

Know Your Family Tree: Turning Points in Church History

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Date: 20 October 2024

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[0 : 00] Well, last week I had a similar handout introducing you to three columns. The first column was the early church, that period that discussed the doctrine of the Trinity in particular, and their kind of summary phrase, under the relations written down in the phrase, Christ with us.

In the Reformation period, they assumed all the insights that had emerged in the early church, but their questions were much more focused on what is grace and therefore what is the church for. So if the earliest period of the church summarised its struggles, its thinking with the phrase, Christ with us, then the Reformation period can summarise its debates, Christ for us, or Christ instead of us, Christ for our life.

But after a couple hundred years of Protestantism, people realised that believing in justification by grace to the faith probably wasn't enough to establish a lively faith, a closed walk of the Lord. So these Christians of the 18th century, we might call them Gentiles, and so I said, yes, of course Christ with us, of course Christ for us, but we must not forget Christ in us.

[1 : 27] And they talked up the role of the Spirit, especially in adorning the world that was newly recreated under enlightened conditions.

I think that the summary is really useful as a code map on which we can further details in the new ones.

Today we're doing much the same thing. We're not thinking about three turning points as much as we can, three cultural moments that have shaped that final column from last week.

So these three cultural moments that have shaped the movement, you might summarise as the Enlightenment, something that you've never done instead, it's the same thing.

The cultural movement called Romanticism, and the cultural movement called Modernism, perhaps post-Modernism. Please note, just in those circles, I'm going to pay.

[2 : 30] Student in modernity and modernism are different. We all like being very modern, and we keep trying to find new ways of using the word modern to describe that. But these three moments are more like soundtracks from the culture rather than decisions that Christians have made to reform or renew their church.

Just imagine this. You see on a video a man and woman, arm in arm, walking down a street at night in Paris, and the background music are violins.

You know that they've just had a good meal together, they love each other, they're comfortable with each other, and they're going home together. But if that same visual scene were played, not with violins in the background, but screechy, screechy cellos, you'd know that walking down this dark street at night, they're about to get mugged.

The music is warning you that something is going to happen any minute now that you have to be aware of, right? The very same visual can mean something different according to the soundtrack, the music that's played in the background.

Evangelicals, these people from the 18th century, who wanted to work out how to have a close walk with the Lord under modern conditions, have had to stare down a few cultural shifts.

[4 : 18] Background music that actually shaped them more than probably they wanted to be shaped, or shaped us more than actually we probably wanted to be shaped.

These background soundtracks are Enlightenment, Romances, and Modernism.

Now, of these three, the first two have been well documented. The third is not so well documented, and it's something that I've been working on for the last couple of years.

So what did the Enlightenment do to Christians who were wanting a close walk with the Lord, an experience of the Lord in their heart?

Well, the Enlightenment talked up human rationality, human sense perception, human experience, if you will, perhaps summarised with a focus on the mind.

[5 : 22] Its characteristic was to help human beings throw off external authority, and especially throw off the church, which represented forces that were keeping people back.

So that humans could trust themselves, trust their own experience, and trust their own reasoning power, perhaps. It wasn't necessarily anti-Christian, but it could be very anti-Christian.

Human beings were trying to develop their own autonomy. There's some good things about that. I'm not just going to obey because someone's always not going to.

I have to keep this through. I have to use my own common sense, my own consensus, my own rationality, to work out whether that person's trustworthy, whether I should go with them or not.

It's not all bad, but it certainly did impact evangelical Christians. Because if they were already saying, we need to talk about Christ in us, then the culture was reinforcing the individual.

[6 : 41] Now, those first evangelical Christians who said, we need to talk about Christ in us, of course, were conservative Protestants. They were anchored to the Reformation.

They were anchored to Greece in the early 20s. Remember that. But the culture started pushing them further from those big historical roots.

If you will, often the image is provided of the machine to summarise what the Enlightenment was about. It's self-contained, well, probably needs a power source, but self-contained, regular, predictable, mechanical, of course, that's what defines a machine.

Powered under its own steam, if you will, the result of human engineering. Now, the representatives of this movement, some of them are familiar to us, Jonathan Edwards, or John Wesley, in England, or in Britain, Sarah Osmond, in Newport, Rhode Island.

These are great evangelical representatives. These were people who talked about not only Christ in us, but were trying to engage with the Enlightenment around them and make this new mode of being a conservative process more acceptable, more engaging, with the world that they were facing.

[8 : 20] John Wesley Neville always carried with him a briefcase with different kinds of tea, tea leaves, because he saw himself as a physician and he would prescribe teas to people to cure them as he travelled to the church.

He kind of had this Enlightenment, rationalistic, scientific thinking that tea's got the answer to all your problems.

John Edwards as well was very deliberate in trying to work out what the world was talking about, light, the Enlightenment, but he knew that the Lord provided light in his word.

God provides supernatural light as it were. And he would deliberately riff off that, deliberately take the debates that the world was engaging in and use them for his own preaching for revival purposes.

In fact, the revivals themselves are, if you will, using the technical language, an artifact of modernity.

[9 : 36] Luther never preached on the streets, in the fields. That was something that was simply modern. The revivals themselves were in part the creation of a new kind of culture.

So the issues that Christians are available or the world are available in this period was how, what autonomy looks like, what does it mean for individuals to be autonomous? This is a world in which revolution threatened Europe and North America.

This is a period when industry using big machines developed, which is also quite threatening.

Although at this stage, industry is largely not in cities, but in rural locations.

Because you need rivers to power factories and stuff. some of the names that, not Christian names by the way, but some of the names that you might associate with this period is Emmanuel Cart the general philosopher, Voltaire, the French philosopher, or Thomas Paine in the early months.

Some of the outcomes of this new cultural movement were, of course, revivals themselves, but also the Methodist church.

[11 : 01] was born in this period and the Methodist church in various forms is still with us. But also in this period the modern missions movement was born.

The Enlightenment enabled mass movement of people. It meant that ships could cross the North of Maine, not just the North of Maine, travelling there really, quickly upon the power of modern machines.

so that if you wanted to go to Burma, if you wanted to travel to Australia, you could in really So that's the first cultural soundtrack that's playing at the same time that Christians are thinking about what it means to revive the church, what it means for us to have a close walk with the Lord, what it means for us to celebrate the work of the Spirit in our life or in the world around us.

Let me pause and hear if you have any questions or concerns. questions. Well, yeah, where was the Roman Catholic Church at this time, kind of in that late 1600s to early 1700s?

Was there a lot of upheaval or were they just struggling to kind of hang on to power with a little bit of everything? Yes, a little bit of everything because when you say the Roman Catholic Church, you mean the Roman Catholic Church in South America or in Italy or in, you know, they'd already reached out and gone to their different destinations.

[12:50] The Roman Catholics were ahead of Protestants in terms of global mission. Protestants were right behind on this floor.

Sure. The Roman Catholics weren't classically liking the revolutions that were taking place, so they'd become quite reactionary and tried to address that question.

I think this column, the first one, is probably the most familiar, actually. The second column, much less so. romanticism doesn't mean how to fall in love or read a good novel.

Romanticism is a cultural moment, a cultural thing, which is in reaction to the Enlightenment. if the Enlightenment stressed rationality and your sense perception, romanticism has stressed emotion or intuition, deep connections, perhaps crudely put, when it's trying to highlight the heart.

this was a moment that saw the shortcomings of enlightenment and tried to compensate, perhaps overreact.

[14:26] the deepest yearning amongst those promoting romanticism was a yearning for integration.

And seeing that the Enlightenment had pulled people apart, your mind was kind of a different part of you from your body or your soul in Enlightenment.

Men were regarded as being more rational, therefore men and women were being called apart in the Enlightenment as well. Romanticism has this yearning to put things, as it were, back together or to integrate, to see the connections between all that we experience.

And if you will, the image that best captures the romantic moment is the tree, not the machine. The tree, the tree is organic, organic, the tree looks different, the very same species planted there and planted here, grows its limbs in different places, it responds to its environment and bends in this direction and bends in that direction.

The tree is earthed, the tree is one with its environment, the tree captures something of what the romantics were trying to highlight.

[15:59] Now, the romantics was not a Christian movement, right? This was something that's happening around the church in the culture generally, but it did impact Christians. And some of the people you might know who most were impacted by this movement were Charles Spurgeon or Dwight Mooney or Phoebe Palmer, a New York doctor's wife who left Bible studies for them in her parlour.

Now, you wouldn't say that Spurgeon or Mooney or Palmer were driving pro-applicism far from it, but they just kind of got a sense that their culture was changing and so their ministry style needs to change or their prioritising of energy, money, had to change.

Charles Spurgeon, for example, Bolly, that churches should be comfortable. Right? Previously, you might have sat on a wooden bench.

There might or might not have been something to lend your back on. In fact, it was only in the modern world that chairs were invented at all the church.

Traditionally, you stood in church, right? That was only really, really wealthy churches could afford chairs. So having chairs, not only having chairs, but Spurgeon having added chairs?

[17:26] Some chairs still don't like that. He was a mega church pastor. He had 10,000 people in his church on Sundays. He designed a building that visually was beautiful.

And something important that happened in Anglican churches or in other kinds as well was that previously, there had been two side aisles when you went to a church.

One side aisle took your eye to the pulpit, and the other side aisle took your eye to the lectern where the Bible is read. But in the Romantic period, architecture changed, and it was decided to get rid of side aisles and to have a centre aisle that was focused on the communion table.

Can you see that's a very subtle architectural change? No longer would the focus in church be what you hear, the Bible read or the Bible preached, but now the focus on the church in the centre aisle would be the table where the elements were, the bread and wine were.

Of course, brides ever since have been thankful because a centre aisle is just perfect for a long time of a living service. But that wasn't originally, my church at home is two side aisles and people would want to book it because it's a very 260 years old people want to book it to have their meetings and so on from the community.

[19 : 00] They come and go, oh my goodness, oh he can't have it, he can't. You've got to have a centre of the way. This is the period when Christians had this crazy thought, why don't we cut some flowers and bring them into the sanctuary?

No one ever before had imagined that you'd have flowers in church? What a dumb idea. Flowers outside, right? They're growing gardens. Christians don't think, you know what, why don't we bring nature into church?

We saw of course have windows that were stained glass so we couldn't actually see the trees that were around the door. That aside, we had decided to bring cut flowers into church. Crazy. the issues for Christians or the gender culture of Christians as well as how therefore do we create unity?

Because the romantic movement is trying to integrate. And this was a period in which the Evangelical Alliance was founded. It was also a period when cultures became increasingly nationalistic because romanticism spoke about the importance of the local not the importance of the universal.

[20 : 23] And the local was I'm a German or I'm a German or I'm a Pole. Let's think about how our own local culture how we work together all together.

And it was a period in which people were reacting to science. science was both answering the impressions but was also creating enormous problems too.

Some of the leaders of this movement you might have heard their names are Jean-Charles Rousseau the French essayist William Wordsworth the English poet or Richard Wagner the German composer.

Perhaps you could put Beethoven on that list as well. Beethoven's music is stormy Beethoven's music involves big orchestras big sounds this was a perfect way of capturing what romanticism is about.

And one of the outcomes I've given you a couple of tiny outcomes that I was in church centre aisle they want a comfortable seating for example these are all kind of trivial actually. One of the the more significant outcomes was the pursuit of holiness and the establishment or the intervention of holiness churches.

[21 : 53] You wanted to be one with your world that was fair enough right? You wanted to be integrated and for your experience not to be chopped up. However how are Christians going to stand apart from the world at the same time that they were trying to find integration within the world?

And they used the categories of holiness and holiness churches to do that. It's a uniquely mid-19th century thing. We did have them in Australia but they hardly exist anymore in Australia but they do I think to a more significant degree in the US.

This was a time when Christians started valuing nature more and often therefore decided to organise conferences Bible conferences either near the beach or in the mountains.

You might know I don't know locally the equivalent camp sites that you might head to. I think there's a place in New Jersey called Ocean Grove where the Methodists who headed down to their summer conferences and so we've got them all over Australia loads.

In fact there's a town in Victoria where I'm from called Ocean Grove some American missionaries from Ocean Grove in New Jersey decided that we had to have an equivalent Ocean Grove in Melbourne and so they came and bought the land and they said it was a big conference centre and so on.

[23 : 28] It lasted not real long but it's still interesting that the churches in town own most of the public spaces. Of course Moody began his conference ministry in Northfield, Massachusetts.

where you could be close to the Lord, it was argued if you were in nature than if you were in the city.

Which theologically is of course completely done. I kind of get the impulse impulse that somehow withdrawing from your work of that world and walking praying as you walk through the trees or as you sit on the beach perhaps perhaps can be a different way of configuring what it means that you have a personal place to walk with the Lord.

Let me pause then and hear if you have any questions. Yes, I have a comment about your nature. It's true that theologically it doesn't make any difference but I think that the idea for me anyway is when you're in nature you're looking around and seeing all the stuff that God created.

Whereas we're sitting right here we're looking and we're seeing buildings that man has built. Yes, yes, yes. So let's see this. Yeah, sure. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, of course that's right.

[25 : 07] Yes, sir. I wonder if there's a similar sense of motivation as monasticism in earlier periods of the church withdrawing from temptation of sinful others and isolating oneself to one who is biblical God.

Yeah, I think that's what we try. Yeah. I think that's exactly right. There'd been a longest period in churches where there hadn't been the case.

Something new was provoked in the 19th century that gave them this trigger to withdraw because it hadn't been the case.

Well, 100 years before that everyone was living in the country. So you can only have a withdrawal to the country when there's need to withdraw from. What are all these churches?

Oh, okay, I thought everyone gave us the wrong one. But that is a good question. Yes, so that's a good question. They often have the language of higher, higher life in their label.

[26 : 29] Now, I think the Camberlite churches or the Disciples of Christ are both Holman's church movements in the US. Nazarenes.

The Nazarenes, thank you. Yes, they don't exist in Australia. Correct, yep. The Salvation Army is a Mormon's church.

And the Holy Church in the US grew strongly after the Civil War where the Civil War divided.

Holiness churches tried to talk up our unity and holiness with whatever your politics, whatever your life.

Thank you. I can't assume too much. It wasn't a very good ordinance. Yes, sir? So, as the Romantic period was beginning to wane, it seems the rationalists that last laughed when Darwin published his book in 1859.

Then, because that is purely a book of the mind, book of I might qualify that. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I'm most willing to hear that qualification.

[27 : 44] But it seems to me that that then provides the underpinning for how shall we regard the now burgeoning industrial revolution from the mid-19th century on.

how shall we regard that with regard to culture and humanity and the environment and so forth.

Well, it's man in Darwinism, it's man against the environment.

It's man against all that would come against the mind. Yes and no. So, Darwin, I don't have to drink this, evolution.

Stresses natural, slow, organic processes.

So, in lots of ways, Darwin was the result or sat comfortably within the romantic movement because he's doing the opposite of seeing nature as a machine.

[28 : 49] He's speaking about the slow, minuscule change of over kind of resumption over the years. So, his worldview sat comfortably within the romantic movement.

Now, of course, he was writing a book, so it appeals to the mind, of course, right? He's not anti-rational, but his observations on how it works, whether you agree with it or not, were observations which described slow change rather than revolutionary change.

Revolutionary could change was something that the environment had kind of sponsored, but romantic had sponsored a kind of slow, a slow or gradual change. And I think romantic is still with us the same thing.

Well, so the symbol for normalism is the tree. I would imagine that's right, yeah, or the finch or something. So I don't mean that they're organic trees, I mean the evolutionary tree.

Oh, although it works by the legs. That's it. I'm fascinated by some of these changes, especially regarding nature, being nature in a church, things like that.

[30 : 04] How, in general, I don't know if you can speak to this, it's too vague of a question, but how conscious were theologians of this shift? I mean, were they aware they were doing something? And did they appeal to scripture for these changes, if they were aware of it, or did it just happen? It's the air you breathe. You sometimes don't even realise that you're breathing in obnoxious fumes, right?

And things, there were some who were much more deliberate, of course, and when the German theologian Schleimacher decided to put the doctrine of the trinity in the appendix to his book on theology, he was doing that deliberately, and he thought the doctrine of the trinity did not represent his right at the moment.

But most of them were just thinking, we can't have something that we did or felt, or too much deliberate reflection, which is a danger, right?

Yes. What are we doing? Yeah, correct. And we said this briefly last week as well. My students said to me, what's our big sin, or what don't we see, of course it's really hard to say, to see what we don't see.

[31 : 24] But our individualism has to be placed on the top of this. That was kind of my thinking on Tom's comment, that it seems as if the church is, the evangelical church is always straining to catch up with culture to understand what's happening now and what do we need to change to appeal to these people.

And sometimes it's a, I think we've just got to get used to being weird. And feel comfortable with being weird. Our culture, I think in our culture they're good.

I'm the last person to kind of wipe it off. But having said, yeah, we're just never going to be like our culture. Let's just go comfortable with doing weird things in church and having weird views.

except to understand that the message is what's important not the means as much.

And to be able to help in all these responses and movements. Yeah, yeah. And keep coming back to our understanding of Christ, Christ by his spirit making us alive, dying for us and so on.

[32 : 39] So we need to be clear-minded in having a base, a home, a focus. Well, let me introduce perhaps the most difficult column, the third column, because less has been written about.

So I'll give you for you in the footer there an article I've written on modernism and how it's influenced which you can find at least one thing on the internet about this.

This is a movement that arose, a cultural movement, again, it wasn't sponsored by Christians, it arose at the end of the 19th century. And this was a cultural movement that said to put things back together again, to heal, to get what the romantics that we talked about, finding integration, the strategy must be increasing self-expression.

To express yourself is to heal yourself. and it would often be linked crudely put to the will, you decide to express yourself, you impose, not only impose, but possibly impose your view on others. It came out of an increasing sense that life was fragmented almost beyond repair. This was when the United States police, the guilty age, the lot of barons, industrial work prices that were unsafe, the rise of unions, and so on, very combustible politics.

[34 : 31] Things were fragmented. How do you deal with that? Cities are now almost where most people are. But in this period, city life was not something I'm knew to do.

But city life was very fragmented life as we know. The image that I think best catches this moment is not the machine, something regular and predictable, not the tree, something organic and planted, but the volcano, something dangerous in its expression.

And there was lots written about volcanoes in this period. Even yesterday I was reading a book where there's this long quotation going to me end of the 19th century about how the earth is unstable and any minute now all these subterranean forces are going to come to the surface and yes, another volcano boat.

I'm feeling like I wonder something. My life is weird and I'm kind of chasing volcano boats. this period is probably less familiar to the most and its leading heritage might be less familiar as well. So locally, Borden and Gale, William Borden was an example of this movement or in Los Angeles or beyond 87th person, a great Pentecostal woman, C.G.

[36 : 01] Stud and a faith mission. C.G. Stud was English, Catholic, and he served in India, and he served in China, and he served in South India, and he served in West Africa as well.

So this was extraordinary. I'm going to beat the world, I'm going to go to the hardest places, and when one place gets easy, I'm going to go to the next place that's hard. C.G.

Stud didn't have a good relationship with his wife, in fact he treated her informably, so his great kind of faith mission probably was tarnished by that. She came and visited, she was living in England, raising money for his mission.

She came and visited him in West Africa at one time, and he basically eaten the water and just kept doing what he was doing, so she went home and went and saw each other again. This is a rise of, if I have enough will, I can conquer.

If I have enough willpower, I can make this fragmented world bend to my aspirations. This was an issue where the questions of power were front and centre, both literally, this was a period in which seized the world by electricity for the first time.

[37 : 29] This was also a world when power waned after the First World War, the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the British Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the German Empire, all collapsed, lost much of their power.

Cities and wars made this a period where people thought the end is surely about to come. world. The philosophers of the age who drove this period were Friedrich Nietzsche, the German philosopher, Sigmund Freud, the Austrian side analyst, Virginia Wolfe, the novelist, and James Joyce, the Irish novelist.

These are people, especially Nietzsche, who were saying the will to power is what helps human beings understand themselves, understand their environment, helps them to achieve their goals of fulfillment in the world.

Some of the more evangelical outcomes of this period were muscular Christianity, of which Borden and C.T. Stubb were our representatives. Muscular Christianity is a movement that says one, we need to use our will to assert our power over the world.

The muscle of Christianity was also a Christian movement that said men are no longer really men because they're working in factories and not fields. So it was assumed that working class men in factories had lost what made them men using their muscles.

[39 : 13] Because we see the working class men in factories as being kind of rough and ready times. Not the kind of people who walked their manhood. But that was the assumption. So Christians had a panicking.

So Christians invented basketball. And Christians invented volleyball. Christians invented boys or boy scouts.

Or Christians invented how to invent the Olympic Games. All these things at the end of the 19th century were responses to this fear that men were losing what it took to their man.

It's a movement called muscular Christianity. Women can also be muscular Christians. So for example, this is the period where we start talking about prayer warriors. We'd never used those two words in the same sentence before.

And women could be prayer warriors. We're described as prayer warriors. Men were described as prayer warriors. in the Salvation Army for example, in this period, women take on quite a significant role as army officers, all part of the same movement.

[40 : 22] But more significantly, perhaps, this was a period in which fundamentalism was born in its modern eyes and cost of them as well around the world.

These were movements reacting to the culture, culture. But also kind of saying we've just got to be, we've got to, through our own sense of power, assert our agency over the world around us.

So fundamentalists, for example, would more and more espouse their opinions and presume that the louder they spoke or the more insistent they were with their opinions, the more likely they were to change the culture.

And Pentecostal, of course, is in many ways a therapeutic movement where your job is to express yourself, either through using your gifts or speaking in tongues.

Both of these are ways that you would express yourself and thereby feel yourself. I think all of these three movements are still with us today.

[41 : 34] It depends which church you look at. different churches have different phases where they stress one or the other. So in the dates, in the circles, I haven't given an end date.

These three movements are circling, we're still breathing their air, they're still impacting and shaping us quite profoundly. Though in different countries, at different moments, one or the other might take the other hand.

Evangelicalism has been quite a porous movement. We want to reach the culture for Christ. We want to engage with the world around us.

Of course we do. But the danger, of course, in engaging with the world around us is about realising it. We're becoming like the world around us. It might be the risk you have to take.

This might be exactly the right thing to do. We want to reach the culture, we want to get close to the culture, we want to engage with the culture. We must. But there is a danger that we then start thinking like the culture, we start engaging with the culture in ways that might be less happy.

[42 : 49] And so we need sessions like this morning to remind us of the ways we've been influenced sometimes for our world, sometimes for our world.

So let me get some more questions. John? Yeah. No, Rhys, this is so, so, I think. One of the impressions that one can easily get is that our culture deeply inflates our engagement with the gospel, truth, reality, all of these things.

And we so absorb these things of culture that, I mean, a reaction could easily be one of the wrong. I don't know. Yeah, yeah, yeah. There is a gospel truth, there is the way it is, there is true reality, there is the God's eye view of things.

And my goodness, this is a disaster that we are so enculturated. What do we do to resist that sort of permeation of culture?

My goodness, is it inevitable that we, if in the world, we are of it? And thinking that that sort of culture pervading us is exclusively a harming thing.

[44 : 12] We need to be more God-like outside of culture. and there's certainly a lot of this that it is much of culture is a sinful inflection in some way that falls short of God's glory.

But is there not another way in which there is an inevitability of culture in the fact that we are creatures? It means we're in time and space and we are in space.

That means we are perspectival. We are positioned during times. So in a sense, this is simply what sort of creatureliness in part.

Not exclusively, but that's in part. And this longing for integration, is there is that integration going to be something that will indeed be an integration of all these different cultural elements purifying but then expressed in the new heavens and the new earth where the wealth of nations come in and it is purified but there will be this final integration but not in terms of a dissolution or creatureness or an elimination of culture but an expression of culture in distinct ways that actually are horrifying in the street or a community.

Could you help us to pull some of these things together because it could easily be just, oh my goodness. We so reflect our culture and that must be just an anthem.

[45 : 51] Yes, a question. Are you in sense at all? Yes, let's do it. Okay. Okay. So, you're right, John. We can't but help reflect culture around it.

We're all speaking English this morning in this room which shapes the way we think. We're living in a certain time and place. We have certain assumptions about time or individual value and none of those are bad things.

We can't not move into culture. We've just got to allow ourselves to be aware and let people help us think through what the culture is and does.

So, that's a kind of a humble posture, isn't it? To get input so we can think more clearly. To resist where we will.

What our questions often do we'll see in the bottom line is create new denominations. I'm not sure that that's the answer to every cultural moment that we need to hold on to what's precious from generations past and then allow our churches, well, the Protestant work have always reformed and not to let ourselves think that we must be continually of this shape or this size but that in time we'll adapt, we'll cut off some limbs, we'll grow new ones, fresh shoots and so on.

[47 : 21] I like what Jaroslav Pelican said, the professor of church history at Yale, he said that the church is unified, it's just not beautiful. Yes.

Okay. We have a deep, we have deep unity in the spirit. Yeah. We're out here and we're all going on the way but the spirit will work out.

Yes. And this final column of all of them, the unity appearing to the spirit to bring unity where there was fragmentation was a pretty big thing.

It strikes me what we're doing here kind of helps alleviate some of the dangers of being so situated in a culture that we're not aware of the culture shaping us.

It's just striking, if I were to say, I only want to fellowship with Christians from New England. I don't want to fellowship with South American Christians or Christians from Australia.

[48 : 29] That'd be like... That'd be abominable, but do we want to fellowship with Christians who lived in the 1500s and lived in the 1800s.

And some of that is they're challenging me and how I'm thinking about certain things. And I love how you show how some of these movements have a good...

There's a good impulse in a lot of these things. And it's not just a danger, but there are also ways that God is perhaps refining his people to be more integrated, to experience the shape, to match our theology.

It's not fundamentally evil to have cushions and seats in church. It's not fundamentally evil to have kind of flowers in church, right?

When it first happened, it was completely weird. You can imagine people going to the pastor saying, we must have did this. That's right.

[49 : 30] I've got to go get my microphone.