

FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OF REFORMATION: THE IMPACT OF ARCHBISHOP CRANMER ON THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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Abstract

This paper examined the issues and the process of Reformation in England. It also appraised the role of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, whose impact has remained indelible in the history of the church. The establishment of Anglicanism, and the use of local vernacular in church worship, were in a sense pioneered by Cranmer. But quite often when the reformation in England is discussed, Cranmer is mentioned in passing and sometimes even in danger of being completely obscured, by the attention given to the English Monarch, whose political structure over-shadowed Cranmer's personality. Hence, many have poor knowledge about the English reformation. This paper therefore, provided information about Cranmer and his role in the Reformation of Church of England using the historical approach. The findings made clear the fact that some principles of Anglicanism are being neglected today by some uninformed Anglicans. Therefore, it recommends, apt teaching of foundational structure of Anglicanism among members, which were espoused most conspicuously in the works of Cranmer.

Keywords: Reformation, English, Church. Impact, Cranmer

Introduction

Thomas Cranmer goes down in history as the first Archbishop of Canterbury and a leader of the English Reformation who built the fundamental structures of the Church of England. Though it was a herculean task, Cranmer stood firm amidst men of diverse opinion and interest to carry out his reform work. In spite of the fact that he worked with hard people at difficult times of his episcopacy; he was able to initiate some reforms that were necessary for the church.

Indeed, Cranmer's views of the reformation were diametrically opposed to that of the conservatives. Hence, they pushed for the abolition of the changes he initiated. A number of times such changes were reversed, but Cranmer doggedly re-established them firmly.

Cranmer's influence traversed the reigns of three monarchs – Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I. While working with the Henry VIII, Cranmer displayed high level of flexibility which enabled him to establish a good amount of influence on the King and the Privy Council. Cranmer's effort to have English Church reformed was delayed by a number of factors. Nevertheless, Cranmer's major reform works were achieved during the reign King Edward. Unfortunately, during the reign of Mary, Cranmer was incarcerated, tortured and eventually put to death for promoting Protestantism. (Trurman, 2017).

Cranmer's role in the English reformation brought him into global limelight. His life story was told from his uncontroversial theological standpoint, with varying interpretations and serious criticism, "Particularly those biographers and historians who belong to the Roman Catholic Church or sympathize with it have tended to assume that, since Cranmer led the way in a reform of which they disapprove, his motives in doing so must have been dishonourable" (Roger Beckwith <http://archive.churchsociety.org>). Even Jasper Ridley who seems to be an admirer of Cranmer could not put formidable defence for Cranmer.

This study critically examined the process of Reformation in England with special interest in Cranmer roles using the historical approach, and basically depended on secondary data. The purpose of highlighting Cranmer's sacrifices in English reformation is to clearly make people understand the rigours Cranmer went through to establish those reforms. To this end the story is simplified so that even someone who is not familiar with the Reformation will come to feel that he or she has become well acquainted with the meaning reformation and appreciate.

The author's choice of this topic bothers on the fact that in the recent times, the Anglican Church has witnessed cases of deviation from Biblical truth which Cranmer stood for. Indeed, some of the issues that prompted the English reformation are prevalent in the church today; it must be addressed and that is the aim of this study.

Reformation; an Overview

The word reform means "to make an improvement, especially by changing person's behaviour, or the structure of a something" (Cambridge Advance Learners Dictionary 3rd edition). Reformation refers to the 16th century religious

idea and activities in Europe which were an attempt to change and improve the Catholic Church, and resulted in establishment of Protestant Church. Therefore, Reformation was a serious attempt to return the church to its original state where the scripture is the final court of appeal, where no man claimed sole authority over the entire congregations and churches. It was indeed, an effort to revive the ailing church.

While writing on some factors that aided Reformation Hanks (1992: 119) opined that, "The most important factor in preparing the way for Reformation, apart from religion was the Renaissance". On the other hand Hulbert (1970: 118) identified the arising in Europe a spirit of nationality as a factor that aided the Reformation. Besides, the invention of printing in Gutenberg in 1456 was another strong factor that aided the reform. It made writing and disseminating of information easy, cheap and faster. Consequently, various translations of the Bible were easily printed, thereby making the Bible available to the common man at affordable price. In this wise, Reformation in Europe took different times and had different causes.

Although English Reformation which is the focus of this work was achieved in the 16th century it began generations before. For instance, in 14th century John Wycliffe, an Oxford brightest scholar of his time, and a theologian of outstanding repute led the movement. Hence, he has been described as "the morning star of reformation". He lived (1329 to 1384), at which time in Europe "various government wanted control over the civil and societal affairs of their countries, and they were fighting the papacy for that control" (Liardon, 2003). About a century before Wycliffe, English has shown resentment against Papacy for his inordinate ambition to rule England. King John of England's unwillingness to pay homage to the papacy warranted his excommunication by the pope. According to Liardon (2003),

Even after this king died, the papacy continued to demand payment from the king -taxes for the right to rule in England. The English was opposed to papal taxations and the manner in which he ruled their economy. England was searching for a way to break from papal control

This and some other similar issues were the reason Shelley (1995: 264) remarked that "Reformation in England began as a political rather than a religious movement". Though Wycliffe was branded a heretic while John Hus who came

under his influence was murdered, and the lollards grounded, still the struggle to reform the church continued until sixteenth century; when according to Diara (2005: 35), "The spirit of reform broke out in Europe with much intensity...occasioned by Martin Luther's 96 theses against some of the Roman traditions of the Catholic Church that were clearly repugnant to the doctrine of Christianity in the light of scripture".

Interestingly, at that time the English Monarch was not ready for the reformation. Even in 1521 when Martin Luther attacked the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, Henry VIII wrote a 'Defence of the seven sacraments in which he castigated Luther as a 'poisonous serpent' and a 'wolf of hell'. In gratitude to the king, the pope bestowed to him the title 'Defender of the Faith' (Shelley 1995). Ironically, Henry's friendship with Pope came to an abrupt end when Henry married a second wife in total disregard of papal order. Thenceforth the two men wrestled each other with vigour. Some claimed the case was a doctrinal misconduct, others attributed it to political issue, but the fact remains, it was the finger of God in action. Besides, Diara (2005: 35) quipped, "The Reformation in England stemmed out of that marital problems of Henry VIII, King of England". Igwe (2013: 67) corroborated this fact thus:

As politics is said to go together with religion, so it was during the reign of Henry the VIII. Henry was second in line to throne; his father Henry VII had a son Arthur who was older. For political reasons an alliance between Aragon (a country now part of Spain) and England was important and so a marriage was arranged between Catherine of Aragon and Arthur, the heir to the English throne.

Unfortunately, in 1502, Prince Arthur the elder brother of Henry VIII died. Their father, Henry VII in order to carry through the alliance with Aragon betrothed Arthur's widow, Catharine to the future king; a woman who incidentally was considerable older than Prince Henry. The betrothal immediately raised questions related to the biblical prohibition (in Leviticus 18 and 20) against marriage to a brother's wife, but this was ignored (Igwe 2013).

After eleven years of marital relationship (1502 to 1520) the couple could only produced a daughter Mary, in 1516. "By 1520s Henry still did not have a son to name as heir and he took this as a sure sign of God's anger and made overtures to the Vatican about an annulment" (MacCulloch 1996: 42). The matter was

exacerbated by the fact that England was in no mood to accept a girl as heir to the throne, because according to Shelley (1982: 265), “the nation’s only previous queen had occasioned bloody wars of succession”. Yet Pope would not grant him divorce. Consequently, the relationship between the Pope and Henry got strained, thereby creating opportunity for Cranmer and his like, who was dissatisfied with papal frivolity and had desired a national church in English land, to strategize for the independence of the English Church from Roman dominance.

Early years of Cranmer (1489–1527)

On Sunday 2nd July 1489, in Aslockton in Nottinghamshire, England; Thomas Cranmer was born to his parents, Thomas and Agnes (*née* Hatfield). His parents were of modest wealth and were not members of the aristocracy. Their oldest son, John, inherited the family estate, whereas Thomas and his younger brother Edmund were placed on the path to a clerical career (MacCulloch 1996: 109). Cranmer lost his father before he was twelve; at the age of fourteen he went up to Jesus College Cambridge. Cranmer’s interest and duration of study was highlighted by Selwyn (1993: 63-65) who quipped that “After eight years of studies in logic, classical literature and philosophy he bagged his Bachelor of Arts degree”. In 1515, he completed his master's degree with “special interest in the humanistic “Jacques Lefevre d’Etaples and Erasmus” and enrolled as a fellow of Jesus Collage” (Ridley 1962: 16).

Cranmer had a nasty marital experience with his first wife Joan. First, his membership with Jesus fellowship was severed, secondly, his wife died during childbirth. After the death of his wife, he was reinstated by Jesus College. Cranmer was not discouraged by that unfortunate incident rather; he pursued his life ambition with vigour. He was ordained in 1520 after successful completion of his theological studies. He bagged his Doctor of Divinity degree in 1526. For the thirty years Cranmer taught in Cambridge, he showed enthusiasm for biblical scholarship which prepared him for the adoption of Luther’s ideas, which were spreading during the 1520s (Ridley, 1962). Due to Cranmer’s ingenuity his service was sought by the English monarch who was in distress and needed help.

Cranmer appointed an Aid of the English Monarch (1527-1532)

King Henry VIII was not satisfied with the Papal stance on the matter concerning the fate of the English Crown. Therefore, he employed Cardinal Wolsey to prosecute his case. Wolsey consulted with university dons in Cambridge, where he identified Cranmer as an interested party and engaged him in the annulment plan of the king's marriage with Catherine. Cranmer and some English theologians and scholars from university were invited to appraise the case. Geoffrey R. Elton (2017) reported that,

From about 1520 he (Cranmer) belonged to a group of scholars who met regularly to discuss the theological problems raised by Martin Luther's revolt; known to be inclined to the new way of thinking, they were dubbed "Little Germany." Among the group that was to lead the English Reformation were William Tyndale, Robert Barnes, Thomas Bilney, and, above all, Cranmer, who by 1525 included among his prayers one for the abolition of papal power in England.

The above statement suggests that Cranmer had been influenced by the protestant reformers who opposed papal authority over the church in England and condemned some of the doctrines formulated by the pope. They insisted on going back to the ancient part where the scripture is the final authority, an act that made them to incur the wrath of the papacy and in 1520s, many of the reformers were murdered publicly and some banished. "In 1530, Cranmer compiled documents arguing that, historically, the King of England had imperial power similar to that of the Holy Roman Emperors and was therefore not subject to the Pope's jurisdiction" (Ridley 1962: 25-33).

Thus, Cranmer grew in favour with King Henry VIII, and the king appointed him into various positions. "First he was in 1532, appointed a resident ambassador at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and was sent to Germany to learn more about Lutheranism" (MacCulloch 1996: 60). This appointment undoubtedly exposed Cranmer to the outside world and broadened his view about the reformation. For instance, he travelled with the emperor throughout his realm. It was at the Lutheran city of Nuremberg that Cranmer first saw the effects of the Reformation; and came under the influence of his new friends Andreas Osiander the champion of the Nuremberg reforms. Hall, Basil (1993: 19) remarked that

During that July Cranmer took the surprising action of marrying Margarete, the niece of Osiander's wife. This was all the more

remarkable given that the marriage required him to set aside his priestly vow of celibacy. He did not take her as his mistress, as was the prevailing custom with priests for whom celibacy was too rigorous. Scholars note that Cranmer had moved, however moderately at this stage, into identifying with certain Lutheran principles.

This was a milestone in the sense that his priestly vow of celibacy which the reformers believed should not be a condition for ordination was set aside. It was a demonstration of his desire for a reform.

Appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury (1532-1534)

Sequel to the demise of William Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1532 Cranmer was elevated to the paramount of office in the English church, even though he was junior to most of his colleagues and had not held major offices before. Cranmer accepted the offer because he saw it as a leeway to bring about the desired reformation. Moreover, his appointment is not unconnected to his belief in the royal supremacy. According to MacCulloch (1996: 637-638)

Henry personally financed the papal bulls necessary for Cranmer's promotion to Canterbury. The bulls were easily acquired because the papal nuncio was under orders from Rome to please the English in an effort to prevent a final breach. The bulls arrived around 26 March 1533 and Cranmer was consecrated as archbishop on 30 March in St. Stephen's Chapel.

It was therefore, not surprise that Cranmer's first function in office was the validation of the secret marriage between Henry and Anne. He considered solving the Crown's family problem which by extension was British problem to be a priority. Hence he was not bothered about the excommunication treat issued by Pope Clement VII who was annoyed with Henry's divorce. Cranmer's action surprised Dowling, who remarked "It is difficult to assess how Cranmer's theological views had evolved since his Cambridge days" (Dowling 1993: 102)

Archbishop Cranmer and the English reformation

The fact that from the time the Act of Supremacy was enacted, English Church gained independence from Roman Bishop and has preserved its autonomy from papal power; was the reason it was presumed that Cranmer's appointment as the Archbishop of Canterbury will guarantee his desired reforms. Ironically, King

Henry's response to Cranmer's reform works was somewhat disappointing; he severely curtailed Cranmer's radicalism; debarred him from implementing major reforms. Indeed, Henry VIII was a man of quirk character; wavering between two opinions 'Protestantism and Roman Catholicism'.

Obviously, Henry VIII and Cranmer had different concepts about an independent church which they relentlessly worked for. While Cranmer wanted a change in administration, doctrine and liturgy Henry wanted change only in the administration. As Shelley puts it, Henry wanted an English Catholic Church instead of a Roman Catholic Church or Catholicism without pope. Therefore, even after his break from Rome, He was betwixt and between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism (Shelley 1992). This inhibited the envisaged change in England despite the growing disaffection with the Papacy.

What contrast the head of the Roman Church and the head of the English Church in the medieval period could be that, one was ordained and the other was not, or better still one was a celibate and the other a polygamist. In comparison the two cherished religious ceremonies but were afraid of the scriptures. Both of them were heads of both secular and ecclesiastical states and equally had strong drive for power and did murdered whosoever that disregarded their authority. The two men also detested reformation because it threatened their self acclaimed status.

Undoubtedly, the power struggles between religious conservatives and reformers was also a contributing factor to the delay experienced in the English reformation. It was not until the reign of Edward that Cranmer was able to establish major reforms which have greatly impacted on the church. Some of his impact is discussed below.

Impact on Political Structure of the English Church

Cranmer was able to separate the Catholic Church in England from the Catholic Church in Rome. Anxious to preserve the autonomy of the English Church, the parliament gave its backing by proclaiming "The Act of Supremacy" in 1534, which recognised not the pope but the king of England as the supreme head of the English Church on earth; thus, fortifying its independence till date. By implication, religious appointments in England were no longer confirmed by the pope but by the British Monarch. Papal political authority was repudiated in England and his bulls were nullified. He could no longer enthrone or dethrone a

prince in Europe as his imperial power diminished. Rome was no longer relevant to congregation in the English church. The Archbishop of Canterbury became the principal religious minister in England with his see in Lambeth from where religious doctrines and liturgy were formulated.

Thenceforth, England regained its economy control from Rome and taxes were no longer paid to Rome. Monastery which was a money venture for Rome was closed and its land and property were taken over by the English government. Some of the land and property were sold while some were kept for government use. This is not surprise because right from the time of John Wycliffe, reformers has accused the pope of disguising himself using religion to amass wealth in the foreign lands.

Cranmer's success in the establishing a national church that is independent of the Catholic Church in Rome, paved way for other nations that could not have ordinarily fought for independence from papal authority. They took advantage of the weakening papal influence in Europe, to establish their ecclesiastical autonomy. Each nation prefixed its name to its own church, just as it was before Constantine's interference with the church affairs. There were Church of Antioch; Galatians' Church, Church of Corinth etc. Hence, Catholic Church in Rome prefixed Rome to its national church "Roman Catholic Church", while in England the English Church affixed England to its name "Church of England".

Sequel to subsequent reforms occasioned by growth and development of the church, "The Act of Supremacy" which read: "The King's majesty justly and rightly is and ought to be and shall be reputed the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England called *Anglicana Ecclesia*" (Shelley 266); has been watered down so that other nations would be incorporated.

Thus, the Church of England and all other churches that are in communion with the see of Canterbury do not recognise any one person as the sole head of the church, not even the Archbishop of Canterbury. Hence, neither the English Monarch nor the Archbishop of Canterbury have ecclesiastical jurisdiction outside England. They have no constitutional role in Anglican churches in other parts of the world. "The Anglican Episcopal family comprises tens of millions Christians who are members of 46 different Churches. These make up 40 member churches (also called provinces) and six other national or local churches known as *Extra Provincials*, spread across the globe" (Anglican Church

Membership). None of these Churches has authority over any other, no central administration: no Pope, no Patriarch, and no overall director. There is no Parliament or Congress'. There is a structure for doctrinal centralization, but in the absence of central authority the doctrine is followed by consensus and not by mandate. There is a set of beliefs, and if a church holds those beliefs and meets certain other requirements, it is welcome to be in the Anglican Communion. This is distinctiveness of Anglicanism.

(Anglican Domain (<http://www.anglican.org/church/NoCentral.html>)).

In England where the Crown has a function, his duty in the Church is practically limited to the appointment of bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, and even this role is limited, as the Church presents the government with a shortlist of candidates to choose from. This process is accomplished through collaboration with and the consent of ecclesial representatives. (<http://www.anglican.org/church/NoCentral.html>).

Anglicanism

To say that Anglicanism is one of the greatest legacies Thomas Cranmer bequeath to the contemporary church is to state the obvious. Anglicanism is the term used to express the unique Anglican principles and practices which includes its doctrine, religious belief, faith, system, and structures. The term at its broadest "includes those who have accepted the work of the English Reformation as embodied in the Church of England or Churches which in other countries have adhered substantially, to its doctrines, its organization, and its liturgy". According to Robert Allen (2017), "Anglican worship is organized and ritualistic... Key elements of Anglican worship include prayer, Bible readings, music, a homily and the Eucharist". It would not be exaggeration to say that Anglican worship is the centre of Anglican life. Its liturgical worship is expressed in The Book of Common Prayer.

The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) is Archbishop Cranmer's work which was written in English and in June 1549. It became the only legal form of worship in the land as a result of the 1st Act of Uniformity. The Book of Common Prayer contained the order of worship for various services. It has played a major role in shaping the spirituality of the Anglican Church and has remained relevant to Anglican worshipers all over the. Anglican Domain (www.anglican) described BCP as a liturgy of the Bible. Though, "It was radically revised in 1552, with subsequent minor revisions in 1559, 1604, and 1662. The prayer book of 1662,

with minor changes, has continued as the standard liturgy of most Anglican churches of the British Commonwealth” (**Encyclopedia Britannica**). The Church of Nigeria’s version of the Book of Common Prayer was first published in 1996 while its revised edition was published in 2007. This versions hold to the essential, historic elements of the prayer book but incorporate local idioms.

Article of faith

Sequel to the reformers activities in the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church was engulfed in doctrinal and theological crisis. It was therefore, important to state publicly the faith Anglican Church. To this end Cranmer in 1553, produced an “Article of Faith” called Article Forty-two, which is the summary of Anglican doctrine. The Articles recalled the ancient Christian doctrine of the sufficiency and primacy of the scripture. Indeed, Crammer’s endeavour was to a large extent a journey back to the Scriptures. The word of God is above the church, was the principle laid by Cranmer, and in that principle consisted of the whole Reformation (Aubigne, 1962 437). So the faith of Anglicanism is to be found in the Bible, and the prayer book. According to (Elton),

The forty-two Article of (1553) was a set of doctrinal formulas defining the dogmatic position of the Church of England on current religious controversies. All clergy, schoolmasters, and degree candidates in the universities were compelled to subscribe to the articles, which were later reduced to 39 and officially accepted by the Anglican Church.

Anglicans understand the Old and New Testaments as “containing all things necessary for salvation” and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith. Other structures and heritage listed by the Encyclopaedia include the Apostles Creed as the baptismal symbol, the Nicene creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith, the Holy Eucharist as the central worship, the Book of common prayer as the order of worship, and the 39 Articles of faith of which Article VI on the sufficiency of the scripture has been the most influential.

The Article did not repose much confidence on any of the councils; rather, it gives credence to the Holy Scripture”. Article XXI (Of the Authority of the General Councils of the Church of England) quips that:

General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of princes. And when they gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an

assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and word of God,) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.

This Article has been the main basic of the exegesis and hermeneutics of the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) which has principally informed her stand on the lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) -Homosexual-divide in the Anglican Communion worldwide. Indeed the.

Cranmer's Impact on Church Doctrine

Doctrine refers to the beliefs and teachings of the church. From the time of the apostles the church had developed some doctrines from the scripture, which the apostles and church fathers believed and taught with zeal and passion. However, at certain point in history some doctrines not in accordance with Scripture crept into the church. Cranmer made profound effort to determine the true doctrine of the church using Scripture as a rule. "Throughout his life Cranmer was deeply interested in the health of the religious community in England, and held the conviction that Scripture was the basis of all education. He incorporated the importance of Scripture into all of his writing" (Sophia Ridgeway www.christianmovementsproject.com.)

Thus, purgatory, indulgence, penance, and images, veneration of saints and auricular confession, altars and shrines were all removed from churches; the doctrinal changes are contained in Cranmer's Forty Two Christian Articles of religion. Corroborating this fact Hanks (1992: 125) wrote, "They (39 Articles) emphasised the authority of Scripture and justification by faith, and excluded the doctrine of transubstantiation". He added that "what was not taught in the scriptures, such as pilgrimage, offering of money or candle to images and saying prayers over beads, was avoided; they also warned against unnecessary holy days and the abuse of images and relics...".

The imposition of celibacy on the ordained as a condition for ordination was also removed. "Cranmer adopted Bucer's draft and created three services for commissioning a deacon, a priest, and a bishop" (Ayris 2005: 97-99). Cranmer's stand on celibacy is expressed in Article of Religion thus, "Bishops, Priest, and Deacons, are not commanded by God's Law, either to vow to the estate of single

life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore, it is lawful for them, as for all other Christian people, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness" (Article XXXII).

Impact on Local Vernacular

Before the reformation, the official language of the church was Latin. No other language was used for Mass even in the foreign countries where Latin was not known. Rome permitted the translation of the Bible to Latin alone. Whoever that wants to read the Bible must learn Latin language. English was one of the local vernaculars in the Roman Empire. Cranmer introduced the use of English language in Christian worship 1538. Subsequently, Cranmer developed an English worship book. He published a *litany* in English 1545, as a prelude towards an English language prayer book.

The use of local vernacular in church services was more effective than Latin in communicating the gospel to the local people; it made church services meaningful to the English worshipers. Therefore, the use of English language was made compulsory on 9 July 1549. This triggered a series of protests in Devon and Cornwall where the English language was not yet in common usage (Now known as prayer book rebellion) (Hanks 1992).

In 1553, King Edward enforced the use of English language as enshrined in Cranmer's 42 Articles of 1552, which states that: "It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive church to have public prayer in the church or to minister the sacraments, in the tongue not understood by the people" (Article XXIV). This Esperanto provided for the English speaking people a cohesion. When the English missionaries moved to foreign lands for mission, they taught the converts in English. Church ceremonies and services were rendered in English; this helped to spread the use of English language in the world. For instance in Anglophone West Africa, English language became the official language of the church and by extension, the government. The effort of the Church of Rome to maintain Latin as official church language was dashed, following the shattering of the Western Europe and the disintegration of the Catholic Church in the late Middle Ages.

Challenges

It has been five centuries after the Reformation and the church seems not to have learnt its lessons from the past mistakes. Hence, issues much worse than the ones that prompted reformation in Europe are prevalent in the church today and if nothing is done the condition of the church might degenerate. For instance, in Europe and America there are several instances of ordained men and women being involved in homosexuality and lesbianism. In 2003 Gene Robison a homosexual priest was elected bishop in Episcopal Church, USA, under the watch of Archbishop of Canterbury Rollin Williams who saw nothing wrong in it. Besides, England and other European countries in their slumber voted in favour of same sex marriage (Bates, 2003). It would not be exaggeration to say that the acceptance of gay by the church betrays Cranmer's, assiduity in establishing Anglicanism which is embedded on the supremacy of the scripture.

Certainly, this deviation from biblical truth has divided the Anglican Communion. For instance, Episcopal Conservatives have left the church and formed a revival church, the "Anglican church in North America" while the Africans and the global south has abandoned Lambeth Conference for GAFON in search for Biblical Truth. It is amazing how the church is driven away from its fundamental principles.

The problem is that biblical truth is no longer taken seriously. Hence, the gospel is being merchandised, and prayers commercialised in Nigeria and some other places in the globe. The world is looking for people who understand the word of God, to show the way out of this theological quagmire. The Anglicans church in Nigeria took the responsibility to lead the way out of this theological quagmire.

Interestingly, some Pentecostals in Nigeria who should align themselves with GAFCON to salvage the church are busy criticising Anglican liturgy. For instance, Gbile Akani expressed his dissatisfaction with Anglican worship when he said, "This day I hear people praying from books. Are we returning to Anglicanism where they use the Common Book of Prayers?" (Living Seed p. 16). What is more worrisome is that even among the Anglican clergy who should know the principles of Anglicanism, only very few are acquainted with Crammer and his work. Hence, some Anglicans historical heritage is fast being eroded. In their ignorant they try to jettison the use of the Book of Common Prayers in church services. They complain that it is boring; others claim it is difficult to understand. Archdeacon Bello (2018: 32), lamented the situation thus: "It is painful to note that some of our priest in Anglican Church and some other

important fathers of church were condemning our rich liturgical heritage". It is a pity that the priests, who should know, are ignorant about Anglicanism. Bello identified some of the problems that are militating against Anglican liturgical heritage to include: "Conceptualization, socialism, syncretism, modernization and multiple Pentecostalism has eroded into the mode of liturgical worship in the churches". Bello concluded that:

The way in which we are doing our liturgical worship today is nothing to write home about. It is either adulterated, mixed with other denomination liturgy or most of us our liturgical worship is now either corrupted or corroded with others than our own.

The problem is a global phenomenon that needs urgent attention; it began from the middle of last century when Western society became increasingly secular in nature. Since then Christian values and heritages are fast being eroded as the church is forsaking the clear teaching of the Bible and conforming to the prevailing culture. "This became particularly evident with sexual ethics, and so at the Lambeth Conference in 1998, the worldwide assembly of bishops reaffirmed the Bible's teaching on sex" (GAFCON 2018)

Recommendation

Therefore, this work recommends that a memorial lecture should be held annually in the honour of Archbishop Cranmer. Such lecture will educate people on Crammer's role and impact in Reformation, thereby spurring them to appreciate him.

Crammer's notion about the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary for salvation, through which humanity has been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit should be held unto tententiously.

Only those who are trained and certificated should be licensed to preach, this will help to curtail heresy, while the Bible should be read, preached, taught in the peoples' native language for better understanding.

The Thirty-nine Articles which contains the true doctrine of the Church and which is agreeing with God's Word and as authoritative for Anglicans today should be aptly taught to members to enhance their knowledge. Besides, Anglican sacramental and liturgical heritage which is an expression of the

gospel, should be uphold as contained in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer as a true and authoritative standard of worship and prayer, to be translated and locally adapted for each culture as has been re-emphasized by GAFCON.

Summary/Conclusion

Thy study investigated the causes and effects of reformation in the Catholic Church with special interest on the Catholic Church in England. It highlighted the sacrifices made by Cranmer to reform the church in England. As a believer in the supremacy of the scripture, he was convinced that everything must be tested by Scripture. He was not going to let any stone unturned; hence, he repudiated all the Romanist doctrines which he found to be incongruous with the scripture.

His doggedness is highly commended and his victory is victory for all those who long and cherished a return to Biblical Christianity. Though he is dead, his longevity is on the survival of his work

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