

**ENGLISH CHURCH  
TEACHING ON FAITH  
LIFE AND ORDER**

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English church teaching on faith life and order by H. C. G. Moule & R. B. Girdlestone & T. W. Drury

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**H. C. G. MOULE & R. B. GIRDLESTONE & T. W. DRURY**

**ENGLISH CHURCH  
TEACHING ON FAITH  
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# English Church Teaching

on

Faith Life and Order

BY

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS manual is designed to aid students of our English Church system. It may also be found useful to clergymen and others who have to conduct classes on the History and Doctrines of our Church, and who desire to follow the lines laid down by our Reformers.

The need of some such manual has been widely felt, but it has not been easy to do exactly what was sought. Some of the topics touched upon are large and complicated, and brief utterances on them are liable to be misunderstood. The writers are conscious that in many respects they have fallen short of their own ideal, and that they may not have fulfilled the expectations and requirements of those whose interests they have at heart. But they have sought to face the varied aspects of this subject fairly, if not fully, and clearly, if not completely.

Though they have worked in general harmony, each writer is answerable only for his own portion of the manual. In discussing some branches of enquiry there has been an almost necessary overlapping, and perhaps some slight

difference of treatment; but this is not altogether a disadvantage.

The First Part, on Faith, is by CANON GIRDLESTONE, late Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford; the Second, on Life, is by the Right Rev. H. C. G. Moule, D.D., Lord Bishop of Durham; the Third, on Order, is by the Right Rev. T. W. DRURY, Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man. The Notes on Texts and the Analytical Index are by CANON GIRDLESTONE, to whom the general editorship has also been entrusted.

May the great Shepherd of the sheep grant His blessing on this effort to set forth the true position and teaching of our beloved Church. May He keep us steadfast in the Apostolic Faith, true to the Christlike Life, and loyal to the Primitive Order handed down to us from ancient times, and re-affirmed by the great Churchmen of the Sixteenth Century.

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#### NOTE ON THE SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH EDITIONS.

The writers are grateful for the general approval given to this work, and for the criticisms it has received. Errors and slips have been carefully corrected throughout.

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By the Rev. Canon Girdlestone, late Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

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## PART I

### THE FAITH OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE RULE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

###### § 1. *The Original Documents of the Faith.*

THE truths which Christians are called upon to believe may be ascertained from various sources, *e.g.* from the lips of parents and teachers, or from catechisms, manuals, and formularies of Churches; but sooner or later we are driven back to that collection of ancient and sacred Books which we call the New Testament. These Books, together with the Old Testament, which they everywhere acknowledge as authoritative and inspired, are the materials from which Christian truth must be drawn. They may be classified thus:—

The *Gospels* record the life and teaching of Him Whom all Christians claim and submit to as their Lord and Saviour.

The *Acts* gives the genesis of the primitive apostolic Church, and sketches the formation of daughter communities in various parts of the Roman Empire.

The *Epistles* show the bearing of the work of Christ on the inner and outer life of the individual Christian.

The *Apocalypse* gathers together the threads of unfulfilled prophecy, and in a series of visions portrays the future of the Church, the triumph of Christ over all evil, and the accomplishment of God's purpose in man.

§ 2. *The Authority on which we receive the New Testament.*

This is of various kinds and degrees. It may be the voice of parents, teachers, and ministers, whom we naturally trust. It may be the dogmatic utterances of the Church in which we have been brought up, or of the ancient and (comparatively speaking) universal Church from which all modern communities inherit most of their religious ideas. It may be an internal conviction produced by God's Spirit and developed by experience. If, however, none of these satisfy us, we have to go into literary evidence. We then find, on the conjoint testimony of MSS., versions, quotations, and catalogues, together with the facts of Church History and the results of research, that the Books which make up the New Testament are traceable to the Apostolic Age, that we have adequate reason for believing that they were written by the men whose names they bear, and that their utterances may therefore be accepted as absolutely true and of the highest authority.

§ 3. *Did the Church give us the Bible?*

It is sometimes said that the Church gave us the Bible. This is true or not true according to the sense we attach to the words. The Bible contains the Old Testament as well as the New. We are indebted, under God, to Moses and the prophets for the Old Testament, and we receive it because our Lord and His apostles put their seal upon it as authoritative and inspired. The case of the New Testament is different. The books have been handed down by Christians from generation to generation. They have been preserved in libraries and monasteries, have been read in Churches, and have been translated and expounded with more or less assiduity and faithfulness through the ages. In this sense the Church of the Past has "given" us (*i.e.* has preserved and handed down to us) the Bible which it had received from the apostles and prophets of Christ.

But the expression is sometimes used as if it signified that