

Unreservedly Ecumenical

History, Opportunities, and Resistance

What Does it Mean to Be Ecumenical?

- What could go wrong with ecumenicism?
- What are the two pitfalls? » Purity & Peace of the Church
- What could it look like?

A Little History

- Catholic charge against the protestant church » schismatic
- 1000s of protestant denominations exist.
- Is this a protestant problem or a modern problem? Look at the Roman Catholic Church
- Large Denominations from 20th century are struggling (Mainline protestants sought ecumenicism through theological drift)

Why Do We Want This?

- The world will come to know the love of God in Christ as Christ's people love one another. » John 17:20-26

The Role of Denominations?

- Easier to be unreservedly ecumenical toward those outside your denomination than those inside when there is internal strife.

Opportunities

- Positive, Neutral, and Negative World (Aaron Renn & James Wood)
- Geography & Decentralization increasingly important
- Parish Model
- Local presence in church, politics, business, etc.

Resistance

- Pietism: Enlightenment move to privatize religion into a system of piety » no public religion
- Tribalism: Pronouncing “anathema” on other Christians on things that are not biblically anathema (matters of wisdom & prudence are real)
- Social Media: Tends toward polarization & conflict.
 - o Realism tends toward finding ways to be together peacefully.