

d. The Protestant churches

- (1) The term grows from the second diet of Speier in the reformation (1529) and the reaction of the German princes to some oppressive acts offered at that time by the German Diet. The reforming company was generally called "the evangelicals" but the name "protestant" spread as did the terms "Lutheran" and "Reformed".
- (2) Divisions: We cannot treat of them all but the reformed bodies, the Lutheran bodies, and the anabaptist bodies serve as the main divisions of Protestantism. Basically all agree that the Scripture is the authority of the church and that the church has no temporal infallibility. The role of tradition is downplayed and sacerdotalism is minimized or at least given a small role. The clergy-laity distinction is reduced in function and the priesthood of the believer is emphasized. The "true church" concept is very much marked in these bodies and it has resulted in a tendency towards proliferation.

In the main, the Reformed bodies are associated with Zwingli and Calvin, the Lutheran with Luther, the Anabaptist with Menno Simons, et al. There are, however, many shades in perspective and distinction.

--I classify the protestant bodies as:

liturgical....those desiring a liturgy for service and worship functions.... and

non liturgical...those having a free order for worship and service.

--Likewise I classify them on the basis of doctrinal posture as:

credal....those claiming confessional unity by a common creed, and

noncredal, those not making use of a standing creed for uniformity

--One of the interesting things you will note in this study is the move towards liturgical structure and broadened credalism. It is part of the quest for a one-world church. That is not what we are seeing in this course.