

21. LEERSTELLIGE SAKE 21. DOCTRINAL AFFAIRS

21.9 BESKRYWINGS PUNT KLASSIS DIE MOOT – VERKLARING VAN DIE EIETYDSE VERTOLKING VAN DIE BELYDENISSKRIFTE

21.9 POINT OF DESCRIPTION : CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE CONFESSIONS

<p>Beskrywingspunt Die Sinode spreek homself uit oor die gebruik van die uitdrukking “Eietydse (hedendaagse) vertolking van die belydenis” en ‘n “eietydse Belydenis dokument”.</p> <p>Motivering</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hierdie uitdrukkings kom telkens voor in Rapporte van die Deputate Ekumeniese Sake (Binnelands) veral wanneer verslag gedoen word oor die gesprek met die NGK (vgl <u>Sinode 2003:162/3, 5.4.3.1.1.1.1.1</u>: Eietydse vertolking van die Belydenis, en <u>Sinode 2012:177/8/9</u> <i>3. World Reformed Fellowship (WRF)</i> <i>3.3.5.5.1.1: Aan die te benoeme Deputate word opdrag gegee om verkennende gesprekke te voer met die kerke met wie die GKSA kerklike eenheid het, oor die behoefte aan ‘n “eietydse Belydenisdokument”</i>). 2. Net soos die Woord van God, is die Kerklike leer of Belydenis nie tydsgebonde nie. Dit is immers die belydenis oor die onveranderlike God. Net soos daar nie ‘n oorspronklike siening, ‘n latere siening en dan ‘n eietydse siening van die Bybel kan wees nie, kan daar ook nie iets wees soos die oorspronklike siening, ‘n latere siening en dan ‘n eietydse siening van die Belydenis nie. 3. Die gebruik van hierdie uitdrukking sonder deeglike omskrywing van die inhoud en betekenis daarvan, bring verwarring en agterdog by lidmate oor die werk van die Deputate. 4. Dit blyk ook dat die gebruik van die uitdrukking “Eietydse vertolking van die Belydenis” (Sinodes 2003:162/3; Sinode 2006:180/1; Sinode 2009:14) lei tot ‘n volgende stap, naamlik die sug na ‘n eietydse Belydenis (Sinode 2012:177/8/9). 5. Bepaalde begrippe het ‘n bepaalde betekenis. Indien partye nie ooreenkom 	<p>Point of Description The Synod is to take a stance on the use of the concept of “Contemporary interpretation of the confession” and a “contemporary Confession document”.</p> <p>Motivation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. These expressions often appear in Reports of the Deputies Ecumenical Affairs (National), especially when reporting on talks with the NGK (cf. <u>Synod 2003:162/3, 5.4.3.1.1.1.1.1</u>: Contemporary interpretation of the Confessions, and <u>Synod 2012 p 177/8/9</u> <i>3. World Reformed Fellowship (WRF)</i> <i>3.3.5.5.1.1.1: The next Deputies are instructed to undertake exploratory talks with the churches with which the GKSA has ecclesiastic unity over the need for a contemporary Confession document”</i>). 2. Just like God’s Word, church doctrine or the confession is not confined to a certain time. It is after all the confession of the unchanging God. Just as there cannot be an original, subsequent and contemporary interpretation of the Bible, there cannot be an original, subsequent or contemporary interpretation of the Confession. 3. Without a thorough exposition of its content and meaning, this concept will cause confusion and suspicion amongst members over the work of the Deputies. 4. It would also seem that the use of the expression “contemporary interpretation of the Confession” (Synod 2003;162/3; Synod 2006:180/1; Synod 2009:14) gives rise to the desire for a contemporary Confession (Synod 2012:177/8/9). 5. Certain concepts have a very specific meaning. If the parties do not come to a
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<p>wat hulle bedoel met 'n begrip nie, kan dit tot verwarring en misverstande lei. Om hierdie stelling te beaam word daarop gewys dat dit gebruiklik in enige kontraktuele ooreenkoms tussen partye is dat die betekenis van sleutelwoorde of begrippe vooraf gedefinieer word in die kontrak, sodat almal weet wat daarmee bedoel word.</p> <p>6. In retrospeksie is dit dus moeilik om te oordeel of 'n eietydse siening (vertolking) van die Belydenisskrifte die onderliggende rede kon wees waarom diep-liggende eenheid in Belydenis, Skrif en Kerkorde nie meer deurslaggewend was vir die opstel en goedkeuring deur die Sinode van die "Memorandum van Verstandhouding tussen die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika en die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk" nie.</p> <p>7. Dit is bekend dat die NGK 'n totaal ander siening en uitlewing van ons Belydenisskrifte het, dat Skrif-kritiese hermeneutiek veral by dosente van die teologiese fakulteit voorkom en dat die NGK ook 'n Kollegialistiese kerkregeer-stelsel het met 'n totaal verskillende Kerkorde as die GKSA. Word die versaking van die tradisionele Gereformeerde beleving van die Belydenisskrifte makliker as gelowiges hul siening of vertolking van ons kosbare Belydenisskrifte eietyds maak?</p> <p>8. Die vraag ontstaan ook oor wat bepaal dan die eietydse siening/vertolking van die Belydenis? Waaraan moet hierdie eietydse siening voldoen om eenparig as 'n gemeenskaplike siening beskou te word? Watter maatstawwe het die Deputate aan die dag gelê sodat die karakter eienskappe van die eietydse siening meetbaar is? Om die eietydse siening/vertolking oor die Belydenis enigiets anders te maak as die outydse/bestaande siening, moet dit buite om die Skrif gesoek gaan word, omdat die Skrif altyd die Belydenis belig. Daar kan gevolglik nie 'n eietydse siening oor die Belydenis wees nie. Die siening/vertolking oor die belydenis moet dan noodwendig buite die Skrif om plaasvind. Dan word dit slegs 'n siening/mening van die Deputate en dra geen gewig waaraan die kerkverband hom hoef te steur nie. Indien dit wel gebeur, dan sien ons</p>	<p>common understanding of a concept, it could lead to confusion and misunderstandings. In support of this statement, it is pointed out that in any contractual agreement between parties it is customary to first define key terms or concepts to ensure a common understanding.</p> <p>6. In retrospect it is, therefore, difficult to judge whether a contemporary view (interpretation) of the articles of faith could be the underlying ground that deep-seated unity in Confession, Scripture and Church Order was not the deciding factor for the Synod's drafting and approval of the "Memorandum of Understanding between the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA) and the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK)".</p> <p>7. It is common knowledge that the NGK has a completely different view and application of our articles of faith, how Scripture-critical hermeneutics is prevalent among lecturers at the faculty of theology and that the NGK also has a collegiate church governing system, with an entirely different Church Order than the GKSA. Does forsaking the traditional Reformed application of the articles of faith become easier when believers contemporise their view or interpretation of our precious articles of faith?</p> <p>8. The question then becomes what determines a contemporary understanding/interpretation of the Confession? What requirements must a contemporary understanding meet to be commonly deemed a shared belief? Which criteria did the Deputies set for the characteristics of the contemporary understanding to be measurable? Making a contemporary understanding/interpretation of the Confession any different from the old-fashioned/existing understanding necessitates seeking it outside Scripture, since Scripture is the guiding light of the Confession. There cannot, therefore, be a contemporary understanding of the Confession and merely makes it an opinion/interpretation of the Deputies, which doesn't possess the credibility that would warrant the denomination to take heed. Should it nevertheless occur, it would bear the same consequences seen in regard to</p>
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die gevolge soos met die Sinode besluit rondom die “Memorandum van Verstandhouding tussen die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika en die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk”.

Slot

As met die begrip “eietydse vertolking” gewerk word, lei dit maklik tot agterdog oor die motiverings vir die uitvoering van bepaalde Sinode opdragte. Om die rede is dit belangrik dat die Sinode vir homself duidelikheid kry oor die inhoud van hierdie uitdrukkings.

the Synod’s decision over the “Memorandum of Understanding between the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika and the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk”.

Conclusion

The term “contemporary interpretation” often leads to suspicion over the motives of the execution of particular Synod instructions. This makes it important for the Synod to obtain clarity on the meaning of these expressions.

Synod 2012 p 177/8/9
"3. World Reformed
Fellowship (WRF)

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Just like God's Word, church doctrine or the confession is not confined to a certain time. It is after all the confession of the unchanging God. Just as there cannot be an original, subsequent and contemporary interpretation of the Bible, there cannot be an original, subsequent or contemporary interpretation of the confession.10. Without a thorough exposition of its content and meaning, this concept will cause confusion and suspicion amongst members over the work of the Deputies.11. It would also seem that the use of the expression "contemporary interpretation of the confession" (Synod 2003, p. 162/3; Synod 2006, p. 180/1; Synod 2009 p. 14) gives rise to the desire for a contemporary confession (Synod 2012, p. 177/8/9).12. Certain concepts have a very specific meaning. If the parties do not come to a common understanding of a concept, it could lead to confusion and misunderstandings. In support of this statement, it is pointed out that in any contractual agreement between parties it is customary to first define key terms or concepts to ensure a common understanding. |
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	<p>13. In retrospect it is, therefore, difficult to judge whether a contemporary view (interpretation) of the articles of faith could be the underlying ground that deep-seated unity in confession, Scripture and church order was not the deciding factor for the Synod's drafting and approval of the "Memorandum of Understanding between the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA) and the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK)".</p> <p>14. It is common knowledge that the NGK has a completely different view and application of our articles of faith, how Scripture-critical hermeneutics is prevalent among lecturers at the faculty of theology and that the NGK also has a collegiate church governing system, with an entirely different church order than the GKSA. Does forsaking the traditional reformed application of the articles of faith become easier when believers temporise their view or interpretation of our precious articles of faith?</p> <p>15. The question then becomes what determines a contemporary understanding/interpretation of the confession? What requirements must a contemporary understanding meet to be commonly deemed a shared belief? Which criteria did the Deputies set for the characteristics of the contemporary understanding to be measurable? Making a contemporary understanding/interpretation of the confession any different from the old-fashioned/existing understanding necessitates seeking it outside Scripture, since Scripture is the guiding light of the confession. There cannot, therefore, be a contemporary understanding of the confession and merely makes it an opinion/interpretation of the Deputies, which doesn't possess the credibility that would warrant the denomination to take heed. Should it nevertheless occur, it would bear the same consequences seen in regard to the Synod's decision over the</p>
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	<p>“Memorandum of Understanding between the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika and the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk”.</p> <p>Conclusion: The term “contemporary interpretation” often leads to suspicion over the motives of the execution of particular Synod instructions. This makes it important for the Synod to obtain clarity on the meaning of these expressions.</p>
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Toeligter.

Elucidator.