

Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667,) Bishop of Down and Connor.

Jeremy Taylor graduated from Cambridge University in 1626. He was under the patronage of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, through whose influence he became chaplain to King Charles I. He held a fellowship at All Souls, Oxford for two years before being called to Uppingham in Rutland and later Overstone, Northamptonshire. His first wife, by whom he had six children, died in 1651; his second wife was believed to be the natural daughter of King Charles I.

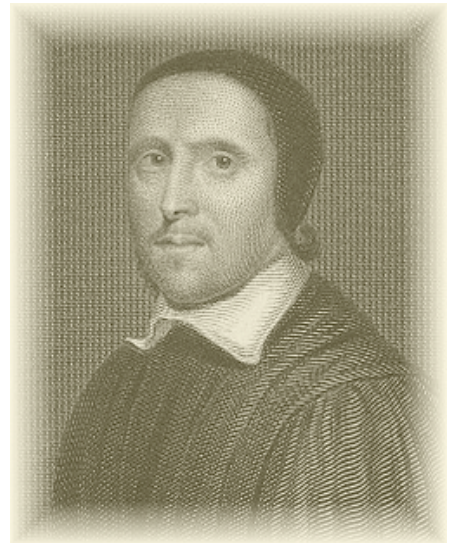
In 1645 Archbishop Laud was tried and executed for treason by the Puritan Parliament. Taylor's relationship with Laud, and his Royalist leanings, led to three brief periods of imprisonment after Parliament's victory over the King. Curiously, he gained fame as an author under the Protectorate of the Puritan Oliver Cromwell.

During a period of retirement in Wales, he became the private chaplain of the Earl of Carbery. After the Restoration, he was made bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland, where he was also made vice-chancellor of the University of Dublin of which he wrote: "I found all things in a perfect disorder . . . a heap of men and boys, but no body of a college, no one member, either fellow or scholar, having any legal title to his place, but thrust in by tyranny or chance." He developed and enforced regulations and established lectureships.

Bishop Taylor suffered many sorrows in later life.

Excerpt from *The Anglican Doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament,* By Jeremy Taylor

“. . . after the minister of the holy mysteries hath rightly prayed, and blessed or consecrated the bread and the wine, the symbols become changed into the body and blood of Christ, after a sacramental, that is, in a spiritual real manner: so that all that worthily communicate, do by faith receive Christ really, effectually, to all the purposes of his passion."



Jeremy Taylor the Writer

Jeremy Taylor was sometimes known as "the Shakespeare of the Divines" because of the poetic expression of his prose.

"Taylor became one of the most learned scholars and most distinguished writers in a great literary age." Gilbert Highet, *The Classical Tradition*.

James Boswell recommended Taylor's works to Dr. Samuel Johnson "at times when he was most distressed."

Below: A chair used by Jeremy Taylor now kept in Magheralin Parish Church near Belfast.





Jeremy Taylor in Ireland

Ireland was, in the bishop's own words, "A place of torment." He was required to enforce the Act of Uniformity, expelling Presbyterian ministers from their parishes. This was a great trial given his views on tolerance.



Works of Jeremy Taylor

- *A Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying* (1646)
- *Great Exemplar . . . a History of . . . Jesus Christ* (1649),
- ***The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (1650)**
- ***The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651)**
- *The Real Presence* A treatise. (1654)
- *Golden Grove; or a Manuall of daily prayers and letanies . . .* (1655)
- *Unum Necessarium* (1655), on the doctrine of repentance
- *Discourse of the Nature, Offices and Measures of Friendship* (1657)
- *Ductor Dubitandum, or the Rule of Conscience . . .* (1660)

Ballinderry (Portmore.) The restored Middle Church of Ballinderry, which Taylor built, and where he first officiated, was abandoned in 1824, and the present Parish Church erected. **Above:** The restored Middle Church. Note the three-tiered pulpit for sermon, Gospel, and announcements.

On his deathbed Bishop Taylor asked to be buried in the Dromore Cathedral. When improvements were made in 1868 five human skulls were discovered in a vault that were thought to have belonged to Bishop Taylor, his wife and three other bishops.

Jeremy Taylor Quotes

"A religion without mystery must be a religion without God."

"Meditation is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit."

"God hath given to man a short time here upon earth, and yet upon this short time eternity depends."

"Love is friendship set on fire."

Excerpts from the Diary of John Eveyln

(1653) 15th April I went to London to hear the famous Dr. Jeremy Taylor (since Bishop of Down and Connor) at St. Gregory's (near St. Paul's) on Matt. Vi. 48, concerning evangelical perfection.

(1657) 25th March Dr. Taylor showed me his MS of Cases of Conscience, or *Ductor Dubitadum*, now fitted for the press. [Three years before publication.]

(1657) 7th June My fourth son was born, christened George (after my grandfather); Dr. Jeremy Taylor officiated in the drawing room.