

d. Arminians offer a rather totally different view of the order of salvation but we need not consider it in detail at this point.

You will discover that whatever the view, there are some who hold it with greater fervor, some with less. Most views are subject to accretions by individual teachers and there are hardly any that are maintained universally uniform. I am always reminded that the identification of a view may be enormously useful so far as fellowship, etc., is concerned but we must be careful with them that we do not become sectarian due to particular established ideologies.

ECCLESIOLOGY

F. Ecclesiology

1. There is a giant change in direction in the doctrine of ecclesiology. The church is seen as a spiritual company not an organic one. The idea is very much closer to what was held in the apostolic age and the first century. The true church has a charge to keep in preaching the word and maintaining the sacraments. If it does not do this, no earthly body is a true church. What determines a church is not apostolic tradition but fidelity to the words and commission of Christ. The organic oneness is to be distinguished from spiritual continuity.

This idea is seen in both Wyclif and Hus as well as Waldo and some others. But it has little free incidence until the time of the Reformation. It will allow for an increase in particular ecclesiastical fellowships...each claiming to be true while often asserting that others are not true.

2. Most reformers continue to put great stress on the structured church, however. The burst of "independency" which our day has seen would have left them cold and blue. They should have seen that, in a sense, it is one or many. But the prescription for church division is one easily followed.

3. There is still the feeling that a great council of all "believers" would be the massive voice of Christ. (In the Reformation age, I mean.) But if that cannot be had, local synods can offer distinctive judgments that will faithfully lead the company.

4. There is a distinct pull-back to the Scripture for the authority of church practice. Hence much that has been traditional is set aside. The tendency is to evaluate the institution as it is seen in the Word.

*The Organization
is not the Church!!*