

Charles Simeon 1759-1836 – bullet points / notes for speaker

- Cambridge was to the Evangelicals as Oxford was to the Oxford Movement
- Baptised as a baby into a wealthy family in Reading
- Etonian
- Cambridge 1779 - subject to the Test Act required all Oxbridge undergrads to receive communion at least 3 times in order to graduate
- Took this seriously – “The devil is as worthy as I to receive communion”
- Holy Week 1780 [Note to speaker: - READ EXTRACT FROM DIARY PAGE 129]
- After ordination in 1782 became incumbent of Holy Trinity Cambridge where he remained for the rest of his life
- His theology follows from his conversion experience that Holy Week - an acknowledgement of sin, a personal relationship with Jesus, an acceptance of salvation by faith

- The bible was preeminent - inspired word of God

- Although he believed that there were degrees of inspiration, he relegated other religious writings to a subordinate role.

- He would rather learn from the Gospels themselves than from what others wrote about the gospels.

- Some interesting teaching on baptism which I think is relevant to the Anglican Church today.

- He preached and wrote that he had no problem with the Prayer Book service and said [Note to speaker - QUOTE BOTTOM OF PAGE 131]

- He was not initially popular with his parishioners at Holy Trinity - he had not been appointed by the wardens for a start and the parishioners showed their displeasure by locking their pews to stop visitors coming in.

- When Simeon bought chairs to put in the aisles the parishioners threw them out.

- Students would throw stones through the windows of the church.
- He gradually won people round by the brilliance of his preaching.
- He wrote no weighty tomes of theology, but his sermons were collected together in 21 volumes called *Horae Homileticae*

Simeon's heart for personal ministry led to engaging Cambridge University students in new and innovative ways. For instance, on Friday evenings during term time, Simeon welcomed students into his rooms for an hour of questions and answers, mostly having to do with Scripture. He also taught an informal Sunday night preaching class that profoundly influenced generations of future Bible teachers. With these Friday night conversations, he was the first person to teach preaching since the Middle Ages and he could be said to be the originator of a lot of training for future clergy in the C of E.

Unlike many ministers of the day, Simeon was active in pastoral visitation. During his early years, Simeon called on parishioners in their homes. One day he divided his parish into sections and charged his lay leaders with the oversight of each division. This is arguably the beginning of what some refer to now as "home groups." Simeon also began holding an evening service at Holy Trinity (almost unheard of at that time) as well as personally catechizing boys and girls in preparation for making a public profession of faith.

- Simeon's desire to proclaim the gospel at home and abroad led him to assist in founding the Religious Tract Society (1799), the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), and the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (1809).
- He was especially instrumental in the establishment of the Church Missionary Society, the evangelistic arm of the Anglican Church (1797).
- Simeon not only helped to start these organizations, but supported them as well.
- He is said to have given away a third of his income.

- Influenced the Clapham Set - was at university with William Wilberforce.

The gap between the Evangelicals and the Tractarians was not as great as one would suppose - both groups believed in the supremacy of the Bible and both applied reason to their theology. Where they differed was on the place of tradition in the life of the Church of England. For the evangelicals, the Bible was absolutely supreme. For the Anglo-Catholics, it was the Bible and the writings of the Early Fathers that held sway. The gap widened over time - especially after several leading Anglo-Catholics moved to Rome.

- Simeon believed that the truth between two extreme positions lay somewhere in the middle - thus he rejected the most extreme forms of Calvinism (although he was a Calvinist) and the more way out views of the Armenians.
- Trivia - umbrella