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Chapter 1 : Creeds: Christian Creeds | blog.quintoapp.com

It's about as close as one can get to a "universal definition" of evangelicalism, though as I will argue in a moment, it demonstrates the final impossibility of any such universal definition. Stackhouse's definition is obviously a reworking of Bebbington's definition.

Download the PDF version of this review. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat installed on your system please click here on Adobe Acrobat Reader to download. Clark was well positioned to write on Karl Barth. Though Clark was never able to have direct conversation with Barth, he had a couple of indirect interactions. Clark, Professor Fred H. Was it reasonable for Paul to endure suffering in his ministry or is it reasonable for us if all are in Christ and will perhaps be saved anyhow, and if, as you once said, [Ludwig] Feuerbach and secular science are already in the Church? In your Anselm English Translation, p. Does not this make theology "your own included" a waste of time? Then the original questioners were given the opportunity to annotate and respond to Dr. To the first question, Dr. The answer is twofold. First, Barth does not hold it as authoritative or certain that all will enjoy the benefits of the salvation sufficiently attained for all in Christ. Secondly, knowledge and faith are necessary for this enjoyment, and these come through the ministry of Christians in the power of the Holy Spirit. Hence Christians have a necessary part to play in the prophetic aspect of the work of reconciliation, and no sense of futility need hang over their work and warfare. Barth is not altogether clear on the matter of universalism. In some places he seems to say that all are saved, whether they know it or not. In this case, a Christian message might comfort some troubled souls for the time being, but inasmuch as it does not determine their future bliss, a missionary is hardly called on to suffer very much in proclaiming a comforting but unessential message. To the second question Dr. The statement would seem to demand rather than to refute the work of the dogmatician. Dogmatics is necessary in order that we may make sure that our own statements are on the right side of the border, and in order that we may develop a critical discernment in relation to those of others. And to this, another annotation of Clark was printed as follows: Carnell " , did ask questions of Barth as a member of the panel. Clark noted Barth in some other writings, but the aforementioned book is the primary source for the following analysis. Clark explained, Barth asserts that the concept of theology cannot be systematically connected, a systematic conspectus is an impossibility, and the name of Jesus Christ as used by Paul does not represent a unified thought. He indeed holds that it is; he accepts only its main teaching and rejects the doctrine of infallible inspiration. But here he is talking about theology, his own theology, and it is his own theology that he now says is illogical, unsystematic, and self-contradictory. He is well aware, for example, that the doctrine of baptism is related to the Nicene Creed as parts of a comprehensive revelation. He makes unmistakable claims to intelligibility and rationality. But there were also the other passages in which he belittled systematic thought and accepted mutually incompatible ideas. But Barth does not agree with this view. And later Clark explained further: One thing is clear, however. Now, when Barth shows so much dependence on Kierkegaard, one would normally suppose that he remains basically irrationalistic, unless he clearly and emphatically rejects the irrationalism of these terms. But by ambiguous or indefinite language he avoids both outright assertion and outright denial of contradiction. And, in fact, he saw that Barth must have at some point become dissatisfied with Kierkegaard. But Barth scholar Bruce McCormack holds that there was little substantial change in Barth between the supposed second and third periods. McCormack, in fact, denies the very distinction between a second and a third Barthian period. Karl Barth originally denied that God created man in his own image. For this reason, revelation cannot be a communication of truth, and although Barth is tremendously interested in theology, it is hard to find any rational motivation for it in dialectical theology. However, he continues strenuously to deny that the image is rationality. Therefore, theology as knowledge of God remains impossible. Emil Brunner puts it perhaps even more pointedly: Strictly, Neo-orthodoxy makes all doctrine false. Since this distinction occurs in animals also, one wonders how it can be the image that sets man apart from the lower creation. And since there are no

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sexual distinctions in the Godhead, one wonders how this can be an image of God at all. Without rationality as a common ground among all people created in the image of God, evangelism and apologetics are impossible. Clark wrote, Barth denies a common ground between believer and unbeliever and therefore also a point of contact between the unbeliever and the Gospel. The only point of contact that he allows is one which occurs at or after the moment of conversion. Because of this he repudiates apagogic argument, excludes all independent apologetics without specifying any definite place for a dependent apologetics, and has virtually nothing to say to the outside world, if there is one. Though Clark applauded Barth for various good elements of his theory of language and knowledge, he argued that Barth often did not follow through with them. This is not true in mathematics. Nor can it be true in theology. Can it be a communication of truth? Can it be objective? Can it save Barth from skepticism? The suspicion that Barth does not escape subjectivism is reinforced rather than allayed by his explanations. This is not true of other words. For example, he noted that Barth unlike the Modernists accepted that Jesus was born of a virgin. Modernism substitutes man for God. Even though Clark concludes that this attempt to avoid skepticism in Barth is to no avail, his attempt at fairness is notable. This is in stark contrast to the more polemic writings on Barth by Cornelius Van Til. However, serious differences between Barthianism and Modernism would likely have prevented Clark from making that exact connection. In European universities, significant elements of Barthianism were promoted by, among others, T. Haitjema at the University of Groningen, G. Berkouwer at the Free University of Amsterdam, and T. Torrance at the University of Edinburgh. Piper, who taught at Princeton from 1953 to 1968; [45] and George Stuart Hendry, who taught for 19 years at Princeton starting in 1948; [48] and Clarence Bouma, all were critical of Barth. But the tide at Calvin Seminary began to turn to Barthianism following World War II when a new wave of Dutch immigrants came to America and military chaplains influenced by Barthianism returned from the war. With these influences, Fuller professors James Daane, [52] E. Carnell, and Paul Jewett, followed at least in part. However, when Clark published his book on Barth, there was no acknowledgement of it from the seminary in its theological journal or anywhere else. Perhaps this was because the faculty had had a contest with Clark in the years following his ordination in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Van Til and Barthianism That Clark was writing his critique of Barth with an eye on his long-term adversary Van Til is a conclusion that has merit. And, it seems, Clark is unique in making this connection although Robert L. The dependence on Brunner, even the wording, makes Dr. Van Til an admirable example. In the course of their papers, one can find a paragraph in which they seem to accept the position they are attacking, and then they proceed with the attack. What can the explanation be except that they are confused and are attempting to combine two incompatible positions? The objectionable one is in substantial harmony with existentialism or neo-orthodoxy. But the discussion of the noetic effects of sin in the unregenerate mind need not further be continued because a more serious matter usurps attention. The neo-orthodox influence seems to produce the result that even the regenerate man cannot know the truth. Let me say this: For Kierkegaard, a paradox is a complete contradiction. But at any rate they both think that it is impossible to harmonize, at least by us. The similarity Clark saw in the paradox doctrines of Van Til and Barth is that they both hold that the supposed paradoxical passages of Scripture are impossible for man to harmonize. Though for Van Til but not for Barth these paradoxes can be harmonized by God, the result is the same: Little good does it do to say that these conflicting doctrines are solvable by God, when to man they remain a mystery, as unresolvable for Van Til as they are for Barth. A similarity can also be seen in the defense of paradox in Van Til and Barth. Barth, and Haitjema in his footsteps, seemed to have given up the classic aim to resolve discord in thinking. Instead Barth labeled this aim a sin. Different doctrines, same result. At least part of the reason they were able to do so was because of their confessionality—their adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith. McCormack and Clifford B. Carnell, and Colin Brown among others. The confessionally Reformed have been almost uniformly critical of Barth. These confessionally Reformed critics include the previously mentioned A. Even the confessionality on the Book of Concord of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as evidenced by John Warwick Montgomery, and also of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has functioned to abate

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Barthianism, as these denominations have retained the doctrine of inerrancy. Among the Dutch Reformed, G.

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Chapter 2 : Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship | Revolv

*REFORMED THEOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: CONFESSIONAL, CONTEXTUAL AND ECUMENICAL S.A. Strauss*¹ **ABSTRACT** This article scrutinises two important, recently published books on the identity of Reformed theology. These books serve as a springboard for the formation of ideas concerning the way in which Reformed theology should be practised in the 21st century.

Origins[edit] The Missouri Synod emerged from several communities of German Lutheran immigrants during the 1820s and 1830s. In Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, isolated Germans in the dense forests of the American frontier were brought together and ministered to by missionary F. Saxon Lutheran immigration of 1839. In the 19th-century German Kingdom of Saxony, Lutheran pastor Martin Stephan and many of his followers found themselves increasingly at odds with the rationalism, Christian ecumenism, and the prospect of a forced unionism of the Lutheran church with the Reformed church. In the neighboring Kingdom of Prussia, the Prussian Union of put in place what they considered non-Lutheran communion and baptismal doctrine and practice. Louis on January 19, Stephan was initially the bishop of the new settlement, but he soon became embroiled in charges of corruption and sexual misconduct with members of the congregation and was expelled from the settlement, leaving C. Walther as the leader of the colony. He also began training men to become pastors and teachers, sending his first two students—Adam Ernst and Georg Burger—to America on August 5. In 1846, he solicited colonists to form a German Lutheran settlement in Michigan, with the thought that this settlement would also serve as the base for missionary activity among the Native Americans. They founded several villages—Frankenmuth, Frankenlust, Frankentrost, and Frankenhilf now known as Richville—and worked to convert the Native Americans. They had limited success, however, and the villages became nearly exclusively German settlements within a few years. Walther, once said of him, "Next to God, it is Pastor Loehe to whom our Synod is indebted for its happy beginning and rapid growth in which it rejoices; it may well honor him as its spiritual father. It would fill the pages of an entire book to recount even briefly what for many years this man, with tireless zeal in the noblest unselfish spirit, has done for our Lutheran Church and our Synod in particular. Husmann decided to leave their respective synods. Two planning meetings were held in St. Wyneken, to care for German immigrants, help them find a home among other Germans, build churches and parochial schools, and train pastors and teachers. The synod continued these outreach efforts throughout the 19th century, becoming the largest Lutheran church body in the United States by 1868. Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America Between 1868 and 1888, the Missouri Synod hosted a series of four free conferences in order to explore the possibility of entering into fellowship agreements with other conservative Lutheran synods. As a result of the controversy, several pastors and congregations withdrew from the Ohio Synod to form the Concordia Synod; this synod merged with the LCMS in 1963. English District LCMS For the first thirty years of its existence, the Missouri Synod focused almost exclusively on meeting the spiritual needs of German-speaking Lutherans, leaving work among English-speaking Lutherans to other synods, particularly the Tennessee and Ohio Synods. In 1868, members of the Tennessee Synod invited representatives from the Missouri, Holston, and Norwegian Synods to discuss the promotion of English work among the more "Americanized" Lutherans, resulting in the organization of the "English Evangelical Lutheran Conference of Missouri. English work became more widespread in the LCMS during the first two decades of the twentieth century, with older members of the Synod continuing to speak primarily German and younger members increasingly switching to English. As one scholar has explained, "The overwhelming evidence from internal documents of these [Missouri Synod] churches, and particularly their schools This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. This culminated in the break up of the Synodical Conference in 1963. However, with the election of J. A. dispute over the use of the historical-critical method for Biblical interpretation led to the suspension of John Tietjen as president of Concordia Seminary; in response

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many of the faculty and students left the seminary and formed Seminex Concordia Seminary in Exile , which took up residence at the nearby Eden Theological Seminary in suburban St. In about of the congregations supporting Seminex left the Synod to form the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches , which became part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in The entire controversy marked an instance of a conservative religious body resisting theological change rather than incorporating its tenets, something relatively rare among American religious bodies,[citation needed] with the only other analogous scenario being the fundamentalist resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention from the late s to the early s. Foreign missions[edit] In the LCMS began sending missionaries to Brazil to minister to German-speaking immigrants in that country, and in created the Brazil District for the administration of the resulting congregations. Work was begun in Argentina in as part of the Brazil District. Both districts became independent church bodies that retain close relationships with the LCMS: However, this was an administrative and not theological division and the two groups still share close ties. Doctrinal sources[edit] One of the signature teachings of the Lutheran Reformation is Sola scriptura "Scripture alone. Missouri Synod pastors and congregations agree to teach in harmony with the Book of Concord because it teaches and faithfully explains the Word of God, not based on its own authority alone. Since the Missouri Synod is a confessional church body, its ordained and commissioned ministers of religion are sworn by their oaths of ordination or installation, or both, to interpret the Sacred Scriptures according to the Book of Concord. For this reason, they reject much"if not all"of modern liberal scholarship. Salvation[edit] The Missouri Synod believes that justification comes from God "by divine grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone. This means that some may disagree on the number of sacraments. All agree that Baptism and Communion are sacraments. Unlike Calvinists , Lutherans agree that the means of grace are resistible ; this belief is based on numerous biblical references as discussed in the Book of Concord. Sacramental Union and the Eucharist[edit] Regarding the Eucharist , the LCMS rejects both the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation and the Reformed teaching that the true body and blood of Christ are not consumed with the consecrated bread and wine in the Eucharist. Rather, it believes in the doctrine of the sacramental union , Real Presence , that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present "in, with, and under" the elements of bread and wine. Or, as the Smalcald Articles express this mystery: The Law is all those demands in the Bible which must be obeyed in order to gain salvation. However, because all people are sinners , it is impossible for people to completely obey the Law. The Gospel, on the other hand, is the promise of free salvation from God to sinners. The Law condemns; the Gospel saves. Both the Law and the Gospel are gifts from God; both are necessary. The function of the law is to show people their sinful nature and drive them to the Gospel, in which the forgiveness of sin is promised for the sake of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament, therefore, is valuable to Christians. Its teachings point forward in time to the Cross of Christ in the same way that the New Testament points backward in time to the Cross. This Lutheran doctrine was summarized by C. The synod requires that hymns , songs, liturgies , and practices be in harmony with the Bible and Book of Concord. Worship in Missouri Synod congregations is generally thought of as orthodox and liturgical, utilizing a printed order of service and hymnal, and is typically accompanied by a pipe organ or piano. While this shift in style challenges the traditionalism of hymnody that the LCMS holds strongly, the LCMS has released a statement on worship admitting that, "The best of musical traditions, both ancient and modern, are embraced by the Lutheran church in its worship, with an emphasis on congregational singing, reinforced by the choir. Missouri Synod congregations implement closed communion in various ways, requiring conformity to official doctrine in various degrees. Most congregations invite those uneducated on the subject of the Eucharist to join in the fellowship and receive a blessing instead of the body and blood of Christ. The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope agrees that "ordination was nothing else than such a ratification" of local elections by the people. The Augsburg Confession Article XIV holds that no one is to preach, teach, or administer the sacraments without a regular call. Concordia Seminary in St. Candidates may earn their Master of Divinity degree at other seminaries but may then be required to take colloquy classes at either St. Seminary training

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includes classwork in historical theology, Biblical languages Biblical Greek and Hebrew , practical application education, preaching, and mission , and doctrine the basic teachings and beliefs of the synod. Role of women in the church[edit] The Missouri Synod teaches that the ordination of women as clergy is contrary to scripture. This is the cause of contention within the LCMS, with some congregations utilizing women in public worship to read lessons and assist in the distribution of holy communion. Other traditional Lutherans reject such practices as unbiblical, with a minority of congregations continuing the historic practice of male suffrage, similar to the Wisconsin Synod. The most recent gathering took place from July 16–20, , in New Orleans , Louisiana. The theme for the gathering was "In Christ Alone. It was based on the theme, "Live Loved. Around 25, youth attend each gathering. Many Christian bands and artists perform at gatherings. The next youth gathering is set to take place in Minneapolis, Minnesota , in This is different from some other Lutheran bodies which have maintained episcopal polity ; however, this is not considered to be a point of doctrine, as the Synod is in fellowship with some Lutheran church bodies in Europe that have an episcopal structure. The corporate LCMS is formally constituted of two types of members: Congregations hold legal title to their church buildings and other property, and call hire and dismiss their own clergy. Much of the practical work of the LCMS structure is as a free employment brokerage to bring the two together; it also allows the congregations to work together on projects far too large for even a local consortium of congregations to accomplish, such as foreign mission work. The President is chosen at a synodical convention, a gathering of the two membership groups professional clergymen and lay representatives from the member congregations. The convention is held every three years; discussions of doctrine and policy take place at these events, and elections are held to fill various Synod positions. The next Synod convention will be in Local conventions within each circuit and district are held in the intervening years. Districts of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod The entire synod is divided into districts, usually corresponding to a specific geographic area, as well as two non-geographical districts, the English and the SELC , which were formed when the formerly separate English Missouri Synod and the Slovak Synod, respectively, merged with the formerly German-speaking Missouri Synod. Each district is led by an elected district president, who must be an ordained clergyman. Most district presidencies are full-time positions, but there are a few exceptions in which the district president also serves as a parish pastor. The districts are subdivided into circuits , each of which is led by a circuit visitor, who is an ordained pastor from one of the member congregations. Districts are roughly analogous to dioceses in other Christian communities.

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Chapter 3 : Calvinism - Wikipedia

Introduction / T.F. Torrance () --Unsettled questions for theology today () --Luther's doctrine of the eucharist: its basis and purpose () --The desirability and possibility of a universal reformed creed () --Schleiermacher's Celebration of Christmas () --Schleiermacher () --The Word in theology from Schleiermacher to.

The Doctrine of God, Part 4: Christ is involved in everything that God does economically, from creation to redemption, but the basis for all this is the election or foreordination of all things to exist in communion with their Creator. This election is embodied in Jesus Christ, in whom the pre-temporal decree and the temporal covenant of grace find their center. In trying to understand Jesus Christ as the electing God we abandon this tradition [of the *decretum absolutum*], but we hold fast by Jn. Jesus Christ was in the beginning with God. For these are two separate things: On the one hand, there is the Word of God by which all things were made, and, on the other, the things fashioned by that Word. On the one hand, there is the eternal election which as it concerns man God made within Himself in His pre-temporal eternity, and, on the other, the covenant of grace between God and man whose establishment and fulfilment in time were determined by that election. But He was so not merely in that way. Barth addresses the subject of individual election, but he drastically subordinates it beneath the election of Jesus Christ and the election of the community. The doctrine of revelation works as follows: The doctrine of election is similar: Jesus Christ as electing God and elected man is the center; the elect community of the church is second; and the elected individuals are the third circle. What concerns me now is my overall argument for universalism. Election is not the center of my argument, but it could be. For Barth, election is surely the center. What is important, then, about this quote is that Barth allows Jesus Christ to condition all that can and must be said about predestination. And here we see more fully how Barth conceives of individual predestination, now that Christ stands as its center and basis. In relation to this passive election of Jesus Christ the great exponents of the traditional doctrine of predestination developed an insight which we too must take as our starting-point, because, rightly understood, it contains within itself everything else that must be noted and said in this connexion. The insight is this: Even in the man Jesus there is indeed no merit, no prior and self-sufficient goodness, which can precede His election to divine sonship. Neither prayer nor the life of faith can command or compel His election. And as He became Christ, so we become Christians. As He became our Head, so we become His body and members. As He became the object of our faith, so we become believers in Him. What we have to consider in the elected man Jesus is, then, the destiny of human nature, its exaltation to fellowship with God, and the manner of its participation in this exaltation by the free grace of God. But more, it is in this man that the exaltation itself is revealed and proclaimed. For with His decree concerning this man, God decreed too that this man should be the cause and the instrument of our exaltation.

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Chapter 4 : Why I Am A Universalist, Å§ 5: The Doctrine of God, Part 4: The Doctrine of Election (Section I

In my presentation to the forum of the South I referred to Karl Barth's address to the WARC in Cardiff on "The desirability and possibility of a universal Reformed creed".

What does the Bible Teach? The word itself often invokes spiritually immature people to anger and rage. William Crews of Spartanburg SC noted in his manuscript of this topic: I have seen people become violent under the preaching of the doctrine of election. He made his way to the front of the church expressing before the congregation his disagreement and detestation of what had been preached. His appearance indicated that in his fit of rage he might become sufficiently violent to physically attack me. It was obvious that he was so mad that he was beyond the point of self-control. The man was not an infidel, agnostic, or atheist. He was not an irreligious person. I hope to discuss and present this subject in a manner that does not provoke or entice someone to such an episode of anger. I realize that many Christians have grown up in churches whereby the subject has often been neglected. Many people today sit in churches whereby the pastor s pick and choose which subjects to teach from in the Bible. In these places many believers suffer from spiritual malnutrition because the leaders fail to teach the fullness of the Bible. Hopefully, I can introduce this subject to you in such a way that you can make logical step-by-step advances in understanding the truth of this biblical doctrine. Sometimes, but not in all of the cases, believers dislike this doctrine by the way the subject is introduced. Sure, there are unbelievers who will oppose the doctrine because it cuts to the heart of their self sufficient, prideful, and haughty spirit that leads to self exaltation. A sinner that has never been converted will naturally by their own sin nature oppose anything that removes them from their life of selfism. But, nonetheless, saints still sometimes struggle with the idea for other reasons, which sometimes include issues of self reliance as well as issues of balancing this doctrine with other legitimate teachings of Scripture. We are not talking about definition of these words just yet. The first step is to simply admit that the Bible does indeed use such terminology. Here are some verses that simply use the terminology of elect, election, chosen, and predestination. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short" Matt. I know the ones I have chosen" John These few verses reveal at the very least that the Bible contains the subject of election and predestination. No Christian can honestly avoid the subject. I like what the Southern Baptist Dr. He noted in a chapel address that, "Any approach to soteriology [the doctrine of salvation] which omits the Bible doctrine of election is incomplete, inadequate, and misleading. What it exactly means is another issue. But first all Christians must agree it is a doctrine of the Bible. For instance, Romans 8: Justification is another term used to mean making a person rightly related to God. From these verses alone we can see that the doctrine relates to the salvation of individuals. Now again, note that I have not said how this predestination takes place. For now we are simply looking at the basic facts that this doctrine does indeed relate to the concepts concerning salvation. Election and predestination have a direct application to the issue of ones destiny and how that destiny is ultimately determined. Of course, this is the very reason why the subject creates so much heat and tension. It is a serious subject. The eternal destiny of a person is a highly emotional and sensitive subject. Most all of the denominations that formed from the s until today formulate some type of doctrinal guideline. A peripheral reading of all of the mainline denominational confessions reveal that the broad, evangelical, multi-denominational persuasions of Christianity teach on the doctrine of predestination. Here are just a few examples of some of the creeds and confessions that mention the idea and concept of predestination: The Articles of Religion in This is the confession of faith used by the Episcopal and Anglican church. Article 17 specifically teaches on election and predestination. The Formula of Concord in This is the confession of faith that governed the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This confession of faith in Article II teaches on the subject of Predestination. The Westminster Confession of Faith of This is the main classic confession for the Presbyterian denomination. The Baptist Confession of Faith of The earliest Baptist Confession of Faith in America discusses the subject of predestination and election in several places in the confession. All throughout

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these chapters references are made to election, foreknowledge, predestination, calling, and other related concepts dealing with salvation. Other Baptist Confessions follow suit with this as well. The New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith in and the Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention all editions from to the current version have sections that discuss the election and predestination subjects. The doctrine of election and predestination must be dealt with as the subject comes directly from the pages of Scripture. If multiple denominations from various persuasions with historical and theological differences all speak to the subject it must be because the subject is clearly taught within the Bible. One cannot come to the Bible and ignore the subject. Though it may be controversial, a person must admit and interact with what the Bible says on this subject if he or she is faithful to the biblical text. What determines if a person is elect and one of the predestined people? This is the most serious question of this study. This is where the subject begins to breed deep controversy. All Christians who believe the Bible recognize that God is omniscient. This means that God knows everything. The Bible is very clear about this. God simply does not know the future; he makes educated guesses. This view teaches that God simply does not have omniscience. God has to grow and develop. God, according to this view, is limited and he has to make educated guesses based upon probability. In this view the elect are those whom choose God. God discovers this only when the person actually believes. God knows because he has to learn who chooses him. God in this version has a unique ability to see into the future from the vantage point of eternity. Those whom God foresees accepting Jesus Christ are then elected. In this model God has knowledge of who will choose but not from all eternity. God knows because he has eternally determined his own knowledge of history. This view says that God does not have to look or learn the future events of history from eternity. Those whom God foreknows are those whom he has eternally thought up in his mind as his eternal children. These are the elect ones. People elect to love God because God elected to first love them in his own mind in eternity. Only one of the three options presents the real God of the Bible. If God is truly eternal and all knowing, and if he is all knowing without having to learn anything, then only option number three represents the true God of the Bible. In other words, if we believe that God is fully omniscient, meaning that he does not have to look or learn anything whatsoever, then the only option left is number three. God knows his children because he has eternally thought of them in this light. In other words, God thought up a certain portion of humanity as his own from eternity, not because he had to learn who would or would not choose him, but because he decided to think determinately foreknow his own. Maybe this explanation will help. God eternally thought of them as his elect, his children, his predestined people. In some cases this is argued because the person is lost and unrenewed. The natural mind does not accept the things of the Spirit 1 Cor. Grace, a work of the Spirit, cannot be earned. The argument goes like this: But this reasoning still does not remove the problem. Free will does not change the final outcome. God has chosen to create some knowing that in the end their destiny is going to be hell. Let us look at some logic for moment. Do you believe God knows the future of every person before he creates that person? If God knew that the rich man in Luke But did God still create the rich man found in Luke 16 knowing that in the end he would never believe? If God knows someone will never believe before he creates that person then what God knows must actually happen. History cannot happen in any other way than by what God already knows.

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Chapter 5 : Election/Predestination: What does the Bible Teach?

Karl Barth's famous address to WARC on the desirability of a universal Reformed creed provides the background for Naudé's argument. Just so, Naudé meets the frequent objection that while Belhar may function as a policy.

All may be saved to the uttermost. Catechism for the Use of the People Called Methodists. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as well as the orthodox understanding of the consubstantial humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. Since enthusiastic congregational singing was a part of the early evangelical movement, Wesleyan theology took root and spread through this channel. Wesleyan Methodists identify with the Arminian conception of free will, as opposed to the theological determinism of absolute predestination. A person is free not only to reject salvation but also to accept it by an act of free will. All people who are obedient to the gospel according to the measure of knowledge given them will be saved. The Holy Spirit assures a Christian of their salvation directly, through an inner "experience" assurance of salvation. Christians in this life are capable of Christian perfection and are commanded by God to pursue it. Methodism has inherited its liturgy from Anglicanism, although American Methodist theology tends to have a stronger "sacramental emphasis" than that held by Evangelical Anglicans. These constitute the Works of Piety. Wesley considered means of grace to be "outward signs, words, or actions Wesleyan Quadrilateral and Prima scriptura Traditionally, Methodists declare the Bible Old and New Testaments to be the only divinely inspired Scripture and the primary source of authority for Christians. The historic Methodist understanding of Scripture is based on the superstructure of Wesleyan covenant theology. Though not infallible like holy Scripture, tradition may serve as a lens through which Scripture is interpreted. Theological discourse for Methodists almost always makes use of Scripture read inside the wider theological tradition of Christianity. By reason, it is said, one reads and is able to interpret the Bible coherently and consistently. Methodism insists that personal salvation always implies Christian mission and service to the world. Congregations employ its liturgy and rituals as optional resources, but their use is not mandatory. During Kingdome, Methodist liturgy has traditionally emphasised charitable work and alleviating the suffering of the poor. A second distinctive liturgical feature of Methodism is the use of Covenant Services. Although practice varies between different national churches, most Methodist churches annually follow the call of John Wesley for a renewal of their covenant with God. Christ has many services to be done. Some are easy, others are difficult. Some bring honour, others bring reproach. Some are suitable to our natural inclinations and temporal interests, others are contrary to both Yet the power to do all these things is given to us in Christ, who strengthens us. I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. As John Wesley advocated outdoor evangelism, revival services are a traditional worship practice of Methodism that are often held in churches, as well as at camp meetings and at tent revivals.

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Chapter 6 : The Desirability and Possibility of a Universal Definition of Evangelicalism

III - The Desirability and Possibility Of a Universal Reformed Creed IV - Schleiermacher's Celebration Of Christmas ()

Their continuing relevance as contemporary confessions has been seen in the many studies conducted on them internationally and in the fact that churches in other countries have decided to include them in their confessional heritage. This paper pays tribute to these two landmark confessions. I start with a narrative of the emergence of the idea that apartheid is a heresy. This is followed by a discussion of the relationship between Barmen and Belhar. In conclusion I share some views on the future relevance of the Confession of Belhar. Eventually our class arrived at the idea that apartheid takes its point of departure in the irreconcilability of people. That represented the theological centre of the problem of Apartheid. This theological discovery was communicated to the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in October of that year. Synod then adopted the notion and opened the way for further reflection in local congregations. The most important consequence of this theological discovery was the declaration of a status confessionis 1 on the theological justification of Apartheid by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Ottawa in the year and by the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, meeting in Belhar, in the year The Confession of Belhar was drafted in and, after ratification by the majority of the congregations, formally adopted by the synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in Despite their symbolic congruence, the Declaration of Barmen and the Confession of Belhar differ in many ways. Barmen presents itself as a theological declaration true to the Word of God, whilst Belhar considers itself a confession. The Confession of Belhar speaks of racism, but does not mention apartheid as a political system. There was an explicit discussion in the Synod about this matter and it was deliberately resolved to confess against a false doctrine rather than a political system. Therefore, it is also possible to read Belhar as a confession that is not overtly political. However, we have seen that church unity Clause 2 is as political in South Africa as civil disobedience Clause 5. The matter of political content can only be resolved if those of us who read these confessions today are prepared to do the social analysis that precedes the lives of these confessions. Edmund Arens 8 proposed a useful model of five categories to study and compare different confessions. According to this model one can say that the Confession of Belhar and the Barmen Declaration are both confessional statements of the situational type, but with Barmen using doctrinal language Huber 10 and Belhar using ethical language De Gruchy Both these confessions arose from a particular context of a concrete heresy and attempted to understand the theological problem in biblical terms. Their doctrinal Barmen and ethical Belhar content, therefore, bears a very specific Christological form. This results in different presentations of their Christology. Whilst the Christology of Barmen essentially combats natural theology in a doctrinal fashion, the Christology of Belhar is rooted in social ethics. This characteristic Christology of Belhar consequentially focuses strongly on discipleship. Just like Barmen, it first confesses faith in the Triune God. However, it goes further in identifying the practices of such a God: Thirdly, it says what the people believe regarding reconciliation and connects it to the responsibility of the church to act in reconciliation. The fourth clause centralizes the focus of justice expressed as discipleship. The fifth section refers to costly practices of absolute obedience to God. This story is also the story of a racially divided church and a racial theology. The DRC also had to ask how apartheid relates to the Christian faith. In the year the DRC proposed a theology of racial separation in their policy document Human relations and the South African scene in the light of Scripture. Theologically, however, their understanding was determined more by the additional source of a natural theology. The seniors defended creation theology and the idea of the orders of creation. By , the majority opinion of the DRC confirmed that creation theology as it relates to the biblical narrative of the tower of Babel in Genesis 11 would serve as adequate cornerstone of a theology of race. Here the DRC developed its understanding of church planting in a racist form. Their foothold was unfortunately not strong enough in the DRC in to resist the acceptance of the theological justification of apartheid. Neither has it been strong enough to this day to lead the DRC to acceptance of the Confession of Belhar, despite its clear

Barthian features. Therefore, the meeting resolved that acceptance of the Confession of Belhar was at that stage not an option for the DRC. This resolution stated that the Belhar Confession as such was not in conflict with the three Doctrinal Standards of Reformed Confessions, i. The Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt and that it need not cause estrangement between the churches. In addition it compromised by saying: It has to be seen against the background of the suffering and need of believing and devout members whose faith is stranded in a crisis as a result of the system of apartheid. First, a revision of the belief that God is a God of justice who, in a situation of injustice and enmity is revealed in a special way as the God of the oppressed and the destitute Confession of Belhar, , Clause 4. The DRC is of the opinion that certain statements could have been formulated differently, among others, paragraph 4 of the Belhar Confession. Instead, the church narrowly judged apartheid from the ethical framework of the second table of the law, i. What is the relevance of the Confession of Belhar after Apartheid? I am aware of the fact that it is possible to ask: Instead, we should continue the search for the relevance of Belhar in the current context. As I have said, the Confession of Belhar has five sections. First, it confesses faith in the Triune God. Then it speaks about the unity of the church in Jesus Christ. Thirdly, it says what the people believe regarding reconciliation. The fifth section refers to the absolute obedience to God. The fourth point states the justice question: Therefore we reject any ideology which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the Gospel. The Confession of Belhar is a testimony to the liberating activity of God in history and context, including that of a global economic reality. The poor and oppressed are identified as the prime interlocutors of such actions. God is a God of justice seeking and acting for justice in a world of enmity and suffering. This revelation is embedded in a contextual understanding of how God acts. In a world full of injustice and enmity God is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged. This is then extended ecclesiologically. During the time of Barmen and Belhar the central institutional question revolved around the church and the nation state. In the current context the market economy is the primary authority with its own secular, neo-capitalist ideology. We are all subjected, no longer so much to religious institutions or states, with their accountability to God or people respectively, but this time to unaccountable financial transactions which operate around the world anonymously and with impunity. Bob Goudzwaard correctly concludes that: I chaired an historic consultation of African Scholars on the issue: This consultation proposed that Africa is faced with a status confessionis in the light of the exclusionary nature of economic globalisation. An interesting flow of events led to a situation where I was instructed to lead the forum and present to them a paper defending the issue of a processus confessionis on economic globalisation. In addition I had the responsibility to prepare a motion which was tabled that evening at the forum. As in the year , I argued that the churches of the South must now reluctantly accept that the World Alliance is, for the same three crucial reasons, not yet ready to declare a status confessionis on global economic injustice. The Alliance a does not have a shared theological category to judge the current global economic reality; b although it has so many member churches from the South in its consciousness the Alliance does not come from an illuminating contextual position to understand the kairos; and c I questioned whether it had the combined political will to act on this matter in the nature of a confessing community. From the perspective of the South, the question is no longer whether we are in a status confessionis of a global economic nature. However, based on the criteria required for the declaration of such a state of confession, we must conclude that it is not yet possible. The World Alliance would, therefore, do better if it declared a process of learning, education, confession and action at this time in history. Based on the recommendation of the Section II Report, the WARC, at its meeting in Debrecen subsequently declared a processus confessionis with regard to economic injustice in the context of globalisation. In the past we have called for status confessionis in cases of blatant racial and cultural discrimination and genocide. The exclusionary nature and the principle of triage in the global context served as epicentre for this development. The decision took the issue of exclusion in the realm of economic globalisation beyond the boundaries of the ethical. Indeed, it took ethical challenges and translated them in terms of faith affirmation. The Alliance has invited member churches and Christians

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everywhere to embark on a journey in which we continued to study the global phenomenon, its impact on people and nature to come to a better understanding of the theological centre of the global challenge which could lead to faithful action for global transformation. This construct is useful in the engagement of global economic realities in the context of globalisation. The Policy Committee Report recognised the work that was done on covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth processus confessionis and recommended work on this subject as a priority issue for the future. This Confession belongs to the ecumenical Christian community. The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa is merely the present trustee of this great confessional treasure which is relevant to the neo-capitalist global economy. I think that Belhar has much more to say to the present situation in Germany and the context of economic globalisation than even, perhaps, the Barmen Declaration. Perhaps, beyond Barmen, the journey of the confessing community is leading to Belhar and thus back to the younger Karl Barth. Elementare handlungen des glaubens. The Doctrine of God. Volume II, Part 1. Volume IV "The Doctrine of reconciliation. Gereformeerdeheid en die Belydenis van Belhar ? Discipleship and Practical Theology: The case of South Africa. International Journal of Practical Theology 4, Is blood thicker than justice? The legacy of Abraham Kuyper for Southern Africa. Lugo, LE ed

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Chapter 7 : Methodism - Wikipedia

Gesamtausgabe III. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, (translated as "The Desirability and Possibility of a Universal Reformed Creed," in Theology and Church. Shorter Writings

Van Til on his birthday. Ed Walsh for CRTA] Dedication The critical essays in this book are dedicated to Cornelius Van Til on the occasion of his 75th birthday and 40th anniversary as professor of apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary, in recognition of his tireless efforts in the statement and defense of the Christian faith. The extensive impact of this original and penetrating Christian apologist has been aided by the private distribution of numerous "unpublished" class syllabi. His lectures, whether given in Roman Catholic, Jewish, fundamental, liberal, or Calvinistic institutions are equally challenging and demanding. Yet for all this prodigious activity, the influence of Cornelius Van Til has been spread mostly by his students with whom in the course of his forty years at Westminster he shared his convictions and concerns. Van Til is not only a philosopher and theologian. A born teacher, he is an outstanding and persuasive lecturer and preacher, possessing, in his lecturing, the gift of simplicity. A warm-hearted and humble man, he draws love and loyalty to himself and gives it with equal readiness. His family migrated to the United States in , when he was ten years old, settling in Indiana. They farmed near the borderline of Indiana and Illinois, close to Chicago, at Highland. The family faith was Reformed, and church membership Christian Reformed. Van Til is a graduate of Calvin College A. In while still a student he married a long-time home-town friend, Miss Rena Klooster. After a year in the pastorate he spent one year as Instructor of Apologetics at Princeton Theological Seminary. After the reorganization of that institution he was asked to remain by the new Board of Control but chose rather to accept the position of Professor of Apologetics in the newly formed Westminster Theological Seminary. My Credo, by Cornelius Van Til How can I express my appreciation adequately for the honor you have conferred on me by your contributions to this Festschrift? I shall try to do so first by setting forth in this, my "Credo," a general statement of my main beliefs as I hold them today. Then I shall deal separately with the problems and objections some of you have raised in respect to my views in separate response to the essays themselves. I hope that by doing this we may be of help to one another as together we present the name of Jesus as the only name given under heaven by which men must be saved. What this implies for various problems will appear more clearly, I hope, as I go along. When Jesus said to this man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," certain of the scribes reasoned in their hearts, "Why does this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? Over and over "the Jews" charged Jesus with blasphemy. For it they nailed him to the cross. These "Jews," call them "Pharisees," were very "orthodox. Abraham was their father, and the God of Abraham was their God. When Jesus, therefore, claimed to be one with the Father they were certain that he blasphemed. What an outrage for Jesus, a mere man, to claim that he was the Son of God. Away with him from the face of the earth! What zeal this was for the one God, the only true God, the God of Moses! Of course, they did not like to put any man to the torture of crucifixion. But the God of Moses wills it; we must save the people from their sentimental love for this man. Soon it appeared that they had indeed "saved" the people. Now Barabbas was a robber" John The irony of it all-the leaders of the Jews did not love and serve the God of Abraham at all! Like the nations about them, and especially the Greeks, they had become worshipers of the creature rather than the Creator! They made their own apostate moral consciousness the standard of right and wrong. With their notion of a "living Torah" they were able, so they thought, to do justice to the changelessness of the law and, at the same time, to live according to the principles of the "new morality. Every fact in dispute between the Pharisees and Jesus involved the ultimate claim that Jesus was the Son of God, and, as such, the promised Messiah. Jesus told the Pharisees, in effect, that they had twisted beyond recognition the meaning of every word of the Old Testament. It was natural, therefore, that they should think of Jesus as a blasphemer. Not that the idea of blasphemy could have any meaning on their view of things. They were intellectually, morally, and spiritually wrong in everything they said and did. Could they

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admit that Jesus was right when he said that they were of their father the devil? Could Jesus be right when he said that though they were lineal descendants of Abraham yet, spiritually, Abraham was not their father at all? Could Jesus be right when he said: As Christians we are not, of ourselves, better or wiser than were the Pharisees. Christ has, by his word and by his Spirit, identified himself with us and thereby, at the same time, told us who and what we are. As a Christian I believe first of all in the testimony that Jesus gives of himself and his work. He says he was sent into the world to save his people from their sins. Jesus asks me to do what he asked the Pharisees to do, namely, read the Scriptures in light of this testimony about himself. He has sent his Spirit to dwell in my heart so that I might believe and therefore understand all things to be what he says they are. I have by his Spirit learned to understand something of what Jesus meant when he said: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. I have learned something of what it means to make my every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, being converted anew every day to the realization that I understand no fact aright unless I see it in its proper relation to Christ as Creator- Redeemer of me and my world. I seek his kingdom and its righteousness above all things else. I now know by the testimony of his Spirit with my spirit that my labor is not in vain in the Lord. All of my life, my life in my family, my life in my church, my life in society, and my life in my vocation as a minister of the gospel and a teacher of Christian apologetics is unified under the banner Pro Rege! I am not a hero, but in Christ I am not afraid of what man may do to me. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the ongoing march of victory of the Christ to whom all power in heaven and on earth is given. No matter, he has written me a letter. By his Spirit, the Spirit of truth, these helpers wrote what he wanted me to know. From heaven my Lord then sent his Holy Spirit on Pentecost to dwell in the hearts of all those whom he came into the world to redeem. I am, by his grace, one of them. Together we form the church, his people. In us and through us he establishes his kingdom. As a soldier of the cross, strengthened by his power in the inward man, I fight daily against Satan, who seeks at every point to establish his own kingdom in the hearts and to the hurt of men. In his letter Jesus tells me that all men are made of one blood because all are created by God. But the first pair, from whom all later generations of men came "by ordinary generation," sinned against God. God set before them the ideal of joy which he would give them if they led their lives in the direction he indicated to them. That direction was to be marked by love and obedience to their Maker and benefactor. But our first parents had a person-to-person confrontation with Satan. Satan told them how free he had become since declaring his independence of God. To be self-determining man must surely be able to decide the "nature of the good"-regardless of what God says about it. If God is such a one as knows the "good" for us, controls whatsoever comes to pass, and has the right of unquestioned obedience, then man obeys his word because it is his word. Adam, in disobedience, became a "free" man. Refusing to believe that God controls the course of history, Satan began his attempt to take over the whole of mankind to himself. Having succeeded with the first Adam, he tried his trick on the Second Adam. He lived his life according to what he, in his program, had written down in advance. Even the words, "I thirst," spoken on the cross, were spoken in accord with what was written. Now what was written consisted chiefly in his promise to his people that he would, in the face of Satan and his hosts, redeem them from their sin. He would be their Great High Priest by giving himself as their substitute. He would be their King, establishing his elect nation of "holy ones" against the effort of Satan to establish a kingdom based upon the self-righteousness of the Pharisees. He came, he saw, he conquered: The new age had come, the age of grace and glory. In his letter Jesus tells us of this new age. Much of this letter comes to us through his servant Paul. How did Paul tell the story of the Christ? In Romans Paul tells us of the wayward path of mankind. Both Jews and Greeks, being from the beginning of the world confronted with the truth of God, have nevertheless exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. Since they chose not to have God in their knowledge, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against these men who hold back the revelation of God as if it were some awful, destructive flood. Such a flood it will be for men who refuse to turn back to God through his Son. As children of Adam they have always made and continue to make the effort required to cover-up the truth about themselves and God. They see every fact as other than it really is. By means of their literature-drama, poetry,

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and philosophy-they try to prove to themselves that the world is not the estate of God and that they are not made in his image. Both Jew and Gentile have blinded themselves to the true state of affairs about themselves and their world-about their past, their present and their future. Not being creatures of God, they could not have sinned against such a one. They do not need, therefore, the atoning death of Christ for the remission of their sins. As Stephen said of the Jews, so also it must be said of the Gentiles, that they have always resisted the Holy Spirit-to their own damnation.

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Chapter 8 : Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod - Wikipedia

PDF | On Dec 1, , Rotney S Tshaka and others published Confessional theology a belligerently public theology - How confessional theology relates to notions of Africanness and Reformedness.

Friendly correspondence has been maintained with several churches of the Reformed persuasion, but in most instances little progress has been made toward actual union. In the General Assembly adopted the following vague resolution concerning relationships with other churches: The Presbyterian Church holds Christian fellowship with all who confess and obey Jesus Christ as their Divine Saviour and Lord, and acknowledges the duty of all Churches that recognize Him, as the only Head of the Church universal, to work together in harmony and love, for the extension of His kingdom and the good of the world; and this Assembly earnestly desires to commend and promote this Christian cooperation, and also practically to advance the cause of Church union by confederation, and, where possible, by consolidation among the Churches of the Reformed Faith, which are most nearly akin in doctrine and organization. These attempts also show the doctrinal laxity in the church and its growing indifference to doctrine. In the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA received overtures from presbyteries requesting that action be taken with a view to effecting organic union with the United Presbyterian Church of North America. But it was not until , when the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA received the following message from the committee on correspondence of the United Presbyterian General Assembly, "United Presbyterian General Assembly by practically unanimous vote adopted report of Committee on Presbyterian Unity authorizing committee to begin conferences with committees of other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches on plans for Organic Union," [3] that the movement for union became a definite possibility. In a Plan of Union was presented to both general assemblies. The name proposed for the united church was "The Presbyterian Church of America. This pamphlet included the doctrinal basis for the union as well as the provisional form of government, book of discipline, and directory for worship. Much criticism was centered about the doctrinal basis of the union, especially the confessional statement of of the United Presbyterian Church and the brief statement of the Reformed faith adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, both of which were included in the doctrinal basis. The strong objections to these statements, on the ground that they toned down the Calvinism of the Westminster Confession of Faith, compelled the joint committee to include these in the Plan of Union only as "historical interpretative statements. The subordinate standards were to be the Westminster Confession of Faith, together with the amendments adopted in by the Presbyterian Church in the USA, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, all of which were recognized as agreeable to and founded upon the Scripture. Gresham Machen assumed a leading role in opposition to this proposed Plan of Union. He voiced no objection to a union between the two churches as such because they represented a common Reformed tradition, but he was against this proposed union for several reasons. The Plan of Union made it possible for a presbytery to take over the affairs of a local church without any judicial process and use the resources and holdings of the local congregation contrary to its desires. If any person of known pecuniary ability fails in giving of his substance, the session should point out his obligation as revealed in the Word of God and the blessing attending its faithful discharge. If he still withhold from the treasury of the Lord, the session may deal with him as an offender. Machen concerned the confessional statement of the United Presbyterian Church, even though it was to be regarded only as an "historical interpretative statement. For example, the confessional statement maintains that the holy Scriptures are "an infallible rule of faith and practice and the supreme source of authority in spiritual truth. On the other hand, a Christian believes that the Bible is true throughout; and therefore events in the external world, like the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, must be true. In addition, the same article states that the writers of the Bible "though moved by the Holy Spirit, wrought in accordance with the laws of the human mind. Machen, denies the supernaturalness of the Bible. The formula read, "Do you believe and acknowledge the system of doctrine professed by this

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Church as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, as taught in the Word of God, and do you engage to adhere to and maintain its truths? Machen attacked this formula as undermining the faith of the church at the most vital point: According to the proposed new formula of creed-subscription the Bible may teach any number of systems and the system contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith may be held to be only one of them. If the Bible contains various contradictory systems of doctrine, then the "infallibility" of the Bible spoken of in the first question of the formula of creed-subscription can mean very little; and certainly it is little short of blasphemous to call such a self-contradictory book the "Word of God. Professor Machen is, we think, right in so interpreting the new formula. John Murray of Westminster Theological Seminary also attacked the confessional statement, not only with respect to the authority of holy Scripture, but also its doctrine of creation, salvation, atonement, and of God the Father. His main thrust was aimed at the doctrine of the atonement which, he claimed, tended to teach universal atonement as opposed to the limited or definite atonement of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which means that the atonement is effectual only to those who are called of God. Craig, editor of Christianity Today, and Dr. There were modernists, middle-of-the-roads, and evangelicals, and as Dr. Craig pointed out, the modernist-indifferentist party was in control. Macartney argued, "If the United Presbyterians wish to unite with our church, they should act in full knowledge of the lamentable doctrinal condition which now obtains within the Presbyterian Church. United Presbyterians were regarded as doctrinally sounder in membership than the Presbyterian Church in the USA, but at the same time as having a confessional statement much less orthodox than the Presbyterian Church in the USA. Speer, senior secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, in a semi-official article defending the new formula of creed subscription, stated that the words, "the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scripture," is contained in the question asked of licentiates so that every candidate for ordination has already declared that he believes in only one system of doctrine as taught in the holy Scriptures. Speer answered the criticism of the confessional statement by saying that the holy Scriptures are to be the final authority in matters of doctrine. He also mentioned that in , in a Plan of Union between the Presbyterian Church in the US southern and the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the southern Presbyterian church accepted that confessional statement. This action on the part of the allegedly conservative southern church ought to warrant the Presbyterian Church in the USA in taking similar action. The Plan of Union was vigorously defended by the Rev. Of the confessional statement Dr. McNaugher wrote, "However its clear recognition as having interpretative character scarcely lessens its influential value as an exponent of Reformed Theology. McNaugher, in biting and sarcastic terms, ridiculed those who had found fault with the confessional statement. The objection to the phrase "spiritual truth," he said, warped it out of its context, "and in hermeneutics that is a damnable sin! McAllister Griffiths, managing editor of Christianity Today, who objected to the union on the grounds of the confessional statement, the new formula of creed-subscription, and the unfairness to congregations who voted not to go into the union, since they could not retain their church property. In the Protestant Episcopal Church approached the Presbyterian Church in the USA on the question of union, but the correspondence was terminated in because the Protestant Episcopal Church would not accept the doctrine of recognition and reciprocity "as a principle controlling negotiations. James De Wolfe Perry, presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, addressed a communication to the secretary of the general council of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, informing him that the Protestant Episcopal Church urged the Presbyterian Church to consider the possibilities of organic union between the two bodies. At the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, June, , no formal approval of the concordat was given, but the committee of the church was asked to continue negotiations. Macartney set forth seven reasons why the union was not likely to succeed. First, it was undesired by the rank and file of both churches. Second, Presbyterians and Episcopalians would not seek ministers from each other. Third, the statement about the Bible is doctrinally latitudinarian. It recognizes the Scriptures as the supreme standard for faith and morals but also states, "in the assurance that with the Catholic fellowship there is room for diversity of interpretation. Fifth, the Episcopal

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attitude toward social customs and amusements is different. Sixth, this union will drive a wedge between the Presbyterian Church in the USA and other Presbyterian bodies who are considering union. Seventh, these marked differences will really help to separate the two churches. Bishop Wilson, a member of the Protestant Episcopal Commission, wrote that the proposed concordat had not yet been approved by the Episcopal church. He also warned that the ordination element was very troublesome. For us to commission Presbyterian ministers without regard to ordination would involve us in endless difficulties. Such a "commissioning" without ordination would do three things. There is little to be said for that kind of unity achieved at the cost of still more disunion. Manning, perhaps the most prominent bishop in the entire Protestant Episcopal Church, has very frankly cautioned against the proposed union as inimical to the good feeling between the two churches and as hindering the effective witness of the churches to the truth. None of these recommendations has been followed in either church to any appreciable extent. The whole project is meeting with little enthusiasm and interest among Presbyterians and Episcopalians and the reasons seem to be quite obvious. The form of government of the Episcopal church with its conception of the ministry and its ritualism is considerably different from that of traditional Presbyterianism. The Episcopal church discipline is founded on the principle of rule by bishops with great concentration of power in their control, while Presbyterianism is a representative form of government, that is, a rule by teaching and ruling presbyters or elders. The parity of the clergy in Presbyterianism would make it difficult for ministers to accept the higher authority of the bishops in the Episcopal sense. Underlying this radically different view of the ministry is the scriptural interpretation of it. Most Presbyterians would surrender their form of government either completely or partially with great reluctance. Matthews of the Presbyterian church expressed this view when he wrote, "The Presbyterian Church will never surrender its ordination by its presbyteries. The Presbyterian Church will never surrender its form of government. Presbyterianism has followed a very simple form of worship with the sermon as the central part of the service, while the Episcopal church has a highly developed form of symbolism in worship, even in the low church congregations, with the sermon occupying a less prominent place than the ritualistic element in the service. The doctrinal statements of each church are fundamentally Calvinistic and so would not present such great difficulties. But there is another phase to the whole enterprise which must give pause to many in the two churches, and that is the moral element. How can a Presbyterian in good conscience who believes that the Presbyterian form of government is that which is taught in the Bible give way, even by indirection, to episcopacy? There are indications that this factor will prevent the union at least for many years to come. The attempt at organic union with the Presbyterian Church in the US southern is the most likely to succeed, because the two churches have the same confession of faith and much the same form of government. Two forces militate against such a union: In response the Presbyterian Church in the US from time to time appointed a similar committee on union but the movement advanced very little beyond this stage until the General Assembly took action urging that organic union between the two churches be considered. While this Assembly does not regard organic union as practicable at this time, yet it hereby appoints the Committee of Conference on Union asked for by the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. Committees from both churches have continued with conferences on the general subject of union but with little result. In fact, the individual who nominated him for this office made that the burden of his speech. In , by a small margin, it voted to ask the presbyteries to express their attitude toward such a union. It seems almost certain that organic union between the two churches is very much in the future. If the Presbyterian Church in the USA continues along its present trend toward modernism, the union may never take place, unless there is a disruption in the Presbyterian Church in the US caused by modernism, in which case the liberal element of the church will be very much in favor of union. The whole union enterprise in the Presbyterian Church in the USA in the past two decades has been motivated by the conviction that outward unity of organization is the great need and goal of Protestantism today. This spirit was expressed by John D. Only a united Christian world can stem the rising tide of materialism, of selfishness, of shaken traditions, of crumbling moral standards, and point the way out. How such a union might be brought about was once suggested by Dr. Stanley Jones, to whose stimulating

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address we have just listened. He proposed one Church, to be called the Church of Christ, or it might be called the Church of the Living God, with all sectarian churches as branches. A united Christian church may be a commendable goal, but the necessary doctrinal vagueness which must result from such a union would vitiate the whole enterprise. Any large union which may result in the future is most likely to be along doctrinal lines rather than denominational ones. The time has come in each denomination for a separation between those who believe the Bible and those who do not; such a division would result in real Christian unity. But such vague and meager doctrinal bases which have been proposed so far as the foundation for a united Christendom would create a church which the historic Christian church would hardly be able to recognize, and which would certainly be ineffective for great spiritual work among individuals and the nations. What is needed, and needed badly, is a rebirth of genuine enthusiasm for, and belief in, the miraculous gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, which proclaims that all men are lost in sin and separated from God and in need of redemption and reuniting with God the Father. This should be the great message of the church; it should be the consuming desire of every minister in the Christian church. If that comes to pass, all ideas of a false and feeble outward church union will be forgotten, and the church will have returned to its true mission. The spirit of unionism in the Presbyterian Church in the USA is strong, and will continue to grow as the doctrinal witness and consciousness of the church becomes weaker.

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Chapter 9 : Ecumenical Movement | blog.quintoapp.com

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Duba In the spring of a proposal was drawn up and shared among a few Presbyterian friends that would bring about a group for support of liturgical and Reformed worship in the Presbyterian Church in the U. At the meeting of the Seattle University Institute for Liturgy and Worship that July, the proposal was expanded and given shape. It immediately became an ecumenical effort. Given the liturgical convergence that has been evident throughout the twentieth century, this would be a joint endeavor of people who support the original, basically Calvinistic liturgical directions of the sixteenth century. Fritz West, a UCC pastor and liturgical scholar, chosen as its convener. As West said, we want to capture the heart and soul of the Reformed and Calvinistic tradition in worship. What was and is its genius? What was and is at its core? The Constitution we developed seeks to summarize this in the following way: The historic ordo includes a commitment to: This essay seeks to put that effort into its historical context, and to trace the threads that have been prominent in liturgies of the Reformed tradition through the years. Calvin sought to build his theology and liturgy on the practice and theology of the early church, therefore making it truly evangelical, truly catholic and truly reformed, thus using the amplified phrase that grew out of the Blake-Pike Proposal. For the first one hundred years the Reformed tradition was a strongly liturgical tradition. This fell into disarray due to a number of factors, basically because of the development of the enlightenment and the rise of individualism with its concomitant loss of cohesion and sense of community. This essay seeks to survey the currents in the Christian church that have led us to the present. We will first survey the historical landscape, highlighting a few of those points at which this Calvinistic ideal received noticeable recognition. We will note the general disintegration that took place liturgically, then trace the threads in the last half of the twentieth century that began a process of being woven back together. What climaxed in the sixteenth century Reformation began several centuries earlier, with John Wycliffe c. In every case, the proposed reforms involved the worship of the Church. Both Martin Luther and John Calvin sought not a new church, not new denominations such a term had not yet been invented in the Christian church, but a reform of the one Church of Jesus Christ in the earth. The work of both reformers had bold and significant bearing on worship. Indeed, it can be said that the theology of both had their primary theological expression in the worship that they developed. In addition to their emphasis on the worship of the assembly, these reformers pressed for the extension of that worship into daily life, in a mission of establishing a more godly new society through the lives of those who worshipped. The winds of reform had already been blowing in Strasbourg and Geneva when Calvin entered the scene as an exile from France. He was not the originator, but a systematizer. His gifts were stellar among these stellar theologians and scholars from whom he received much. The Genevan Psalter Most church leaders and members today who identify with the Calvinistic tradition are oblivious of the deep liturgical tradition out of which we were born. This was never to be realized. Putting the words of prayer and praise in the mouths of the whole congregation was vital. Twenty-one metrical Psalm texts were provided by Clement Morot to be sung in the French language to settings composed by Louis Bourgeois. And the texts of almost all the prayers were provided. Free, individually prepared prayers were suggested at only three points in the worship. The Calvinist theologians were quite insistent that proper words be used in worship, for these words would carry the essential message and theology of the reform in which they were engaged. Word and Table still stood together. He also did not insist on the necessity of communion on the festival days of the church; in fact, the church year was suspect. Toward the end of the century Puritan and Separatist sentiments became more prevalent. Individualism and innovations began to encroach on these set liturgies, introducing variations and in some cases, contradictions. In this context, the Westminster Assembly was convened in July of to reform the standards of the church in

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the British Isles and to produce a liturgy satisfactory to all, while hoping to maintain unity. This was a directory that never had the benefit of being hammered out on the anvil of parish use. Rather, it was the result of ten months of wrangling in an anguished and fragmented committee. While Richard Baxter, a Presbyterian, was the primary author of the Savoy Liturgy of 1662, Congregationalists played a role in the formation of the Savoy Declaration of 1662. This and other works such as those of John Owen, sought to give greater form than Westminster had provided. These had deleterious effects on Christian worship and they continued both in Europe and in America throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. He was a Protestant who put Zacharias Ursinus at the head of the school that his predecessor had established. He asked Ursinus, together with Caspar Olevianus, for a time professor in the University of Heidelberg and preacher to Frederick III, to provide a confession of faith or catechism for the Palatinate. The result was the Heidelberg Catechism. This liturgy continues to be used as the Order for Holy Communion in congregations in both Germany and in America. Hageman and his Reformed Church in America RCA committee had worked fifteen years on their assignment of writing a liturgy for the church. By this time they had finished the research and the writing of their draft. Notable were the Oxford Tractarian movement and the Gothic revivals in architecture, art, and literature. It was the dawning of a romantic desire to recapture the imagined glory of the past and to move to a utopian future. It became fashionable to revivify the music of previous epochs. Thus this included the recovery of Gregorian chant. This period saw movements toward liturgical recovery. Some of these were romantic attempts to re-pristiniate a past idealized epoch. Others were efforts seeking historical and theological integrity and recovery. Among the Reformed there are several nineteenth century efforts that deserve our attention. The Disciples of Christ. In 1824, they and a group gathered around them formally advocated a return to simple primitive church practices and weekly communion. He too sought to restore primitive Christianity, and came into conflict with his Presbytery. Stone met Campbell in 1825, and subsequently they continued private correspondence and a public discussion in their respective journals in the hope that they could join forces. In 1827 representatives of their movements established a formal union, which they hoped would unite all Christians. The churches that have descended from this union have celebrated the Supper with the Word every Sunday for almost two hundred years, with simplicity, dignity, and little ceremony. From the beginning the Disciples have taken seriously the liturgical role of the officers of the church, stressing the priesthood of all believers and participatory worship. Thus, they never developed a set liturgy, and only in the twentieth century began to take seriously the historic continuity of the church around the Table. In their strong emphasis on Christian unity, they were ecumenical pioneers, instrumental in the formation of the National Council of Churches and the Faith and Order Commission of which we will speak later in this essay. Thomas Chalmers at St. Andrew's. He was ordained in July 1817 and was called to a kirk in London. His tall, commanding presence and his sonorous eloquence gained large crowds, so large that the congregation soon built a new church in Regent Square where it counted among its attendees members of Parliament, poets and bankers, the elite of London. Cardale, a retired lawyer and liturgiologist. Irving introduced a liturgy characterized by symbolism, metaphor, and mystery. He had a theological appreciation for the early church and its worship. The worship in Regent Square placed emphasis on the sacraments and on the holy, spiritual life. In the Church of Scotland deposed him from their ministry roster for his theological excesses. Characteristics of this worship were: Its strong basis in a recovered doctrine of the church, sacraments, and ministry, An emphasis on the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, beginning with monthly Eucharist quite frequent by Church of Scotland standards, becoming weekly in 1827, A strong emphasis on the efficacy of the sacraments as means of grace, A strong emphasis on the unity of the whole church stemming from one baptism. Hislop is extravagant in its praise. Through Cardale, a copy of the liturgy of the Catholic Apostolic Church came into his hands and was a factor in setting him off on his liturgical quest. Based on this research he developed a liturgy, seeking to provide the words of prayer and praise for the mouths of the faithful in his congregation. His intent was to bring about a fundamental liturgical renewal. At that time, of course, the synods did not have the foresight to join this project. He believed that every aspect of the worship service should express facets of the faith of the church,

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and that the entire service is to express the great truths and facts from which the church draws its life, and to which the church is to witness. A renewed emphasis on the Christian year, A strong emphasis on the trinitarian faith, confessing the divinity of Christ, Extensive participation of the congregation, with sung and spoken responses, A strong socio-ethical commitment. A cycle of initiation rites, with the enrollment of catechumens, enumerated stages of catechetical development and the provision of opportunities to reaffirm or to exit the program at any stage. He was an evangelical pastor, and his motivation was pastoral. Strengthened by worship, it can then fulfill its Christian responsibility in the public, political sphere and in its social surroundings. Foundations and Uses of Liturgy. The Mercersburg Liturgy The foundation of a German Reformed church in this country was laid by colonists from the Palatinate and other parts of western Germany and also from Switzerland. The first minister came to America in and the first congregation was founded at Germania Ford in Virginia in , though the primary locus soon was Pennsylvania. The Mercersburg Seminary was founded in and John Williamson Nevin , a Presbyterian of Irish descent, joined the faculty in , coming from Princeton Seminary. Philip Schaff left his Swiss-German roots and joined the faculty in But also built into creation is the protestant principle of movement, of freedom and growth, whereby the Word of God is experienced individually and internally as freedom. He maintained that both must be held in tension. The contrast could not have been greater. The two melded together as a team and the Mercersburg theology had its genesis, and with it came the conception of the Mercersburg liturgy. This liturgical theology and its movement were born of theological and historical concerns, not romantic visions of a lost utopia. Nevin and Schaff at Mercersburg. Here are two theologians of Calvin, one hundred sixty years apart, and there are certainly points of meeting and agreement. Some have said that the entire Mercersburg theological system and its worship, center on that one item.