

THE UNITY OF THE FAITH

That the World May Believe

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1. What is the Unity of the Faith?

1. It is about *basic* beliefs which are foundational.

- not about what is fundamental for initial conversion
- not about the unity of the Spirit
- not about ecclesiastical unity
- not about what is less basic
- about *basic* beliefs that are clear from:
 - General revelation (Philosophical Foundation)
 - Scripture (Theological Foundation)
 - Church history (Historical Foundation)

1. What is the Unity of the Faith?

2. The unity called for is:

- the unity in the Trinity
- the unity in Christ himself
- the unity in the Truth in Church history
- the unity in the good

2. Is the Unity of the Faith Necessary and Urgent?

1. The necessity for unity depends on one's view of the good.

i. knowledge by direct experience
received only in heaven

ii. knowledge of God is by understanding
received only by Christ ruling through the Church

2. Is the Unity of the Faith Necessary and Urgent?

2. Is unity of the faith urgent?

Without foundation:

- we do not thrive
- we have increasing loss of meaning (meaninglessness)
- the family breaks down; the Church is not salt and light; culture without God decays
- If the cup is nearly full, then unity is urgent

3. What Proposals are there for Progress toward Unity?

- Begin with five areas of basic agreement
- Seek to become more conscious and consistent
- Step-by-step, differences can thereby be identified and addressed

3. What Proposals are there for Progress toward Unity?

1. Man's chief end: the good—eternal life—the knowledge of God

- Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever
- We are to glorify God in all that by which he makes himself known, in all his works of creation and providence
- Eternal life is knowing God
- The good never changes—the knowledge of God through the work of dominion
- From the Garden of Eden to the City of God
- The work will be completed—the Sabbath
- Through Christ's rule, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea

3. What Proposals are there for Progress toward Unity?

2. Common Ground: the necessary conditions for thought and discourse

- It begins with the self-evident: reason in itself is the laws of thought
- *Reason* is the test for meaning
- *Integrity* is a concern for consistency (logically and existentially)
- *Rational Presuppositionalism*: if we agree on the more basic we can agree on the less basic
- *The Principle of Clarity* is opposed to both skepticism and fideism
- Clarity makes unbelief inexcusable
- If there is no sin and death, there is no need for Christ and him crucified.

3. What Proposals are there for Progress toward Unity?

3. The Moral Law is clear, comprehensive and critical

- It is grounded in human nature and given in Scripture as the Decalogue
It is universal and perpetual
- It is total, spiritual, and summed up in the commandment to love
- Its consequence leads to life or spiritual death
- It is neither arbitrary nor foreign
- It is teleological; not deontological or consequential
- It is corporate, cumulative and communal
- It is over all institutions

3. What Proposals are there for Progress toward Unity?

4. Foundation in Scripture: Creation–Fall–Redemption

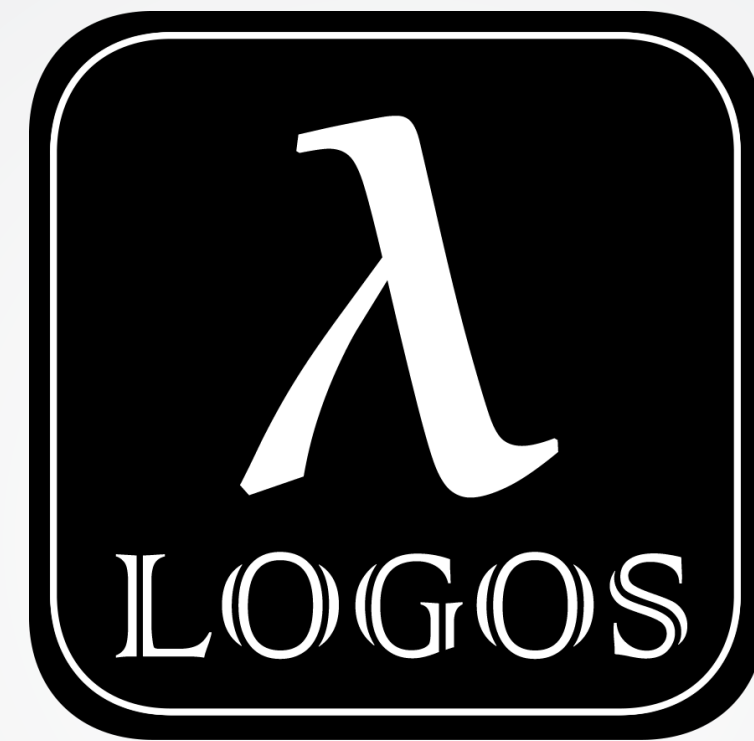
- Foundation consists of the elementary truths
- It is necessary for maturity
- Theological Foundation is found in Genesis 1–3
- What Creation reveals
- What the Fall reveals
- What Redemption reveals
- Christ will undo what Adam did, and will do what Adam failed to do

3. What Proposals are there for Progress toward Unity?

5. Historic Christianity

- The work of the Holy Spirit
- Through the pastor-teachers
- Summed up in Creeds
- Jerusalem, Apostles' Creed, Nicea, Carthage, Chalcedon, Orange
- The Reformation built on the previous councils
- The Westminster Confession built on the earlier creeds of the Reformation
- The work of the Holy Spirit leading the Church into all Truth is continuing

For more info:



thelogospapers.com

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