

Called to Catechize

~ Dr. J. I. Packer ~

A Puritan Pilgrim's Passion

The quickest way to introduce this article is to explain how I came to want to write it. So, with advance apologies for my narcissistic natter, here goes.

It seems to me that there never was a time when I did not want to teach, or know how to do it. I took to teaching as a duck takes to water, and as some lucky people take to playing tunes the first time they see a piano. Whether teaching instincts can be inherited I do not know, but certainly my mother and my sister were schoolteachers of distinction, and from adolescence on I took for granted that somehow I would end up in the same trade. Most spiritual gifts, I think, are natural abilities sanctified and harnessed by God-given desire, and in my case, since I became a believer as a student, adult Christian education has been my passion.

How deep this went I only realized when, by a strange providence, a seminary hired me before my own theological studies began, to teach Latin and Greek and, as it turned out, some philosophy, ethics, and New Testament exegesis also, for one academic year. I reveled in doing this, and not just because I was the youngest man in the place! The liberal theological college that I subsequently attended was a very different experience; there my heart was mutinous, and I learned by habitually making myself work out why I disagreed with so much of what I was regularly hearing. But I recall that when a visiting lecturer declared that in pastoral ministry there are just three priorities, the first being teach, the second being teach, and the third being teach, I wanted to stand up and cheer, for already, as still today, this

seemed to me to be obviously and profoundly right. In those days I had gotten into reading seventeenth-century Puritans, and their skilled didactic style had been impressing me no less than their clear-headed evangelical substance. Already, therefore, I was asking myself how I might emulate them in my own ministry. And the expository preaching of Martyn Lloyd-Jones and John Stott, alongside my reading, was helping me toward an answer.

Then, during my initial two-year stint as an assistant priest, I spent both winters taking a group of older young people through the key themes of Christian doctrine. My joy in teaching them, and theirs in learning to articulate their faith, stay in my memory as high spots of my ministry there. Since that time I have spent over fifty more years in Christian adult education, one way and another, *viva voce* and on paper. The joy still flows, and my conviction of the primacy in all ministry of constantly, systematically, enthusiastically teaching the foundational Christian truths remains undimmed. That is the conviction that generated this article.

Christian Basics

But what are these basic truths? How should we discern, formulate, delimit and spell out the essential syllabus from which we should always be teaching? In the post-orthodox confusion of our age throughout the Protestant world (a reality that drives some in despair into Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy), different people answer the question, "What are the basics?", in different ways. This makes it important for my argument that—before I go further—I should answer this question in my own

terms. The answer I wish to give is, “the truths of the Gospel,” but simply to say that will not suffice, for the word “Gospel” has itself become a nose of wax in our time, and the question, “What is the Gospel?”, on which evangelical Protestants were virtually unanimous for centuries after the Reformation, is today a major talking-point and area of dispute. So I must spell out the basics explicitly and analytically. My account of them comes via the patristic Creeds, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Christian theological heritage, from holistic, coherent, canonical interpretation of the canonical Scriptures, the teaching and witness of which, historically and panoramically outspread in sixty-six very varied pieces of writing, comes from God himself. As I wrote elsewhere,¹ the key truths seem to me to be as follows:

In the Bible, the Gospel is the entire saving plan of God, all revolving round the person, place and power of our Savior Jesus Christ, the incarnate, crucified, risen, reigning, returning Lord. Preaching and teaching the Gospel requires us to show how Jesus Christ relates to every part of God’s plan, and how every part of that plan relates to us who are savingly related to the living Christ through faith... this means dealing with six main topics, as follows:

1. The Truth about God

The one God who made and rules everything is revealed as three persons through his plan of salvation. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit love each other, love us, and work together to save us from sin and make us holy. Jesus Christ, the Son of God now and for ever incarnate, is Lord over all the powers of evil, as he is over every other created reality. Any other view of God is idolatry.

2. The Truth about Ourselves.

We were made for God, to bear his

image and be like him in moral character. But sin now controls and spoils us, so that we need to be brought back to God to be forgiven and remade. Jesus Christ, who brings us back, is himself the model of true godliness. Any other view of him or of us is deception.

3. The Story of God’s Kingdom.

Step by step, as Scripture tells, God has been working since man first went astray, to exercise his kingship by establishing his Kingdom in this fallen world. Jesus Christ is now the King, and our lives are to be his Kingdom at its heart. King Jesus is also the world’s Judge, and those who have not bowed to his kingship here will not share his joy hereafter. Trusting, loving and honoring Jesus, and serving others for his sake, is the core and center of true godliness. Any other form of religion is error.

4. The Way of Salvation.

Jesus Christ, our Sin-Bearer on the Cross, now from his throne reaches out to rescue us who are lost in the guilt and shame of sin. He calls for faith (trust in him as Savior) and repentance (turning to him as Master). He sends his Holy Spirit to change us, so that we hear his call as addressed to us personally and respond to it whole-heartedly. Thereupon we are forgiven and accepted (justified), received as God’s children (adopted), moved to rejoice at our peace with him (assurance), and made to realize that now we are living a new life of co-resurrection with Christ in Christ (regeneration). Any lesser view of salvation is deficient.

5. The Life of Fellowship.

Christians belong in the Church, the family of God, sharing its worship, work, witness and warfare, and enjoying its worldwide brotherhood in Christ. Any lesser view of the Christian calling is sectarian.

6. Walking Home to Heaven.

Helped by the ministry in the Church of word and sacrament, prayer and pastoral care, spiritual gifts and loving support, Christians live in our constantly hostile world as travelers, heading for a glorious destination. Praise and worship, personal and corporate, directed to both their heavenly Father and Jesus Christ their heavenly Friend, strengthen them to live in obedience to the divine commands, in endurance of whatever happens under the divine providence, and in undying hope of good things to come. Led and inspired by their Savior through the Holy Spirit, they seek to do all the good they can as they go, and to battle all forms of evil that they meet. Any lesser view of the Christian life is worldly.

Or the syllabus of fundamentals could be formulated like this:

1. The Authority of Scripture, our true, trustworthy, God-given and God-interpreted source of knowledge about God in relation to his world and to ourselves as part of it
2. The Sovereignty of God, in creation, providence and grace, undergirding the reality of our own free and responsible decisions
3. The Truth of the Trinity, in which all three persons work as a team for our salvation
4. The Sinfulness of Sin, total egocentric perversity of heart leading to total inability to respond to God from the heart, and total unacceptability in God's sight by reason of the sins to which our sinful hearts have led us
5. The Centrality of Jesus Christ, God incarnate, our Mediator and penal substitute, our prophet, priest and king, crucified, risen, reigning, returning;

Savior, Lord and Friend to all who turn to him; our Companion through life, both here and eternally hereafter

6. The Graciousness of Salvation, which is the gift of a new status (reconciliation, justification, adoption) and a new state (regeneration, sanctification, resurrection and perfection to come); all of which is bestowed by Christ through the Holy Spirit, embraced by faith and repentance, and expressed in a life of worship, of prayer, and of obedience

7. The Power of the Holy Spirit, through whom alone faith, repentance, "good works," Christian hope, Christian assurance, and Christian love become reality

8. The Circuitry of Communion, whereby through the means of grace, Scripture, prayer, the Lord's Supper, and the interchanges of Christian fellowship, Christ and the Father come to us in our personal awareness and the Holy Spirit spurs us to respond in devotion, doxology, and permanent practice of the divine presence, in faith, in love, in hope, and in service

9. The Truth about the Church, which is an international company of Christians who congregate together in local units to worship and work for God

Being the church -- that is, doing what the church does -- means praise and prayer, preaching and teaching, celebrating the sacraments, practicing discipleship and discipline, spreading the faith worldwide, warring against all forms of evil and unbelief, watching for Christ's return, and looking forward to the life everlasting in heaven. It also means spending and being spent in outreach -- making disciples, founding congregations, Christianizing communities, vindicating Christian truth, and

opposing public sin and all that dehumanizes.

10. The Glory of God, in the twofold sense of the praiseworthiness of God revealed to us in the plan of redemption, and the praise we give to God for that revelation, thus beginning to glorify him here as we shall be doing eternally hereafter

These two sample formulations of the syllabus for teaching are given here because I myself have found them satisfactory for my own purposes. No doubt there are many other ways in which this material could be arranged, and all teachers should in any case have liberty to fulfill what is indeed their responsibility, namely to arrange their material in what, for them, is the most effective way. But in teaching this syllabus, however one presents it, there are three things that must always be kept in view. The presentation must be God-centered, with God as the subject and humanity and ourselves as, so to speak, the predicate throughout. It must be practical, bringing out the response God requires to each truth that we teach. And it must be doxological, showing how each action by God reveals his praiseworthiness and calls for actual praise as well as formal acknowledgment. All Christian instruction should have this three-fold quality.

Catechesis

Now there is a historic Christian name for the kind of teaching that I am writing about. It is, let me say once more, systematic, in that it covers and links together all the biblical truths by which Christians are to live; it is practical, in that it teaches would-be disciples how to live by these truths; and it is doxological and devotional, in that it leads those under instruction to appreciate and adore those qualities in God that are most directly displayed in the economy of saving grace. These are, for starters, God's holy love,

greatness, goodness, wisdom, faithfulness, patience and power, all springing from and shaped by the interpersonal perichoresis — that is, the eternal three-in-one-ness — of God's Trinitarian life. The name that properly belongs to this type of teaching is catechesis. This is a noun that comes from the Greek verb *katecheō*, which is a New Testament term meaning "instruct." The kind of instruction I am envisaging is called catechetical; anyone undergoing it is called a catechumen; any written items produced to help it along may properly be called catechisms; and any person fulfilling this ministry of faith formation through teaching the basics merits the honorable name of catechist.

Catechesis has had a mixed history. The apostles established churches in cities, where cults already abounded, and soon it became standard practice for each congregation to maintain some form of ongoing catechetical instruction for enquirers. Before long the syllabus was stable, being the inter-church "rule of faith," the essence of our Apostles' Creed, and the course length was fixed also — ordinarily, three years, leading up to an Eastertide baptism. Countering Gnostic heresies and Jewish anti-Christianity came to be included in the syllabus, and in Alexandria, under Clement and Origen, the catechetical school became in effect a Christian arts university, engaging with secular philosophies as well as with deviant alternatives to apostolic faith. As entire communities became nominally Christian, however, and Jewish opposition subsided and Gnostic groups ran out of steam, the adult catechumenate shrank to vanishing point, and catechizing, where it did not perish entirely, morphed into instruction for children. The Reformation, which from one standpoint was a revival of Christian education, saw a new emphasis on catechizing children to prepare them for adult communicant discipleship (see the Anglican Prayer Book Catechism for one example of a text for this purpose), and it was hoped to renew

adult catechizing also, as witness Luther's Larger Catechism, Calvin's Geneva catechisms, the Anglican Alexander Nowell's Large Catechism (1570), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and the Westminster Larger Catechism (1647), to name a few. All were composed in question-and-answer format. Nowadays, however, question-and-answer learning is out of fashion, and catechizing as an explicit, intentional pastoral discipline, both for adults and for children, is virtually extinct.

In Today's Western World

Therefore, the church in the modern West is more hazardously placed than perhaps we realize. For the culture that surrounds us, social, intellectual, educational, literary, musical, aesthetic, domestic, recreational, and in all other departments of community life, is now consciously post-Christian and sometimes anti-Christian. The Christian world-view and value-system has virtually disappeared from school and university life and from home life too; also from the worlds of human imagination and art, relationships and community programs, self-understanding and reflection on life's purpose. The triumphs of technology have effectively redefined the cosmos for us in materialistic and natural-forces terms, and adherents of historic Christianity are seen as throwbacks and shellbacks, marginal eccentrics at best, quite irrelevant to the main stream of global cultural development. Logically, all roads lead to some form of relativism and ultimate scepticism, for there are no agreed first principles any more. Such is the supposedly progressive Western world, and it looks to be only a matter of time till this Western mindset becomes a global infection. In face of these continuing and mounting pressures, Archbishop George Carey's often-repeated dictum, that the modern church is only one generation from extinction, appears very insightful.

So it becomes increasingly vital that in this and every future generation all the church's members, from nine to ninety as we might say, should at their own level be fully abreast of the historic God-taught basic beliefs that we listed above. Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses know their faith well, for they are required to study it. We Anglicans need to take a leaf out of their book. Pope John Paul II called for a new catechesis, and commissioned the new Catechism of the Catholic Church (actually, an excellent resource handbook for teachers), as a tool for the task. Here, too, is action that global Anglicanism needs to match.

Making our task harder, however, is the fact that English-speaking Anglicanism still suffers from the numbing, dumbing poison of both the old Liberalism, which saw Christianity as essentially an ethos of neighbor-love that comes naturally to all whose life-situation has not screwed them up, and the new Liberalism, which sees all doctrinal affirmations as powerful though essentially uninformative pointers to the ineffable transcendent that is the common factor in all religions.

Though change and decay in all the many forms of Liberal theology are plain to see, the Liberal legacy in the older Western churches, the Anglican among them, remains strong. This legacy is a pervasive, entrenched suspicion that the church's historic doctrine is epistemologically vacuous and spiritually irrelevant: which suspicion naturally generates deep-level sales resistance to any suggestion that learning this doctrine in a systematic, organic, organized way would yield wisdom and enrichment for Christian existence. We live today, in effect, by the maxim of leaving behind any ideas, fancies or concepts that do not seem to us indispensable for practical use, and the habitual Liberal scepticism about historic Christian beliefs has, it seems, convinced churchpeople across the board that while Sunday worship remains important, the

church's doctrine does not. So for the Anglican constituency in the West to become a fellowship of catechetical endeavor, marked by continuous, enthusiastic teaching and learning of the full faith, according to the ideals of both historic Protestant and historic Catholic Anglicans, will require much uphill battling by all who, along with the present writer, want to see this happen.

And is such battling really necessary? Does the church's health and strength really depend on it? Yes, and yes, and yes, to both questions. For, to put it bluntly, our God is a speaking God, who has used particular Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words, arranged in sentences and paragraphs in documents of canonical status, to open his mind to us and tell us things; specifically, to tell us of his covenant love for the lost, and to explain to us what he has done, is doing and will do, to re-create and re-order his lapsed world with ourselves as part of it. This is the revealed truth by which he now calls his believing people, the new humanity, to live. Holy Scripture is, as Article 20 says, "God's Word written," witnessing to Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, the living Lord, the Father's Son and our Savior, whose own words to his disciples were words of God in the truest and most substantial sense, and from whose hand, if we may put it so, we now receive both the prophetic Scriptures of the Old Testament and the apostolic writings of the New. Now, disciples of Christ, which we are called first to be ourselves and then to lead others to be also, are first and foremost learners -- persons who learn to follow their master by attending to his words, which in this case include Jesus's own attestation of the Old Testament and promise of the New as combined testimony to the world from the Father through the Holy Spirit regarding himself. So God's truth, thus revealed in Holy Scripture and embodied in the ecumenical Creeds and in reformational Anglican doctrine, is truly foundational to Christianity, and none of us can get on without it. Let it be said, then, loud and clear,

that loyalty to our Lord Jesus requires that these authoritative teachings be in place as controls for Anglican life, and be taught to all Anglican worshippers to shape their Christian discipleship.

Catechetical Ideals

Catechesis is a matter of teaching and learning, and of Christian formation through both. Here there are four matters that call for discussion: the meaning of teaching; the methods of instruction; the modeling of Christlikeness; and the mindset of ministers. We take them in order.

(1) The Meaning of Teaching

Teaching is a mode of communicative action that has to be defined not by its intention, but by its effect. The formula that always fits is threefold. When the learners (a) have the subject matter clear in their minds and appropriately lodged in their memory, so as to be accessible to them for the future; when they (b) can discern its inner connections and coherence, and can perceive its implications for a larger conceptual synthesis, and thus show that they have got the hang of its systematic ordering and structure, and when they (c) can make appropriate application of their knowledge and understanding to new facts in the same field of reality, then it may fairly be claimed that teaching has taken place. Apart from these results, however, such a claim would be invalid, no matter how many words had been spoken with teaching intent. As you are only a leader if you have followers, so you are only a teacher if people learn from you in these three ways. In the church, as elsewhere, one meets persons who speak at length with teaching intent, but in a way that bewilders rather than enlightens, neither leading the mind to understand nor stirring the memory to retain. Of such it must be said that they have no gift for teaching, or at least, if they have such a gift, they have not yet learned to harness it, so that thus far it is as if they had

none. Catechists must know their theology before they start; they must, in other words, have been in effect catechized themselves, so that their minds are grooved to communicate the saving truths that they themselves live by. Then they need to be clear on what discipling is, and that it is their precise job, and that it is not completed till those at the receiving end can and do, in however simple a way, actively express in word and life the faith that their instructors have sought to share with them.

The question arises: how soon can this start? Can children be taught theology? If by theology we mean abstract, defensive, anti-heretical formulations, then the common response, that children's minds cannot handle abstractions till they are about ten, would seem to be right. But if by theology we mean (as, be it said, we always should) good news about what our heavenly Father and our heavenly friend Jesus were, are and will be doing for us and for others, and how they have shown us their love for us, and what they have promised to do to look after us from now on, and what we must do to please them, and why, the teaching and learning of theology can ordinarily begin, other things being equal, at the age of about three. Certainly, Bible stories in abundance should be taught in Sunday Schools from the start, as is done now, but certainly also, simple relational theology, based on and illustrated by the Bible stories, should be taught throughout in an intentional way alongside the stories themselves.

(2) The Methods of Instruction

A time-honored tag among schoolteachers is, "no impression without expression," and this is as true when we teach the gospel to persons of any age as it is of teaching anything else. Expression takes at least four forms: answering questions on what has been presented; working out logically its implications and applications; positioning oneself by personal commitment to act on the

truth one now sees; and actually obeying that truth by forming habits of thought and behavior that reflect it. Response to the gospel message, whether spelled out in full, as above, or focused in a Christ-centered abbreviation ("Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved," Acts 16:31), has all these four elements to it.

In the Reformation period, which was, as we have already observed, an era of great educational endeavor, all-age catechizing was a major pastoral concern, based on four fundamental formulations: the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the gospel sacraments as instituted by Jesus himself. In all age groups, it was felt, ignorance must be banished and gospel truth clearly grasped. Accordingly, as was noted above, catechisms in abundance, mostly for adults, were composed and published. The catechetical method that they serviced, it must be said, was redolent of the schoolroom, answers to questions first being memorized, followed by question and answer *viva voce* to ensure that the memorizing had been done, leading to explanatory exhortation to live by the truths thus learned. But by the end of the seventeenth century adult catechesis had petered out in Anglicanism. The supreme enthusiasts for it had been the Puritan pastors inspired by Richard Baxter's practice of family catechizing, described in his Reformed Pastor (1656); when they were ejected in 1662, there was no one to carry the torch. The Prayer Book Catechism was seen as being for children, to prepare them for confirmation (right so far), and it came to be assumed that after confirmation churchpeople needed no further instruction beyond what Sunday sermons would give them — a view that Western Anglicans generally still take for granted, a view that this present article is calling into question. Without knowing what Free Churchmen seek in the instruction classes that regularly accompany their Sunday worship, Anglicans are sure that

they do not need it themselves. This is where persuasion has to start.

Let it be said at once that the schoolmasterly style, and the stress on memorizing, are not integral to adult catechizing, and that some fruitful variants on the old austere procedure have recently been developed. I think for instance of the runaway global success story of the Alpha course, emanating from Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, London, and of its counterpart, Christianity Explored, developed in All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, and now published by Authentic Media, Milton Keynes UK and Waynesboro GA. The latter item, which may not yet be as well known as it should be, is a ten-evening course based on Mark's Gospel, each session laid out as (I quote the brochure) "an informal meal, a short Bible study, a talk ... and a further discussion based on what the participants have just heard." Alpha is similar. These courses are in effect (though perhaps without their makers and devotees realizing it) first steps in the re-establishing of adult catechesis as a regular part of church life.

A British proverb declares that there are more ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream, and no limit should be set to human ingenuity in packaging the catechetical process, provided only that the syllabus of gospel doctrine gets fully and properly covered, and that the need for the fourfold response to it that was described at the start of this section remains in view.

(3) The Modeling of Christlikeness

For the past half-century, due partly to charismatic preoccupation with spiritual gifts and partly to the Western world's lack of interest in moral character as such, the centrality of Christlike virtues (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control), the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) in authentic Christian

discipleship, has been obscured. Catechizing, however, is a discipline which, when rightly managed, takes its recipients not only into orthodoxy, but also into fellowship with God and, as one aspect of that fellowship, holiness of life. When Jesus said that a "fully trained" disciple will be like his teacher (Lk. 6:40), he was referring to mental attitude and moral character, not just to skill in parroting off what the teacher taught. Most of his own specific teaching was on behavior, one way and another. The catechisms of history bring out the prominence of ethics in the life of faith and discipleship by their expositions of the decalogue; here it is, perhaps, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Larger Catechism that lead the pack. We must never lose sight of the fact that discipleship means learning not only sound faith in Christ, but also conscious obedience to Christ, and conformity to his character, and a lifestyle that is conscientiously sin-free, so far as we can manage that.

So a great deal depends on the character of the catechist, as well as on his or her didactic competence. Paul, a catechist *par excellence* in our sense of the word, told those he disciplined to be "imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1; cf. 4:16-17; Phil. 3:17, 4:9; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess. 3:19). Today's catechist, like Paul, must be a convincing, winsome example of living by the truth being taught, in the power of the Spirit whose sanctifying work is being celebrated, and in a way that consistently reflects the example of Christ. Catechizing seeks to transform weak and sinful beings like ourselves into faithful worshipers of God in Christ, holy and disciplined followers of their Lord, self-denying servants of God in his church, clear-headed travelers through this often hostile world, and passionate outreachers to the needy and lost. And it is vital to this end that catechists themselves be, if I may so phrase it, good role-models at this point.

(4) The Mind-set of Ministers

The thrust of this article is that the concept and reality of catechizing, that is, of catechetical theological education, needs to be recovered so as to shape the local church as first and foremost a gathering for the lifelong teaching and learning of biblical Christian faith, in all its aspects. For that to happen, of course, will in the first instance place one more burden on the shoulders of the congregational leader, that is, the rector, who will need to persuade his people that this is the way to go, recruit catechists and oversee their preparation for this service, and form a plan for introducing the new procedures. Courses of sermons? Other courses? Pilot schemes? The pastor has to work it out. My only excuse for thus burdening my brother clergy is that I believe it will be very great gain for this to happen.

When you play darts or take part in archery or rifle shooting contests, the goal is always to hit the bull's-eye. Coming close is meritorious in a way that missing the target entirely would not be, but yet hitting the bull's-eye remains the name of the game. In many churches the Bible is already the center of attention, through expository preaching, small group Bible studies, congregational Bible schools, topical explorations, and other Bible-focused church events; and seeing this I rejoice. But is it quite hitting the bull's-eye for congregational advance when theological catechesis is not yet part of the mix? That is my question.

Paul calls to his juniors, Timothy and Titus, to keep teaching the faith and vindicating it in face of doctrinal confusion all around. His calls sound to me like a constantly tolling bell in all three Pastoral epistles, "Command and teach these things ... devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching ... Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching" (1 Tim. 4:11, 13, 16). "Teach and urge these things ... the teaching that accords with

godliness" (6:2-3). "What you have heard from me ... entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). "The Lord's servant must be ... able to teach" (2:24). "Teach what accords with sound doctrine" (Tit. 2:1). Where the intentional teaching and learning of apostolic theology is not crowning the Bible study, I am left with the uneasy feeling that the bull's-eye is not quite being hit.

Do not misunderstand me. I want to see all churches passionate about digging into the Bible, and where this passion has already taken hold I do not want to see it damped down. On the contrary, I want to see it enriched, and I am now urging a course of action that will surely enrich it. For there is a reciprocal relation between good theology and good Bible study; each helps the other forward. As Calvin pointed out long ago in the preface to the second edition of his Institutes, good theology enables you to see more of what is being shown and taught in the Bible, and to see it more clearly, just as good Bible study enables us to discern what should and should not be in our theology. Thus theologizing and Bible-work walk hand in hand.

So what I am urging on my brothers in the pastorate is that ongoing catechetical teaching and learning be established in our churches as complementary to what is there already – worship, mutual care and nurture, Bible study, and missional outreach. My argument is not an either-or, but a both-and. My hope and prayer is that we shall all see the need for this step forward into truer maturity, and that God will give us in these days a catechetical renewal, matching in influence the charismatic renewal, yielding wiser faith and enhanced usefulness across the Christian board. Anglicanism at its best has always been willing not only to learn new things but also to re-learn old things that have been largely forgotten, which is how a re-emphasis on catechizing should be seen. In hope, therefore, I now rest my case.



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