



THE ANGLICAN ROAD

The Bible as the Word of God:

...the readers of the Old [and New] Testament lessons are instructed to conclude their readings with: "The Word of the Lord". Probably to many people this suggests that the Anglicans are fundamentalists who believe that the words of the Bible are direct oracles of God. [Some Anglicans in the 19th century supported this stance, i.e. Dean Burgon]... we can no longer follow him...his claim for the inerrancy of Scripture was never made by the Church of England even at the time of Reformation...[see Book of Common Prayer, Thirty Nine Articles, Articles II, VI, VII for a Reformation period Anglican view].

There is a more modern reason for thinking that the Anglican Churches do not require us to hold that the Bible is the word of God in a literalist sense. The historical-critical method [of appraisal] has shown that however much the Bible may contain the word of God in the sense that it speaks of Jesus Christ, it is ...a very human product, the work of

many human authors over a period of a thousand years or more, and all of them conditioned by the cultural assumptions of their age. Biblical criticism has further shown that the Bible is a highly pluralistic work, containing the views and perspectives of many different writers, views that were shaped by the peculiar situations in which they were written. In sum, the Word of God is conveyed to us through the words of human beings.

This is something we should gladly embrace, for it is wholly analogous to the doctrine of incarnation. The eternal Word of the Father became incarnate as a first century Jew, with all his limitations...All the way through, with the Bible as with all other means God uses for our salvation, the same principle is at work: God in his wondrous condescension stoops to use human and earthly means to accomplish his saving purpose. (Stephen Sykes, 1998, *The Study of Anglicanism*, pp. 87+)

The difference a "W" or "w" makes.

Word: divine reason; in Christian theology, the divine rational principle as epitomized by Jesus Christ

word: a meaningful sound or combination of sounds that is a unit of language or its representation in a text

BIBLE READING GUIDES

"Fill us each morning with your constant love, so that we may sing and be glad all our life." Psalm 90:14

New Canadian Bible Society pamphlets are available at the back of the church: **Daily Bible Reading Guide 2010, Where to look in the Bible and Through the Bible in a year.** (Natural Church Development Team)