are humanly ordained (not mandated from Scripture) may be changed!**

**Can we live with that? If it leads to edification: yes**

**Examples?**

## In Article VI. Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation, we saw that:

Holy Scripture<sup>i</sup> containeth **all things necessary to salvation<sup>k</sup>**: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be **required** of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith<sup>l</sup>, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

This means that the Scriptures are the Rule of Faith: nothing can be claimed as necessary for Salvation that is not in or can be proved there from.

**Class 4**

## XX. Of the Authority of the Church.

The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

**CLASS 4**

- The Church hath **power** to decree **Rites** or **Ceremonies**, and authority in Controversies of Faith (liturgy) *contra* Puritans
- neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be **repugnant** to another (analogy of Scripture)
- Church is a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing **against** the same, so **besides** the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

**Class 4**

# Acts of Uniformity

The **Act of Uniformity 1549** (Edward VI) which established the Book of Common Prayer as the only legal form of worship.

The **Act of Uniformity 1552** (Edward VI) required the use of the Book of Common Prayer of 1552.

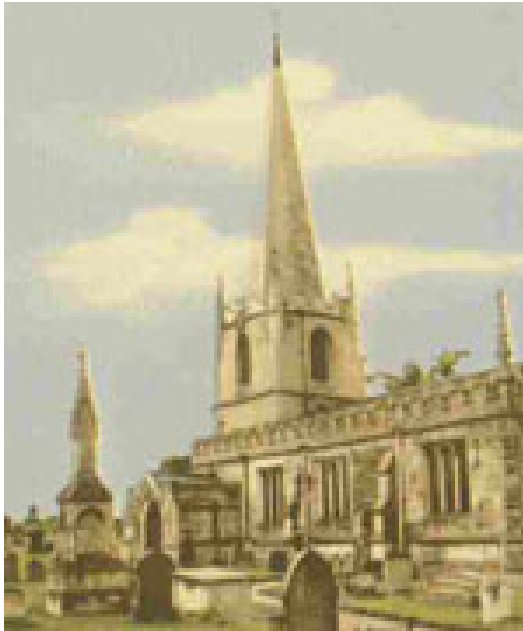
The **Act of Uniformity 1559**, (1Eliz.) was adopted on the ascension of Elizabeth I. *Elizabethan Religious Settlement*

The **Act of Uniformity 1662**, (Chas. II , c. 4) was enacted after the restoration of the monarchy. It required the use of all the rites and ceremonies in the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 in church services. The Great Ejection: 2000 Evangelical Clergy Ejected from Pulpits!

The **Act of Uniformity** 1559 set the order of prayer to be used in the English Book of Common Prayer. Every man had to go to church once a week or be fined 12 pence, which was a lot for the poor. With this act Elizabeth made it a legal obligation to go to church every Sunday. The 'Act of Uniformity' reinforced the Book of Common Prayer.

This act made up part of the Elizabethan Religious Settlement in England instituted by Elizabeth I who wanted to unify the Anglican Church. Other acts concerned with this settlement were the Act of Supremacy 1559 and the Thirty-Nine Articles (1563).

Elizabeth was trying to achieve a settlement after thirty years of turmoil during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I, in which England had swung from Catholicism to Protestantism and back to Catholicism again. The outcome of the Elizabethan Settlement has been a sometimes tense and often fragile union of both Catholic and Protestant wings of the Church of England and Anglicanism world wide.



Scrooby Parish Church, St Wilfred's



The Old Manor House in Scrooby,  
home to John Brewster of the  
Pilgrim Fathers



A reconstruction of the Mayflower  
on which the Pilgrim Fathers sailed



**One of the direct results of the 1559 Act of  
Uniformity!**

**Mayflower , Plymoth Plantation**



## **Aside on the Five Articles of Perth**

**In November 1617 the King called a meeting of the clergy (of Scotland) at which he proposed Five Articles of **conformity** to the English Church. These Articles...were approved (reluctantly) at a meeting in Perth in August 1618 and have become known ...*as..* the Five Articles of Perth. Kneeling at Communion;**

- 2. The observance of holy days: Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas**
- 3. Episcopal Confirmation;**
- 4. Private Baptism;**
- 5. Private Administration of the Lord's Supper.**

**From Roy Middleton, English Popish Ceremonies: Historical Introduction**

## XXXV. Of the Homilies.

The Second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine, and necessary for these times, as doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth; and therefore we judge them to be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people.

**[This Article is received in this Church, so far as it declares the Book of Homilies to be an explication of Christian doctrine, and instructive in piety and morals. But all references to the constitution and laws of England are considered as inapplicable to the circumstances of this Church; which also suspends the order for the reading of said Homilies in churches, until a revision of them may be conveniently made, for the clearing of them, as well from obsolete words and phrases, as from the local references.]**

CERTAIN  
SERMONS  
OR  
HOMILIES

appointed to be read in  
CHURCHES,

In the time of the late Queen Elizabeth  
of famous memory.

And now thought fit to be reprinted by  
Authority from the KINGS most  
Excellent Majesty.

# The Homilies

- I. A Fruitful exhortation to the reading of holy Scripture.
- II. Of the misery of all mankind.
- III. Of the salvation of all mankind.
- IV. Of the true and lively faith.
- V. Of good works.
- VI. Of Christian love and charity.
- VII. Against swearing and perjury.
- VIII. Of the declining from GOD.
- IX. An exhortation against the fear of death.
- X. An exhortation to obedience.
- XI. Against whoredom and adultery.
- XII. Against strife and contention.

- I. Of the right use of the Church.
- II. Against peril of Idolatry.
- III. For repairing and keeping clean the Church.
- IIII. Of good works. And first of Fasting.
- V. Against gluttony and drunkenness.
- VI. Against excess of apparel.
- VII. An homily of Prayer.
- VIII. Of the place and time of Prayer.
- IX. Of Common Prayer and Sacraments
- X. An information of them which take offence at certain places of holy Scripture.
- XI. Of alms deeds.
- XII. Of the Nativity.
- XIII. Of the Passion for good Friday.
- XIIII. Of the Resurrection for Easter day.
- XV. Of the worthy receiving of the Sacrament.
- XVI. An Homily concerning the coming down of the holy Ghost, for Whitsunday.
- XVII. An Homily for Rogation week.
- XVIII. Of the state of Matrimony.
- XIX. Against Idleness.
- XX. Of Repentance and true Reconciliation unto God.
- XXI. An Homily against disobedience and wilful rebellion.

## XXXVI. Of Consecration of Bishops and Ministers.

The Book of Consecration of Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, as set forth by the General Convention of this Church in 1792, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it any thing that, of itself, is superstitious and ungodly. And, therefore, whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to said Form, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.

*The original 1571, 1662 text of this Article reads as follows: “The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth, and confirmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering: neither hath it any thing, that of itself is superstitious and ungodly. And therefore whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to the Rites of that Book, since the second year of the forenamed King Edward unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same Rites; we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.”*

## **XXXVII. Of the Power of the Civil Magistrates.**

The Power of the Civil Magistrate extendeth to all men, as well Clergy as Laity, in all things temporal; but hath no authority in things purely spiritual. And we hold it to be the duty of all men who are professors of the Gospel, to pay respectful obedience to the Civil Authority, regularly and legitimately constituted.

## Romans 13:1-7

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.<sup>[2]</sup> Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.<sup>[3]</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval;<sup>[4]</sup> for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.<sup>[5]</sup>

Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience.<sup>[6]</sup> For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing.<sup>[7]</sup>

Pay to all what is due them--taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.



## 1 Peter 2:12-17

Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.

[13] For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, [14] or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. [15] For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. [16] As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. [17] Honor everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

# XXXVII. Of the Power of the Civil Magistrates.

*The original 1571, 1662 text of this Article reads as follows: “The King’s Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England, and other his Dominions, unto whom the chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction. **Where we attribute to the King’s Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended;** we give not our Princes the ministering either of God’s Word, or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scriptures by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers.*

***The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.***

*The Laws of the Realm may punish Christian men with death, for heinous and grievous offences.*

*It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars.”*

## **XXXVIII. Of Christian Men's Goods, which are not common.**

The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same; as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

"Property is theft" ("*la propriété, c'est le vol*"), French socialist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, in "What Is Property?"

**Well is Private property theft?**

**Not according to the Bible, but we should be full of charity and alms giving!**

## **Acts 2:42-45**

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

[43] Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. [44] All who believed were together and had all things in common; [45] they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

## **Acts 4:32-35**

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. [33] With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. [34] There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. [35] They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

But this was a voluntary thing as seen in the very next chapter of the Acts of the Apostles:

### **Acts 5:4**

While it remained unsold, **did it not remain your own?** And after it was sold, were not the **proceeds at your disposal?** How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us but to God!"

## XXXIX. Of a Christian Man's Oath.

As we confess that vain and rash Swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle, so we judge, that Christian Religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching in justice, judgment, and truth.

The following verses were used by anabaptists and others to deny the right of Christians to swear an oath in court for example:

### **Matthew 5:33-37**

"Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' [34] But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, [35] or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. [36] And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. [37] Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

### **James 5:12**

Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "Yes" be yes and your "No" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

# **But, other scriptures teach the opposite:**

**Jeremiah 4:2**

and if you swear, "As the Lord lives!"  
in truth, in justice, and in uprightness,  
then nations shall be blessed by him,  
and by him they shall boast.

**2 Cor. 1:23**

But I call on God as witness against me: it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth.

**Hebrews 6:17**

In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath,

**Matthew 26:63-64**

...Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." <sup>[64]</sup> Jesus said to him,  
"You have said so. But I tell you,  
From now on you will see the Son of Man  
seated at the right hand of Power  
and coming on the clouds of heaven."



The Articles were written to defend the Biblical Orthodoxy of the Church of England after its Reformation. The authors had to defend against slander from

the left (the anabaptists)

the right (Lutherans)

the far right (Roman Catholics)

Tradition was not considered a bad word (contra later Puritans)

Neither was tradition the final word

Biblical Authority was settled

**The Articles are without a doubt Protestant: all attempts to interpret them otherwise have failed.**

**Can they be used to unit Evangelicals, Catholics and Charismatics?**

# Questions on:

- Introduction to the Reformation in England
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