

Ecumenism, in the broader range, does not overlook these and, in keeping with much modern thinking, is prone to think that anyone with a basic concept of God is thinking of the right god. Therefore there is some hope that all may be brought into a fraternal relationship through this general god is concept.

4. Some features of interest in world religious bodies.

Most of them have similar problems and challenges. Note that for virtually all:

- Conservatives and progressives conflict
- Traditionalists and syncretists confront each other
- Provincialists and universalists are in confrontation.

So it is rather reassuring to know, when we are faced with cultic challenges and other such difficulties, that most of the religious forces in the world have similar problems and difficulties. We are not alone in division and attempted reorganization.

D. The Ecumenical Movement

Definition

The ecumenical movement is the thrust for bringing together into a single religious entity, all the Christian churches (in the broad usage) and then the blending with that body of all possible religious outreaches in the world. It is a big idea. The term "ecumenical" has a sense of "worldwideness" and the idea of the movement is to have a world wide association with rather little regard for doctrinal standards or correct expressions of truth. The organization is the big thing. It is not a matter of increased charity or lack of censoriousness, it is a matter of amalgamation based on the concept that doctrines do not exist in the absolute and all that is important in an inclusive ecclesiastical society. The ecumenical umbrella has room for just about any and everybody with perhaps an exception for old fighting fundamentalists...the ecumenicists are not sure there is room for them (for us, that is).

My definition is a bit arbitrary. Classical ecumenism may refer to an entire world or to a more restricted movement of a core group on a world sphere. The inclusion of the non-Christian religions is sometimes denied on this basis but any reading of the ecumenical concept of missions and conversion, etc., will indicate that to the bulk of the movement a total amalgamation is the aim.

TVT thinks that in the ecumenical movement may be seen the seed of the creature seen in Revelation 17-18 although he does not compel others to agree with him in all eschatological ideas.

This is the ideology and power we are treating in this course and having introduced it we will now return in history and update the material in better historical perspective.