

When the rupture with Rome was evident the Patriarch in Constantinople made an appeal to Luther to consider the Apostolic Patriarch as the real church head. (It was not so much of an appeal as a statement in principle...not quite a demand, but in that league) The ground was on the basis of a unity of faith as expressed in the formal creeds of the church and its historic tradition. There is little evidence that Luther took these matters seriously but it is interesting that the Patriarchs saw in the Reformation a move that could pacify the portion of the church that would not recognize the sole authority of the Bishop of Rome or give to the Roman curia the distinctive right to rule and regulate the church at its whim.

(5) Ideals in the evangelical community:

(a) Concepts of Simon Schumucker:

Schmucker, the evangelical Lutheran theologian of the 19th century, championed a union of churches under an umbrella organization. In this company every group could continue to maintain its own ideals but would do so as a branch of the united body.

(b) J.H. Merle D'Aubigne:

The famous church historian of the 19th century travelled widely in Europe and England seeking to promote peace and unity largely between the reformed bodies although he would talk to anyone. Like Schmucker, he was thoroughly conservative.

These are only two of many persons who sought a more Biblical oneness with sacrifice of truth or unnecessary compromise. The frustrations they endured from all parties make very interesting and almost frightening reading. I am amazed at the persistency of their efforts in the face of abuse and failure. If one reads McNeill HISTORY OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT, one thinks that every preacher /teacher in the last many centuries was an ecumenist but this is a presentation to establish a point and seek to prove a cause and does not take into account doctrinal or polity applications by the persons mentioned.

(6) Some cooperative works used to promote oneness

(a) Religious education work

(b) Evangelism

(c) Christian literature

I am not calling these ecumenical in any very specific sense but that their influence easily moves to ecumenical ideals.