

The Prayer of Humble Access

Katie Badie

One of the little treasures that Cranmer left to the Church of England (and perhaps to the wider Church) is the Prayer of Humble Access. This prayer is still widely known and loved, despite both a fairly eventful liturgical history (it has had difficulty finding a permanent 'home' in the Communion liturgy) and despite the slight embarrassment it might cause to modern liturgical specialists due to its being so specifically Anglican, with few obvious liturgical roots.

The Prayer of Humble Access really is a Cranmer legacy, perhaps the first of Cranmer's own compositions to feature in the Anglican liturgy. It first appeared in the 1548 *Order of the Communion*, a short selection of texts and prayers in English (Exhortation, General Confession, Absolution and Comfortable Words) designed to prepare the laity for Communion under both kinds, newly decreed. This new material in English was to be inserted into the mass in Latin, just after the priest's personal communion. Much of this 'first draft' of the Communion liturgy in English was essentially 'imported' from the Continental Reformation, being an adaptation of material prepared by Martin Bucer and Philip Melancthon for Archbishop Hermann von Wied of Cologne. The Prayer of Humble Access, however, had no such source. All the evidence points to a Cranmer original and thus the first of its kind.¹ This could lead us to conclude that the addition of the Prayer of Humble Access reveals theological or devotional aspects of the Communion service particularly important to Cranmer. Since we find similarities between the Prayer and the wording of the introductory Exhortation, this would appear to be so.² However, we should also note the specific role played by the Prayer in this its first liturgical setting which might explain its addition to the continental material, developed for a different context. The Prayer of Humble Access is the last of the texts of the 1548 *Order* and was thus to be said immediately before the congregation's Communion. In this position it establishes a parallel with the priest's prayers for 'worthy reception'.³ By way of example, the priest prays in Latin: 'May the sacrament of your body and blood, O Lord Jesus Christ, that unworthy as I am, I receive, be not for my judgement and condemnation but for the salvation of my body and soul'.⁴ The Prayer of Humble Access opens with 'We do not presume'⁵ and affirms that the only grounds for coming

confidently to the Communion *table* are the Lord's 'manifold and great mercies'. We could continue the comparison, but these aspects alone mark the theological change to a Protestant understanding of salvation and Holy Communion that Cranmer was seeking to bring home to the communicants. Thus the Prayer of Humble Access in its original setting provides a liturgical parallel, but a theological contrast, with the Latin Mass.

This particular role of the Prayer was short-lived, with the publication of the new complete Communion liturgy in English in the 1549 Prayer Book. Here, the Prayer of Humble Access, preceded by the rest of the 1548 *Order* material, remains in its position immediately before the distribution, but the priest receives the bread and wine at the same point as the rest of the congregation: it thus becomes the priest's prayer too, who, according to the rubric, kneels down and prays in the name of all who will receive the Communion.

The wording of the Prayer in the 1549 Prayer Book is the same as in the 1548 *Order* but differs slightly from the traditional 1662 wording that we know: the phrase 'in these holy Mysteries' followed the sentence 'grant us so to eat...and to drink...'; the adverb 'continually' is used rather than 'evermore' for '...to dwell in him...'; finally, the last two phrases were in the reverse order, the prayer finishing with the words '...that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood...'.⁶

However, the text of the Prayer soon changes to the version with which we are familiar with the publication of the 1552 Prayer Book. But the most striking difference between the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books as regards the Prayer of Humble Access is Cranmer's decision to move it from its position before the distribution to the very heart of the Communion liturgy. In fact, all the 1548 *Order* material is moved to an earlier position in service before, rather than after, the Eucharistic Prayer. But the Prayer of Humble Access now begins to live a separate liturgical life and finds a new home in the rather surprising setting of the Eucharistic Prayer itself, preceded by such traditional elements as the *Sursum Corda*, the Preface and the *Sanctus* and followed by the Memorial of the Institution of the Lord's Supper.

For many modern critics, choosing this new setting for the Prayer of Humble Access (where it was to stay for centuries as regards the English Prayer Book) was

a case of liturgical sabotage!⁷ But what can we discover about Cranmer's reasons for so organising the new (and thoroughly Reformed) Communion liturgy?⁸

In general, as Colin Buchanan has clearly demonstrated, Cranmer's radical upheaval of the traditional Liturgy in the 1552 Prayer Book was designed to make *reception* by the communicants of the bread and wine (and not their *consecration*) the unique liturgical high-point.⁹ For this reason, Cranmer cleared away all the liturgical material between the now simple Institution narrative and the distribution of the bread and wine, leaving no time and no word that might convey the consecration, let alone transubstantiation, of the elements.¹⁰ As regards the Prayer of Humble Access in particular, Cranmer was perhaps particularly sensitive to its possible misinterpretation as Stephen Gardiner, in his reaction to the 1549 Prayer Book, maintained that, said kneeling, it taught the adoration of Christ's flesh in the Sacrament.¹¹ For Dix, this was the main reason for moving the Prayer from its 1549 position.¹² But while it is difficult to know whether Gardiner's remark prompted or only confirmed Cranmer's project between 1549 and 1552, it does seem that moving the Prayer of Humble Access was part of a positive theological design and not merely a reaction to criticism.

We have explained why the Prayer needed to relocate, but not why Cranmer chose to separate it from the other 1548 *Order* texts and to incorporate it into the Eucharistic prayer. A general point is that this illustrates that the Prayer of Humble Access was not for Cranmer an integral part of what the ASB later called *Prayers of Penitence*. Modern authors criticise the heavily penitential atmosphere of the traditional Anglican Communion service to which, in their opinion, the unusual position of the Prayer of Humble Access contributes,¹³ but we can question if this was Cranmer's intention, as it would seem that he considered it a prayer of humble thankfulness and for 'worthy reception' rather than a prayer of repentance. After all, in its original 1548 *Order* setting, the Prayer of Humble Access came *after* the declaration of Absolution and the assurance of the Comfortable Words—Bible texts confirming the forgiveness of those who repent (Matt. 11:28, John 3:16, 1 Tim. 1:15, 1 John 1:21). In the Protestant perspective of justification by grace alone, the believer does not respond to such 'evangelical' sentences by more penitence, but with thanksgiving. The Prayer of Humble Access therefore stands apart from the initial penitential sequence and is perhaps more joyful than we modern listeners appreciate!

More specifically, we can better understand why Cranmer placed the Prayer of Humble Access between the *Sanctus* and the Memorial if we note that he had created a 'hole' in the traditional Eucharistic Liturgy, by removing to an earlier position the Intercession (which he had left in place in 1549). Now thoroughly purged of all oblatinal elements, this prayer no longer had any connection with the Eucharistic Prayer. The Prayer of Humble Access then filled the gap appropriately,¹⁴ preparing the communicant for the reception of the elements which was now the focus of the 1552 Communion Liturgy.

Lastly, an additional reason for this new location for the Prayer of Humble Access can be suggested: in the reorganisation of the traditional elements of the Liturgy, a new Biblical transition appeared, which meant that the Prayer of Humble Access fitted very well. As Colin Buchanan comments—

The *Benedictus Qui Venit* was removed from the end of the *Sanctus*, and the whole biblical order of Isaiah 6 came to light. If we catch the vision of God and sing the angels' song, then, if Isaiah is to be believed, we immediately express our own unworthiness. What could be more natural than the location of humble access at this point?¹⁵

Modern liturgical specialists, more concerned than Cranmer to preserve the traditional shape of the Liturgy, have not often shared this viewpoint and have almost universally recommended displacing 'the intruder', as the Prayer of Humble Access seems to be perceived, from the Eucharistic Prayer. But before looking briefly at the modern history of the Prayer, we will explore the various sources that seem to have inspired Cranmer's composition in commenting on each line of the Prayer.

A first general comment is to note that while traditional liturgical sources are present in the wording of the prayer, the most easily identifiable source is the biblical text—the book of Daniel, the Gospels of Mark and John, Romans, Leviticus and Hebrews are probably all alluded to in the wording of the prayer.¹⁶ This characteristic of Cranmer's method of liturgical composition is, of course, widely acknowledged. Robert Stackpole makes this point, quoting Roger Beckwith as saying—

Cranmer not only modelled his services in general on the principles and teaching of the Bible...but as far as possible constructed his very prayers

out of the words and phrases of the Bible, to an extent unexampled in liturgical history, either before or since.¹⁷

The Prayer of Humble Access stands then as a good illustration of Cranmer's biblical liturgical style.

As to the other identifiable sources, we do well to note Geoffrey Cuming's comment after giving his list of possible sources (the liturgy of St. Basil, the Hereford Missal, the Litany, St. Thomas Aquinas, Florus of Lyons and Paschasius Radbert), reminding us that Cranmer's relationship to these sources was more intuitive than scientific—

With the exception of the gospel references, none is so literally reproduced so as to be definitively identifiable as a source, but each, filtered through Cranmer's retentive memory, may have contributed something to the general sense, and a word or two of the actual phrasing.¹⁸

Bearing this in mind, it may nevertheless be useful to associate these possible sources with each phrase of the Prayer (1662 wording).

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord...

We have already noted the parallel with the priest's private ante-Communion prayers in the Latin Mass. In general, Cranmer worked from the Sarum Missal, but the York Missal used the plural for 'we' for these prayers.¹⁹ Luther, in his *Formulae Missae* of 1523 permitted the continuing use of these prayers as long as the plural form was used.²⁰ As regards the reference to 'thy Table', we can associate this with the reorganisation of the ecclesiastical furniture recommended by the 1552 rubrics.²¹

...trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies.

The biblical source is Daniel 9.18, which reads, according to the Great Bible of 1539—'for we do not cast our prayers before thee in our own righteousness, no, but only in thy great mercies.' This phrase had already passed into the eastern Eucharistic liturgy: the liturgy of St. Basil reads—'Not according to our own righteousness, for we have not done anything good on earth, but by your mercy and your compassions that your have bestowed liberally on us, do we approach with confidence your holy altar.'²² The Liturgy of St. James is similar:

...for our confidence is not in our righteousness but in your good mercy by which you make us your people.²³ In the Western Church, we find the same phrase in Florus of Lyons.

non de ullis nostris meritis sed de multitudine miserationum tuarum sperantibus.	Putting our hope not in our merits but in the multitude of your mercies. ²⁴
--	--

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table...

The source is clearly the narrative of the Syro-Phoenician woman. The wording is closer to Mark's version (Mark 7:24-30). This text does not seem to have been employed in a liturgical context before. The link is the repetition of 'thy Table', which marks a significant point in the historical context. In the gospel narrative, this sentence is not referring to the bread of the Lord's Supper but is an image of the priority of the Jews in salvation history. It is not a question of worthiness, but of God's plan. Jesus even praises the woman for her *faith* in perceiving that she *can*, as a Gentile, like a dog under the table, 'eat of the children's crumbs', something that the Prayer suggests we are *not worthy* to do. This is, of course, true—we are not worthy. As often in the New Testament, this sentence is leading us to the 'But' of the following one: we are sinners, but God is rich in mercy (e.g. Rom. 3:23, Eph. 2:4).

...but thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy.

If by 'the same Lord' Cranmer is referring to the 'Lord' of the Gospel narrative in the previous sentence, he is affirming Jesus as Lord, which continues the ambiguity between the Father and the Son in the words 'thy Table'. Another possible source is Romans 10:12: 'For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the *same Lord* over all is rich unto all that call upon him' (AV), a relevant commentary on the Syro-Phoenician woman narrative. 'Whose property is always to have mercy' is also found in the Litany that Cranmer had published in 1544, following the Sarum Missal which itself followed the ancient Latin source *Sacramentarium Gregorianum*:

Deus cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere, suscipe deprecationem nostram : et quos delictorum cathena constringit, miseratio tue pietatis absoluat. Per Christum dominum nostrum.	O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive our humble petition, and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins: yet let thy pitifulnes of thy great mercy loose us for the honour of Jesus Christ's sake, our mediator and advocate. Amen.
---	---

Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood...

The language of this sentence is drawn from John 6:47-58. This appears even more clearly if we remember that, in the original text, the phrase 'and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us' (John 6.56) followed directly afterwards. This same language appears in the Exhortation before the Communion of 1548 *Order*—

...For as the benefit is great, if with a truly penitent heart and lively faith we receive this holy Sacrament; (for then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we be made one with Christ, and Christ with us): So is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily....

Cranmer often quoted this text in defending his understanding of the Communion, which helps us grasp the underlying sacramental theology of the Prayer of Humble Access. Two examples make Cranmer's understanding of John 6 very clear—

Christ in that place of John spake not of the material and sacramental eating, (for that was spoken two or three years before the sacrament was first ordained,) but he spake of spiritual bread, ...and of spiritual eating by faith, after which sort he was at the same present time eaten of as many as believed on him.²⁵

The spiritual eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood by faith, by digesting his death in our minds, as our only price, ransom and redemption from eternal damnation is the cause wherefore Christ said: That if we eat not his flesh, and drink not of his blood we have not life in us; and if we eat of his flesh and drink his blood, we have everlasting life.²⁶

For Dix, Cranmer thus dissociates completely the bread and the wine from the spiritual feeding on Christ which is by faith in his redemptive work. He therefore qualifies Cranmer's theology as Zwinglian.²⁷ But the spiritual feeding on Christ by faith is associated with the reception of the elements both by the structure of the 1552 Communion Liturgy and by the language of John 6 in the Prayer of Humble Access. Cranmer also evokes in his *A Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament* (1550) the role of the Holy Spirit at Communion.

...And in this faith God worketh inwardly in our hearts by his Holy Spirit, and confirms the same outwardly to our ears, by the hearing of his word and to our other senses by the eating and drinking of the sacramental bread and wine of his holy supper.²⁸

This understanding of a spiritual ‘nourishing’ of the believer’s faith on receiving the elements and of the sacraments as outward tokens that strengthen faith²⁹ is very close to Calvin’s position, which is not very surprising given the personal and theological influence of Bucer on both Cranmer and Calvin.³⁰

...that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed by his most precious blood...

The terms ‘made clean’ and ‘washed’ already featured in the Missal—Brightman mentions the Westminster and Hereford Missals in particular.³¹

Ut peccata que ex carne et sanguine contraximus, caro mundet, sanguis lauet domini nostri ihesu christi.	As we have committed sins of flesh and blood, may the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ make us clean and his blood wash us.
--	--

No other commentator has referred to the influence of Hebrews 10:22 on this phrase, but this seems possible, particularly as Cranmer gives Hebrews 10:1-25 as the Epistle reading on Good Friday. ‘Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water’ (AV).

As to the doublets ‘sinful *bodies*...made clean by his *body*’, and ‘*souls* washed by his...*blood*’, the most controversial phrase of the Prayer of Humble Access, commentators point to a number of possible sources, the first being the biblical text of Leviticus 17:11—‘For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul’ (AV).

As to the liturgical tradition, Strawley mentions that of the Syrian Jacobites, quoted by Brightman—‘Vouchsafe us, O Lord God, that our bodies may be made holy by thy holy body and our souls made radiant by thy propitiatory blood and may it be for the pardon of our offences and for the remission of our sins, O our Lord and our God, for ever. Amen.’³²

According to Neil and Willoughby, the same division between the effects of Christ's body and blood can be found in one or two ancient or rare Missals, but in general the Western tradition preferred to combine the ideas, as in the York Missal, for the priest's private prayers at Communion—'May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my body and soul unto life eternal.'³³ However, this was despite Thomas Aquinas' writings that Brightman considers an important source for this sentence of the Prayer.

Somme iii. 74.1

Quantum ad effectum consideratum in unoquoque summentium, quia ut [Ambrosius] super Ep. i ad Cor. Hoc sacramentum valet ad tuitionem animae et corporis, et ideo corpus Christi sub specie panis pro salute corporis, sanguis vero sub specie vini pro salute animae offertur, sicut dicitur [Lev. xvii] quod anima carnis in sanguine est.

Verbum supernum prodiens

Quibus sub bina specie | carnem dedit et sanguinem | ut duplicis substantiae | totum cibaret hominem.³⁴

As to the effect, considered in each of the partakers. For, as Ambrose says on 1 Cor. 11:20, this sacrament 'avails for the defense of soul and body'; and therefore 'Christ's body is offered' under the species of bread 'for the health of the body, and the blood' under the species of wine 'for the health of the soul,' according to Lev. 17:14: 'The life of the animal [Vulg.: 'of all flesh'] is in the blood.'³⁵

To his own people, under both kinds, he gave his flesh and his blood to feed the whole man, made of a double substance.

Brightman also quotes Paschius Radbert's work as containing the same idea—

De Corpore et Sanguine Domini

11 Caro quidem carne pascitur... anima vero Christi sanguine reparatur.

19 Totus enim homo qui ex duobus onstat substantiis redimitur et ideo carne et sanguine saginatur.³⁶

11 The flesh feeds certainly on the flesh...the soul is truly refreshed by the blood of Christ

19 The whole man, made up of two substances, is saved, which is why he feeds on the flesh and the blood.

In Dix's view, the idea that the sacrament was instituted under both kinds, the Body for our bodies and the Blood for our souls, was a fairly common speculation among medieval theologians and that, quite simply, 'Cranmer held strongly to this notion'.³⁷ However, it is possible that this language was used with deliberate polemical, or at least pastoral objectives, if we remember that

the first publication of the Prayer of Humble Access in 1548 was to accompany the administration of the Communion to the laity under both kinds. The wording justifies and alerts the lay believer to the importance of receiving both the bread and the wine. We note, however, that while in the 1548 *Order* the words of distribution followed the same pattern as this line of the Prayer of Humble Access, ‘The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee preserve thy body unto everlasting life. The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul unto everlasting life’, they were changed in the 1549 Communion Liturgy to, ‘The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life’.

We can wonder why the Prayer of Humble Access was not modified accordingly. At the Savoy Conference in 1661 the Presbyterians did propose to change the wording of the Prayer to ‘that our sinful bodies and our souls may be made clean by his body and his most precious blood’ but the Bishops justified the original text and the wording of the Prayer was unchanged in the 1662 Prayer Book.³⁸ Several modern versions of the Prayer omit this line (American 1979) and the Australian Prayer Book (1978) replaces it simply with ‘so that we might be cleansed’.

and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us. Amen.

As we have seen, the source of this final line of the Prayer is John 6:56: ‘He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him’ (AV).

This is not, however, the only Bible verse which speaks of ‘dwelling’ in Christ. It is typical of John’s Gospel, particularly chapter 15:1-16 and John’s epistles. The same language also features in the Exhortation, as we have already seen. Dix again quotes Cranmer developing this thought—

The true eating and drinking of the said Body and Blood of Christ is with a constant faith to believe that Christ gave His Body and shed His Blood upon the cross for us, and that He doth so join and incorporate Himself to us that He is our head and we His members and flesh of His flesh and bone of His Bone, having Him dwelling in us and we in Him.³⁹

It would seem that Cranmer thus evokes the intimate living and personal relationship of the believer with Christ. The request of the Prayer of Humble Access is that Communion should be a moment when this relationship of faith is strengthened and nourished, producing the desired fruit for eternity (John 15:5).

We have deliberately concentrated on Cranmer's craftsmanship of the Prayer of Humble Access in this study. To finish, we will nevertheless glance at its fate after the 1552 Prayer Book. The first revision to displace the Prayer from its new liturgical home was the Liturgy of the Frankfurt Exiles of 1555.⁴⁰ In fact, in order to harmonise the English liturgy with that of the French exiled Protestant community with which they shared a building, the exiles simplified the Communion liturgy, leaving aside the traditional elements such as the *Sursum corda* and the *Sanctus*, Calvin having expressed his dislike of primitive rituals.⁴¹ The Prayer of Humble Access thus followed directly the Comfortable Words.

It was the Scottish Liturgy of 1637 that, in a general move to return to the structure of the 1549 Prayer Book, put the Prayer of Humble Access back to its original position just before the distribution. It was, however, accompanied not by the rest of the 1548 *Order* material as in 1549, but by the Lord's Prayer. The text remained that of 1552. This had a very limited wider impact for centuries for although the 1637 Scottish Liturgy influenced the wording of the Eucharistic Prayer in the 1789 American Liturgy, the 1662 Prayer Book structure prevailed. It was only in 1928 that the American Liturgy followed the 1637 Scottish Liturgy in placing the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of Humble Access between the Institution and the distribution.

In the same year the proposed 1928 English Prayer Book, following the recommendation that the Prayer of Humble Access be removed from the traditional Eucharistic Prayer, placed it after the Comfortable Words, before the *Sursum corda*. In the Bombay Liturgy of 1933 the Prayer of Humble Access disappears, replaced by a prayer for worthy reception of Catholic inspiration. For the rest of the century, these three options for the displaced Prayer of Humble Access are followed according to the 'liturgical family' to which the revision belongs. The ASB confirmed the English trend in associating the Prayer with the other Prayers of Penitence before the section Ministry of the Sacrament. Common Worship, however, for its *Order* 1, breaks away from this twentieth century pattern and follows the Scottish/American model in placing

the Prayer of Humble Access (as optional) immediately before the distribution, after even the words of invitation (which first appeared in the 1928 English Liturgy). For Peterson, this proximity could lead to a devotional attitude towards the elements⁴² (as expressed by Bishop Stephen Gardiner in 1549!).

If the Prayer of Humble Access is placed too early in the Communion Liturgy then it is associated with prayers of Confession and seems penitential; if too late then it seems too devotional towards the elements. Our difficulty in finding a suitable new position for Cranmer's Prayer, to which too many Anglicans are too attached simply to leave it to one side, testifies to Cranmer's liturgical and theological insight in putting it in the heart of the 1552 Communion Liturgy.

KATIE BADIE is assistant pastor in a French-speaking evangelical church in Paris. This article is part of a Masters's thesis from the Faculté Libre de Théologie Evangélique, Vaux-sur-Seine where she studied theology.

ENDNOTES

1. G. J. Cumming, *A History of Anglican Liturgy* (London: MacMillan, 1969, 1982,) p. 43: 'What is now called the Prayer of Humble Access is in no way dependent on Hermann, who has no prayer at all at this point, but it is an excellent example of Cranmer's method of composition.'
2. The verb 'presume' and the vocabulary from John 6: '...for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christe an drinke his bloud : Then we dwell in Christ and Christ in us...' see Buchanan, "The Lord's Supper according to the Book of Common Prayer", in Irmgard Pahl (ed.), *Coena Domini. Die Abendmahlsliturgie der Reformationskirchen im 16./17. Jahrhundert*, Fribourg, Ed. University, 1983), p. 377.
3. J. Gunstone, "The act of Penitence", in R. C. D. Jasper, *The Eucharist Today* (London: SPCK, 1974), p. 78: 'The Prayer of Humble Access...was intended to provide a prayer for worthy reception for the laity on the analogy of the prayers said by the priest in the Latin mass before communicating.'
4. From the Sarum Mass, the second of three prayers: *Corporis et Sanguinis tui, Domine Jesu Christe, Sacramentum, quod licet indignus accipio, non sit mihi judicio et condemnationi; sed tua prosit pietate corporis mei et animæ salutis. Amen.*
5. The prayer was, however, said by the priest on behalf of the congregation and this until the 1960s!
6. The most controversial sentence of the Prayer—see later.
7. James Herbert Strawley, "The Holy Communion Service", in William K. Lowther-

Clarke, *Liturgy and Worship: a companion to the Prayer Books of the Anglican Communion* (London: SPCK, 1932, 1936), p. 340: 'This abrupt breaking off of the thanksgiving after the Sanctus seriously impairs the unity and sequence of the Eucharistic prayer.' According to Buchanan, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?*, (Cambridge: Grove Books, 1976), p. 26 notes: 'The Scottish Liturgy of 1637 first ran on from *Sanctus* to the commemoration of Christ's death, but the idea has spread and grown in this century...Frere was one of the first major writers to refer to the "dislocation" of the canon and to urge the removal of humble access from its 1552 position.'

8. Note the viewpoint of Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945, 1975), p. 672: 'As a piece of liturgical craftsmanship (Cranmer's 1552 liturgy) is in the first rank—once its intention is understood. It is not a disordered attempt at a catholic rite, but the only effective attempt ever made to give liturgical expression to the doctrine of "justification by faith alone".'
9. Buchanan, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?*, *op. cit.* pp. 23-25.
10. Francis Proctor et Walter H. Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer* (London, Macmillan, 1901, 1965), p. 473: 'The revisers thus obtained their purpose and, by admitting no interval between consecration and communion, they minimized the danger...of a false habit of Eucharistic worship.'
11. Strawley, *op. cit.*, p. 340.
12. Dix, *op. cit.*, pp. 663 et 671.
13. Gunstone, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
14. Colin Buchanan, in J. G. Davies (ed.), *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, (London, SCM Press, 1986), p. 324.
15. Buchanan, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?*, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
16. Dan. 9:18, Mark 7:28, Rom. 10:12, John 6:56, Lev. 17:11, Heb. 10:22 according to our findings.
17. Robert Stackpole, 'Not Just for Sentiments Sake', in "Defense of Traditional Language Worship," *Churchman*, 106/3, 1992: 268, quotes Roger Beckwith, "The Prayer Book and Evangelical Doctrine", in *The Prayer Book: A Theological Conference* held at St. Peter's Cathedral, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, (St. Peters Publications, 1985), p. 77.
18. Cuming, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
19. *Domine, sancte Pater, omnipotens, aeternae Deus, da nobis hoc corpus et sanguinem Filii tui Domini Dei nostri Jesu Christi ita sumere, ut mereamur per hoc remissionem peccatorum nostrorum accipere...*
20. R. C. D. Jasper and G. J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist—early and Reformed*,

(Collegeville, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1975, 1980, 1992), p. 194 quote Martin Luther, *Formulae Missae 1523*, VI: "Then, while the *Agnus Dei* is sung, let him (the liturgist) communicate, first himself and then the people. But if he should wish to pray the prayer, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who according to the will of the Father, etc., before the communion, he does not pray wrongly, provided he changes the singular mine and me to the plural ours and us.'

21. See Buchanan, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
22. F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*, (Londres: Rivingtons, 1921), pp. 699-700, see also Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 329.
23. *Ibid.*, *The English Rite*, p. 699-700 and lxxv, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 46.
24. *Ibid.*, *The English Rite*, p. lxxv. *Expos Missae 109*. Florus of Lyons was a deacon who left a considerable work of poems, hymns and letters written between 843 and 860.
25. Dennis Petersen, "The Major Shift: Doctrine in The Alternative Service Book 1980," *Churchman*, 110/3, 1996: 265, quotes *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer relative to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, J. E. Cox (ed.), Parker Society, 1844, p. 307.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 264, Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
27. Dix, *op. cit.*, p. 656.
28. Quoted by Dix, *op. cit.*, p. 663-4.
29. Roger Beckwith, "The doctrine of the sacraments in the Thirty-Nine articles," *Churchman*, 105/1, 1991: 45, quotes Cranmer, *On the Lord's Supper*, Parker Society, 1844: 'Thus our Saviour Jesus Christ, knowing us to be in this world, as it were, but babes and weaklings in faith, hath ordained sensible signs and tokens whereby to allure and draw us to more strength and more constant faith in him. So that eating and drinking this sacramental bread and wine is, as it were, shewing of Christ before our eyes, a smelling of him with our noses, feeling and groping of him with our hands, and an eating, chewing, digesting and feeding upon him to our spiritual strength and perfection.'
30. Jean Calvin, *L'Institution chrétienne*, Bk. 4, ch. 14, para. 3. For Calvin on John 6 see *Petit traité de la Sainte Cene*, ch. 2 and *L'Institution chrétienne*, Bk. 4, ch. 17, para. 32.
31. Brightman, *The English Rite*, p.lxxv, *Missale Westmonaster*, (ed.), H. B. S. Legg, London, 1893, c. 519 and *Missale Hereford*, Maskell, *Ancient Liturgies of Church of England*, p. 719.
32. Strawley, *op. cit.*, p. 339; Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 102.

33. Charles Neil and J. M. Willoughby, *The Tutorial Payer Book for the teacher, the student and the general reader* (London, The Harrison Trust, 1912), p. 332.
34. Brightman, *The English Rite*, p. lxxv.
35. Translation of Benziger Bros. edition, 1947 by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Internet).
36. Brightman, *The English Rite*, p. lxxv.
37. Dix, *op. cit.*, p.611-12 note.
38. Colin Buchanan, *The Savoy Conference Revisited* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2002), p. 48.
39. Dix, *op. cit.*, p. 663, the italics are Dix's.
40. Robin Leaver, *The Liturgy of the Frankfurt Exiles 1555* (Bramcote: Nottingham, Grove Books, 1984), p. 5.
41. Procter and Frere, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-4.
42. David Peterson, "Holy Communion in Common Worship," *The Theologian: the Internet journal for integrated theology*, 2001 at http://www.geocities.com/the_theologian/content/pastoralia/cw_communion.html

Can you name the words the Prayer of Humble Access, a traditional Anglican (and/or Catholic) prayer before Holy Communion? Test your knowledge on this religion quiz to see how you do and compare your score to others. Quiz by knope2012. Get the best of Sporcle when you Go Orange. This ad-free experience offers more features, more stats, and more fun while also helping to support Sporcle. Thank you for becoming a member. The Prayer of Humble Access is the name traditionally given to a prayer contained in many Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and other Christian eucharistic liturgies. Its origins lie in the healing the centurion's servant as recounted in two of the Gospels. It is comparable to the Domine, non sum dignus long used in the Catholic Mass. The prayer was an integral part of the early Books of Common Prayer of the Church of England and has continued to be used throughout much of the Anglican Communion. Its text is the Prayer of Humble Access: We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. Archbishop Cranmer wrote the Prayer of Humble Access for the 1548 Order of the Communion, a newly-decreed collection of prayers in English to prepare worshippers for the sacrament in both species, bread and wine. It is thought that Cranmer borrowed it from the Sarum Missal, specifically: "Let not the sacrament of thy body and blood, O Lord Jesus, which, although unworthy, I presume to receive, be to me for judgment and condemnation, but may it avail, through thy mercy, for the salvation of my body and soul. Amen." Prayer of Humble Access. share. 113 views 1 upvote Made by prschroeder 2 years ago. prayer.