

Session Two: From the Anglican Reformers to the Caroline Divines

The Caroline Divines

- The Anglican divines of the 17th cent., esp. when considered as exponents of High Church principles. The term is not ordinarily restricted (as the word would imply) to those who wrote esp. or solely during the reigns of Charles I (1625–49) and Charles II (1660–85), but it is taken to include like-minded earlier figures such as Bp. Lancelot Andrewes (d. 1626).
- Usually means Andrewes, Laud, Taylor, Cosin, Nicholas Ferrar and other high church English clergymen. It certainly includes the Anglican poet-priests Donne and Herbert; however, it ordinarily excludes like-minded 17th century laymen such as Izaak Walton and Sir Thomas Browne.
- Ordinarily, excludes the Puritans who are sometimes referred to as the Puritan Divines.

Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667)

- During a time of spiritual and political crisis, he stressed temperance, order, moderation
- His piety was directly related to ethical conduct and a self-disciplined life
- According to Urban T. Holmes, *Holy Living and Holy Dying* are “expositions of the growth toward perfection, advocating habitual recollection upon the Word, and frequent, short prayer. Dull as it undoubtedly is, this expresses the English concern with the question of how one lives the ordinary, routine Christian life” (*A History of Christian Spirituality*, 117).

Taylor on Prayer

“Prayer is the peace of our spirit...the stillness of our thoughts...the evenness of recollection...the seat of meditation...the rest of our cares...and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind...of untroubled thoughts: it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness” (352 in *Selected Works*; *Whole Works*, 638)

From Taylor’s “Agenda, or Things to be Done”

- As one dresses: “let there be ejaculations fitted to the several actions of dressing.” One should pray to be “clothed with righteousness” so that religion may be not merely “the garment” of one’s soul, but also the “fringes to every of your actions” throughout the day, so that “something of Religion appear in everyone of them besides the innocence of them all” (*Selected Works*, 419).
- Recollection is to be “constant and regular” (*Selected Works*, 466).

More on Recollection from the “Agenda”

- The important thing is that “you recollect yourself and send your heart up to God with some holy and short ejaculation”; that “your heart retire with some

- holy thoughts and sober recollections, lest your mind be seized upon and carried off from better things” (Selected, 422).
- “Let Him be in all your discourses...and when you cannot speak of Him, be sure you forget not to think of Him” (Selected, 423).

Taylor on Recollection in Trouble

“If, in our fairest flowers, we spy a locust, or feel the uneasiness of a sackcloth under our fine linen, or our purple tied with an uneven and a rude cord; any little trouble, but to correct our wildnesses, though it be but a death’s head served up at our feasts, it will make our tables fuller of health and freer from snare, it will allay our spirits, making them to retire from the weakness of dispersion, to the union and strength of a sober recollection” (Whole Works, 102.).

Taylor on Recollection in Trouble as *Imitatio Christi*

“Those affections, which dwell in sadness, and are married to grief, and lie at the foot of the cross, and trace the sad steps of Jesus, have the wisdom of recollection, the tempers of sobriety, and are the best imitations of Jesus, and securities against the levity of a dispersed and vain spirit” (Whole Works, 297).

Taylor Maintains that Recollection Produces Moral Advance

- “From the same fountain are apt to issue humility of spirit, apprehensions of the great distance and our great needs, our daily wants and hourly supplies, admiration of God’s unspeakable mercies: it is the cause of great modesty and decency in our actions; it helps to recollection of mind, and restrains the scatterings and looseness of wandering thoughts; it establishes the heart in good purposes” (Whole Works, 412).
- Recollection teaches the soul to dispatch temptation readily, with “a sigh and a sad thought, and a severe recollection, and a holy prayer” (Whole Works, 841).

Discussion of Passages from Taylor’s *Holy Living*

- “The first general instrument of Holy Living: Care of our Time“
- “The third general instrument of Holy Living: or the Practice of the Presence of God”
- “Several Manners of the Divine Presence”
- “Of Charity, or the Love of God”