

THE REFORMED CONFESSIONAL QUADRILATERAL

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ECUMENICAL	The first historical consideration of the Reformed confession, therefore, has an ecumenical concern, as it seeks to ground Christian truth within the theology of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.
PARTICULAR	The second consideration gives attention to the particularity of the gathered Reformed congregation of confessors, articulating what is to be preached, taught, and lived in this local community of faith.
DEFINED	The third consideration provides confessional definition, stating what aspects of the confession must not be compromised as Christian dogma.
PROVISIONAL	The fourth consideration acknowledges a provisionality to the confessional task, as the confessing community corrects, revises or reaffirms confessional statements in light of Scripture.
DEFINITION OF A REFORMED CREED/CONFESSION ²	
A Reformed Creed is the statement, spontaneously and publicly formulated by a Christian community within a geographically limited area, which, until further action, defines its character to outsiders; and which, until further action, gives guidance for its own doctrine and life; it is a formulation of the insight currently given to the whole Christian Church by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, witnessed to by the Holy Scriptures alone. Notice the sharp dialectic we have described in this summation of the different essential components of the concept of the Reformed Creed. It concerns not conceptions of faith, but dogma [defined]; yet fundamentally variable, fluid dogma [provisional]. Universal Christian truth [ecumenical]; yet truth understood now and here in a specific way and expressed by one Christian community [particular].	
REFORMED CONFESSIONAL CATEGORIES	
Scripture/Canon Revelation Trinity Creation/Providence Humans/Sin Covenant of Grace/Reconciliation Christology Justification/Faith	Sanctification Election Church Word/Sacrament Law/Gospel Ministry/Offices Church/State

¹ One Church in Christ, 29

² One Church in Christ, 30-33