

## Why I'm An Anglican - Because We Honor Scripture, Reason and Tradition!

In the Bishop's Note over the past several weeks, I've written nine reasons why I am an Anglican - this morning's Bishop's Note will provide the tenth reason, and final one in this series. This is not meant to be an exhaustive examination, just my own musings with the people of the Diocese of San Joaquin. I've enjoyed the responses from folks in the diocese, and am glad to know that others have similar reasons for being Anglican.

OK, I've said that I am Anglican because we are: 1) Biblical, 2) Liturgical, 3) Sacramental, 4) Evangelical, 5) Rational, 6) Episcopal, 7) Ecumenical, 8) International, and 9) We Are A Three Streams Church! The last reason that I am an Anglican is because we: 10) Honor Scripture, Reason, and Tradition - the theological matrix of Anglicanism.

You'll remember, from your catechism class, what is often referred to as the "three legged stool" of Anglicanism. What the teachers were referring to is what is generally attributed to the Anglican theologian Richard Hooker... the three legged stool of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition.

Hooker wrote The Laws of Ecclesiastical Piety in the sixteenth century, providing direction and theological foundations in a time of confusion as the Church of England was seeking her identity. Hooker embodied the Anglican ethos that honors the universal and historic realities of the church and the reform that became necessary. That ethos is often summed up with Scripture, Reason, and Tradition.

Now that being said, I'm not a Hooker Scholar, but I think that the notion of a three legged stool was not Hooker's, and he'd probably be aghast at the notion. A three legged stool images three equal legs, but Hooker did not say that these were equal in authority.

What did Hooker say? "***Be it in matter of the one kind or of the other, what Scripture doth plainly deliver, to that the first place both of credit and obedience is due; the next whereunto is whatsoever any man can necessarily conclude by force of reason; after this the Church succeedeth that which the Church by her ecclesiastical authority shall probably think and define to be true or good, must in congruity of reason overrule all other inferior judgments whatsoever.***" (Book V, 8:2)

Rather than a three legged stool, I envision a ladder built upon the three steps of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition:

**Scripture** - the Word of God, that contains all things necessary for salvation (Article 6), is the foundation upon which everything else is built. Scripture is God's self-revelation - literally God Breathed - "***All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God<sup>2</sup> may be complete, equipped for every good work.***" (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**Reason** - the God given ability to use our minds to recognize and understand, on some level, the Word of God and God's revelation in nature. God has given us the ability to think critically about Him, and about ourselves.

**Tradition** - while Hooker does not specifically use this term, it makes sense to me in this context. While God has given us, individually, the ability to think critically, He has collectively given us the ability to receive the Word of God, and to be the Body of Christ in the world. The revelation given in and through the Church has changed the course of history, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, transformed and saved billions of souls.

I'm proud to be an Anglican Christian for the ten reasons that I've listed, and for a hundred others - why are you an Anglican Christian?

God bless you all!

Bishop Menees

September 27-29 Bishop @ Stewart Ruch's Consecration in Chicago, IL

October 4-6 Clergy Wives Retreat at ECCO

October 9 Bishop @ Daughters of the Holy Cross Quiet day at ECCO

October 12 Diocesan Honored Women's Luncheon in Lemoore, CA

October 18 Delegate and Meal Forms for Convention Due to Diocesan Office

October 25-27 Well North Youth Retreat at St. Luke's in Merced, CA