

H. Long

**THE EVANGELICAL
AS A
CHURCHMAN**

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**LONDON
CHURCH BOOK ROOM
7, WINE OFFICE COURT
E.C.4.**

CHURCH & LIFE SERIES No. 1

2P 1497

THE EVANGELICAL AS A CHURCHMAN

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THE EVANGELICAL AS A CHURCHMAN

FOR the sake of brevity and clearness I shall
treat of the Evangelical as a Churchman, first,
with regard to his *position*; second with
regard to his *perils*; and third, with regard to his
prospects.

FIRST, WITH REGARD TO HIS POSITION

The Evangelical is in a strong, not a weak,
position as a member and as a minister of the
Church of England. And he is in a strong position
as a Churchman because he is in a true, not a false,
position. He truly represents the spirit of the
Church to which he belongs. He rests on its history,
its teaching, and its formularies. On his side are the
Book of Common Prayer, which is its worship, the
Articles, which are its teaching, and the Scriptures,
which are its law.

When Colonel Colbourne, afterwards Field
Marshal Lord Seaton, and next to the Duke of
Wellington, the greatest general in the British
army, went forth at the battle of Vittoria, and with
only an aide-de-camp beside him and five or six
men near, called on a great body of Frenchmen to
surrender, and took prisoners a whole regiment, it
was because he knew he had behind him the
strength of the British army. And the Evangelical

is strong because he has behind him the historic force of the Church of England.

**He has the
Articles**

—that authoritative exposition of the Church's distinctive teaching. He accepts without reserve his Church's statement that "the Articles of the Church of England do contain the True Doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's Word," and disdaining the sophistry of Tract 90, he neither "draws the Articles aside any way nor puts his own sense or comment to be the meaning thereof, but submits to them in the plain and full meaning thereof and takes them in the literal and grammatical sense."

**He has the
Book of
Common
Prayer**

—that admirable standard of the Church's worship, the most Scriptural and Evangelical of all the formularies of the Episcopal Churches. The Prayer Book, which he loves and defends, is substantially the Prayer Book which came forth in its completed and reformed state from the perfecting hand of the reformers in 1552; and the subsequent additions in 1559, 1604, and 1662, so far from weakening, tended to confirm, its position as the liturgical embodiment of the distinctive principles of the Church of England, and the bulwark of our Church's Protestantism. It was not only designed to set forth the Scriptural and primitive idea of divine worship, but was also designed to be a protest against the misleading teachings of the Church of Rome; and in accordance with these two great designs it was compiled, constructed, and completed. With the spirit of the reformers within him, the Evangelical with all confidence believes that he has behind him the Prayer Book which they produced.

**He has the
History of
the Church
of England**

He looks back over the vast sweep of the past, and surveys the extended history of that great national and spiritual organization which has borne for many centuries the name of the Church of England. He sees that there were in that past three great periods successively, of the construction, the destruction, and the reconstruction; or, rather, of the formation, the de-formation, and the re-formation of the Church. He sees how, after its formation, error entered in, and the Church of England became an integral part of the Church of Rome, a section for many years of the great Catholic Church of Western Christendom, degraded with all its degradations, diseased with all its superstitions. And then, as he enters into the meaning of that miracle of the grace of God, the reformation of the Church of England, and sees how in His great love and by His guiding hand the men He raised up for the work won back again the heritage the Church had lost, built up the walls that lay waste and the gates thereof that were burned with fire, deep grows the conviction in his soul that they there attained the reconstitution of the apostolic ideal of worship and of faith. Consequently, that he who as an Evangelical stands for simplicity in worship, Scripturalness in doctrine and the necessity of heart conversion in preaching, and protests against the whole ritualistic system with its teaching of the altar, the priest, the sacrifice, the confessional, has with him the massive force of the history of eighteen centuries.

And more. He has behind him the unquestionable support of the documentary evidences of the primitive age of the Church; an age that will be searched in vain for any valid authorization of the complex and lengthy catena of doctrines which form the essential features of the Church of Rome,

and which, alas—so foolish are they and ignorant—a growing number of English Church clergy are trying hard to believe they believe.

He has behind him the Bible, the Word of God Holy Scripture, which containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that, as Article VI. says, "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, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Holy Scripture, which gives to Christian ministers about twenty separate names, but never once the name of priest; which contains the word altar in sixteen passages, but never once as meaning the Lord's Table (the metaphorical expression in Heb. xiii. 10 having no such reference); which dwells off upon the Holy Communion as the Supper of the Lord, but never as a sacrifice, still less as the reiteration of the one oblation of Christ once offered, still less as for adoration and worship of a transubstantiated morsel of bread; which gives not the slightest countenance for the entirely execrable system of auricular confession; which rejects the worship of saints, the conduct of divine service in an unknown tongue, the compulsory celibacy of Christian ministers, and repudiates the adoration of Mary, and the withholding the cup from the laity; which protests by its absolute silence against prayers for the dead, the worshipping and adoration of images and reliques, and the fatuous doctrine of purgatory.

Holy Scripture, which puts before all things that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature and a faith that is energetic with love.

Holy Scripture, which declares that Christ sent

forth His apostles not to baptize but to preach the Gospel, and that it is by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever that we are born of Him Who of His own will begets by the word of truth.

With all these behind him—the Church's teaching, the Church's Prayer Book, the Church's history, the voice of antiquity, the authority of the Scriptures, and beyond all this, the principles and practice of Christ and His twelve apostles—the Evangelical cannot but be strong. He is in a firm position.

As he preaches the necessity of conversion and of heart religion, he has with him the Spirit of God, the teaching of the Prayer Book in the Articles and the Catechism, and the very history of the Church of England. The very Church to which he belongs is a converted Church. Its very existence is a perpetual sermon on the necessity and power of true conversion. For the conversion of the Church was due to the conversion of her reformers. The conversion of the reformers was effected by the Spirit of God through the Holy Scripture.

As he recognizes the ministers of the non-episcopal reformed Churches as brethren, he has with him the spirit of the Articles, the sense of the Prayer Book, the teaching of the greatest of Churchmen, and the practice of the Church itself for many years.

He is, if he is consistent and real, not only a true Churchman and a good Churchman, he is *the* true Churchman, he is *the* only really good Churchman.

As a Churchman the Evangelical need never be ashamed, and in order that he may never be ashamed he should know his position.

The strength of prejudice is ignorance, and the strength of ignorance is the indifference and the indolence of those who should know. Therefore, he should not only know these things and under-

stand, he should labour to make others know. He should never apologize for his position. No apology is required. If he doesn't believe this, he should study more and learn more, and he will believe it ; and gradually but surely he will come to say—not hastily, not uncharitably, God forbid—what the writer of this paper has said before and is not ashamed to say again : Next to my being by God's grace a Christian man, I am a Churchman.

I am a Churchman, not merely because my ancestors were members of the Church of England, or because I have been confirmed therein or ordained in its ministry. I am a Churchman by conviction, by preference and by deliberate choice. I love the Church of England. I do not belong to the one-church-as-good-as-another school, or regard her only as good as others. I consider her better. I consider her the best of all.

I am, moreover, a Prayer Book Churchman. I uphold the doctrines and the rubrics of the Church. By these rubrics I am directed, and according to them I guide my conduct in Church and in the services I conduct. The doctrines that are therein found I preach. I preach them as I believe, squarely, honestly, and without any evasion. But, when I say that I am a Prayer Book Churchman, I do not mean that I disregard the Articles. I accept the Prayer Book as it stands with the Articles, believing them to contain the true doctrine of the Church of England ; and therefore, because I am a Churchman, I am a Protestant Churchman and an Evangelical Churchman.

SECOND, WITH REGARD TO HIS PERILS

The Evangelical has many dangers confronting him. One is the danger of imagining that principles are a guarantee of success apart from personality,

or that a supposed dependence on the power of the Holy Ghost will guarantee ministerial success without ministerial efficiency. This is a great mistake, for after all, no principles, however pure and attractive and powerful in theory, will ever win their way into the hearts of men apart from the character of the man who is their exponent. If Evangelicalism is weak, it is weak because of the personality of the Evangelical, of the laity as well as the clergy. The principles are powerful, but the man is without force. If he is narrow and cold and lifeless, or dull and stale and flat, or indolent, or unsagacious, or unevenly balanced, or unlearned, he will trust to the greatness of his principles in vain. The parish will decline, and he will lose weight, and the cause will weaken, not because Evangelical Churchmanship is weak, but because he is weak. It is not the principles that are at fault, it is himself ; it is not the cause that is unpopular, it is the man. The end of doctrine is holiness, and if Evangelical principles do not produce sanctity of character, they are but vain.

And here let me also say that the Evangelical must never forget, as a preacher of the Gospel, that it is dangerous for him to assume that he has the power of the Holy Ghost, or is in the line of the preaching of the Apostles, as long as he preaches with indifference to the circumstances of his hearers, and in utter ignorance apparently of the great sea of human life with its cares and sorrows, and worries and trials, and toils and losses, that surges incessantly around him. Surely it is in vain for a man to fancy that he has the mystic power of the Holy Ghost when he lacks even the power to win the attention of a child by a simple parable, or to bring the tear to a parent's eye by a sympathetic appeal. Surely it is ignorance, nay, arrogance, for one to imagine that he has the spirit of Christ and

preaches in the power of the Apostolic Gospel, when he lacks the very initial evidence of the possession of that Spirit, the power to rouse a soul, or awake a sleeping conscience.

We call it Gospel preaching ; is it Gospel preaching, when tested by the everlasting tests of the Word of God and apostolic example ?

If it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. i. 16), saving men from the meanness and earthliness and selfishness of their lives ; if it pricks men in the heart and awakens the conscience (Acts ii. 37) so that souls are added to the Church by its instrumentality ; if it brings comfort and peace and joy and liberty (Acts viii. 8-12) ; if it heals the wounded sores of fretted and lacerated humanity ; if it helps with mystic benediction those sick with sin and weary of the world ; if it arouses and attracts the thoughtless and the thoughtful ; if it animates and spurs on to an undying enthusiasm the eager and desirous ; if it come like a clarion to the young, then it is gospel indeed. But, if not, it is a perilous thing for a man to assume its name, or fancy he is living along the line of its power.

But there are other dangers to which Evangelicals as Churchmen are liable.

There is the perilous tendency to individualism, a tendency which manifests itself doctrinally in an exclusive emphasis of personal and inward religion to the apparent neglect of the corporate aspect of religion, the duties and privileges of the believer as a part of Christ's body ; and parochially in that indifference to the great world of Church life which surges around him, and that lack of interest in the wider circle of the affairs of the Church which is so frequently characteristic of men who have fallen into the contracted rut of a narrow and inconsiderate parochialism. Beware of unsympathy ;

beware of narrowness. In root it is selfishness, in effect it is suicide.

If there is one lesson that Evangelicals as a party have failed to learn, it is the lesson of unity. No man, no Church, no party, liveth unto himself or itself.

While I am far from admitting the pessimistic declaration of the late Lord Shaftesbury that the Evangelical party was like a rope of sand, or the equally famous assertion that their unity was that of a bag of marbles, I am still convinced that we have not sufficiently realized, as Evangelicals, the necessity of mutual sympathy and united action. In a great political party it is impossible for all to see eye to eye in details. But in the resolve to work out the great principles upon which all are agreed, individual differences and minor desires should be submerged. We will never advance as we should, our great principles will never have the power that they ought to have, until we learn to think less of our individual preferences and more of the Church's needs, and resolve to work hand in hand, heartily and loyally and unsuspiciously, with every man who claims the name Protestant and Evangelical, no matter from what college he comes. *Fas est ab hoste doceri*. We have only to note the unity of purpose and the systematized action of the so-called Catholic party to be ashamed to think how foolishly we have allowed our cause to be crippled by crotchety objections and short-sighted disagreements. We must be more sensible. We must strive *together* for the faith of the Gospel. We must gladly hail as brothers all who stand on the platform of the principles of the Reformation. And, if we do, it will be with us as it was with King Arthur and his knights when they strove with Rome,

"And King Arthur and his knighthood for a space
Were all one will, and through that strength the
king

Drew in the petty princedoms under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm and
reigned."

I now come to another very serious peril. That is, the tendency to disregard the external, the visible, the audible, the systematic, the dogmatic, the formal.

The outward matters of form, the apparently trivial matters of order, the details of music, and architecture, and position, and procedure, and habit, and deportment, while not the great matters—the weightier matters—are nevertheless important in their place; and lack of attention to these matters on the part of Evangelical clergymen and laymen has done no little harm. Churchmen love their Church, and it is notorious that the vast body of Protestant and Evangelical Church people, clergy and laity, desire a beautiful and becoming service, and are displeased, if not alienated, by that lack of reverence and brightness, and orderliness and propriety that is sometimes found in the churches of so-called Low Churchmen. "They are trifles," said the great Michael Angelo, "but trifles make perfection." A clean and comely surplice, a bright and reverent service, a careful attention to the exact requirements of the rubrics in the various services, the cultivation of the reverential and adorational and devotional instincts in worship, trifles though they be, are not trifling enough to be despised.

Nor let Evangelical Churchmen neglect, as they have so mischievously done in the past, that attention to the dogmatic form of Church teaching which has been an engine of such influential force

in the *modus operandi* of the High Church party. The only way in which the young can be taught is by the dogmatic and catechetical elements of instruction; and the great desideratum of the Evangelical is a wiser attention to the form of sound Church doctrine. By leaflet and catechism, by manual and tract and booklet, the growing generation should be taught the true principles of our Church, and the true meaning of the history and interpretation of our Book of Common Prayer. Our people generally should be led to that enthusiastic devotion to the principles of Evangelical Churchmanship which is the inevitable result of a sanctified knowledge of our Church's history and position and teaching.

There has been too little sympathy for the devotion and sentiment and loyalty of the young, and too little regard for the necessity of formal instruction; and lack of interest in them has alienated vast bodies from our cause. The Church children of yesterday are the Church men of to-day. Let us see to it that their brightness and earnestness and enthusiasm shall be won by God's help for the great cause of the Reformation principles of the Church, and that, instead of merely casting our forces into the line of denunciation of error and the bare negation of protest, we throw our energies into the channel of the positive, and build up the constructive elements of the truth of Christ and His Church.

Preach the old gospel more than ever, preach it earnestly, winsomely, personally, practically; exalt the old Bible more than ever, and beware of ever disturbing a youthful mind by unsettling suggestions about its inspiration; insist on the spiritual and doctrinal side of Church teaching and worship as you will; but never forget that after all there can be no worship without form, no teaching without

dogma, and no attractiveness without music and order.

These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone, are the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And this we can only do by being enthusiastic Churchmen. To me, the lack of enthusiasm in an Evangelical is as real a sin as the lack of sincerity. It is hard to understand how a man who knows the history of the Church of England before the Reformation, and sees how God has brought out the Church of England to its present position, and given us such a glorious heritage of truth in our Articles and Book of Common Prayer, can think of these things without glowing with fervour and determining that he will do all in his power with old and young to make the Church of England that great popular spiritual force in the life of the nation that God intended her to be.

There are other perils—the temptations to think of ease or popularity, and the avoidance of singularity, to strain after a reputation for cleverness or originality, and perhaps most insinuating of all, the desire to be charitable and popular and liberal and broad, and so avoid all so-called extremes—but those that I have outlined are those that most easily beset us. Our safety lies in the Saviour's warning, "Watch and pray;" our power in consistency, character, unity, and sense.

THIRD, WITH REGARD TO HIS PROSPECTS

The Evangelical as a Churchman faces a bright future.

It is true that when he looks down he is somewhat distressed, and when he looks around he is somewhat dismayed; but when he looks back at what God has wrought, and looks out and sees what God

is doing, he looks up with deepened gratitude and quickened hope.

The outlook has indeed its distressing features, and Evangelicals when they look only at the things that are seen might well be perplexed. There is much to trouble a true man. Ritualism is still endeavouring to forge ahead, and the floods of tractarian doctrine and sacerdotal opinions prevail mightily in England's ancient and apostolic and reformed Church. He is amazed at the widespread ignorance on the part of both the clergy and the people of the Church of England, of the true position and doctrines of the Church, and of the exact meaning of the rubrics and real principles of the Prayer Book. He marvels at the complacency with which erroneous opinions, historical, doctrinal, and liturgical, are put forth by so many of the clergy. He wonders at the facility and rapidity with which erroneous teachings are received by the people, and spread by Anglo-Catholic propaganda. He is at a loss to explain the amazing inability to discern between the elements of truth and error, and the gullibility of the average half-trained Churchman. He is still more perplexed at the strange indifference, the mysterious apathy with which so many Churchmen regard the striving for truth and the earnest contending for the principles of the Reformation; and the extraordinary way in which they are willing to believe that these things are no more to a Churchman than the stripes of quarrelling Jews to an uninterested Galileo. He cannot understand the fascination which small catch-words and petty arguments,* and silly reasonings, and trivial points

*One of the most extraordinary instances of this is referred to in Dr. Jacob's Ecclesiastical Polity, p. 228. Dr. Neale, a learned writer of the so-called Catholic school, tried to show that the three doctrines of the Real Presence, the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and Prayers for the Dead, were really

of ritual seem to have for some minds ; still less the timidity and aversion to singularity and individuality that characterize so large a body of the English clergy. And above all he is bewildered at the almost hypnotizing power of that enervating and emasculating spirit of a falsely so-called charity which is ever calling for peace when there can be no peace, and ever imploring that a truce may be called, and all antagonism cease in a universal spirit of toleration and mutual kindness. All these things may well distress and perplex the thoughtful and prayerful soul. As we think of them we do not wonder at the words that not many years ago were wrung from the heart of one of the great Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church : " When I reflect on the Anglican Reformation ; when I worship in the glorious Liturgy they rescued from an unknown tongue, and cleansed from innumerable defilements ; when I compare our reformed Church with Holy Scripture and the purest ages of antiquity, I am amazed at these results ; I wonder that, amid the passions and the conflicts of such an age, such a miracle should have been wrought by the hands of men. Then, when I see these benefactors of the world attesting in the flames their holy mission, and bequeathing their work to England, sealed and hallowed with their blood, I seem to dream when I think of an age like this, that has bred a puny race of men to mock their memory, and to go on servile knees to those

of apostolic authority. And this was his logic : These three doctrines are found in the ancient liturgies. But the ancient liturgies are of apostolic antiquity and authority. Therefore these three doctrines are apostolic. The fallacy, of course, lies in taking for granted what never can be proved, that is, the *apostolic* authority of the ancient liturgies—none of which appeared before the fourth century, and all of which contain certain doctrines that the apostles never taught, and that the Scriptures deny.

who slew them, begging to receive back again the yoke of bondage and corruption."

On the other hand there are signs to cheer. The indignant protests of so large a body of English Churchmen against the recent excrescences of ritualism which show that the old heart of the English Churchman still beats in sympathy with the principles of the Reformation ; the growing attention to Church principles and Prayer Book instruction on the part of Evangelicals ; the increasing regard for the positive features of truth, of assertion rather than negation, of the resolve to build up our own rather than to pull down others, to kill out error by filling first with truth ; the growing attention to the circulation of Evangelical Church literature, the needs of the young, and the power of music ; the marvellous genesis and expansion of evangelistic and of missionary zeal ; all these things make us as Evangelical Churchmen thank God and take courage.

The fact is, there never was a day when the old, old story of the Gospel of Jesus and His love, plainly and personally, and clearly and humanly preached by a manly man, was so attractive. There never was a day when there was such a wide desire for the simple and hearty services of the Church, and when the exposition of evangelical Church principles and the setting forth of evangelical Church order elicited such a response in the hearts of true lovers of the Church of England, and awakened such determination to uphold and support and defend these principles to the end.

A thousand hearts still thrill when the Church service is rendered in its winsome simplicity. Thousands of thousands who have long wearied and still weary of the emptiness and unsatisfyingness of a mere musical and ritualistic performance, and of a gospel of morality and ecclesiastical

pre-eminence and sacramental efficacy, are just longing to have the Church of England services rendered brightly and heartily, unblemished by the irritating attractions of ritualism ; and to hear the message of God unfolded in its simplicity and truth.

I believe that there is no message so arresting, so electrifying, so satisfying, as the story of Jesus and His love, and that where the supremacy and sufficiency of the Bible, and the substitutionary work of the Crucified, and the necessity of heart conversion, and the need of practical holiness and a consecrated life are preached simply and fervently by a real and genial man of God, there the multitudes of Churchmen will flock, and gather round the Church as thirsty travellers in the desert around a spring of living water.

It is this response and possibility that are after all the chief elements of cheer in the outlook of Evangelical Churchmen.

Let us, therefore, be strong and fear not.

Finaliter veritas vincit, was the proud avowal of John Wycliffe when the current of prevalent Church teaching swept fiercely against him. And we who are proud of that name are uplifted by the same assurance ; in the end the truth will conquer. Error is great, but truth is greater. Human falsity is mighty, but God's verity is mightier. We know and are sure with good old Bishop Fox that " Truth is the daughter of time, and time is the mother of truth. And whatsoever is besieged of truth cannot long continue, and upon whose side truth doth stand, that ought not to be thought transitory, or that it will ever fall."

A just cause is never lost. God is not on the side of the biggest battalions. God is on the side of the lovers of truth ; or rather, they are on His side, a far more necessary consideration. Truth, not majorities, will prevail.

And so in the slightly altered language of one of England's greatest sons we can say to those who oppose the progress of the principles of the Reformation, and prognosticate the speedy extinction of the Evangelical party and its disappearance from the life of the Church of England : You cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side. The great spiritual forces which move onward in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of our debates does not for a moment impede or disturb, these great spiritual forces are against you. They work with us. They are marshalled in our support. And the banner which we now carry in the fight, though perhaps at some moment of the struggle it may droop over our sinking heads, will yet float again in the eye of heaven, and will be borne by the firm and united hands of the upholders of evangelical truth, not indeed to an easy, but to a certain and a not distant, victory.

Let us only add

" Deeds to our knowledge answerable, add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
The soul of all the rest,"

and we need not despair.

" Not long the sigh, the pain, the death,
Not long the battle's fiery breath,
The Lord will come ;
Then lifting high the banner bright,
And shouting, God defends the right,
Strike home, strike home."



*Printed in Great Britain
by Gibbs & Bamforth Ltd.
St. Albans*