

CHURCH and SALVATION

1. Introduction.

- a) Quotation from ARCIC I (as in Group B).
- b) Justification is a problem for some Christians, but of existential significance to all.
- c) The mystery of God's saving dealings with mankind, which has given rise to a multiplicity of complementary biblical images.
- d) Two warnings:-
  - (i) In the past, and even today, words are used by different traditions in different senses.
  - (ii) Concentration on one set of terms can cause problems.

2. History.

- a) At the Council of Trent the RC Church was engaged in defining its position, vis-a-vis the Lutherans, not the Anglicans. In turn, Anglican formularies are not aimed directly against Trent.
- b) Exposition of the two positions.
- c) The issue in debate between Roman Catholics and Anglicans both in the 16th century and now.
  - (i) How does the sinner become acceptable to God.
  - (ii) Does the goodness of the justified person please God and therefore merit reward?
  - (iii) How far can we be certain of our salvation without arrogance or libertinism?
  - (iv) What do we understand by justifying faith?

3. Our common understanding today

- a) Scripture
  - (i) The overall concept of salvation.

(ii) Variety of models expressing salvation.

They are complementary.

Each expresses a different facet of the mystery  
of our salvation.

b) Systematic

(1) Theocentric.

The hidden mystery of God's inexpressible love beyond  
man's deserving.

This hidden love is expressed in salvation.

God is creating a koinonia of men and women who can  
be accepted by him, and are equal with one another in  
the eyes of God.

- (ii) The universal need of salvation..
- (iii) Some images of salvation emphasise the eschatological finality of what God has done. Others emphasize more the process of change in the believer within the fellowship of the koinonia.
- (iv) Justification  
its definition  
The complementary images of reconciliation and forgiveness needed to balance what might appear coldly juridical in the language of justification.  
The false antithesis between justification and sanctification/regeneration (cf. imputed/imparted righteousness).
- (v) Prevenient grace and faith  
Freedom
- (vi) Merit and reward.
- (vii) The role of the Church in salvation
  - reconciled and reconciling
  - evangelisation
  - baptism/incorporation into the koinonia;  
baptism the sacrament of justification
  - the Church the context within which people grow in Christ
  - To be the reconciling community, the Church requires the means of grace which God provides within its fellowship
  - The Church as witness:  
by life and proclamation..

4. Some areas of diversity in belief and practice. Their role and understanding is a matter of discussion and clarification within each of our communions. Some Anglicans feel these issues to be of special importance, not so much in themselves, as because of their implications for the understanding of salvation:

a) Areas of belief

Assurance, final perseverance

Mortal/ venial sin

Purgatory (An Article condemns this belief)

b) Areas of practice

Indulgences

Absolution

Penitential acts

(The areas of practice might be handled as Reservation was handled in Elucidations )

5. Conclusion

We are justified by grace (the source)

" " Christ's blood (the means)

" " faith (the mode of acceptance)

" " works (the consequence, and the evidence of the reality of our faith)

Each of these four statements is true at a different level