

teaching (and our youth) an appreciation of
Our Family Characteristics
In Churches of Christ

Looking Back...

Characteristics (which together) give us our distinctive face

- Baptism (immersion) for the forgiveness of sins (and gift of Holy Spirit)
- Singing a cappella (unadorned, simple worship in assembly)
- Lord's meal weekly (in remembrance)
- Overseers with deacons, autonomous congregations, priesthood of believers

Reasons for neglect (in teaching... and to youth)

- Desires for "mere" Christianity : C.S. Lewis and churches
- Discomfort in disagreements with the "other" (judgment? prayer? agreement?)
- Impulses to do good (more than to seek clarity in belief, confession, practice)

"Which door is the true one? Where is holiness?": Return to understanding confessions (church websites)

- Ted Campbell's work (Carl Braaten, ...)
- ACU series/ Everett Ferguson / John Mark Hicks / AGST faculty articles in Christian Studies

Teaching and re-stating (afresh, again) our family characteristics... from, in dialogue with

- a. Discriminating appreciations from observers (e.g. Scott McKnight; Ted Campbell...)
- b. Hearing scripture as Word of God, in community (to validate, to correct, to deepen)
 - Prayer, Gratitude, Denying Self, Taking Cross, Following Jesus
 - Knowledge, Understanding, Love of God and His gospel, through story
 - Rereading again in context(s)
- c. Knowledge of church history (patristics, reformation, *restoration*), of each
 - a. What *others* (commissions/leaders) are saying? (and what others are sharing with us)
 - About baptism (Anthony Cross, Aidan Kavanagh, Ted Campbell...)
 - About elders (Mark Dever...)
 - About singing and worship (Ted Campbell...)
 - About the Lord's meal (*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982): best known ecumenical of 20th)
 - b. What says *scripture* as heard among God's people?
 - Baptism: "in Christ" (participating in divine life) ... and new creation
 - Overseers... and Deacons (character and service)... trans-local ministry in NT
 - Worship... and singing: Psalms ... discerning lyrics faithfully
 - Lord's meal...
 - c. What our *ancestors* taught and practiced?
 - Early Church
 - Reformation ... Luther, Zwingli, Calvin ... anabaptists
 - Restoration (Stone-Campbell)... Alexander and Jane

Faith, Hope, Love... as Churches of Christ... bracing under the sword, daily

- Christ continues to inspect his congregations (His body)
- Christ continues to be seated (us with him) in the heavenlies
- Priscilla/Aquila and Apollos