Caroline Divines and Ecumenism

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[0:00] It's good to be here today. I'm glad so many could make it in for a talk on the Caroline Divines. If you guys know something I don't know, I don't know. Well, yeah, so I'm Arnold Mayorga.

It's lots of familiar faces. Just to tell you a little bit about myself, I'm an intern here, very part-time, mostly working with the men's, sometimes pinch-hitting for morning kids or Sunday service or something like this.

I'm also an ordnant in Anik. What that means is I'm a candidate for ordination, essentially. I'm in the last kind of stage of that, waiting for appointment to a position.

Yeah, also a little bit of the background. Yeah, maybe you could say I'm a former Pentecostal. I try and tell my parents I am still Pentecostal. But I don't know if they would have me.

Because I'm also Anglican. I'm also many other things. So that's there. I'm interested in learning more about Anglicanism and curious about this group of people.

[1:05] You'll also notice it's Caroline Divines and Ecumenism is what the title was. I will be speaking about ecumenism, but it'll be a little brief. It's not fully developed because I think it kind of started becoming a whole other paper.

And I want to get through this. Yeah, maybe. Maybe. So I want to introduce you to the Caroline Divines. Let you know who they are, what's their theology, what we can learn from them.

So I want to do that in two parts. First part, kind of a brief historical background to kind of get the context for the Caroline Divines. In that same first part, I want to then talk about their theology.

I won't be able to go through everything, but I'll try and hit some things in detail there. In the second part, that's when I want to suggest how their work can be more immediately relevant to us.

So I will talk about ecumenism, but I also want to talk about other ways and how they're immediately relevant. Okay. Also, last introductory remark. I'm addressing you today as fellow learners.

[2:10] So, in the spirit of community learning, I don't want to just monologue for an hour. So please, if you have questions or comments, something that I'm not being clear on, just make it known so we can engage and dialogue a little bit.

We're here face-to-face, so let's take advantage of that, right? Okay. So for a brief historical setting. The Caroline Divines are mostly a 17th century group of theologians and writers.

The majority of them lived and worked under the reign of the Stuarts, James I, Charles I, and Charles II. And their time spent under the reigns of Charles I and Charles II is what gives them their designation Caroline.

Charles in Latin is Carolus, hence Caroline. So there's no canonical list of who these divines were, but the most prominent are, I think, Jeremy Taylor, who lived from 1613 to 1667.

Lancelot Andrews, 1555 to 1626. And Archbishop William Laud, who lived from 1573 to 1645. Others include, and you might recognize them, you might not, John Cozen, Nicholas Ferrar, George Herbert, Robert Sanderson, Isaac Walton, Henry Hammond, Herbert Thorndike, George Bull.

[3:31] The list goes on. In the period of the divines, you'll see there is largely 17th century. Late 16th century, going to like mid to late 17th century.

So this period, as some of you might know, comes at the heels of several identity-forming events in Anglicanism. There's the Elizabethan settlement and the publication of the third Elizabethan edition of the Book of Common Prayer.

There's the revision of Cranmer's Articles of Religion, which becomes the 39 articles, which we know today. And the publication of Richard Hooker's Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. Huge, pivotal moments in the history of the Church of England.

And they established something of the spirit of Anglicanism. Hooker's work did much to defend a more moderate kind of via media form of Anglicanism. But in the 17th century, things are still far from stable.

And there's a battle for the identity of Anglicanism. It's in full swing for decades, really. The 17th century is marked by intra-ecclesial conflict. So generally speaking, the Carolines are in opposition to a group of, we might know, Puritans, Calvinist Puritans.

[4:45] So the Puritans wanted a more Presbyterian or non-Episcopal form of Church governance. Well, the Carolines were strong monarchists, and they defended the historic Episcopate.

Episcopate, by the way, it's just bishops. They're defending the office of bishops. Yeah, exactly. The Puritans maintained the need to be more fully reformed in the Church, according to the Genevan way, while the Carolines insisted upon retaining all that was good and true, even if it was resemblant of Roman Catholicism.

And the Puritans rejected the Book of Common Prayer. They were austere in their liturgical expression, and they were uncompromising, if not intolerant, of what they regarded as theological impurity in the Church.

The Carolines, on the other hand, were prayer book Anglicans. They advocated an extravagant beautification of their worship, and they opposed all separatism.

Unfortunately, the conflict wasn't just ideological, either. It's a bit of a stain here in our Anglican past. Archbishop William Laud undertook a project of aggressively enforcing and persecuting the Puritans when he came into power.

[5:55] So he wanted to enforce uniformity in liturgical form of worship. So he imprisoned, he mutilated, even martyred many dissenting Puritans. Eventually, though, he was beheaded at the hands of the Puritans in 1645.

And then the Puritans had their share of bloodshed through the English Civil War. And then to capture the trial and execution of King Charles I. Some bloody history there.

I have no interest in perpetuating antithetical form of theological thinking. I don't like the kind of sectarianism that can come from that. So the rehearsal of the story really is just to give us a kind of context to know what was going on with the Carolines.

There was some polemical writing in the Carolines, especially with the Puritans, but also with the Roman Catholics. Hopefully that kind of gives you a sense of where they were historically.

So, what I really want to do is look at their theology, receive like what they were doing, receive all that is good and true and beautiful within our common Christian heritage. I think that's a vital work for the maturity of Christians.

[7:01] Because Christians, I think, should be marked by a generosity of thought, the charitableness to our Christian past. Try and understand them as best as we can. And in humility, we should be able to recognize the Spirit at work in others.

And if we can recognize the Spirit at work in others, we can welcome that work. And see how it can inform our own theology, our own spiritual life. So, maybe some questions or comments at that moment.

Maybe? Good? I was really thorough? Probably wasn't, but... That's rough. Can we have a little thing for you? Opening prayer. Yes. Sorry, I didn't know that we'd do that.

Just a quickie. Yeah. Sure, sure. Thank you. Father, I ask that you would help us this morning to listen carefully to how you might be speaking through these group of men called the Caroline Divines.

Help us, Lord, to wisely appreciate their work and to receive what your Spirit has done in our path. I pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. I've got one question, you know, with all these beheadings and things, and how England is known for their horror movies.

[8:11] Could this be, perhaps, why the English is so much into making horror movies? Because of all these, oh, good Lord, things that went on there. I don't know if there's direct, I mean, I don't think there's a direct connection, though history is sometimes horrifying.

And I think the English, with their great long history, have known some of that horror. Okay, maybe let's get into the theology. Okay. So, theologically, the Carolines contributed to a golden era of Anglican scholarship and devotion.

In their hands, theology was more than prose, it was poetry. Actually, I don't think it's a coincidence that several of the Carolines and their heirs were poets. George Herbert, John Dunn, and later T.S.

Ella taking their cue from Lancelot Andrews are all great poets, you might recognize them. And their leitmotif, their central theme was their realistic theology of the sacraments.

So, what I mean by realistic theology of the sacraments is that they believed the sacraments truly communicated to the recipient something of what the sacraments represented. So, to the Carolines, a merely symbolic understanding of the sacraments is a theological novelty that doesn't do justice to what a sacrament is.

[9:33] So, though the sacraments are symbolic, they're also more. They're actual means or effectual signs of God's grace to the recipient. So, Richard Hooker puts it this way, that the sacraments really give what they promise, and they are what they signify, is what he says.

So, therefore, the sacrament of baptism, which symbolically, I think, indicates cleansing, rebirth, participation in Christ's death and resurrection, the sacrament of baptism was understood to be truly regenerative of new spirit-empowered life in the person being baptized.

Jeremy Taylor, one of the foremost leaders of the Caroline Divines, writes, He says, He says, As Christ, our head, felt these effects in manifestation, so the Church believes God does to her and to her meanest children in the susception of the holy rite of baptism, in rite of appointment and holy dispositions.

For the heavens open to upon us, and the Holy Ghost ascends, to sanctify the waters, to hallow the catechumen, to pardon the past and repented sins, and to consign him to the inheritance of sons, and to put on his military girdle, and to give him the sacrament of oath of fidelity.

So, lots going on in baptism. Really, actual things are happening in this rite of baptism for the Caroline Divines. Thank you. Maybe any questions there?

[11:09] Good? Makes sense? Maybe we all believe that already? Are they called the Divines? Are they like a series of sermons, or just talks? I think the Divines part kind of acknowledges that they were writing theologically.

Oh. Lots of these guys were clergy or theologians, though there were some laymen and just poets and writers there as well. I don't know if you're going to get to this, but if they believe in transcendentiation.

I will get to that. Perfect segue. Are you, Arnold, convinced? Are you just telling us what they believe? Yeah, lots of what I read in there is compelling, though there are some that needs to be, I wouldn't say discarded, but maybe handled judiciously.

Some of their context is polemical, right? And so it might come off as negating other positions that we would also want to include.

Particularly the Puritans, they're part of the evangelical heritage. And sometimes in really polemically advancing their position, they're negating some of the good that the Puritans bring.

[12:16] I wouldn't want to do that, for example. Okay. So in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, or the Eucharist, which symbolically indicates Christ's sacrificial giving of his body and blood, the communicant was believed to be actually receiving the body and blood of Christ in some real way.

So John overall maintained in self-conscious consensus with the Fathers that in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and the blood of Christ, and therefore the whole Christ, are indeed really present, and are really received by us, and are really united to the sacramental signs, which not only signify, but also convey Christ in the communion of the Sacrament.

And Puritans believe that? Puritans, I do not think. I mean, I don't know, maybe it's hard to paint them in a whole light. It's not exactly the Catholic position. Similar, but it isn't exactly the Catholic position, because they take objection to transubstantiation.

So it seems that most of the Carolines continued along Hooker's understanding of the Eucharist. They spoke about the sacraments as working in a receptionist manner, though they still believed in the objective, real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

In short, the receptionist doctrine stated that the effects and benefits of the sacrament are not strictly dependent on the elements of the sacrament, but primarily on the one receiving the sacrament. So this receptionism was actually formulated in polemical dialogue with the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation.

[13:54] So they're saying it isn't the same as transubstantiation. Actually, many of them make very clear that we don't adhere to that. And, you know, the 39 articles, they say that you shouldn't.

It's unbiblical and non-patristic. And so they don't accept transubstantiation. I was looking in the work of Holy Rosary Cathedral Church program.

They say they literally translate the scripture when Jesus says, this is my body, this is my blood. And I refer to him from the Brethren Church. He says that's actually receiving him.

So some very evangelicals, but that's why Catholics believe what they do. They believe it actually is a very literal interpretation of the scriptures.

In some ways, yeah, it can be understood as very literal. And that's actually one of the places with the Carolines that I think there's some problems there. Because many Catholics would say it isn't literal.

[14:50] It's not that simple. So it isn't that they're corporeally receiving Christ's body and blood in some very mechanical way.

So there are many that try and find a kind of connection between the two or how they can be united again. So the receptionist position of the Carolines, it acknowledges the real presence of Christ in the sacrament.

It says it's there. They're very hesitant on kind of explaining the mechanics of how Christ is there, the metaphysic behind that, where the Catholic position can be understood to be doing a little bit more of that, more than the Carolines are comfortable with, and more than the patristics did, which for them is not okay.

That's where they really take objection. Currently, there are many who try and see those things be reconciled. For those who are interested, there is an idea by George Hunsinger on trans-alimentation that I think is quite compelling on how these two things can be reconciled without just making it transubstantiation.

Does that make sense a little bit? Is that, some of that might be a little, yeah? Is it more like Luther's position that he eventually arrived at, which we would call consubstantiation.

[16:13] Consubstantiation. He may have called it that too, I don't know. So it's a lot more similar, I think. The marriage of Christ is there. Yeah, it's a lot more. Christ and blood. Yeah, maybe you could say substantially.

Theologians are famously really careful with how they're putting these things because they want to acknowledge kind of the full reality of it or not overly defined but also not be too ambiguous, I guess.

So it is very similar to consubstantiation, but I don't think it's the exact same thing. Sorry, go ahead. Yeah, I don't know if you're familiar with the book given for you by Keith Matheson.

It's an excellent exposition of the reformed position of the real presence of Christ in the supper but not as transubstantiation. The issue with transubstantiation, of course, is that it is literally becoming that.

And this leads to all the veneration in monstrance. You have to have these things because it's literally God in your hands.

[17:18] And it led to all kinds of oddities in the church and they're putting it directly in your mouth because people would pocket it, take it home, pray to it because it's Jesus, right? And so it's an excellent book.

I put it out there for people who haven't read it. And he defends the traditional reformed view of the real presence, but it's a presence by faith. So I will, thanks for that. There are different ways in which Christians have understood real presence.

So the reform do speak about, and Calvin especially, speak about a spiritual real presence. Lutherans have consubstantiation, so it's a little bit more in between transubstantiation and the spiritual presence.

And I think Anglicans are very close to that consubstantiation. Though consubstantiation, I think it talks about the substance of bread and wine and Jesus' substance, body and blood, existing kind of in like hypostatic union, which is the way that Jesus' divinity and human nature were united.

But some take issue with that, without getting into details. But I think it's, I think, there's something there that I think we need to wrestle with and acknowledge.

[18:41] And yeah, I think it's a view of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist that I think many Christians have held. And there's reason for it.

Transubstantiation sees it more like the substance of Christ's body and blood annihilate the substance of bread and wine.

So in kind of like in appearance, in external, in accidents, they call it, they're still bread and wine. But truly, substantially, it's the body and blood of Christ.

And, well, one, that's like describing the metaphysics of the sacrament in a way that the Church Fathers and the Carolines and many other Christians were not really comfortable with. Today, many Orthodox, that they're not comfortable with that because they're describing a mystery that is really inscrutable to the minds of men.

That's where the issue is mostly held. Yeah? What was that word that you said, George Hunsinger? George Hunsinger talks about trans-alimentation.

[19:51] Trans-alimentation. The book is called Eucharist and Ecumenism, Let Us Keep the Feast. Okay.

Yeah, so the Carolines all reject transubstantiation. And the 39 articles, they basically say you have to reject transubstantiation. Yeah, but they do hold to a real presence, a real and essential presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

So to more fully understand the Carolines position on the sacraments, I want us to recall the classically Augustinian distinction between the outward and visible sign of a sacrament, and this is called the sacramentum, and the inward and spiritual grace of a sacrament.

This is called the race. So in a receptionist understanding, the sacramentum and the race are sacramentally united. And the sacramentum is not abolished.

So that's what seems like that might happen in transubstantiation, which they take a problem with. So the elements, the sacramentum, play an instrumental role in communicating the race, the real presence of Christ, to the faithful receiver.

[21:06] But this doesn't occur in a kind of mechanical or corporal way, which, that's where it tends to more like magic, and can lead to superstition, particularly in those who don't understand what's going on, which is where the problem is, right?

So the efficacy of grace conveyed through the sacrament depends primarily on the disposition of faith in the recipient, as well as the right administration of the sacrament.

So, the Carolines did not go on to speak about how exactly the sacrament affected the reality which it signified. That's why they took objection to the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation.

They interpreted transubstantiation as giving precise metaphysical explanation of the Eucharist, and they didn't think that was possible, like I said earlier. For the Carolines, the mechanism of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist remained a mystery.

The sacraments weren't there. This is the other thing. In this kind of metaphysical description of the Eucharist, the focus goes entirely, or can go entirely, to the elements.

[22:21] And then, the sacrament of the Eucharist, the intent kind of seems to bring the presence of Christ to these elements. But for the Carolines, the sacraments weren't there to be analyzed, or the elements weren't there to be worshipped in that way.

They were instituted by Christ and offered to the Church that we should duly use them, so we could partake in the very life of the Triune God. So they stayed away from putting the Eucharist in monstrance and Eucharistic adoration.

They didn't go that direction. Though they would acknowledge the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. It was something that was, let's say, bound in the liturgy, in its due use by the recipient.

Does that make a little bit of sense there? Okay. Appropriately then, the Carolines maintained that the sacraments were central to the life of the Church.

This is another one of their distinctive features. Lancelot Andrews maintained that word and sacrament are equally integral to Christian worship. For Andrews, the Eucharist was the heart of the Church's worship, but it was always to be contextualized by the reading and preaching of the Scriptures.

[23:37] His sermons were a high point, but they tended to set up parishioners for reception of the Eucharist. After all, they thought, if Christ is really present, if he's really come and made himself present to the recipient of the Eucharist, then how could Christians treat this event as anything other than central?

For the Carolines, the portion of the liturgy preceding the Eucharist should prepare and direct all towards a worthy reception of Christ. Communion itself was to be conducted in a manner that was God-honoring and reverent, and the portion of the liturgy that followed the Eucharist ought to encourage gratitude and joy at the grace of God's presence with us.

So it all very much kind of centered on communion. So part and parcel with this emphasis on the sacraments was their concern for the aesthetic quality of worship.

The Carolines made great efforts to restore churches and to beautify the liturgy. King Charles I encouraged, with the influence of sovereign authority, a liturgical renewal and a surge in the production of new devotional material.

And with King Charles I's accession to the throne, William Laud's ecclesiastical career prospered. Laud loved ceremony and harmonious liturgy, so as Archbishop of Canterbury, he began to enforce conformity in the conduct of worship services.

[25:00] So he's enforcing kind of aggressively, but to his mind he was restoring decent and orderly worship. To his opponents, the Puritans, he was imposing Roman Catholic potpourri.

But that's not at all what he was trying to do. He actually wrote against the Roman Catholic position, against potpourri. So in the Oxford history of Christian worship, it describes it, it describes this kind of moment in Anglinism this way.

Ceremonial was introduced, including bowing towards the altar. Copes were worn more frequently, and many Carolines insisted that the communion table should be placed where the old altar had stood, and be railed in so that communicants could kneel in an orderly fashion around the table.

Chapels were beautified with organs, plate and utensils adorned the altar for the Holy Sacrament, and all were instructed to approach and depart in lowly reverence and adorations.

However, far from promoting potpourri, this was seen as a defense against the appeal of Roman Catholicism to the laity, as well as being a more apostolic and Catholic form of worship than the austere Puritan worship.

[26:14] Eventually, after much conflict and dissent over liturgical practice, and thanks to the restoration of the monarchy with Charles II and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, which was issued along with an act of uniformity.

In some ways, the changes that were made there were really minimal, but the end result was that the liturgical practices of the Carolines that they insisted upon and introduced, they found a permanent place within Anglicanism with that.

Though the changes weren't super drastic, they stayed there, and we still know it to this day in many places. Worship in the beauty of holiness, which is a phrase used to describe the Caroline worship, became one of the foremost and long-lasting legacies of the Caroline divines.

Worship in the beauty of holiness, by the way, is a reference made in Psalm 29 and 96. They wanted to see the worship of the church line up with kind of the worship that they saw in Old Testament scriptures of God and in the book of Revelation where Jesus is high and lifted up and the church is kind of elevated into these heavenly places.

Their mind for worship is very vertically oriented. Sometimes we, especially in modern period, we tend to be much more horizontally oriented.

[27:42] Theirs was, because of kind of sacramental imagination, much more vertically oriented and God related to them in kind of physical, real, tangible ways in the liturgy.

Okay? Any other questions there? Maybe comments, fears, concerns? I remember the holy rosary, you have to be confirmed before you take the sacrament, the body of Christ, and a person took it.

The priest knew he hadn't been going to, and it was such a big concern. The priest managed to get the wafer back from the person. It was that big. Yeah. Oh my goodness gracious. Yeah.

I don't know if the Carolines, I didn't read too much about their theology of confirmation, but I imagine that they would have continued that. The Anglican Church was still largely continuing that. Yeah, you had.

What role, if any, did Charles I play in some of this? Because, I mean, he was married to a Roman Catholic, and this, of course, was a vote of contention at the time as well, leading up to the Civil War, and some people, like the Puritans, would have viewed her influence on him, and his influence on the Archivision of Canterbury as being kind of a political meddling within church affairs.

[29:02] Do you have any comment on that? Yeah, well, I think that's where the grounds for saying that there was potpourri being promoted by them is, that's where it's grounded, I think.

Was there any substance to that? Was he actually influencing it? I don't know. I don't think so. I think many of the Carolines, they all, they reject Roman Catholicism, Catholicism, they're not just wanting to become Roman Catholic.

They take objection to universal papal jurisdiction, they take objection to transubstantiation, they wanted to retrieve the kind of Catholic worship that they thought was common to all Christians before the Reformation, which they thought was kind of set aside post-Reformation in a way that wasn't helpful.

but I wouldn't say that, like, he gives plays for Archbishop William Lodd, but William Lodd, like, he wrote polemically with the Catholics and, like, really aggressively, you know the writing back then, wasn't okay with it.

Huh? Imagine he didn't know the writing. They're flowery with their language, they're not, like, as kind and non-confrontational as we tend to be when we object to somebody's position.

[30:28] Yeah? When you read across these traditions, you don't want to go to big issues like this until the end, because your presentation so far is great. There are hidden agreements across the traditions.

I hope an agreement here would be, I love the phrase of John Webster, that God, the Trinity, and the Bible has always presented, this little phrase haunts me for its beauty, God is self-presenting in freedom.

Okay. The church doesn't command Jesus, be here now, we've done a proper liturgy, or we've heard the word preached basically as good evangelicals, that doesn't command God's presence.

God presents himself in his freedom. Are they all agreed on that? Yeah, so one of the things that the Carolines do recall, because they're going to patristic sources, which I'll talk about a little bit in a second, they're retrieving this prayer called the epiklasis, or the invocation of the Spirit.

So when they're praying before communion or the Eucharist, they're asking that the Holy Spirit make himself present to his people. It's a prayer in kind of appealing to God, saying, be merciful, be gracious, come be present with us.

[31:48] So it isn't that mechanical, we've done the physical things, and therefore he just shows up. But there is an acknowledgement that God promises to be with his people, and they say, okay, come be with us then, right?

Does that make sense? I'm not quite sure I know what polemic and polemical mean. Oh, it's in kind of argumentation with another, yeah. Yeah. Good, yeah?

I don't understand how, what you mean by worship being horizontally. Oh my God. So we can, let's think about like in the context of a sermon, let's say, often we might listen to application.

Okay, what do we go out and do then? How should we therefore live our lives? Which is good, it's right. But there's also a sense in which in the sermon, Christ speaks to us.

He comes and kind of makes himself present with us. And so there's a vertical dimension in which we're not just listening in the liturgy, we're not just hearing someone read the scriptures, but we're hearing God speak to us.

[33:01] Right? Worship is elevated out of just an earthly kind of realm or earthly reality. And it's brought into, let's say, the throne room of God.

Revelation is like something that really... Hebrews as well. Yeah. Yeah. It plays a large role in their kind of theological imagination. So when you're saying the vertical is more elevating your mindset up to heaven, but if it's horizontal, we're just too much occupied with us surrounding us here, and then seeing beyond what we see here is more vertical thinking.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. There's mind to the heavenly realities that happen when we gather as a people, we pray together, we worship, we read the scriptures together. something more than just a people gathering is happening.

Yeah. Okay. Well, we are getting close. So they're also, you'll have noticed that they're in their theological method turning to the church and the church fathers to inform their understanding of the scriptures.

scriptures. Short here, they have, they hold to a primacy of scripture, but the scripture isn't a scripture that is in vacuo.

[34:26] It's not alone in the sense of just exists without mediation. So they're looking to the church fathers to see how do they interpret the scriptures.

They're looking to the wider church, the wider understanding of what the people of God have understood God to be saying in the scriptures. scriptures. So they're consistently turning to the role of tradition, little t.

Yeah. I want to kind of get to the last bit because I think there's going to be some engagement there as well. So I'm going to skip a little bit of this.

The kind of major area that they go to are the first five to seven centuries because there are like, it's the presence of the undivided church.

There was divisions kind of afterwards. And so they look especially to the four ecumenical councils in the three ancient creeds, the Athanasian, the apostles, and the Nicene Creed. Those inform how they're understanding the scriptures.

[35:29] Okay. Okay. Let's do that. Yeah.

So not surprisingly, the Caroline appeal to antiquity was also used ecclesiologically to defend the status of the English church itself. For the Carolines, the church of England was the Catholic and apostolic church in England.

So this proved her status as a true church. So John Bramhall, another Caroline, vindicates the church of England against aspersions of criminal schism by arguing that the church of England before the Reformation and the church of England after the Reformation are as much the same church as a garden before it is weeded and after it is weeded is the same garden.

So the ecclesiological claim to Catholicity and apostolicity is also what gave Caroline's impetus for worshiping in the ancient Catholic manner. Against those who opposed Caroline's ceremonial as novel and Romish, John Cozen writes that in truth we have continued the old religion and the ceremonies which we have taken from them that were before us are not things which belong to this or that sect, but they are the ancient rites and customs of the church of Christ.

Wherefore, ourselves being apart, we have the self-same interest in them which our fathers before us had, from whom the same descended unto us. You'll catch something in the role of what tradition with the predecessors play for the Carolines there.

[36:57] Okay, now I could go on to tailing the theological contributions of the Carolines. They do a lot. They did much to advance also moral theology of the pre-Reformation schoolmen.

They stressed the need for Christ to cooperate with God's grace, or with, sorry, let me say that again. They stressed the need for Christians to cooperate with God's grace and to cultivate growth in virtue.

So they were even labeled Arminians by the Calvinist Puritans for doing so. Also, as was already hinted at, they were high church politically, which meant that they viewed the state and its head as instituted and ordained by God.

And they defended the episcopacy against Presbyterian attempts to reform church governance. You could detail that. We don't have time. But I think what's been said is a bit of an introduction to their thought, to their theology.

Now, what I want to do now is to suggest what the Carolines can give to us. So before today, this group of Anglican thinkers were probably largely unknown to the most of us.

[38:03] There are aspects of their theology that are definitely more suited to their particular context, I think. But I'm persuaded of the good of at least two points. Their sacramental theology and their worship in the beauty of holiness.

And this for two reasons. I want to talk about ecumenism and evangelism. I'll explain. I'll try to be succinct. So, ecumenism, as some of you may know, has in some ways come to a roadblock.

Though much progress was done in the 20th century, it seems that there were and are some doctrinal differences that just will not allow convergence. Many of the irreconcilable differences remaining between the theologies of Catholicism and Orthodoxy and Protestant denominations, I think, are traceable back to a divergence in an issue of fundamental theology.

And that's the relationship between the order of nature and the order of grace. So how one conceived of this relationship affects everything from Christology, soteriology, moral theology, to ecclesiology, apologetics, and biblical hermeneutics.

It's really fundamental. It affects all these things. So continued ecumenical work in this subject of nature and grace, I think, is going to be pivotal for the future of ecumenism.

[39:21] The Carolines, I think, might prove a helpful Anglican way into understanding the relationship between nature and grace. And I think their contribution here is especially helpful because it's simultaneously Protestant insofar as it's Anglican, it's Catholic insofar as it's medieval, and it's Orthodox insofar as it's patristic.

So it's already ecumenical, this idea of how nature and grace relate. So underlying the Caroline sacramental theology and their Catholic ecclesiology is a complementary theology of nature and grace.

It's perhaps only implicit in the theology of most of the Carolines, and from what I can tell, it's not consciously developed, as it was in the 20th century.

But there are noteworthy indications that the Carolines indeed held this position. At least in the theology of Andrews, as well as of Hooker's, there are iterations of the old idea that grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it.

An important idea. So just, for example, faith perfects reason, and reason is ordered to faith, but reason remains incomplete without the grace of faith.

[40:33] Or another way you could understand this is in moral theology, let's say, there are the theological virtues, and they perfect the acquired moral virtues, and the acquired moral virtues are ordered to the theological virtues, but the acquired moral virtues remain incomplete without the theological virtues.

You can catch there. There's an interconnectedness. They can remain distinct, but they're not separated. Okay? A complementary understanding of grace and nature connects everything in the natural order through Christ to the supernatural order.

I think that's really key there. So in effect, it re-sacramentalizes our disenchanted world. It opens us up to the transcendent. It gets us out of the horizontal and more into the vertical.

So the modern and postmodern inability to see beyond the imminent material world is healed, I think, and there's a happy union between the order of creation and the order of redemption.

So not a few thinkers have suggested that this is exactly what is underlying so many contemporary problems. And if this is the case, then the Carolines seem to be a helpful source pointing Anglicans in the direction of an attempt to re-weave what one of my Regent Professors, Hans Borsma, has called the sacramental tapestry.

[41:55] They might help us in that. That needs explanation. That's where I think if I'm going to dive into that a little bit more, that might be another paper.

I understand if there's questions there. And if you do want to engage on some of that stuff, if you know some of that stuff, would love to hear suggestions for books or where to follow that stuff up. You know what Catholic people I've met, the atmosphere of when some Catholics are like, whoo, are going to do the Catholic.

There's something about it. It's just, and when they had the charismatic Catholic renewal in the 80s and the Vatican II in the 60s, there's something about the Catholic church. It's just really, there's, wow, it's fantastic.

Yeah. Yeah. You know, interesting that you mentioned the charismatic renewal. I think that's something that's, it's implicit in the charismatic kind of churches.

There is also a vertical tendency. I mean, there's sometimes maybe to the point of disregard of our physical earthly realities. But I think that's something that's there as well.

[42:59] Yeah. Yeah. The baptism and the Holy Spirits is sometimes you pray and that other language, the heat comes out of your hands and put, you know. The miraculous is a lot more kind of present.

Yeah. Okay. Secondly, the Carolines, I think, could be helpful for our evangelistic endeavors in the 21st century North America.

Admittedly, it's a little odd to suggest that Anglicans from 300 years ago, whose favorite theologians were men who lived a thousand or 1600 years ago could aid in our evangelism.

But the Lord has done stranger things, no? And as strange as it may seem, I think the Carolines remind us of something that is well suited to reach people in our current time and place. I think it's the power of beauty and symbol.

You'll recall that one of the characteristic features of the Carolines is their concern to beautify the churches and their liturgy. And I think we may do well to do likewise.

[44:00] In post-modern North America beginning, your evangelism... Well, let me explain. This is... So, in our context, we might begin evangelism by appealing to the moral goodness of Christianity.

But with, I think, millennials and iGeners, this appeal is pretty unproductive, maybe even counterproductive. The moral value of Christianity has been dealt some devastating critiques.

And because of the churches, and our own failure, I think, to show forth a truly Christ-like goodness, the church has lost any claim it might have once had in the culture as a moral guide.

So, I'm not saying here that this should be the case or that we should just allow this to be the case. I don't think we should. But I'm just stating what I think is a pretty recognizable fact. People don't believe that the church is good, that it's good for society or that it might be good for them.

Actually, one of the most common objections to Christianity that I hear from people is that the church and or Christians are hypocritical. At best, the moral goodness of Christians is negligible to the average non-Christian.

[45:08] And for those who come from a Christian background and maybe share some of the beliefs in Christianity's moral goodness, evangelism that calls for a recognition of their moral failure in Christ's moral goodness is often dismissed as judgmental.

And again, I'm not saying that that should be the case. I'm just describing how people generally respond to those appeals. Now, on the other hand, leading with the truth of Christianity, I think, is certainly more effective.

But it's too often met with bewilderment, I think. Biblical illiteracy is increasingly widespread. We even find it in our own churches. So you're likely to receive blank stares if you describe how Jesus is the Messiah or he's the son of God who has come to save the world from its enslavement to sin and death.

Much of the categories that we Christians use to understand the faith are no longer shared. And what's worth, truth itself is under fire. The objectivity of the natural sciences isn't even immune anymore.

So people appealing to any truth, let alone the truth that is Jesus, often requires a good deal of preliminary work. People today generally come equipped with, okay, that's your truth, or that's good for you, but I know my own truth.

[46:27] That's not what I believe. So engaging in the inevitable philosophical questions on the nature of truth, I think, can be helpful. So apologetics can be helpful.

But this text often assumes a lot about the kind of person that you're dealing with and where they are on their spiritual journey. Also, it takes a lot of time.

And you have to get behind a lot of defenses. So in short, I think evangelism through reasoned conversation, though good and absolutely necessary, it can prove inefficient in our culture because it's often an uphill battle against their wills, against their hearts.

So accordingly, then, I think we need to show them that they want Christianity to be true. To take a play from C.S. Lewis, if our presentations of the gospel are going to be emotionally gripping, we have to work at attuning their desire to Christ.

And I think this is most simply done when we lead with beauty in our witness to Christ. The beautiful bypasses or maybe surpasses the intellect.

[47:40] It floods into persons through all the senses bodily. So the beautiful grips people, I think, by the heart and draws them into itself, into the beautiful.

So I think it's a pretty good way to begin evangelism when possible. It isn't the whole story, of course. You have to get to the moral goodness and the truth of Christianity.

But it's a good way to engage in the beginning. And I think this can be done in a variety of ways. Obviously, art, music, and literature, like that of Lewis and Tolkien's, are good ways.

Movies are, of course, increasingly popular and powerful. And Christians have used them to great effect. But let me propose that the most potent way for the church to do this is through a beautiful liturgy.

A beautiful liturgy, which is harmonious with scripture and richly multilayered in symbolism, internalizes the gospel in us in a way that goes beyond even what a good sermon or good lecture can do.

[48:45] Truthfully, I think the church's liturgy is where we encounter God most fully and most explicitly, because I think it's the place where God has promised to meet us.

And when we communicate this physically in the aesthetics of our worship, it makes this more of a felt reality. It ceases being theoretical or intellectual, and it becomes much more visceral to the audience or to the people in the pews.

So, interestingly, I think more traditional Catholic liturgical expressions of Christianity are now becoming increasingly popular. Even in denominations where traditional Catholic liturgies are frowned upon, traditionally, church-planting strategists, which tend to spend a lot of time kind of exegeting the culture, they're heading in that direction, oddly enough.

A big, flashy, contemporary-style worship that centers on a dynamic sermon and popular music, it arouses minimal kind of interest today.

Non-Christians, they're generally just, they don't care about, they're not really interested by that. The Caroline insistence on the beautification of the church in her liturgy is therefore maybe worthy of our careful consideration.

[50:03] Some questions we might want to ask ourselves are, do we share the Caroline's reason for making the liturgy beautiful? If not, why not?

If we do, why would we object to the project of beautifying the church? I think the forms and the resources for Anglicans to do this are already in place.

That's part of what attracted me from Pentecostalism to the Anglican church. So I think it's just a matter of allowing it to flourish. And finally, I'll add that even if we're skeptical of the evangelistic benefits of a beautiful, richly layered liturgy, there is still the question, I think, of how form affects content about the formative power of embodied liturgical worship for Christians.

Maybe the fittingness of a style of worship to its object. And the scriptural precedence for worshiping in the beauty of holiness. I think all these points are points which the Carolines and their heirs have commented on, so they seem an interesting resource for thinking about these things.

Okay. So I hope it's clear that my intent isn't to idealize the Carolines as like the authentic heritage of Anglicanism. There are many other streams that need to inform us, but they are a stream that we cannot just say they didn't exist in Anglicanism.

[51:31] And they need to be considered, I think, and think about what we can retrieve from them. So I think if the Anglican Communion is to ever move forward, it will be through a reconciliation of Anglicanisms, not through the assertion of a single strand of Anglicanism.

And in becoming a student of the Carolines, I only hope to discover and bring out what good treasures there are in the Anglican household of God. I think maybe, perhaps, what Anglicans find there will contribute to the restoration of the Anglican Communion, and through this, to the reunification of the whole Church, the healing of the Christian body.

Thank you. Thank you. A little bit of time for God. Thank you. Thank you.