

Rooted Disciples
Session 7

‘The Household of Faith (2)’

Article XXIII and XXIV

The following are Rev Dr Andrew Atherstone’s notes for his students, which in turn are helped by W.H. Griffiths ‘The Principles of Theology.’

Article 23: Of Ministering in the Congregation

It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

- Concerning public office
 - ‘public preaching’, ‘in the congregation’
 - Not concerning private preaching and ministry
- Priorities in ministry
 - Preaching and sacraments (compare Article 19)
 - For more on Anglican priorities in ministry, see BCP ordinal
- Commissioned by the church
 - About public external commissioning by the church, not about internal spiritual gifts from God (which are assumed)
 - ‘called’ = general summons to ministry
 - ‘sent’ = commission to a particular place
 - But, NB, no mention of bishops
- Against the Anabaptists
 - Some Anabaptists denied need of public authority and recognition, since divine illumination is sufficient
 - But, the Article does not bring the Bible to bear against them on this point
- ‘The Lord’s vineyard’
 - See Parable of the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16)
 - A reminder that the church commissions, but it is the Lord’s work

Article 24: Of Speaking in the Congregation in Such a Tongue as the People Understandeth

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 a tongue not understood of the people.

- Article of 1553 was framed more positively: *‘It is most seemly and most agreeable to the Word of God, that in the congregation nothing be openly read or spoken in a tongue unknown to the people. The which thing Saint Paul did forbid, unless some were present that should declare the same.’*
- Changed in 1563 – probably in response to the Council of Trent in September 1562 which anathematized those who pleaded for the mass in the vulgar tongue
- ‘Public prayer’
 - Private prayers are a private matter
 - Medieval custom of using Latin for public worship
- Why denounced?
 - Against the Bible
 - see 1 Corinthians 14:14-17
 - see Paul’s emphasis on edification (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26)
 - Against primitive custom
 - A new phrase added in 1563
- ‘Not understood’
 - Change from ‘unknown’ (*ignota*, 1553) to ‘not understood’ (*non intellecta*, 1563)
 - Not about excluding foreign languages, but about understanding
 - May even apply to use of inaudible English
 - Notice BCP emphasis on ‘a loud voice’
 - Unlike medieval priestly whispers during the mass.