

PRTH 602—THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY (“ECCLESIOLOGY”)

DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH

Scriptural Definition

Ephesians 1 =

- Past = God elects before the foundations of the earth
- Present = we are now in Christ
- Future = How people should live as members of the Church (nitty-gritty stuff)

Creedal Definitions

Cannons of Dort

- defines Church from a historical-redemptive approach
- tells you to look at your life to see: 1.) The fruit of your salvation 2). The joy in your life and to “know” your election

The Belgic Confession = most of DeMoor’s class was based on these three Articles

- Articles 27-32, but especially 27-29
- 27 = the Holy Catholic Church = 1. Unity 2.
- 28 = The Obligations of Church Members = 1. Join the Church 2. Do not separate from it
- 29 = Marks of the True Church = 1. Word 2. Sacraments 3. Discipline

Terms

Militant Church = the church now on earth

Triumphant Church = the dead who are now in heaven and are cheering on the militant church

“Assembly of God” = Qahal YHWH and *ekklesia*

Names for the Church

- People of God = Reformed
- Body of Christ = Evangelical
- Communio Sanctorum = focuses on what God does (historical-redemptive)
- Congregatio fidelium = focuses on what we do in Christ
- Fellowship of Grace
- New Creation

Invisible vs. Visible Church

Invisible = The Church as it is in the mind of God

Visible = That Church which we observe w/ our eyes on this earth

- Organism = we see the fruit of our new humanity (ie what is actually discernable in the way people live their entire lives, their modeling, their fruit)
- Institute = we see the Sunday and Wednesday night services

What are the *marks* of the Church? (ie What does the Church confess?)

Primary Marks:

1. Word = preached, believed, confessed
2. Sacraments = Baptism, Lord’s Supper/Communion
- ?? Discipline?? = as a primary mark or a secondary mark? This is debated in the Reformed community.

Secondary Marks:

1. Office of the Keys: discipline = withholding the Word and Sacraments; also discipleship in truth
2. Ordination to offices
3. Prayer, Praise, & Thanksgiving
4. Possession of the Sacred Cross

What are the *attributes* of the Church?

One = there is one true Church (Unity). United by one true faith in God through J.C.

Holy = people that God has set apart, called out

Catholic = Universal Church, meaning that it is:

1. Unlimited = not limited to race, tribe, culture, varying theological perspectives
2. Non-exclusive = does not operate w the pretense that we have our theology all down perfectly; orthodox w/in boundaries
3. Non-localized = the local church is not to be autonomous and anti-communal—a law unto itself; it is part of the Church

Apostolic = Founded upon:

1. The witness of the 12 apostles = Eph 2
2. being nurtured in the 2 Primary Marks = Eph 4
3. for the mission of spreading the Gospel = Eph 3

When did the Church begin? This Q is very likely to be asked!!!

Choices:

1. At Pentecost = due to the coming of the Holy Spirit
2. At Christ's resurrection = Orthodox Church believes this b/c 1.) they see Easter as the beginning of New Life → Church and 2.) The Church is the product of the H.S. (although he did not come until Pentecost so this is a bit off.)
3. 12 Disciples = b/c they formed a “congregation” with Jesus; Peter—on this rock I will build my church
4. Noah = “the man who found favor in the eyes of God.” (Congregation of people & animals in the arc)
5. **Abraham = Genesis 12 – God calls Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees to be his people. (Prof. DeMoore likes this answer.)**
6. Seth and Cain = b/c the first use of the word group “Assembly of God” (“Kahul YHWH”, and ekklesia = Septuagint)
7. On the 6th Day = when Adam and Eve were created b/c they were the first group of People of God (ie a congregation)
8. Before the Creation of the World = b/c the Church was in the mind of God at that time based on Ephesians 1
 - Supralapsarian = God planned the redemption of his people before the Fall occurred
 - Infralapsarian = God planned redemption after the Fall occurred

BAPTISM – 3 B's

Branding = it is a sign and a seal. Thus, it marks us and gives us assurance

Bath = the physical water washing our bodies symbolizes Christ's spiritual washing us of our sins

Burial = we are buried with Christ's death and we rise again as he did

LORD'S SUPPER

Transubstantiation (Roman Catholic Church) = Christ is physically present in the bread (his body) and in the wine (his blood)

Consubstantiation = Christ's body and blood are under/over/around the bread and wine

Lutheranism =

Calvin = Christ is spiritually present in the bread and wine

Zwinglianism/Memorialism = Christ is symbolically present in the bread and wine