

## JEREMY TAYLOR'S MERELY SPIRITUAL POWER

### An Examination of Canon Law in *Ductor Dubitantium* 1660

CANON REGINALD ASKEW  
Dean of King's College, London

A paper delivered to the Ecclesiastical Law Society  
at Ripon on 24 April 1993

Jeremy Taylor is remembered not as a canonist but as a Caroline divine. He was not a lawyer; he is a saint. (The Alternative Service Book 1980 in its Calendar of Lesser Festivals and Commemorations for 13 August brings into the open what reticent informality never thought to advertise, the good news that the heroes of the Church of England are saints.) At Taylor's funeral in Dromore in 1667 his friend George Rust said, 'His skill was great, both in the Civil and Canon law, and casuistical Divinity.' But he added this halo: 'I believe he spent the greatest part of his time in Heaven.'<sup>1</sup>

Neglect of English divinity by English lawyers has been contrasted with an admirable tradition among Catholics for relating theology to law.<sup>2</sup> But the seventeenth-century struggle of the national Church included an ambition to cure Roman casuistry. It was attempted in difficult years for the Church of England. At Christmas 1655 John Evelyn wrote in his *Diary*:

'This being the last day, after which Cromwell's proclamation was to take place that none of the Church of England should dare either to preach or administer sacraments, teach schoole, and cetera, on paine of imprisonment or exile. So was this the mournfullest day that in my life I had scene, or the Church of England herselfe since the Reformation; to the greate rejoicing of both Papist and Presbyter.'<sup>3</sup>

About his spiritual director he writes in 1657:

'Dr Taylor shew'd me his MSS. of Cases of Conscience, or *Ducto Dubitantium*, now fitted for the presse.'<sup>4</sup> And a year later:  
'There was now a collection for persecuted and sequester'd Ministers of the Church of England, whereof divers are in prison. A sad day! The Church now in dens and caves of the earth.'<sup>5</sup>

Jeremy Taylor, in prison three times, at last got *Ductor Dubitantium* published in early June 1660, printed in two folio volumes and presented to Charles II, merry, restored, whose heart was not in moral theology.

The reasons for reforming Roman Catholic casuistry were stated right away. Taylor objected to:

'partialities in determining matters and questions of justice . . . as if . . . there were *two sorts* of justice, the one for Seculars and the other for Church-men . . . nothing of this is fitted to my intention, which is only to make it evident that it was necessary that Cases of Conscience should be written over a-new, and established upon better principles, and proceed in more sober and satisfying methods.'<sup>6</sup>

- 
1. *The Whole Works of Jer. Taylor* edited by Reginald Heber, revised by Chas. Page Eden (London 1854), vol I, p cccxxv.
  2. Norman Doe, 'Towards a Critique of the Role of Theology in English Ecclesiastical and Canon Law' (1992) 2 *Ecc LJ* 328-346.
  3. *Diary of John Evelyn FRS*, 25 December 1655.
  4. *Ibid.*, 25 March 1657.
  5. *Ibid.*, 23 March 1658.
  6. *Taylor Works* vol IX, p xi.

What are better than Erastian principles, the supremacy of the civil magistrate in ecclesiastical as well as secular causes, and the identity and common boundaries of Church and State? Taylor does not raise these for the first time. They were already discussed and defended by Richard Hooker in *Ecclesiastical Polity*.<sup>7</sup> The satisfying method he hoped to use was simplification:

'What God had made plain, Men have intricated, and the easie commandment is wrapped up in uneasie learning . . . the very title of canon law was *Concordantia Discordantiarum*, a tying of contradictions together in one string . . . So that there is a wood before your doors, and a labyrinth within the wood, and locks and bars to every door within that labyrinth, and after all we are like to meet with Unskilful guides.'<sup>8</sup>

*Ductor Dubitantium* is divided into four books: Conscience; Natural and Divine Law; Civil and Ecclesiastical (and Domestic) Law; Freedom and Morality. It is in chapter IV of Book III that Taylor, under twenty rules, fastens upon 'the merely spiritual' power of the Church.<sup>9</sup> Again and again he insists that 'Religion is no pretence to Regalities':<sup>10</sup>

'Thus the Church hath power to command us to be devout in our prayers, to be charitable to our Brother, to forgive our enemy, to be heartily reconcil'd to him, to instruct the ignorant, to follow holiness, and to do justice, and to be at peace with all Men.'<sup>11</sup>

But:

'the Church makes no absolute laws; she makes them for good ends, and beyond that she hath no authority: her legislative is *wholly a ministry of grace* and godliness, not of Empire and dominion. For the difference is this, Civil laws oblige in publick and in private, for reason and for Empire, when the cause ceases and when it remains, when the breach is scandalous and when it is not scandalous: but the Canons of the Church oblige only for their reason and religion, for edification and for charity, when the thing is useful to others or good in it self; but the authority it self being wholly for these purposes, is a ministry of religion, but hath in it nothing of Empire, and therefore does not oblige for it self and by it self, but for the doing good, and for the avoiding evil.'<sup>12</sup>

Because religion cannot be forced, the admonition in 1 Timothy 3:3 that a bishop must be no striker is interpreted by Taylor to mean that he bears no arms, has no power of the sword, but governs 'by arguments and reason, by fear and hope, by preaching'<sup>13</sup>:

'There is an Empire in preaching . . . Commanding in the Name of God . . . some things are so clear and obvious, so necessary and confess'd that he who neglects them is condemn'd by himself . . . The Bishop can declare him to be out of the way of salvation, and unworthy to receive the holy mysteries. This is our coercion.'<sup>14</sup>

7. 1594. Note, however, that Bk VIII did not appear until 1648.

8. Taylor *Works* vol IX, pp xii ff.

9. *Ibid.*, vol X, p 264, Rule 1. For these twenty rules, see the end of this paper.

10. *Ibid.*, vol X, p 203.

11. *Ibid.*, vol X, p 282.

12. *Ibid.*, vol X, pp 393 ff (italics added).

13. *Ibid.*, vol X, pp 266 ff.

14. *Ibid.*, vol X, p 272.

Here is something which only works with those who want to be good Christians. 'It compels those who are willing to be compell'd, that is, it does not compel at all, and therefore is but improperly an act of Jurisdiction.'<sup>15</sup> Obedience to the bishop in his diocese is curiously defended. The prerogative of the bishop is to address our souls. But since the body is accessory to the soul, there are certain conditions when the bishop is entitled to rule our bodies as well as our souls, as when he requires us to come to church to hear the sermon he has prepared for our souls.

Ecclesiastical censure, which Taylor thinks took up at least half the room in Roman Catholic canon law, might be reduced to simple rules about excommunication, chief of which is that it does not make sense to excommunicate the Head of State, nor to inflict such a sentence upon anyone without the consent of the State. The difference between civil and canon law is demonstrated in cases of miscarriage of justice. The secular magistrate who condemns the innocent with the death sentence is not in the cheerful position of the unjust bishop whose sentence of excommunication 'is harsh as the noise of Peacocks, but does no harm'.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless Taylor allows that merely spiritual power may be considerable when the Church conscientiously resolves to suspend its own action, and to use its liberty in refusing, for example, to baptise or to communicate.

Grace he discovers in the balance between discipline and freedom. So the canon law which prescribes the Eucharist enshrines divine commandment and must be obeyed. But he recognises an admirable liturgical freedom in celebrating it, which he traces to the common sense and the genuine liberty of the apostolic community:

'for of all Men in the World they would least *put a snare upon the Disciples*, or tie fetters upon Christian liberty. But in Divine Commandments, and in what were the appointed ministries of grace, they were but the mouth of Christ and Ministers of his holy spirit; and in those things what they told the Churches is our law for ever.'<sup>17</sup>

He illustrates how this balance is working by researching the Lenten rule. It is typical of his casuistical method to observe how grace is both instructing, and forming, and setting at liberty a Christian conscience within the tradition of the practice of a community, reason and love co-operating.

The fast is an undeniable custom of the Church. As a divine command it can be described as an imitation of Christ. But 'under the Gospel we fast by the love of Vertue, and the choice of our own will, rather than by the coercion of any Law.'<sup>18</sup>

Continual reference to classical authors, pagan as well as Christian, is part of Taylor's satisfying method. Thus Prudentius is cited with approval:

*Laxus et liber modus abstinendi  
Ponitur cunctis; neque nos severus  
Terror impellit: suaquemque cogit  
Velle potestas.*<sup>19</sup>

15. Ibid, vol X, p 274.

16. Ibid, vol X, p 319.

17. Ibid, vol X, p 338.

18. Ibid, vol X, p 344.

19. 'A rule of fasting is laid upon everyone; but it is free and unrestrained. The motive is not straight-faced nervousness, but simply the willingness to do it.'

He consults the Fathers with learned thoroughness, finally observing that they were:

'very shie of receiving any load of ordinances and burdens to their consciences, as soon as ever they had entred into the liberty of Christians. They did all that reason and all that love would require: but if love was the parent of their observations, they would do them in love, and not in necessity, lest they should be again intangled in a yoke of bondage.'<sup>20</sup>

Then, with irony and antithesis, Taylor launches one of the most eloquent attacks on church legalism and insincerity ever written:

'It is enjoy'd not that we fast totally; but that we fast so: you *may* dine, if you will eat at the Merchant's hours, after twelve or one of the clock, but you may not eat *flesh*; you may eat sweetmeats, the most delicious fish, the Sturgeon and the Scarus, the Lamprey and the Oyster, the Eel and the Salmon, and all the delicacies of Nature, so you do not touch the fillets of a Veal, nor eat an Egge . . . Now what can be the meaning of this? For if fasting and abstinence be the thing required, this is nothing of it.'<sup>21</sup>

Whoever fasts must be simple and whole-hearted about it. Ten years earlier, in his famous preliminary essay for *Ductor Dubitantium*, he comments in *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living*:

'A man must not, when he mourns in his fast, be merry in his sport; weep at dinner, and laugh all day after; have a silence in his kitchen, and musick in his chamber; judge the stomach, and feast the other senses.'<sup>22</sup>

It was plain how swiftly scrupulosity and superstition could bring rules about fasting into ridicule. Nice avoidance of your meat knife to cut bread in Lent, or 'whether a Cook that dresses meat for sick persons may lawfully lick his fingers' are 'an exact parallel with the practice of the Pharisees in that folly which our Blessed Saviour reprov'd'.<sup>23</sup> The laws and customs of the Church he does not intend to turn upside down. But he has a keen sense of what is bogus, and what trespasses upon perfect liberty. 'They *exorcise* salt and water to cast out Devils; they give Verses out of the Psalms or Gospels to charm Witches; they ring the bells to appease tempests, and very many more such ridiculous devices.'<sup>24</sup>

Canon law and religious practices 'can become religion if they be the outward act of an *inward grace*; as giving money to the poor . . . made religion by the grace within'.<sup>25</sup> Taylor's advice is reasonable, learned, and charitable. His concluding judgment is that 'Ecclesiastical laws must serve religion, but *must never pretend to be religion*'.<sup>26</sup>

As for Establishment, Taylor argued that the Crown cannot be supreme in the realm unless it has all the power of government. The clergy are ministers of the Crown. Likewise lawyers and soldiers are ministers under the Crown. The royal governor has a special interest in religion because it is a great instrument of political happiness. (Taylor can trace that opinion back as far as Homer.<sup>27</sup>)

20. Taylor *Works*, vol X, p 350.

21. *Ibid*, vol X, p 385.

22. *Ibid*, vol III, p 168.

23. *Ibid*, vol X, p 387.

24. *Ibid*, vol X p 381.

25. *Ibid*, vol X, p 392.

26. *Ibid*, vol X p 390.

27. Homer *Odyssey*, Bk XIX, 109 ff: 'as the glory of some god-fearing king of a populous powerful race, by virtue of whose equity and good governance the masses prosper and the dark earth abounds with wheat or barley and the trees bow down with fruit' (trans T. E. Lawrence).

Powerful enough to become subversive, religious ideas are like a weapon the sovereign must hold onto if he is not to be knocked on the head. The citizenry, easily stirred up by superstition and false religion, needs wise civil government as a remedy. The disturbances of strange, new religions have to be restrained by law. As the pagan emperor was also *pontifex maximus*, so in Christendom the Crown is Christ's deputy exercising the kingship and dominion which is expressly denied to the ministers of religion. But royal power is for the defence of the Church and all the king's subjects in their service of God. 'The supreme judgment and the last resort is to the Prince, not to his Clerks.'<sup>28</sup> But 'as the Civil power hath authority in Ecclesiastical matters, so the spiritual power hath a share in the legislative.'<sup>29</sup>

Erastian theory was not modified by Taylor for the Commonwealth. When time was running out for Charles I, he gave his watch to his chaplain, Jeremy Taylor, who inscribed on its plain gold dial: *Nescitis horam*. He did not know the hour when monarchy would be restored, or if it would be, and the Church of England re-established. But he repudiated rebellion against government whatever its legitimacy, and however it might treat the Church. 'Religion thrives as well in a storm and in persecution as in sun-shine.'<sup>30</sup> It was plain to him that the Church could not defy the State. God had granted:

'another Oeconomy for religion, the way of the Cross, and the beaten way of humility, and the defensatives of mortification, and the guards of self-denial, and the provisions of contentedness, and the whole spiritual armor, and prayers and tears, and promises, and his holy spirit, and these are infinitely sufficient to do God's work, and they are infinitely the better way.'<sup>31</sup>

Contentedness in this recipe is not the same as cosiness or complacency. The important analysis of contentment occupies considerable space in *Holy Living*, and is clearly an English form of detachment or *apatheia*, marked specially by charming manners in the face of privation. In a rare autobiographical moment Jeremy Taylor revealed his predicament:

'I am fallen into the hands of publicans and Sequestrators, and they have taken all from me: what now? They have left me the Sun and Moon, fire and water, a loving Wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me, and I can still discourse; and unless I list they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit, and a good Conscience: they still have left me the Providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of Heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate, I can walk in my *Neighbour's* pleasant fields. . .'<sup>32</sup>

To summarise so far: Jeremy Taylor opposed the (Roman and Calvinist) claim that canon law can realistically be independent of, or superior to, the law of the land. The Crown's supremacy and its government of the Church was not a threat towards but a defence of Christianity. Harshly dealt with by the State,

28. Taylor *Works* vol X, p 261.

29. *Ibid*, vol X, p 295.

30. *Ibid*, vol X, p 249.

31. *Ibid*, vol X, p 250.

32. *Ibid*, vol III, p 91.

the Church must be content to be persecuted. But wise government might be expected when the supreme power listened to the spiritual advisers. The strong appeal of spiritual law, with its lack of coercion, and its emphasis upon grace, allowed the Church only the permission to refuse to act in some cases. Obedience was owed to bishops and to ecclesiastical canons; but common sense was needed to preserve liberty, especially in the face of legalism, scrupulosity of conscience, and superstition, when law could be confused with religion. The value of canon law was the underlying grace which initiated it. The importance of conscientious Christian judgment (which is the concern of Book I of *Ductor Dubitantium*, and not discussed here) is its power to set free the informed conscience from a casuistry tied either to Scripture alone, or to the authority of the *magisterium* and the weight of tradition. The casework of the Establishment is to be practical, reasonable, and full of grace.

Is this fine arrangement, a national Church utterly tied to its secular society, any longer workable? Can it be a *national* Church when the nation modifies its side of the bargain to include members of Parliament who are not members of the national Church, and when it re-defines, for example, its idea of family life in order not to distinguish partners living together from spouses? The formula of being bound to the secular authority, of being merely spiritual, and of being reasonably conscientious, offered the Church of England as an established Church certain advantages. Taylor never despaired of the secular society; he was not frightened by the prospect of an established Church shackled to the emperor Nero.

Denied to such a Church would be the opportunity of becoming a sect or a denomination, and of distancing itself from the problems and decisions of The City of Destruction. An established Church could not easily excuse itself when, for example, the determination of the civil magistrate promoted equality for women. To frame state law seeking equal opportunities for women, without inviting the state Church to review its own ideas and practice, would be difficult. To decry the established Church for yielding to secular fashions and to the spirit of the age in making up its mind to ordain women would be laughable, because a *national* Church can hardly be anything if it is not secular. If an established Church usually believes that the powers that be are ordained of God, it would always be asking itself why it should not be reflecting the law of the land exactly.

If the struggle in slow motion about the ordination of women represents an attempt to propel the national Church into a brand of Catholic dissent, from another direction, enthusiastic and Protestant, comes the thrust to restrict the membership of the established Church by admitting believers only to baptism. All parishioners and their offspring can claim the charitable ministry and protection of the Church. Aptly and mysteriously infant baptism represents the unself-conscious faith of being included in the establishment. Such a Church has to ask if it is ever at liberty to refuse baptism or to discourage anyone who asks for it. The sacrament is awash with the grace of God. The policy of a national Church would never be to pick and choose which citizens of the nation might be said to deserve it, but rather to show how irresistibly welcome it is to every parishioner in all sorts and conditions of citizenship.<sup>33</sup>

---

33. Cf General Synod Report *Senior Church Appointments* (GS 1019) (1992), Memorandum of Dissent by Frank Field MP. App VII, para 4, p 116.

The uneven and harmful marriage discipline of the Church of England raises in an acute form the question of whether the Church is in danger of dis-establishing itself by expecting so-called Convocation Regulations to be obeyed. Is it possible for those clergy and lay persons who find the principle of re-marriage for divorced people unacceptable to belong to a *national* Church when the nation has made up its mind differently about divorce and re-marriage? At a time when divorce was a shocking rarity, and the appearance in respectable society of a divorcée was decidedly daring, Convocations might get away with refusing to dispense from vows and not allowing marriage to those who had been divorced and whose former spouse was still alive. But the working party which published the report *Marriage in Church after Divorce*<sup>34</sup> has noticed the growing pastoral pressure to let these regulations fall into desuetude. The report also complains that it is difficult to set up a 'national code of practice'. But an established Church is entirely interested in national practice. At present, the practice of the nation is that divorce is common, but there remains 'in men and women a wonderful desire of marriage'.<sup>35</sup> Implied by that are these probable effects: re-marriage will be frequent; requests for such marriages to be held in church will grow.

Between a sect with an unyielding belief that re-marriage is adultery, and a national church which fulfils a civil duty to marry those who present themselves, it is possible to put Jeremy Taylor's understanding of canon law in its Erastian setting.

The advantage of the established Church is that it belongs to the secularised nation where divorce is reckoned to affect 40 per cent of marriages. Only 'for great reason and great necessity' has such a Church the liberty to avoid matrimonial failure and dismay by pretending that some regulations are in fact religion. Marriage discipline cannot have an antinomian air. But it should certainly be known to be charitable and easy. It must make sense, and not be a burden to families for whom a divorce has brought woe and acrimony. A sense of relief, of rescue, and of reliable compassion, which the Church exists to provide, ought to be well-known to those seeking re-marriage. In some cases the news of annulment might be an appropriate remedy. The delay and uncertainty which can attend that process are stumbling-blocks. The idea that a panel of investigators, or a tribunal, or an inquest is what a failed marriage deserves makes matters worse. What is needed is grace.

Instead of wishing to tidy itself up, the Church of England should notice its increasing difficulty to honour Convocation Regulations, and not regret it. It is being drawn into the realm of unhappy, unsuccessful marriages and family breakdown. Perhaps we should be more eager to be found among the deserted and the unrighteous. The secular citizen is entitled to a Register Office. But marriage has spiritual needs which the civil magistrate is not competent to satisfy. The generosity of the national Church and its hospitality are signs of the same grace of God which any marriage needs new every day.

Jeremy Taylor's theological description of grace can be teased out in his treatment of canon law. But there is a more direct route, in two sermons published with twenty-five others for the summer half-year in 1651, and dedicated to Richard Vaughan, Lord Carbery, after the death of his wife Frances at Golden Grove.<sup>36</sup>

34. (1992) 2 Ecc LJ 359-368.

35. Taylor, *The Marriage Ring* (*Works*, vol IV, p 208).

36. Taylor *Sermons* 14, 15 (*Works*, vol IV, pp 496-519).

Modern Christians suppose it to be their special task to re-think faith in a culture which is growing every day more remote from the world in which that faith began. But Taylor has some inkling of this problem. He can contrast the world he lived in with the amazing beginning of Christian faith, when he supposed 'multitudes overcome by grace, and passionate with zeal.'

'Piety was so universal that it might well be enjoyn'd by St Paul that if a Brother walked disorderly the Christians should avoid his company . . . they were not to endure so much as to eat with or to salute a disorderly Brother and ill-living Christian. But now, if we should observe this Canon of St Paul, and refuse to eat or to converse with a fornicator, or a drunkard, or a perjured person, or covetous we must also goe out of the Worlde: for a pious or a holy person is now as rare as a disorderly Christian was at first.'

For Taylor the remedy, since religion, if it does not grow better, grows much worse, is to grow in grace.<sup>37</sup> A ladder is provided: starting from the first signs of regret in a hardened sinner, 'when the grace of God begins to work . . . it makes the conscience nice and tender,' and continuing through habitual virtue, stewardship of time, mastery of passion, up to the point when 'virtue is like hunger and thirst, it must be satisfied or we die'.<sup>38</sup>

Taylor's description of a state of grace<sup>39</sup> and its growth is not sharply different from the 'acquist of virtue', the formation and development of a moral character, which is the purpose of holy living. But it is extremely lively and well observed. At the bottom of the ladder grace represents that 'first deliciousness of religion'. And since 'the work of heaven is not done by a flash of lightning', grace is next found in the cheerful practising of virtue until it is easy, rather than laboured, or driven 'like Pharaoh's chariots with the wheels off'.<sup>39</sup> It should feel like the irresistible tide coming up the beach.

He picks out the ability to listen to criticism meekly without making excuses, not murmuring, and not being jealous about reputation, as signs of grace growing. There comes a time when the virtuous will certainly know how to resist eating forbidden fruit, but may still think they might at least 'kiss the apples of paradise'. But small sins unravel holy purposes. Growth in grace is shown in greater resistance to temptation, and in the way it spreads through everything we do. Something is lacking in a grace which is 'apt for prayer and close-fisted in alms; sound in faith and dead in charity'.<sup>40</sup> A very good sign is not only the avoidance of deliberate sin but the ability not to be caught out by unpremeditated sin suddenly. These are signs of grace 'as eating and drinking are signs of life'. Grace is not to be looked for directly. Justice and charity are what are to be aimed at, in growing up to the contemplative love of God for himself.

The moral freedom of the virtuous is not impaired by the provision of rules and canons and exercises in holy living. Neither God's providence nor his grace diminish freedom and the autonomy of conscience. The problems which are raised by Helen Oppenheimer,<sup>41</sup> whether we can speak coherently about the way

37. 2 Peter 3: 18.

38. Taylor *Works*, vol IV, p 512.

39. *Ibid*, vol IV, p 502.

40. *Ibid*, vol IV, p 514.

41. Helen Oppenheimer, *Incarnation and Immanence* (1973) pp 48-50.

God acts upon individuals and at the same time claim freewill and moral responsibility, are not difficulties for Jeremy Taylor. He may be taunted for using a piece of divine jargon, 'grace', to describe what any humanist would recognise as strenuous and heroic moral seriousness; he might be attacked by innuendo for regrettable Pelagianism. His reply would be that anyone who wishes to make sense of grace and freedom must think about the work of love:

'For Himself is love; and it is the greatest thing we can give to God, for it will also give ourselves . . . and reaches at glory through the very heart of grace, without any other arms but those of Love.'<sup>42</sup>

## Jeremy Taylor *Ductor Dubitantium*, Bk III, Ch 4 Of the Powers of the Church

*Rule 1:* The whole power which Christ hath left in ordinary to his Church is merely spiritual.

*Rule 2:* The Church hath power to make laws and to give commands obliging the conscience, that is, tying the subjects to obedience under the penalty of committing sin, or of incurring the divine displeasure.

*Rule 3:* The Church hath power to make laws in all things of necessary duty by a direct power and a divine authority.

*Rule 4:* The Church hath power to make laws in such things which are helps and apt ministers and advantages of necessary duty.

*Rule 5:* When the canons or rules of ecclesiastical rulers are confirmed by the supreme civil power they oblige the conscience by a double obligation.

*Rule 6:* Kings and princes are by the ties of religion, not of power, obliged to keep the laws of the Church.

*Rule 7:* It is not lawful for the ecclesiastical power to excommunicate Christian princes, or the supreme civil power.

*Rule 8:* Ecclesiastical censures are to be inflicted by the consent and concurrence of the supreme civil power.

*Rule 9:* Excommunication inflicted upon a light cause binds externally but not internally; but if it be inflicted upon an unjust cause it binds not at all.

*Rule 10:* It is not lawful to communicate with those whom the Church hath by a just sentence excommunicated.

*Rule 11:* The canons of the apostles which are of order and external government do oblige the conscience by being accepted in several churches, not by their first establishment.

*Rule 12:* All those rituals which were taught to the Church by the apostles concerning ministers which were of divine institution, do oblige all Christendom to their observation.

---

42. Taylor, *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (Works, vol III, p 156).

*Rule 13:* In the rules which the apostles gave to their churches in things indifferent, the Church hath a liberty; but it is not to be used but for great reason and great necessity, and for the edification of the people committed to their charge.

*Rule 14:* The canons of the ancient general and provincial councils are then laws to the conscience when they are bound upon us by the authority of the respective governors of churches.

*Rule 15:* The laudable customs of the Catholic Church which are in present observation do oblige the conscience of all Christians.

*Rule 16:* The decrees and canons of the bishops of Rome oblige the conscience of none but his own subjects.

*Rule 17:* Ecclesiastical laws that are merely such cannot be universal and perpetual.

*Rule 18:* Ecclesiastical laws and circumstances of external observances do not bind the conscience beyond the cases of contempt and scandal.

*Rule 19:* Ecclesiastical laws must be charitable and easy, and when they are not, they oblige not.

*Rule 20:* Ecclesiastical laws must ever promote the service of God and the good of souls; but must never put a snare or stumbling block to consciences.

## **1994 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

SATURDAY 26 MARCH

CHURCH HOUSE WESTMINSTER  
(Harvey Goodwin Suite)

GUEST SPEAKER  
**THE RT. HON. THE LORD MACKAY OF CLASHFERN**  
**LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR**

Plus A PANEL TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS ON  
Blasphemy · Cost of Discipline · Can there be two integrities?

---

Probable Cost (including refreshments & lunch) c.£22

Details (0664-840262)

Booking Form to follow