

One God, Many Faiths: Reformed Theology Engages Religious Pluralism
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I. Introduction

- A. the plan: three parts
- B. a note on terms (pluralism, plurality)

II. Context: Why

- A. factors in new awareness of religious plurality
 - 1. Columbus; Reformation; Enlightenment; scholarship
 - 2. Western crisis; Asian renewal; globalization

III. Identity: Who

- A. Reformed
 - 1. ecclesial dimension
 - a) 16th century: churches that were neither Roman Catholic nor Lutheran (Presbyterian polity)
 - b) preaching, sacraments; discipline
 - c) *ecclesia reformata semper reformanda* (a reformed church will always be reformed) ⇒ ongoing confessional tradition (examples)
 - 2. theological dimension: content (what) vs. approach (how)
 - a) *theologia reformata semper reformanda* (reformed theology will always be reformed) ⇒ ongoing theological commitment
 - b) sources of theology: scripture; tradition; reason and experience
 - c) criteria of theology: orthodoxy; coherence; relevance
 - 3. cultural dimension: cultural expression; Christian education

IV. Response: What

- A. the heretical imperative (Peter Berger)
- B. scripture: universality and particularity
- C. Christian history and theology
 - 1. exclusivism
 - 2. inclusivism
 - 3. pluralism
- D. pluralism as incompatible with Christian orthodoxy; strengths of exclusivism and inclusivism (presence of both positions in many theologians)
- E. problem(s) with the exclusivism-inclusivism-pluralism typology
- F. a Reformed response to religious plurality
 - 1. triune God's plan of salvation focused on Jesus Christ (the norm)
 - 2. the outstanding and frequently-asked question: is there salvation elsewhere? ⇒ three possibilities
 - a) book title by Hans Urs von Balthasar
 - 3. telling the Christian story
 - 4. issues in mapping out exclusivism and inclusivism
 - 5. prospects for Christianity in its inter-religious encounters and global expansion