

# Contents



## PART I

### THE METHOD AND TASK OF THEOLOGY 11

#### 1 Who Is a Theologian? 13

Who Are You? 13

Who Is the Author? 17

What Is the Task of Theology? 20

What Is the Reformed Tradition? 24

#### 2 Who Says So? 29

##### THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

The Origin, Nature and Purpose of Creeds and Confessions 30

The Authority of Reformed Creeds and Confessions 34

The Freedom and Responsibility of Individual Christians 37

*Appendix: Introduction to the Creeds and Confessions* 43

## PART II

### GOD AND MAN 53

#### 3 How Can We Find God? 55

##### THE DOCTRINE OF GENERAL REVELATION

The Problem 56

The Search for a Solution 62

Some Guidelines for Making a Decision 67

#### 4 How Does God Find Us? 71

##### THE DOCTRINE OF SPECIAL REVELATION

The Meaning of Revelation 72

The Word of God 80

The Freedom of God 84

<b>5 Who Is God?</b>	<b>89</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY	
Why This Doctrine Is Important	90
The Biblical Source of the Doctrine	92
The Development of the Doctrine	97
One God in Three Persons	100
There Is No God But One	103
<b>6 What Is God Like?</b>	<b>107</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD	
The Living, Personal God	109
The Loving, Sovereign God	111
Our Father	114
In Heaven	120
<b>7 What Does God Want With Us?</b>	<b>125</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION	
Three Classical Interpretations	126
How to Approach This Doctrine	136
Light on the Mystery of His Will	137
 <b>PART III</b>	
<b>GOD THE FATHER AND CREATION</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>8 What Are We Doing Here?</b>	<b>153</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION	
God the Creator	155
God's Good Creation	159
Good But Not God	165
<b>9 Why Doesn't God Do Something About It?</b>	<b>169</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF PROVIDENCE AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL	
The Reality of Evil	170
The Dark Side of Creation	172
The Power of Darkness	175
The Light Shining in the Darkness	180
<b>10 Who Are We?</b>	<b>186</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF MAN	
In the Image of God	188

Man and God	194
Man and Fellowman	195
Me, Myself and I	199
<b>11 Why Don't You Just Be Yourself?</b>	<b>204</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF SIN	
Three Basic Forms of Sin	207
Original Sin	213
The Consequences of Sin	216
 <b>PART IV</b>	
<b>GOD THE SON AND RECONCILIATION</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>12 Where Is God?</b>	<b>226</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION	
The Event—An Eternal Mystery	227
A Real Man	230
The Son of God	235
<b>13 Is God Against Us?</b>	<b>242</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT	
The Biblical Images	244
God Versus the Gods	249
Were You There?	255
<b>14 Who's in Charge Here?</b>	<b>264</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION	
On the Third Day	265
The Lord and His Kingdom	270
 <b>PART V</b>	
<b>GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT AND A NEW LIFE</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>15 What's New?</b>	<b>290</b>
THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT	
Who the Holy Spirit Is	292
The Holy Spirit and Life	295
The Holy Spirit and Truth	301
The Holy Spirit and the Christian Community	305

<b>16</b>	<b>Are You a Christian?</b>	<b>312</b>
	THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION	
	The Problem of Justification	313
	Justification by Grace	317
	The Justice of Justification	319
	Justification Through Faith	321
<b>17</b>	<b>Are You a Christian?</b>	<b>329</b>
	THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION	
	Christian Faith and Christian Action	331
	In But Not of the World	338
	The Holiness Jesus Commands	342
<b>18</b>	<b>Living or Dead?</b>	<b>350</b>
	THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH	
	The People of God	353
	A People in Community	356
	A Holy People	358
	A United, Catholic People	361
	An Apostolic People	364
<b>19</b>	<b>What's Going to Happen to Us?</b>	<b>376</b>
	THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHRISTIAN HOPE FOR THE FUTURE	
	Some Non-Christian Answers	377
	Asking the Right Questions	384
	The Christian Hope for the World	389
	The Christian Hope for Individuals	394
	<b>POSTSCRIPT</b>	
	Where Do We Go From Here?	403
	Where Have We Come From?	403
	Where Are We?	405
	What Lies Ahead?	408
	<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>414</b>