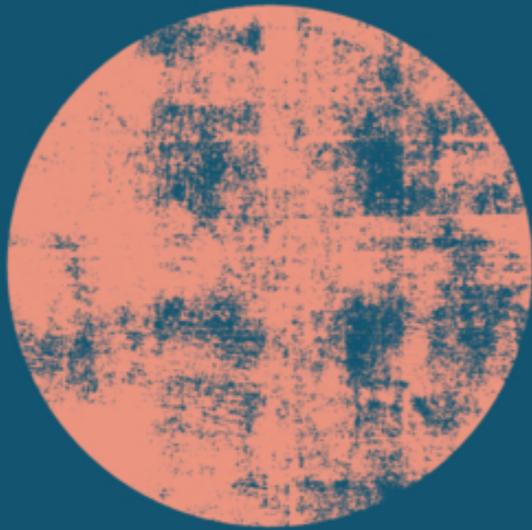


**fundamentals
of the faith**



fundamentals

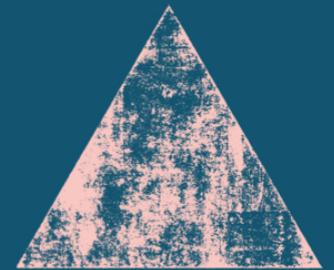
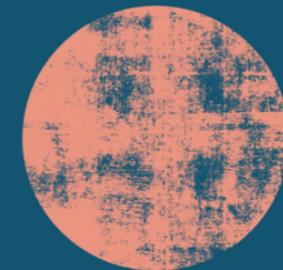
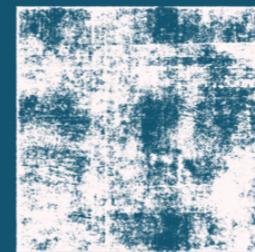
**FILL IN THE
BLANK:**

A CHRISTIAN

IS _____ ?

THE APOSTLES' CREED

- ▶ "I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord..."
- ▶ "A Christian is one who makes confession of Jesus Christ as Lord... everything else we have to say is an expansion upon the lordship of Jesus Christ."
- ▶ The creed is an elaboration of the earliest and original Christian confession, "Jesus is *Kurios*."
- ▶ *Kurios*: The *shema* in Deuteronomy 6

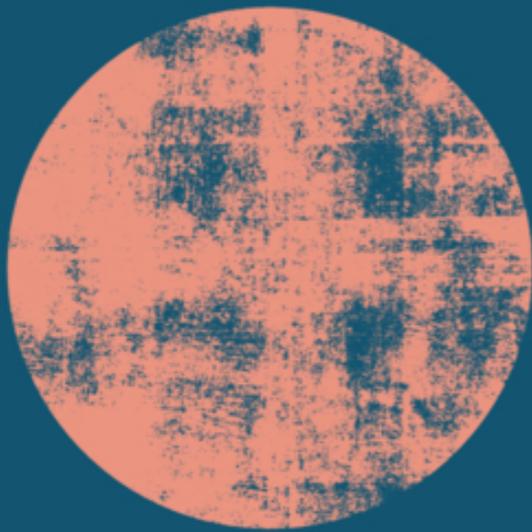


fundamentals

THE SECOND ARTICLE

- ▶ The second article of the creed is implicit in the first article: "The heart of the object of Christian faith is the word of the act in which God from all eternity willed to become man in Jesus Christ...this work of the Son of God includes in itself the work of the Father as its presupposition..."
- ▶ It's not, "I believe in Jesus Christ who was made Lord or became Lord." He is eternally the Lord.
- ▶ Because God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit God just is the divine decree to be God for us in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.





fundamentals

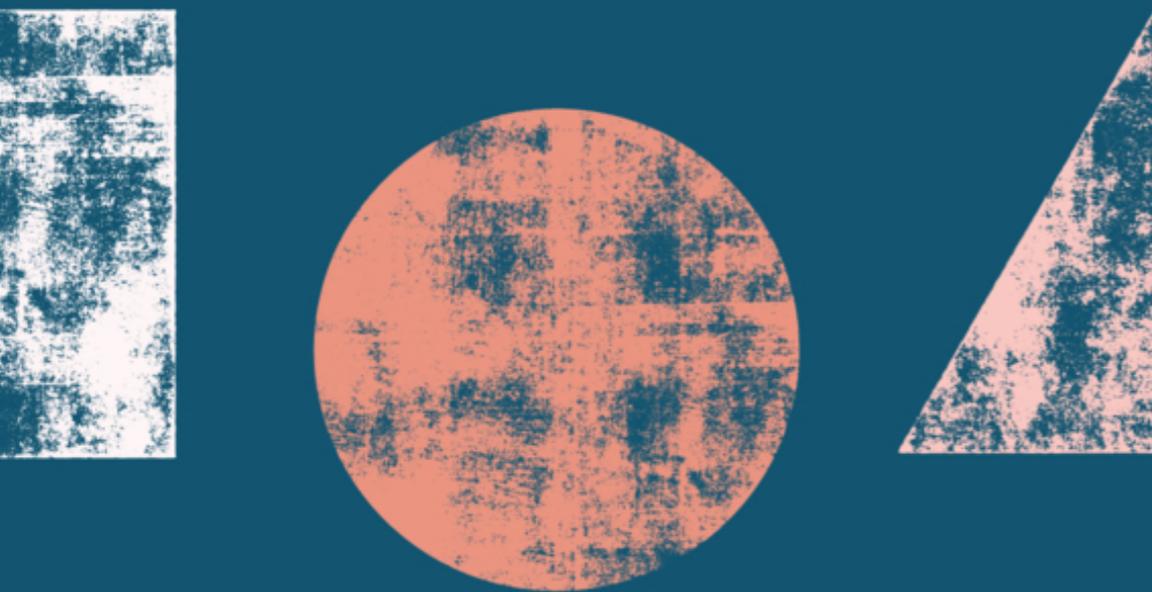
**WHAT MAKES
CHRISTIAN
REVELATION
DIFFERENT THAN
MYTHOLOGY?**

BECAUSE IT DOES SOUND OUTRAGEOUS!

- ▶ Jesus Christ is the inconceivability of God made flesh
- ▶ “A man stands before us in God’s place...the Almighty appears not almighty at all...”
- ▶ The revealed God in Jesus Christ is still the hidden, absolutely Other God: The Creator became a creature...the Creator became not the totality of creation itself but this particular, unrepeatable creature, Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal becomes temporal, the infinite finite.

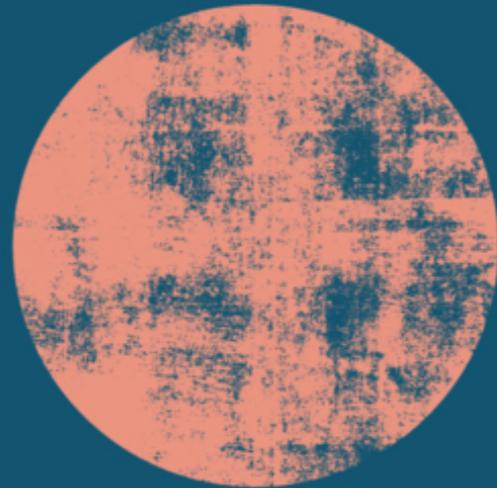
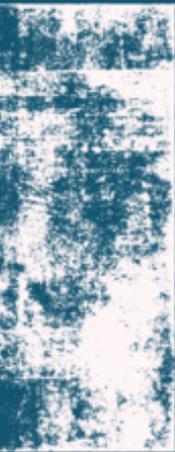


WHAT MAKES CHRISTIAN REVELATION DIFFERENT THAN MYTHOLOGY?



fundamentals

- “The name Jesus Christ is not the transparent shell, through which we glimpse something higher— there is no room for Platonism here!”



fundamentals

WHAT MAKES CHRISTIAN REVELATION DIFFERENT THAN MYTHOLOGY?

1. Particular vs. Universal

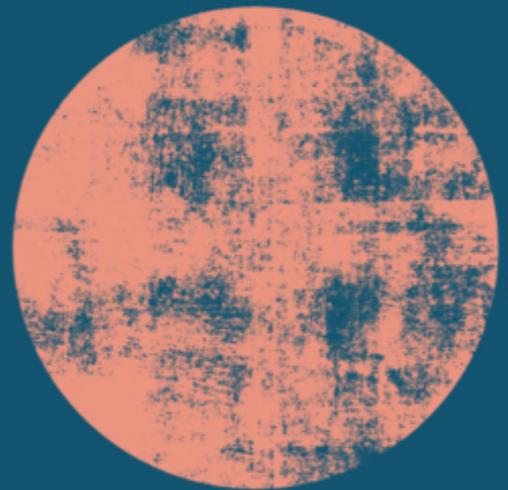
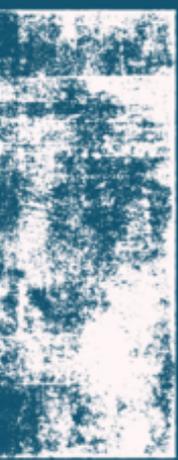
Myths are particular stories which give expression to general beliefs or universal principles.



WHAT MAKES CHRISTIAN REVELATION DIFFERENT THAN MYTHOLOGY?

fundamentals

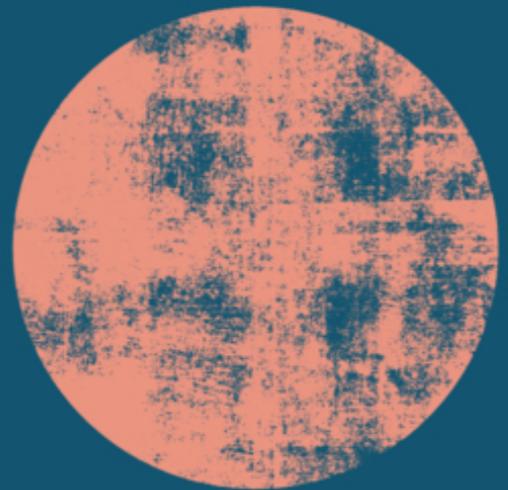
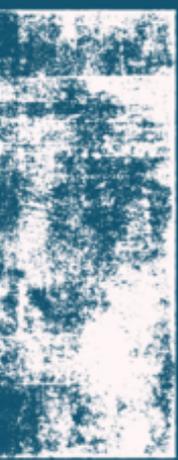
The Gospel is the opposite. There is no general or universal principle behind the particular person of Jesus Christ—he is the fullness of God.



fundamentals

WHAT MAKES CHRISTIAN REVELATION DIFFERENT THAN MYTHOLOGY?

By calling Jesus Christ, “Lord,” we’re identifying Jesus Christ as God’s existence itself.



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WHAT MAKES CHRISTIAN REVELATION DIFFERENT THAN MYTHOLOGY?

**2. The Revelation of Christ as Lord
Presses Binding Claims Upon Us**

WAS CHRISTMAS GOD'S "PLAN B?"



fundamentals

FROM ETERNITY TO HERE

- ▶ No— because Jesus Christ is *kurios*.
- ▶ “Jesus Christ is the reality of the covenant between God and humanity. It is only when we look at Jesus Christ that we succeed, in the sense of the first article, in speaking about God in the highest...the One who stands for all others.”
- ▶ “Jesus Christ is the event willed by God from all eternity.”
- ▶ “In taking flesh, Christ becomes the form of the eternal will of God...in Jesus Christ God elected eternally not to be God without us.”

IS JESUS CHRIST THE ONLY WAY?

**Short answer:
Yes.**



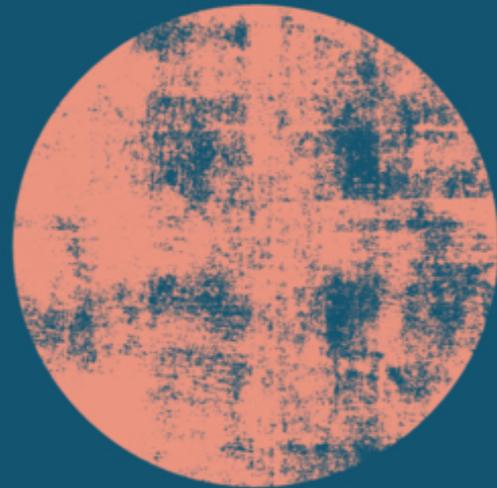
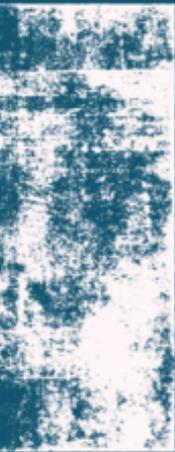
fundamentals

IT'S NOT ABOUT EXCLUSIVITY BUT ELECTION

- ▶ There is no other God but the God who determined to be for us in Christ from before the foundation of the world.
- ▶ It's not that he's the only "way" to God. Jesus Christ is the only God. That's what we mean by calling Jesus Lord: "In thinking of God, we have from the beginning to think of the name of Jesus."

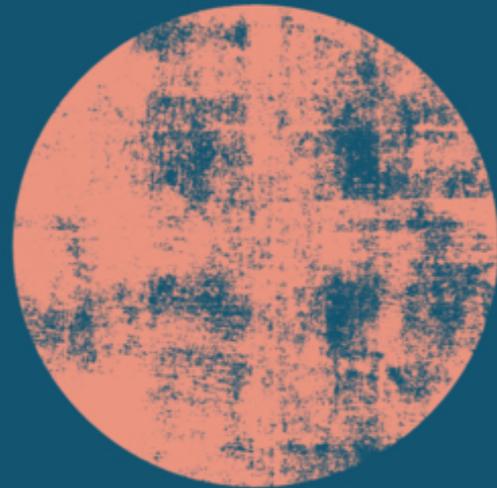
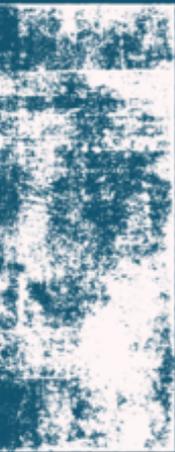
IT'S NOT ABOUT EXCLUSIVITY BUT ELECTION

- ▶ “The eternal will of God [for all humanity] has this form [the decision to be God for us in Jesus Christ].”
- ▶ “From eternity, there is no other God than the God whose will was revealed in this act [Jesus Christ].”
- ▶ “Do not regard this as speculation. The Christian message is, let me repeat, not one truth among other truths; it is the truth.”
- ▶ “He is the King of the Kingdom without end...from him there is no escape...the very future bears his name.”



fundamentals

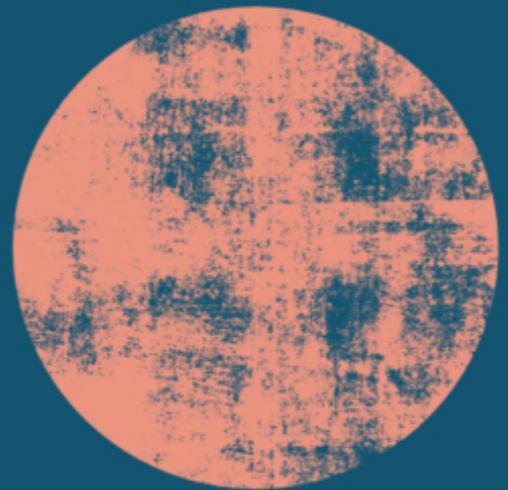
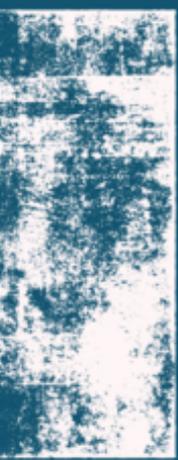
**WHAT DOES IT
MEAN TO “KNOW”
CHRIST?**



fundamentals

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “KNOW” CHRIST?

1. To know election



fundamentals

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “KNOW” CHRIST?

- 1. To know election**
 - “for our good”
 - “for us”

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “KNOW” CHRIST?

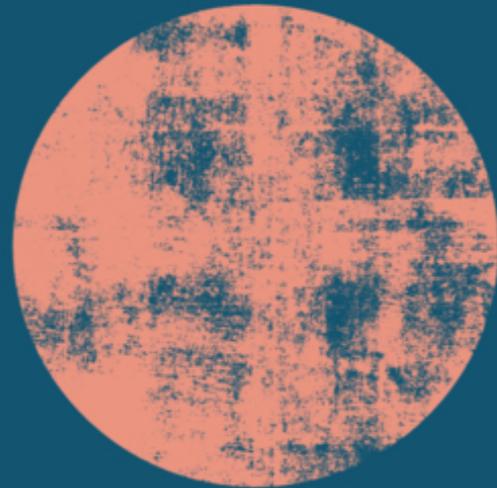
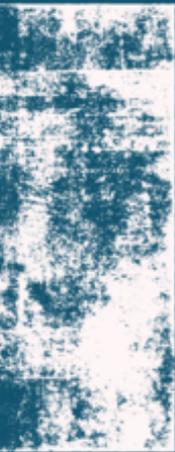
2. To know his benefits in
action

Our action in the world echoes the nature
of our justification.

“The finished work of Jesus Christ does
not set the Christian at rest but sets them
the Christian in motion...”



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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “KNOW” CHRIST?

**3. To know the nature of
his salvation**

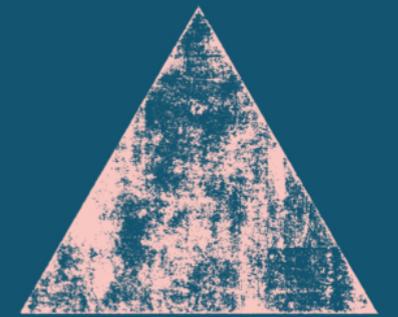
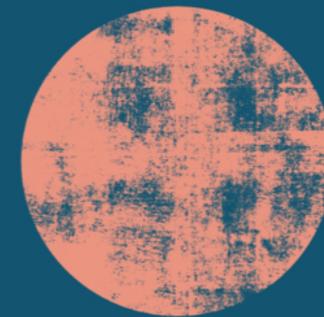
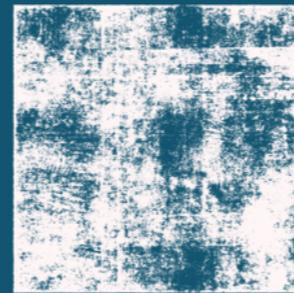
**“Jesus Christ is humanity’s salvation in all
circumstances and in face of all that
darkens our lives, including the evil that
proceeds from ourselves.”**

IT IS THIS FAITH WE ARE CALLED TO BELIEVE

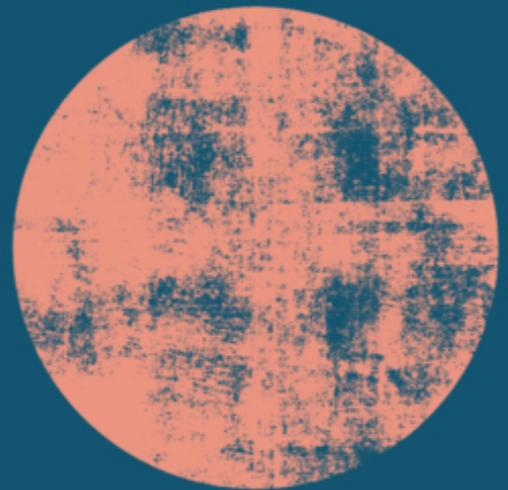
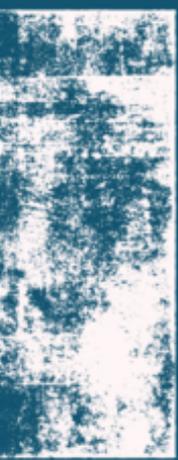
“IT MAY BE TRUE THAT WE EXIST IN CONTRADICTION TO THIS GOD, THAT WE LIVE IN REMOTENESS FROM HIM, INDEED IN HOSTILITY TO HIM. IT IS STILL TRUER THAT GOD HAS PREPARED RECONCILIATION FOR US, BEFORE WE ENTERED THAT STRUGGLE AGAINST HIM... ONLY THOSE WHO KNOW GOD’S MERCY TRULY UNDERSTAND MAN’S MISERY.”

WHAT IS IN A NAME?

- ▶ *Jesus Christ*
- ▶ Personal Name and Title: definite person and description of an office
- ▶ The first Christians did not call him Jesus Messiah: Already the language of the Gentile world determined his name and thus points towards his mission and backwards to Israel's vocation
- ▶ "These are not titles..."
- ▶ "You will name him...and he will..." said the angel to Mary; that is, the person and the office do not exist without each other."



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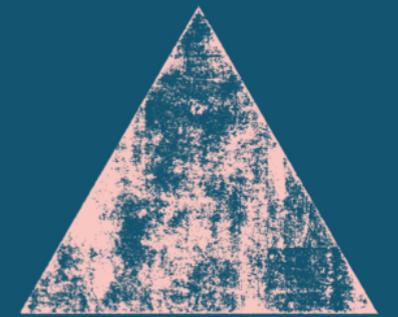
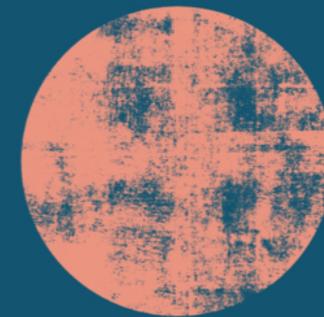
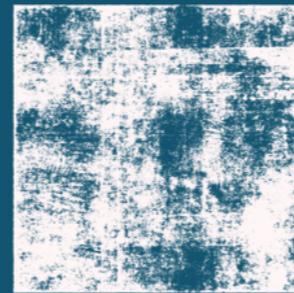
HOW DO WE PROVE GOD'S EXISTENCE?

ISN'T IT INTERESTING THAT WE TALK ABOUT PROVING GOD'S EXISTENCE IN THE SECOND ARTICLE BUT NOT THE FIRST?

IT SHOWS HOW WE PRESUME GOD IS CONCEPTUALLY REDUCIBLE RATHER THAN A GOD WHO CALLS.

HOW DO WE KNOW GOD EXISTS?

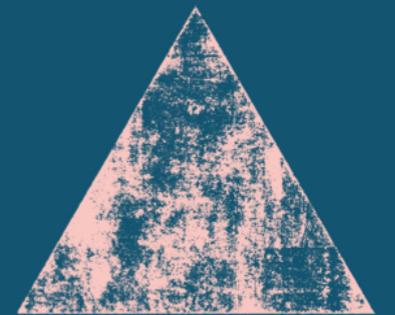
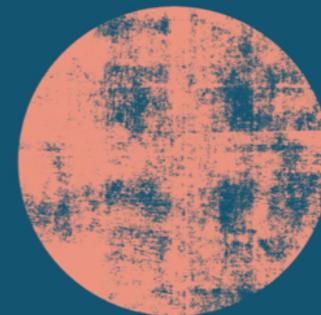
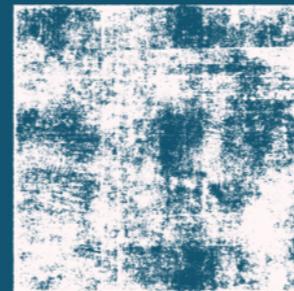
- ▶ "The Jews! There they are!"
- ▶ The Jews are proof of God's covenant with Abram.
- ▶ "God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead having first raised Israel from slavery in Egypt." – Robert Jenson
- ▶ "Jesus was of necessity a Jew."



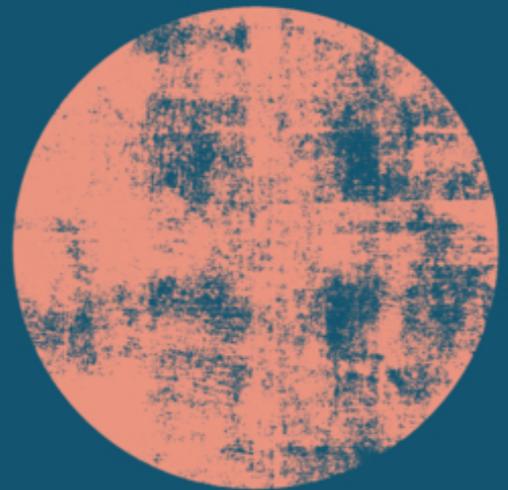
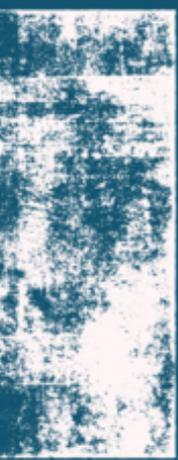
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HOW DO WE KNOW GOD EXISTS?

- ▶ “The Jews had to be the enemy of the Nazis for they are the proof of God and God’s revelation to us and for us in the Law and in Jesus Christ.”
- ▶ “A nation which makes itself the measure of everything will sooner or later collide with the truly chosen people of God.”
- ▶ “The person who is ashamed of the Jews is ashamed of Jesus Christ and therefore is the person ashamed of his own existence.”
- ▶ This is another way of thinking about Jesus saying “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” To say that Jesus is the Way is to say that salvation is from the Jews.

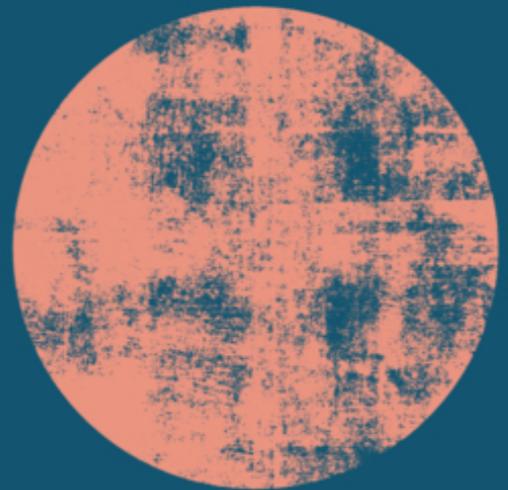
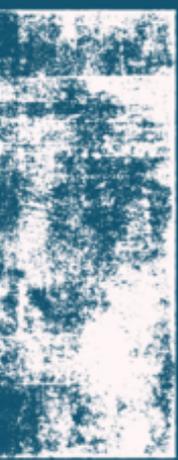


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**ANTI-SEMITISM
IS WORSE THAN
ATHEISM**

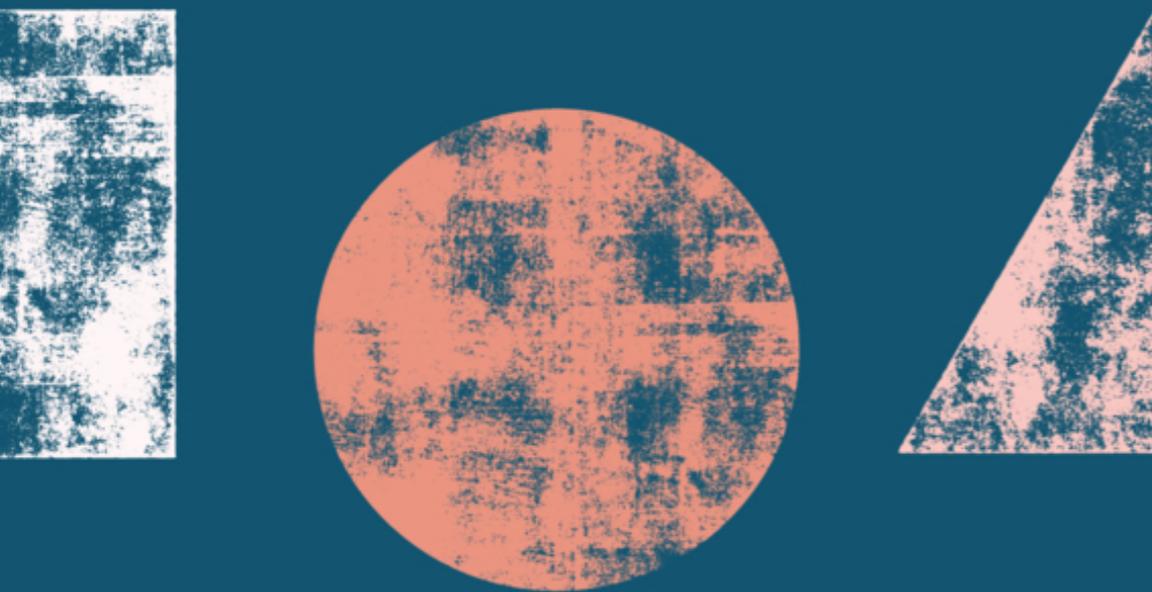


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HAS ISRAEL BEEN SUPERCEDED?

**SHORT ANSWER:
NO!**

HAS ISRAEL BEEN SUPERCEDED?

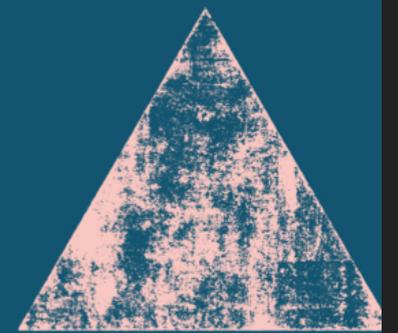
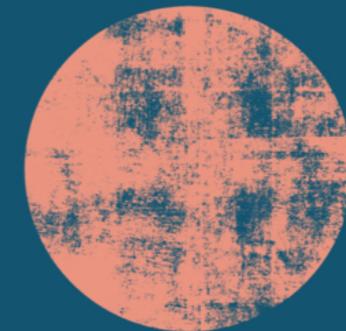
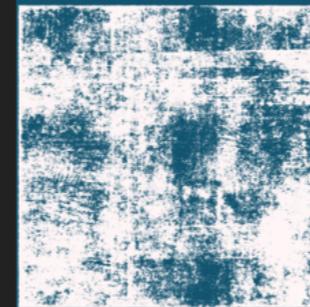


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**GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO ISRAEL IS IN
FACT THE GUARANTEE OF GOD'S
FAITHFULNESS TO US TOO (ROMANS
9-11).**

THE VALUE OF ISRAEL

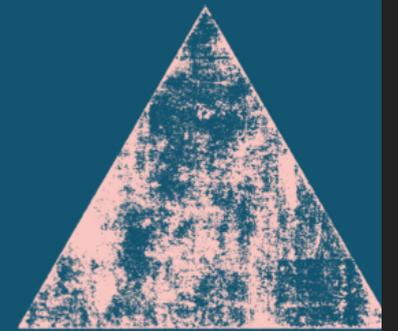
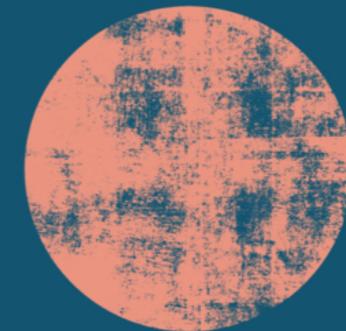
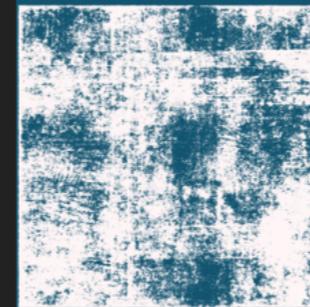
- ▶ In the Old Testament, we find in God's dealings with Israel the pattern for the Gospel.
- ▶ In Israel, we see our own resistance to our election and God's gracious determination to say "No" to our "No!" This upends the pernicious distinction between the grace of the New Testament and the conditionality of the Old.
- ▶ "Israel is not a sick man who was allowed to recover but One risen from the dead."



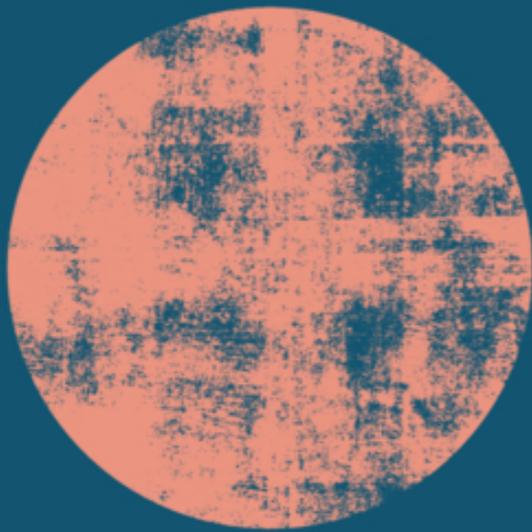
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THE VALUE OF ISRAEL

- ▶ "Israel is the presentation of God's free grace."
- ▶ In the Old Testament, we learn the nature and purpose of grace:
- ▶ Grace is for vocation, to go out and proclaim.
- ▶ "It's not a question of better or more moral people but of those who are distinguished by having been called."



fundamentals



fundamentals

**IF JESUS IS LORD
IS THE ANSWER,
WHAT'S THE
QUESTION?**



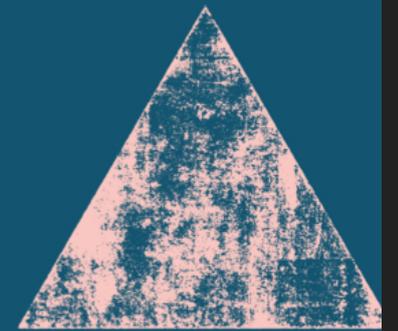
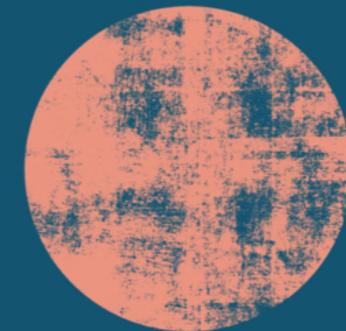
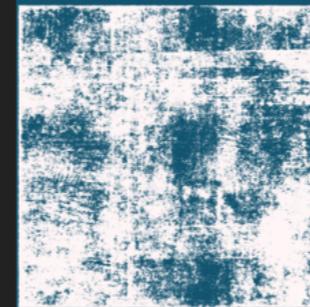
**IF JESUS IS LORD IS
THE ANSWER, WHAT'S
THE QUESTION?**

**WHY IS THIS REVELATION DIFFERENT
FROM OTHER REVELATIONS?**

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THE REVELATION OF JESUS AS LORD

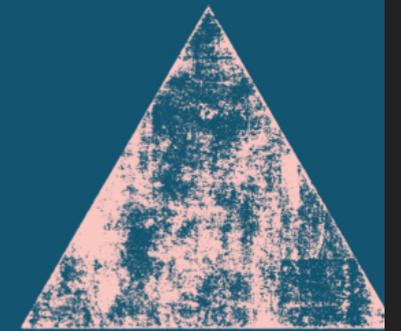
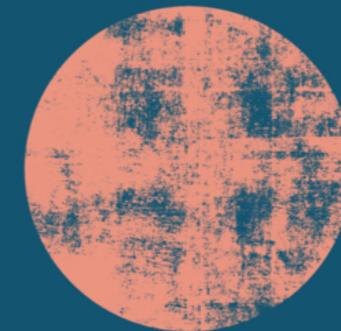
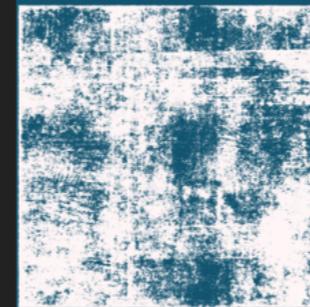
- ▶ “There are revelations of beauty and truth...”
- ▶ Creation is creation, after all, not nature. “It could not be God’s creation and not be full of revelations.”
- ▶ Other revelations, even heavenly [spiritual] revelations, lack the binding authority of “Jesus is Lord.”
- ▶ The profession makes claims upon your whole self and the entire world.



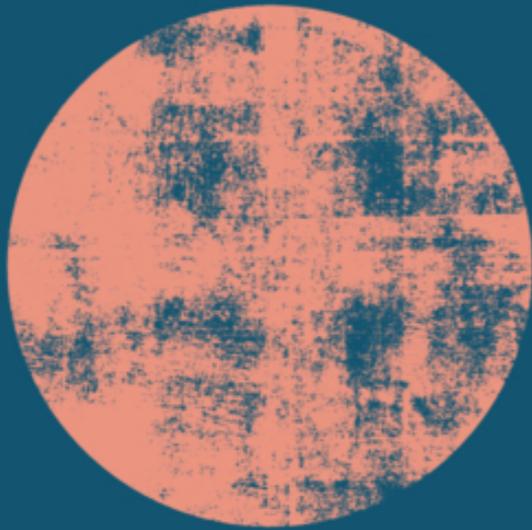
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THE REVELATION OF JESUS AS LORD

- ▶ The language of Lordship requires the language of claim and call not the language of choice.
- ▶ “The story of modernity is that you should have no story except the story you chose when you had no story. We call that freedom. Except, notice, you never got to choose the story which says you should have no story except the story you chose when you had no story. It’s precisely the story of modernity that produces a nonsensical statement like “I believe Jesus Christ is Lord but that’s just my personal opinion.”



fundamentals

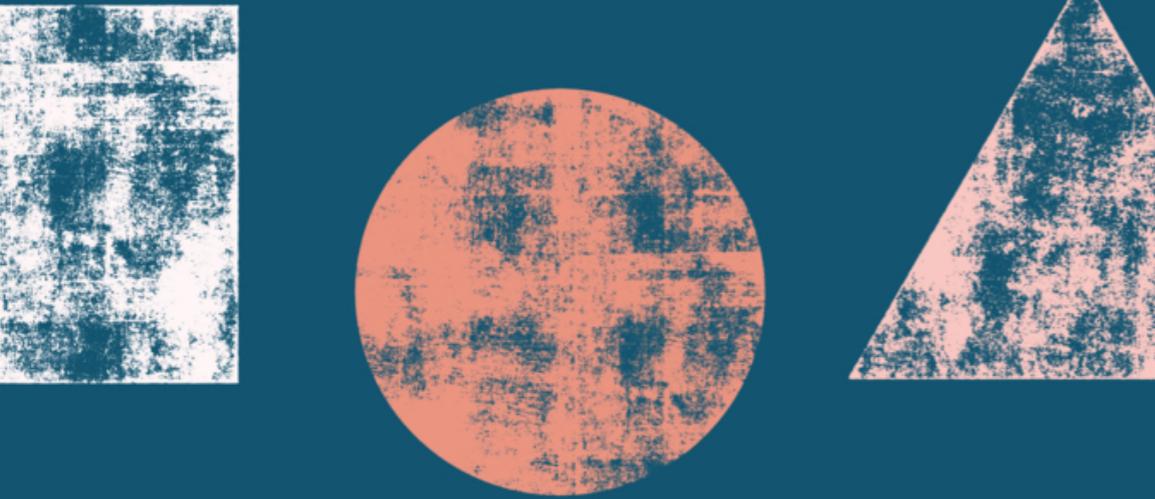


fundamentals

JESUS IS JEHOVAH

**“THE GOSPEL NAMES NOT AN
EVENT OF GOD’S WILL BUT GOD
HIMSELF.”**

THE GOSPEL IS AT STAKE!



fundamentals

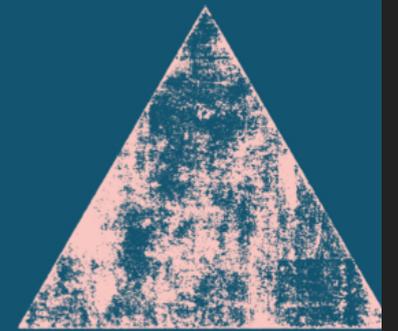
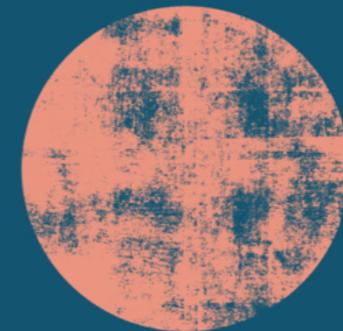
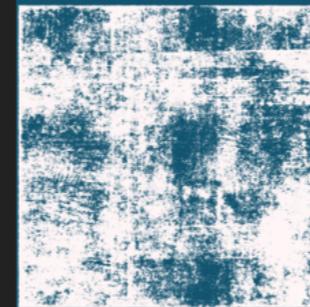
- Is Jesus Christ Lord, the Maker of Heaven and Earth?
- Or is Jesus a creature?

BY “LORD”

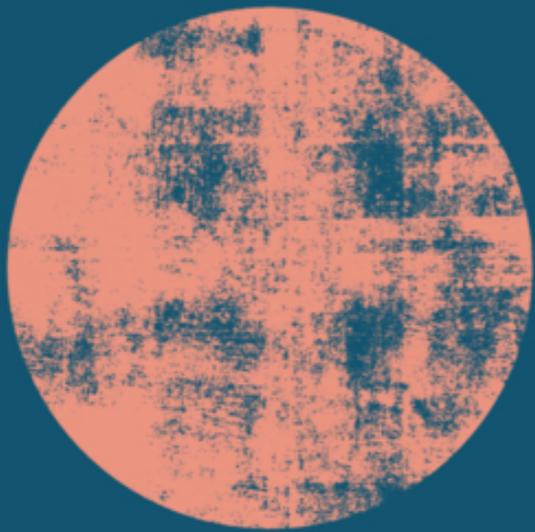
“THE EXISTENCE OF THE MAN JESUS CHRIST IS THE SOVEREIGN DECISION UPON THE EXISTENCE OF EVERY PERSON...BY GOD’S DISPENSATION, THIS ONE STANDS FOR ALL...IN THIS ONE MAN, GOD SEES EVERY MAN, ALL OF US, AS THROUGH A GLASS...EVERYTHING ABOUT US IS DECIDED IN HIM...HE IS THE CONCRETE FORM OF GOD’S DECISION FOR YOU...WE ARE NOW, THEREFORE, HIS PROPERTY.”

HOW DOES JESUS AS OUR LORD DETERMINE OUR READING OF THE BIBLE?

- ▶ The doctrine of election means we read all of the New Testament from the vantage point of God being for us and our good.

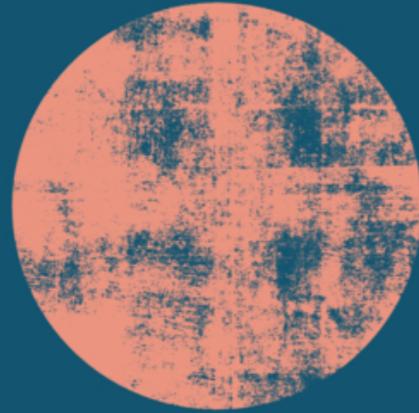
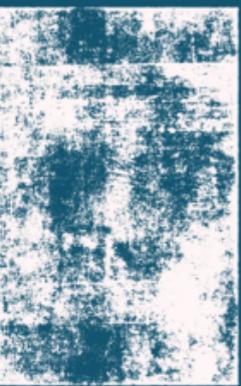


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**WHAT IF WE
DON'T BELIEVE
JESUS IS LORD?**



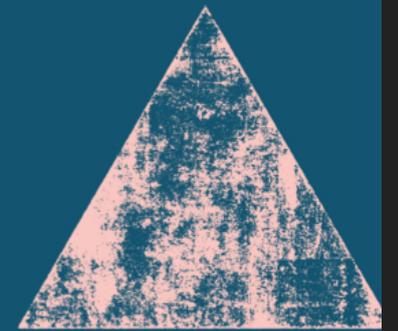
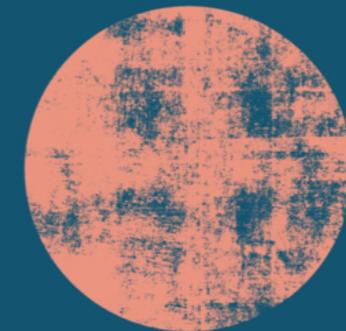
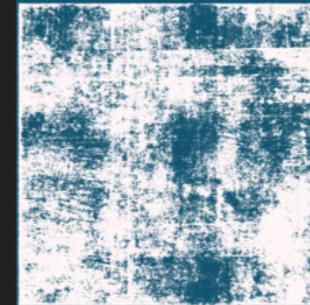
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**WHAT IF WE
DON'T BELIEVE
JESUS IS LORD?**

**Short answer:
He's still Lord.**

WHAT IF WE DON'T BELIEVE JESUS IS LORD?

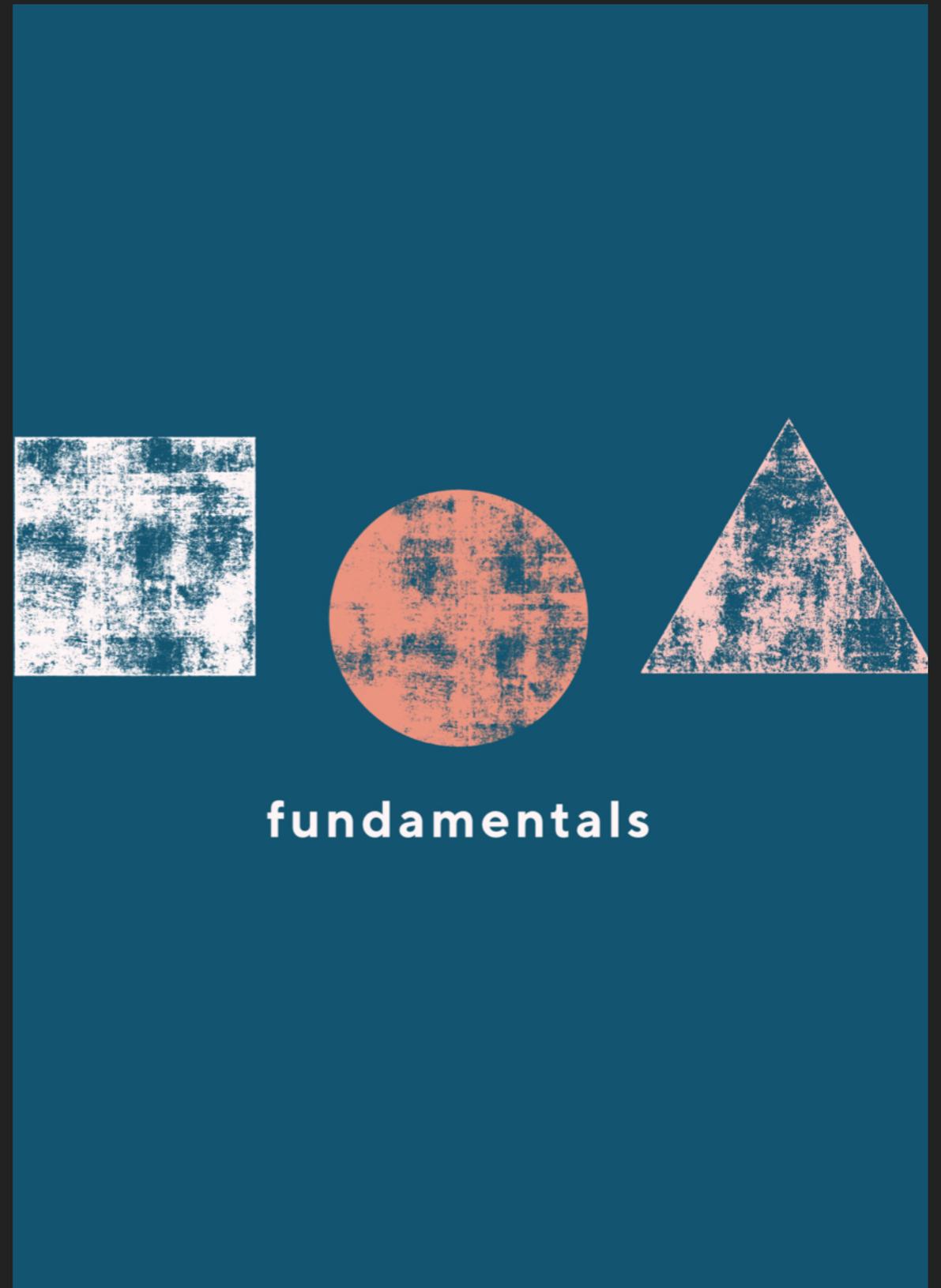
- ▶ The lordship of Jesus Christ does not depend on our knowing. He is Lord whether we realize it or do justice to it.
- ▶ We do not have a Lord who is not others' Lord.
- ▶ Not, "my Lord" (vs. Luther) but "our Lord."
- ▶ We know he is Lord— the Church— because we have been elected to proclaim it.
- ▶ He is not the Lord of the Church only but only the Church has been elected to witness to his Lordship: "The unique and living advertisement..."

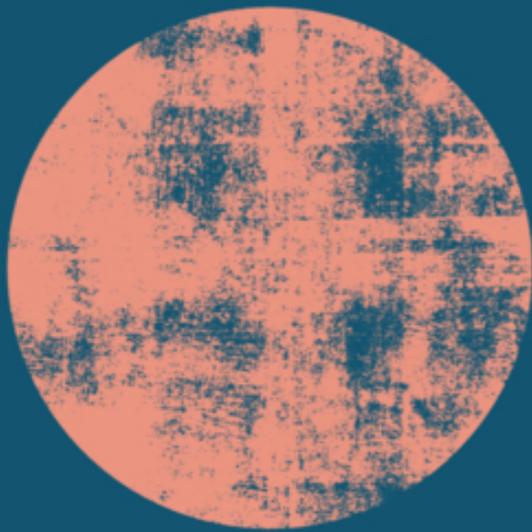
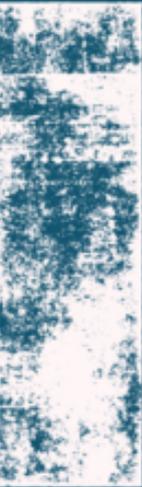


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OUR COMMISSION

- ▶ The Church appears here in the second article
- ▶ The world is the realm who ought to hear this news of its true Lord.
- ▶ Not words or ideas (“Christian idols”) but bearing witness to his Lordship.

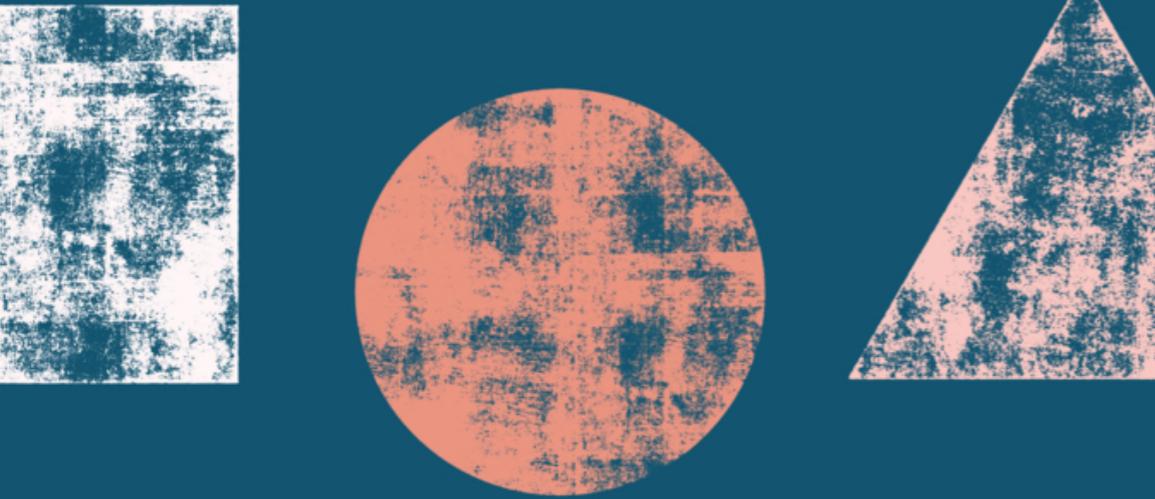




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**WHAT DO WE
MEAN BY FAITH
THEN?**

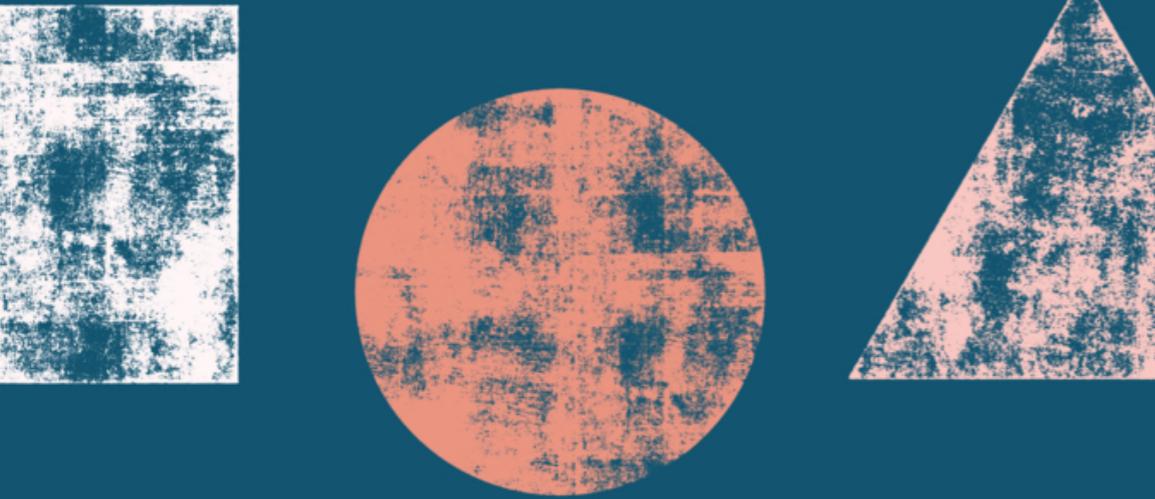
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FAITH?



fundamentals

**Faith is our decision about
a prior, inviolable decision
of God.**

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FAITH?



fundamentals

**Faith is our decision about a prior,
inviolable decision of God.**

**Because faith is about a prior
decision on God's part, faith and
obedience are one and the same.**