

Podcast: Confessing the Faith

Episode 1: What Does it Mean to be a Reformed Baptist?

Participants: Mike Thezier, Joe Anady, Austin Pine

Q1: What *kind* of Church is Emmaus Christian Fellowship?

A1: We are *Reformed and we are Baptists*

Q2: Does Emmaus Christian Fellowship Belong to a Denomination

A1: Not presently, but it is our intention to join one.

Q3: What does it mean to be Reformed?

A1: Some Qualifications

- 1) I'm aware that there are differences of opinion within the Reformed community concerning what it means to be Reformed.
- 2) I'm aware that the history of the Reformed tradition is far from simple.
- 3) I am simply trying to identify the principles which lie at the core of the Reformed tradition.
- 4) I obviously will not be able to *defend* these principles in this episode. That is for another time.

A2: We affirm the great "sola's" of the Reformation (*sola* Latin for *alone*)

- 1) Sola Scriptura ("Scripture alone"): The scriptures alone are our highest authority.
- 2) Sola Fide ("faith alone"): We are saved through faith alone in Jesus Christ.
- 3) Sola Gratia ("grace alone"): We are saved by the grace of God alone.
- 4) Solus Christus ("Christ alone"): Jesus Christ alone is our Lord, Savior, and King.
- 5) Soli Deo Gloria ("to the glory of God alone"): We live for the glory of God alone.

A3: We affirm and promote a high view of the *supremacy and sovereignty of God* in all things. We see God as actively involved in His creation, governing and overseeing all the affairs of men.

- 1) "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases." (Psalm 115:3, ESV)
- 2) "If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust." (Job 34:14–15, ESV)
- 3) "...all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'" (Daniel 4:35, ESV)

A4: We affirm the *Doctrines of Grace* (commonly referred to as Calvinism). We see God as the author of salvation, beginning, middle, and end.

- 1) The acrostic TULIP (which is a summation of the Canons of Dort (Nov. 13, 1618-May 9, 1619) which convened to respond to the heresy of Arminianism) is the most familiar way of delineating the doctrines of Grace. Go read the Cannons of Dort - <http://wscal.edu/about-wsc/welcome-to-wsc/doctrinal-standards/canons-of-dort/>
 - a) Total Depravity
 - b) Unconditional Election
 - c) Limited Atonement
 - d) Irresistible Grace
 - e) Perseverance of the Saints

A5: We are *creedal*. We affirm the great creeds of the historic orthodox church.

- 1) The Apostles' Creed
 - a) "This creed arose out of the early Western church and should be thought of as a summary of the Apostles' teaching rather than directly attributable to them. Originally it was essentially a baptismal confession and had several variations. The form in use today dates from the eighth century." (<https://carm.org/apostles-creed>)
- 2) The Nicene Creed

- a) "This creed was first formulated at the First Ecumenical Council, held at Nicea, located in what is now Turkey, in 325, as a response to the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Christ. It was revised at the Second Ecumenical Council, held at Constantinople in 381 as a response to the Macedonian or Pneumatomachian heresy, which denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit."
(<https://carm.org/nicene-creed>)
- 3) The Definition of Chalcedon
 - a) "This creed was adopted at the Fourth Ecumenical Council, held at Chalcedon, located in what is now Turkey, in 451, as a response to certain heretical views concerning the nature of Christ. It established the orthodox view that Christ has two natures (human and divine) that are unified in one person." (<https://carm.org/christianity/creeds-and-confessions/chalcedonian-creed-451-ad>)

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A6: We are *confessional*. We affirm one of the great confessions of the historic orthodox church.

- 1) Some Example of Historic Reformed Confessions
 - a) The Westminster Standards
 - i) The Westminster Confession of Faith
 - ii) The Westminster Larger Catechism
 - iii) The Westminster Shorter Catechism
 - b) Reformed Baptist Standards
 - i) The 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith
 - ii) The Baptist Catechism
 - iii) Orthodox Catechism
 - c) The Three Forms of Unity
 - i) The Belgic Confession of Faith
 - ii) The Heidelberg Catechism
 - iii) The Canons of Dort
- 2) Some benefits of *Confessionalism*
 - a) Brings clarity
 - b) Helps with unity
 - c) Stabilizes teaching ministry
- 3) A response to the "biblicists"

A7: We possess a high view of Scripture. We believe in it's necessity, sufficiency, infallibility, internal consistency, clarity, and that we are dependent upon it.

A8: We have a high view of the church and a high view of preaching, the ordinances, discipline, worship, and evangelism.

A9: We believe that Christians ought to possess a distinctly Christian worldview that permeates the whole of life.

A10: We are *covenantal*. We affirm that God deals with man by way of covenants, and that the organizing structure of the scriptures is covenant. This is more significant than you might think.

Q4: What does it mean to be Reformed *Baptist*

A1: We belong to a very particular stream of tradition which flowed out of the Protestant Reformation.

- 1) Two things that distinguish from other Reformed Christians
 - a) Our view of the church
 - i) See chapter 26 of our Confession
 - b) Our view on baptism
 - i) See chapters 28 and 29 of our Confession