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The Church and the churches: A Dogmatic Essay on Ecclesial Invisibility

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SUMMARY

I will sketch a dogmatic account of the Church and the churches – thereby reframing a Reformed affirmation of Christian unity – in light of the observable splintering of the institutions and contexts tied to Christendom. In so doing, the life of the Church will be considered as related to four foci: the doctrine of God, the economy of salvation, eschatology, and the relation of true and false churches to the Church. The dogmatic necessity of the invisible Church within ecclesiology will be suggested, and the effects of such a doctrine for assessing denominational divisions and the place of ecumenism within the salvific economy will be noted.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est une étude dogmatique sur l'Église et les Églises, qui repense la doctrine réformée de l'unité chrétienne, en prenant en considération les divisions en institutions et mouvements divers au sein de la chrétienté. Il aborde le sujet de la vie de l'Église en rapport avec quatre thèmes clé : la doctrine de Dieu, l'économie du salut, l'eschatologie, et la relation des Églises authentiques et inauthentiques avec l'Église. Il montre la nécessité dogmatique de la doctrine de l'Église invisible et indique les conséquences de cette doctrine quant à la façon de considérer la multiplicité des dénominations ecclésiastiques, ainsi que la place de l'œcuménisme dans l'économie du salut.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ich skizziere eine dogmatische Darstellung der Kirche und der Kirchen im Lichte der beobachtbaren Zersplitterung von Institutionen und Zusammenhängen, die mit dem Christentum verbunden sind. Dabei wird eine reformierte Bejahung der christlichen Einheit neu formuliert. Das Leben der Kirche wird in Bezug auf vier Brennpunkte betrachtet: die Lehre von Gott, die Heilsgeschichte, Eschatologie und die Beziehung von wahren und falschen Kirchen zur Kirche. Die dogmatische Notwendigkeit der unsichtbaren Kirche innerhalb der Ekklesiologie wird aufgezeigt und die Auswirkungen so einer Lehre auf die Bewertung denominationeller Trennungen und auf den Ort der Ökumene innerhalb der Heilsgeschichte wird registriert.

I. Toward a Dogmatic Ecclesiology of Ecumenical Expectations

Contemporary discussions of ecclesiology and ecumenism have integrated a variety of disciplinary concerns, suggesting the importance of socio-historical, politico-ideological, even economic methods of investigation.[1] At their most influential moments, recent ecumenical discussions have lingered graciously in careful thought over matters of ecclesial practice and, in particular, liturgical formation amongst the varied ecclesiastical communions. Thus documents like the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commissions's justifiably well-noted "Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry," have tailored the ecumenical enterprise along cultural-linguistic lines. Following theorists like

Alasdair MacIntyre and George Lindbeck, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Clifford Geertz, the commonalities and differences of practice within varied denominations and churches have been the focus of relatively traditional ecumenical efforts.

In a different vein, however, have been the ideological pursuits of radical inclusivity within the mainline denominations and amongst minority factions of other communions. In these situations, ecumenism has followed the path of broader cultural engagement: relativism and tolerance have been brandished as moral commonplaces for the embrace and encouragement of a bevy of socio-cultural and indeed ecclesiastical practices and professions. Oftentimes the inclusivist agenda has been (sub)merged within the aesthetics, or even the participatory ontology, of the (to all appearances) traditional ecumenical concerns noted above. Whether couched in terms of sacramental and ministerial praxis or in the incarnational extension of the *assumptio carnis*, to contemporary ecclesiastical embrace of varied sexualities and liturgical pluralisms, ecumenical theory has been driven towards visible points of contact. These tangible commonplaces may be inherently ecclesiastical (liturgical) or generically cultural (tolerance, inclusivism), yet they pursue the conversational task of ecumenical reflection (oftentimes strictly) with reference to the visible actions of the churches.[2]

A dogmatic theology of the Church involves an approach befitting its object of study: investigation of the particular shape which the community of those gathered by and around the Word of God takes in the economy of triune grace.[3] That this investigation limits itself to consideration of the people of the Word (rather than some phenomenological category) further implies that dogmatic ecclesiology will critically appropriate the confessional understanding of Scripture for the sake of testifying to the Church which the Gospel creates. My task, then, will be to sketch a dogmatic account of the Church and the churches. This sketch will focus on the question of Christian unity in light of the observable splintering of the institutions and contexts tied to Christendom. In so doing, four *foci* will be considered: the doctrine of God, the economy of salvation, eschatology, and the relation of true and false churches to the Church. My goal will be to suggest the dogmatic necessity of the invisible Church within ecclesiology and note the effects of such a doctrine for assessing denominational divisions and the place of ecumenism within the salvific economy. The present essay will pro-

ceed from the confessional texts of the post-Reformation Reformed tradition, thereby sketching what ecumenical expectations might be dogmatically appropriate within this particular confessional context.

II. The Church of the Transcendent and Triune God

The Church lives in the space provided by God. That God makes space for the Church's life entails the distinction of God and Church. Just as God and world must be distinguished by the doctrine of creatio ex nihilo,[4] so also the Church and the triune God are differentiated by the doctrines of calling, vocation, and election (Eph. 2:10). The Church's life and the divine life cannot be identified or merged.[5] The life of God freely precedes and exists independently of the causal activities of the people of God.[6] The unceasing freedom of the Lord finds ultimate expression in the claim that the incarnate Son of God did not circumscribe the life of the second person of the Trinity.[7] Even more so, the "body of Christ" does not directly, nor extensively, represent the Son's identity.[8]

The Church does live, however, and this must be attributed solely to the determination of God's Word to shape this community.[9] Therefore, the life of the Church and the divine life must be asymmetrically ordered as speaker and listener.[10] That the Word precedes and provides in no way violates the freedom of the Church as a communal agent (e.g., reader and preacher of God's Word; celebrant of Eucharistic feast). Rather, the transcendence of God qualitatively distinguishes the action of God and this God's people such that ontological competition cannot occur.[11] The Spirit mediates the Word through these graced activities: mortifying and vivifying in exegesis and proclamation, sanctifying the common elements for union with Christ in the sacraments. As David Willis puts it, "Holiness is not the opposite of creatureliness, but is the right use of creatureliness."[12] God makes the Church holy, thereby perfecting her concrete life as uniquely formed for fellowship in Christ.

A dogmatic account of the Church's life, therefore, must attend to the ontological shape of the creaturely life of God's people, given by the transcendent Lord of grace. Such metaphysical clarification follows from the logic intrinsic to the Scriptural accounts of the triune God's self-revelation (Ex. 3:14; Isa. 46:5, 9-10).[13] The implicit ontological judgments necessitated by such texts

must precede and qualify later considerations of ecclesiology, lest the Church somehow occlude the place of Christ himself.[14]

III. The Church of the Electing God

That the Church is distinct from the world follows only from the freedom of God's election unto fellowship with sinners through the Word (Jn. 17:14). Her common elements are sanctified by God's actualizing call, wherein the divine declaration sets apart that which is culturally and historically natural for distinctly supernatural ends.[15] That the Church participates in the economy of salvation, therefore, involves the Church in the covenantal relation of Lord and servant, as well as the eschatological sublimation of nature in the beginning by grace at the end. Grace neither destroys, nor merely perfects nature; rather, grace perfects nature through a disruptive event which must be classified as mortification and vivification.[16] Not only ecclesiology more broadly, but the churchly fellowship considered under the rubric of ecumenism remains tethered to God's sanctification of a people. The unity of the Church beckoned forth by Jesus in prayer (Jn. 17:21-22) follows the pursuit of ecclesial sanctification (Jn. 17:17, 19). However this unity is to be considered must be tied to the manner in which Jesus's sanctification involves that of his people.

Dogmatic ecclesiology, therefore, requires that the Church be considered not only subsequent to Trinitarian orthodoxy (in the vein of Nicaea), but soteriological orthodoxy (as clarified in the Protestant confessions). Differences between Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, liberal *Kulturprotestantismus*, and confessional evangelicalism flow through the doctrine of salvation (e.g., justification) to the nature of mediation in the Church (e.g., sacraments, authority).[17] The shape of soteriology, then, affects the concrete life of the Church and suggests the manner by which communal existence will form around the Word. A Reformed soteriology which emphasizes the continuing integrity of humanity and created nature, even in the hypostatic union, will restrict speech about the Church's life in nature-appropriate ways (*finitum non capax infiniti*).[18] The Church will not be burdened with divine tasks, nor will the sanctifying calling out of these people be withdrawn from its broader redemptive-historical context.[19] The Church exists as people elected for service, marked only by God's mortifying and vivifying speech,

simul iustus et peccator. The creaturely being of the redeemed people has been assumed in Christ and glorified in his raising; the inclusion of the saints in this vicarious identity grounds the self-effacing nature of the Church's Gospel, as well as her attestation. The Church in the economy of divine grace finds justification *solus Christus*, thereby mandating an extension of the material principle of the Reformation into extensive ecclesiological qualification and restraint.[20]

IV. The Wandering Church

The Church wanders from bondage in sin and death to the awaited city of God.[21] That her life is marked by pilgrim expectations, *simul iustus et peccator*, suggests that her constitution may be particularly difficult to discern in concrete history. The battle for assurance of personal salvation may be paralleled by the quest for discernment of the Church's true visible unity; true fellowship is "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).[22] Such epistemological caution is not in vogue within the recent ecumenical and ecclesiological literature. In fact, the distinction between the visible and invisible Church has been lambasted as of late, by Roman Catholic and mainline ecclesiologies which have proposed a patently visible Church or none at all.[23] From Bonhoeffer's worries during the Nazi era, to the pleas of narrative theologians of hope during the tumultuous Sixties, to the bold anti-secular posturing of the Radical Orthodoxy movement, the invisibility of the Church has been denounced as a flight from responsibility and reality to sectarianism and fantasy.[24] Rather than recede into some idyllic realm of ecclesial remove, the Church's concrete practices have been the ontological and pastoral focus of recent ecumenical efforts.[25]

Yet the Church of the Word cannot accept such terms and allow ecclesial definition to proceed in an immanent fashion, for the Word which makes alive must first kill.[26] That the Spirit continually inspires the life of the Church around the Word in no way minimizes the need for the Spirit's illumination of proper acknowledgment of the Church and Word. The visibility of the Church, therefore, involves what John Webster has called a "spiritual visibility."[27] That is, her true manifestation cannot be considered an universally-perceptible truth available to all.[28] Quite to the contrary, the Nicene marks of the Church confess *belief*, not observation, of the Church's life as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. The Spirit alone makes known the

Church's veiled glory.

The invisible Church lives as a concrete people veiled by the flesh and made visible in the Spirit. That is, the Church's invisibility is an epistemological limitation.[29] Is it merely an epistemological principle? The Westminster Larger Catechism defines the invisible Church as "the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head."[30] This definition distinguishes these elect members of Christ ontologically – as those gathered to live united in Christ – privileging the ontic over the noetic.[31] The actual number composing the Church visibly and invisibly differs, because the visible Church as mixed multitude includes the elect and those who profess faith, but already have or yet will fail to persevere in faithfulness. At this point the argument for invisibility by Barth falls short, insofar as he fails to ground adequately the epistemic invisibility in an ontic reality under the rubric of divine election/ predestination. The provisional communion of the reprobate within the *communio sanctorum* marks the primary need for a doctrine of the invisible Church – the elect only to be revealed in definitive fashion at the eschatological judgment – which Barth shies from, apart from relatively reticent admissions of divine providence. Only secondarily does the invisibility of the Church serve to highlight the sinful-yet-justified nature of the Church's witness, wherein even the truly redeemed are less than patently obedient in their attestation. Care in distinguishing these two uses of the doctrine – as well as maintenance of both – will be necessary in addressing the quest for true unity.

Invisibility marks the life of the Church due to her eschatological placement (Jn. 17:11).[32] That the triune God has made space for her being in the wake of Christ's passion and with anticipation for his glorious return marks her life with unfulfilled expectation. Christ's vindication has been distinguished as "first fruits" from the long-awaited resurrection of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:23).[33] Thus the New Covenant promises have yet to be enacted in their fullness, leaving the makeup of the Church mixed rather than a strictly regenerated membership.[34] This eschatological context leads G. C. Berkower to claim that "the continuity of the Church becomes visible in hope."[35] The eschatological invisibility of the Church, therefore, extends ecclesiology along the principle of *sola fide*.

Yet the invisible Church resides in the visible Church, partaking of the ordinary "means of grace" found in her consecrated ministry of the Word.[36] Ontological passivity – dependence upon the life-giving Spirit – cannot be likened to phenomenological laxity, nor can it facilitate a docetic ecclesiology which spiritualizes the material by abolishing it.[37] The spiritual character of the Church works through creaturely mediation, attestations which hearken in human voice and symbolic testimony. Even champions of the invisibility of the Church affirm the mandate to vigorously work for the purification of the visible churches.[38]

Her concrete life, however, can never be ascribed metaphysical necessity, for her life follows from God's election. That is, the Nicene Creed confesses *credo ecclesiam*: "I believe the Church," rather than "I believe in the Church."[39] This dogmatic point simply affirms the sanctification of this creaturely company for divine use in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18ff.). As with the spiritual presence of Christ in the visible words of washing and feasting, so the ecclesial life will be only spiritually discerned because eschatologically limited: as Christ is absent from the table physically (because ascended physically), so the Church will fail to evidence concrete obedience in any perfect or unceasing measure.[40]

V. The Invisible Church, True Church, and false churches

The Church enlivened by the Spirit of the Word transgresses all socio-cultural boundaries (Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11-22). Communion enjoyed by those gathered around the pulpit, table, and font, involves fellowship with fellow saints across the globe and through the centuries (the *communio sanctorum*). Yet the typical observer will see anything but joyful fellowship among those within the churches of the twenty-first century. Denominations abound; proselytism continues; anathemas remain. A theology of the Church must address the concrete plethora of churches.

The invisibility of the Church does not directly solve the dilemma of relating at institutional levels, for the invisibility applies primarily to individuals within churches.[41] Contrary to some Lutheran renditions of the invisibility doctrine, its purpose is primarily to note the presence of a mixed multitude within the people of God and only secondarily to distinguish the just activities of the Church amidst the enduring sinfulness of the as-yet-not-fully-redeemed saints.[42] Yet the invisibility of the Church does affect the life of the churches and therefore dogmatically precedes consideration of

the true Church and the false churches. That there are churches does not necessarily reflect sinful failure to maintain unity, except when such multiplicity reflects differences other than geographical diversity.[43] Disunity for reasons of petty difference, scandal, or (worse yet) theological division reflect failures to appropriately maintain Christian communion. Thus the Reformers and their confessional heirs sought to note the marks which characterize the life of a true, though perhaps less than ideal, Church in hopes of identifying the churches with which one ought to fellowship.

The true marks of the Church are the preaching and reception of the pure Word of God and the right administration of the two sacraments.[44] Later confessional documents and orthodox dogmatics included the appropriate exercise of church discipline as a third mark; however, this was likely included within the Word and sacraments in earlier formulations and ought be seen as an expansion for clarification, rather than addition of an alien principle.[45] Nevertheless, these marks do not remove the invisibility of the Church. Rather, they are touchstones by which the visible Church might be tested and found acceptable as an instrument and witness of the Gospel.[46]

Thus the invisibility of the Church must be adequately acknowledged – not removed – in each of its two manifestations, albeit differently.[47] Regarding individual hypocrisy, church discipline can and must be enacted faithfully; yet such efforts, no matter how well-intentioned, will never remove all hypocrisy from the Church.[48] Only the eschatological judge, Jesus Christ, will decisively separate the righteous from the unrighteous (Mt. 13:24-30, 47-58).[49] Similarly, regarding ecclesial sinfulness amidst the life of even the righteous, hidden behind facades of flesh and failure, the Church can and must listen to the Word and allow her witness – in Word and sacrament – to be tested by the Gospel (*semper reformanda*). False churches will be shunned, such that the Church may be unified gradually, imperfectly, but concretely in some fashion through the varied lives of the true churches. That is, the division of churches into true and false may incrementally aid the quest for unity by making explicit the grounds for true fellowship, adequate witness to the Gospel. The most difficult decisions will undoubtedly involve the provisional judgments about varying degrees of faithfulness to the Word and different levels of failure to rightly administer the sacraments.[50] Such witness will certainly remain "daily advancing," though imperfect

and visible only to the eyes of faith, and in so doing be on the pilgrim path of holiness.[51]

Notes

1   Many thanks to Prof. Henri Blocher for his gracious comments – marked by encouragement and perceptive analysis – on an earlier version of this essay.
2   For an excellent survey of recent literature on the integration of sociological analysis (particularly of the communitarian style) and contemporary ecclesiology, see Stanley J. Grenz, "Ecclesiology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology* (Cambridge Companions to Religion; ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 252-268.
3   John Webster, "On Evangelical Ecclesiology," in *Confessing God: Essays in Christian Dogmatics II* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 153-154.
4   Janet Martin Soskice, "Athens and Jerusalem, Alexandria and Edessa: Is there a Metaphysics of Scripture?" *IJST* 8, no. 2 (2006), 153.
5   *contra* Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man* (trans. Lancelot Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund; San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988), 53, 73, 82, 88, 127, 196.
6   Webster, "On Evangelical Ecclesiology," 156-158.
7   E. David Willis, Calvin's *Catholic Christology: The Function of the So-Called* Extra Calvinisticum *in Calvin's Theology* (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 2; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 26-60.
8   Ian A. McFarland, "The Body of Christ: Rethinking a Classic Ecclesiological Model," *IJST* 7, no. 3 (2005), 244-245. cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/1: 667-668 (hereafter *CD*).
9   Webster, "On Evangelical Ecclesiology," 154.
10 John Webster, "Christ, Church, and Reconciliation," in *Word and Church: Essays in Christian Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 228; Christoph Schwöbel, "The Creature of the Word: Recovering the Ecclesiology of the Reformers," in *On Being the Church: Essays on the Christian Community* (ed. Colin E. Gunton and Daniel W. Hardy; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), 122; Martin Luther, WA 8:491.
11 Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 2-4.
12 David Willis, *Notes on the Holiness of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 48.
13 Matthew Levering, *Scripture and Metaphysics: Aquinas and the Renewal of Trinitarian Theology* (Challenges in Contemporary Theology; Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 47-74; Brevard S. Childs, *Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster, 1974), 83; *pace* R. Kendall Soulen, "YHWH the Triune God," *Modern Theology* 15 (1999), 34.

14 Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 20-21; Webster, "On Evangelical Ecclesiology," 179; Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 259; *pace* de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 53 (but see 363).

15 Karl Barth, "The Real Church," *SJT* 3, no. 3 (1950), 341-342.

16 George Hunsinger, "Baptized into Christ's Death: Karl Barth and the Future of Roman Catholic Theology," in *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 269-270; Colin E. Gunton, "Creation: (2) The Spirit Moved Over the Face of the Waters. The Holy Spirit and the Created Order," in *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Essays toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), 109-110, 112, 118; *pace* de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 283-284.

17 Willis, *Notes on the Holiness of God*, 94: For example, Roman Catholic doctrine supplants the true humanity of the sacramental elements and, similarly, the Church by their participation in the divine movement (deification or theopoeisis). In this way, neither transubstantiation nor papal infallibility takes the creaturely nature of the *communio sanctorum* seriously enough; *contra* de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 286.

18 Adrienne Dengerinck Chaplin, "The Invisible and the Sublime: From Participation to Reconciliation," in *Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition: Creation, Covenant, and Participation* (ed. James K. A. Smith and James H. Olthuis; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 90-91, 104; *pace* de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 211.

19 Westminster Confession of Faith xxviii.3; see Michael Horton, "Participation and Covenant," in *Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition*, 129-132; George Hunsinger, "Fides Christo Formata: Luther, Barth, and the Joint Declaration," in *The Gospel of Justification in Christ: Where Does the Church Stand Today?* (ed. Wayne C. Stumme; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 77-78.

20 Suggestions of this in Calvin, Institutes, IV.i.21, 27. Calvin helpfully notes the fittingness of confessing "forgiveness of sins" immediately after confession of the "communion of saints." See Gerhard O. Forde, "The Word that Kills and Makes Alive," in *Marks of the Body of Christ* (ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 1; *pace* de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 226.

21 First Helvetic Confession xi; see Augustine, *City of God*, I.35.

22 G. C. Berkouwer, *The Church* (Studies in Dogmatics; trans. James E. Davison; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 178-182.

23 De Lubac remains a notable exception (to some extent); see *Catholicism*, 72, 273, 292, 363 (but see 53).

24 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 113; Robert Jenson, *Systematic Theology* (2 vols.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997-1999), 1:205-206; 2:211-227; John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 159-165.

25 See, e.g., James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago, eds., *Knowing the Triune God: The Work of the Spirit in the Practices of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 8; see the recent criticisms by Nicholas Healy, "Practices and the New Ecclesiology: Misplaced Concreteness?" *IJST* 5 (2003), 287-308.

26 Forde, "The Word that Kills and Makes Alive," 11-12.

27 Webster, "On Evangelical Ecclesiology," 175, 179; Barth, *CD* IV/1: 654.

28 Barth, "The Real Church," 338-340; idem, *CD* IV/1: 654.

29 Webster, "On Evangelical Ecclesiology," 181-182.

30 Westminster Larger Catechism 64.

31 *pace* John Murray, "The Church: Its Definition in Terms of 'Visible' and 'Invisible' Invalid," in *Collected Writings of John Murray*, vol. 1: *The Claims of Truth* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1976), 231.

32 Forde, "The Word that Kills and Makes Alive," 2; Douglas Farrow, "Eucharist, Eschatology, and Ethics," in *The Future as God's Gift: Explorations in Christian Eschatology* (ed. David Fergusson and Marcel Sarot; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 205, 214; idem, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 3

33 Colin E. Gunton, "The Church and the Lord's Supper: 'Until He Comes.' Towards an Eschatology of Church Membership," in *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, 224.

34 Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, IV.i.13; on the partial fulfillment of the "new covenant" promises of Jer. 31, see Richard L. Pratt, Jr., "Infant Baptism in the New Covenant," in *The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism* (ed. Gregg Strawbridge; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003), 168-169; *pace* Henri Blocher, "Old Covenant, New Covenant," in *Always Reforming: Explorations in Systematic Theology* (ed. A. T. B. McGowan; Leicester: Apollos, 2006), 247-248.

35 Berkouwer, *The Church*, 194.

36 Westminster Shorter Catechism 88; Westminster Larger Catechism 35, 153-154; Westminster Confession of Faith xxvii.3; Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.4-5.

37 Tanner, Jesus, *Humanity, and the Trinity*, 71-73.

38 Belgic Confession, xxviii; Barth, *CD* IV/1: 653-654; Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.7.

39 Berkouwer, *The Church*, 10; Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.2.

40 Barth, *CD* IV/1: 662.

41 Scots Confession xvi.

42 Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.7; Westminster Confession of Faith xx.1; First Helvetic Confession xvii; *pace* I. U.

Dalferth, "The Visible and the Invisible: Luther's Legacy of a Theological Theology," in *England and Germany: Studies in Theological Diplomacy* (Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity; ed. S. W. Sykes; Bern: Peter Lang, 1982), 33-37;

43 Barth, *CD* IV/1: 671; see Second Helvetic Confession xvii.

44 Second Helvetic Confession, xvii; Westminster Confession of Faith xxvii.4.

45 Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* (ed. E. T. Bizer; trans. G. T. Thomson; London: Wakeman Trust, nd), 668-670; see also Scots Confession xviii;

Belgic Confession xxix.

46 "Touchstone" (*ad Lydium lapidem*) comes from Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.11.

47 For careful response to both individual hypocrisy and institutional apostasy, see Belgic Confession xxix.

48 Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 666-667.

49 Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.13.

50 On the notion of such degrees, see Westminster Confession of Faith xxvii.4-5; Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.ii.8.

51 Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.i.17.