

June 2022 Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative

'Engaging with Scripture in Today's World'

'The role and function of Scripture in Evangelicalism, especially Evangelical Worship.'
Some historical reflections and contemporary observations

1 Scripture in evangelicalism: roots and early growth

Sixteenth Century Reformation

- Martin Luther: 'I am bound by the Scriptures'.
- John Calvin: 'We must come, I say, to the Word, where God is truly described to us from his works'.
- Believer captive to God's Word / Church under the Word.

Eighteenth century revival

- Evangelicalism: *missional, experiential, doxological and conversionist*.
- John Wesley: 'I want one thing, the way to heaven . . . O give me that book!'.
- Evangelical preaching
- Evangelical singing

Summary

- Karl Barth: core, centre and content of the Bible is the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- The God of the Bible who speaks through the Bible.
- Scripture: dynamic site of encounter with God / the living, active source of God speaking.
- Safeguarding scripture as the speech of God.
- Lausanne Manila meeting of 1989: 'We affirm that in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments God has given us an authoritative disclosure of his character and will, his redemptive acts and their meaning and his mandate for mission'.

2 Scripture in evangelical worship: practices and questions

Reformation (in England)

- 1536 Injunction
- Reform of the Mass
- Reform of other liturgies and lectionaries
- Scripture: define and direct, shape and inspire, the worship of the people.
- Cracks: two disputes.
- Legacy: two kinds of English evangelicalism.

3 Revival

- Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
- Preaching
- Priesthood

4 Today

- Tendency: neglect the public reading of scripture despite the injunction to Timothy (1 Timothy 4.13).
- Tendency: scripture to be used selectively and to serve predetermined themes.
- Tendency: light scriptural content to contemporary hymns and songs.
- Tendency: overplay priesthood of the people in church and underplay training and release of well-trained prophetic disciples as witness in the world.

5 Conclusion

- Unique combination of evangelical worship
- A fruitful field of mutual learning.

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