

Lecture 32: Reformed Christianity

April 8, 2020

Review

Three Eras in Church History – Patristic, Medieval, Modern
Three Traditions in Christianity – Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant
Three Families of Protestants – Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican
What countries adopted these various forms of Protestantism?

Sadoletto & Calvin, *A Reformation Debate*

Two humanist scholars, but one emphasizes the role of conscience in overcoming an “indolent theology.”
Two appeals beyond the secularism of today, but one emphasizes the glory of God over the value of the soul.
Sadoletto – Think of your soul!
Calvin – Think of your God!
Application – Classical & Christian Education

Reformed Beginnings: *Switzerland*

Zurich – *Ulrich Zwingli* (1484-1531)

Humanist, Pastor, Patriot – an independent source of Protestant theology
Bibliocracy – a church-state union taking the Bible literally (e.g. iconoclasm)
Anabaptists – an illegal offshoot of biblical literalism
Sacraments – covenant baptism and memorial supper

Geneva – *John Calvin* (1509-1564)

Humanist, Writer – “a poor, timid scholar”
“Sudden Conversion” – Nicholas Cop sermon on All Saints Day (1533)
The Institutes of the Christian Religion (1536-1559)
Geneva—Strasbourg—Geneva – two threats and a cross of “a thousand deaths”

How did Reformed Christianity relate to the two existing communities?

Unification Efforts in Western Christianity

Among Protestants – The Marburg Colloquy (1529)

Marburg Articles – fourteen points of agreement, one point of disagreement
Zwingli: “The flesh profits nothing” (John 6:63).
Luther: *Hoc est corpus meum* (“This is My body.”)
After apologies, the two men never met again.

Between Protestants and Catholics

Augsburg (1530) – Melancthon minimalism vs. the Augsburg Confession
Regensburg (1531) – doctrinal equivocation and ambiguity (e.g. Contarini’s “double justification”)
Catholic historian: Faith and works is left unclear, and merit is not even mentioned (Bedouelle)
Luther: Consequences are ignored and heresy allowed. “Making distinctions is part of confessing.”

Among Catholics – The Council of Trent (1545-47, 1551-52, 1562-63)

Catholic Reform (self-realization) or Counter Reformation (self-defense)?
Key to Success: The simultaneous pursuit of dogma and discipline (Bedouelle).
Result: Cure the Roman Curia, but leave the papacy in place.

Assessment

What is the definition of the church?

Sadoletto: “...that which in all parts...has been always and everywhere directed by the one Spirit” (p. 41).
Calvin: “...a society...bound together by the one doctrine and the one Spirit of Christ” (p. 62).
Sola Ecclesia vs. Sola Scriptura (p. 47)
Jesus: “...those also who are to believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one” (p. 46, John 17:20).