

Questions for Further Reflection – The Confessions of 1967

1. How does the church benefit from having a Book of Confessions, rather than just one confession of faith? What are the potential drawbacks from having multiple confessions, as opposed to just one? Before this class, how familiar were you with the Book of Confessions? Which ones had you heard of? Which ones had you never heard of? Has this class encouraged or discouraged you from delving deeper into the Book of Confessions? Why or why not?
2. The Confession of 1967 was written to be a confession “of its time”, addressing issues of the late 1960’s. What progress have we made on these issues? Which issues are still at the forefront? Are there parts of the confession that seem outdated? Which parts seem to speak with more urgency than ever? If the church were going to revise the confession now, 54 years later, what issues would need to be added or deleted?
3. The Confession of 1967 draws a distinction between the Word of God and the word of God written. In your own words, what is the difference between these two? Do you feel it is an important distinction to make? Why or why not? Do you agree with making the distinction? Why or why not? The Confession of 1967 says that the atonement is a mystery and offers several different images for understanding Christ’s atonement – sacrifice, substitution, ransom, and satisfaction. Which most helps you understand how God reconciled us to himself through Christ? How would you feel about the church telling you there was only way to understand it?
4. The General Assembly of 1967 voted to change the subscription standards for ordained service in the church from positive agreement with The Five Fundamentals, to agreeing to be led and guided by the confessions. Do you think this was a positive change or a negative change? What benefits do you see from having an easily identifiable list of doctrines that must be agreed to? What drawbacks are there? What benefits do you see in the vow to be guided by the Book of Confessions? What drawbacks are there?
5. In your own words, what does it mean to be reconciled with God? To be reconciled with one another? Do you think the church is called to speak and act on political and social issues as part of its witness to Christ? Why or why not?
6. The confession says “The reconciling work of Jesus was the supreme crisis in the life of humankind.” What do you think this means? It also affirms the Priesthood of All Believers by saying, “the Christian community nurtures and equips us for our ministries.” How have you been nurtured and equipped for ministry through Christian community? How have you helped nurture and equip others for their ministry?