

COURSEWORK FOR  
TH504 SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IV  
ECCLESIOLOGY

An Assignment Presented to the Faculty  
of Louisiana Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for TH504 Systematic Theology IV  
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By

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**ASSIGNMENT**  
**TH504**  
**SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IV**

**TEXT:** Thiessen, Henry (rev. by Doerksen), **LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., any date is acceptable.

**COURSE OBJECTIVE:** This study pertains to the theological issues of the church; its definition and founding, its organization and ordinances, as well as its mission and destiny. How this age closes with final apocalyptic events is researched.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- (1) Read chapters thirty five through thirty eight (35-38) of the textbook for understanding. Mark listings, Scriptures and information you wish to quickly locate for outlining each of the above chapters and for preparing the required questions and answers that are described below.
- (2) Select another conservative theology book and read what the author teaches about the subjects shown above under "Course Objective." Document what you read on the "Required Supplemental Reading Report".
- (3) Prepare a detailed outline (at least three or four full pages for each chapter of Thiessen) in such a way that it can be used for teaching a series of lessons about these theological subjects to your college class, church congregation, staff members, or a Sunday school class.
- (4) From each of the above chapters, prepare and show the answers to at least eight (8) questions (true or false, fill in the blank, multiple choice or listings of important facts) which you feel could be an appropriate final exam if you were actually developing this course for a college or Christian school. Indicate the page number where you found each question and its answer, and place these questions and answers after your reading report.

**SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:**  
**LOUISIANA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**  
**6301 WESTPORT AVENUE**  
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## Supplemental Reading Report - Ecclesiology

The selected conservative theology books listed below were read and considered in light of what Thiessen covered on the course objectives ( 1. the theological issues of the church; 2. its definition and founding, 3. its organization and ordinances, 4. as well as its mission and destiny. 5. How this age closes with final apocalyptic events is researched.)

Cambron, Mark G., "Bible Doctrines, Beliefs That Matter", 1954, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Erickson, Millard J., "Christian Theology", 1985, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI

Ryrie, Charles C., "Basic Theology", 1981, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois

Mason, Roy, "The Church the Jesus Built", Challenge Press, Lehigh Valley Baptist Church, Emmaus PA

Schofield, C. I., "Prophecy Made Plain", Photolithographed by Grand Rapids Book Manufacturers, Grand Rapids, MI, 1967

Specific differences from Thiessen's work are analyzed according to the Objectives below:

### **Objective 1. the theological issues of the church;**

The following sections were read and used to investigate Thiessen's claims on this objective.

Thiessen's Part VII Ecclesiology pg 403-404

Cambron Chapter 7 Ecclesiology Section I The Meaning of the Word *ecclesia* pg 213-214

Cambron Chapter 7 Ecclesiology Section VI The Local Church pg 221-222

Ryrie Chapter 71 – Principles and/or Pattern pg 403-404

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Ryrie Chapter 70 - The Distinctiveness of the Church pg 397-402

Erickson Chapter 49 The Nature of the Church pg 1025-1050

The theological issues of ecclesiology is most contrasted from Thiessen's catholic church concept by Cambron's local church description. Therein he states

“While we believe that the Body of Christ is composed of all believers from Pentecost to the Rapture, we do stress the importance of the *local* church, or assembly. The local assembly is the physical body by which the Body (Church) is manifested. God stresses the importance of the local church by giving it officers and ordinances. He who is ashamed of the local assembly is ashamed of that which was established at Pentecost.

The local church, as well as the Body of Christ, was established at Pentecost.”

That opening paragraph modestly captures the Bible and Baptist emphasis on the local Church rather than the catholic Church which Thiessen continually emphasizes. I did not find a theology book which emphasizes the local church enough to counteract Thiessen's exaggeration of the Catholic Church. Cambron, however, comes close. Thiessen's strong emphasis on the catholicness of the Church overspreads all of his ecclesiology.

### **Objective 2. The Church definition and founding,**

The following sections were read and used to investigate Thiessen's claims on this objective.

Thiessen's Chapter 35 Introductory: Definition And Founding Of The Church pg 403-411

Cambron Chapter 7 Ecclesiology Section II The Use of the Word *ecclesia* pg 214-215

Section III What the Church is NOT pg 215-216

Section IV What the Church IS pg 216-220

Ryrie Chapter 69 - What is the Church pg 393-396

Erickson Chapter 50 The Role of the Church pg 1051-1-68

Mason, Roy, "The Church the Jesus Built", Challenge Press, Lehigh Valley Baptist Church,  
Emmaus PA

While Thiessen soft shoes and completely side steps the exactness of the word *ecclesia*, Cambron and Ryrice both accentuate its importance. The fact that the Bible and Baptists exaggerate the Local Church over the Catholic Church is captured effectively in the assembling and assembly ingredients of the definition of *ecclesia*. Thiessen leaves it off completely because it does not fit his concept of the Catholic Church which will not be assembled until the Rapture. A thorough definition of *ecclesia* is essential to seeing the Bible and the Baptist's emphasis on the assembly of the Local Church.

When it comes to the founding of the Church no theology book addresses the Bible truth as thoroughly as Roy Mason does. His purpose in writing is to show the perpetuity of the Baptist's Biblical doctrine and he thus puts great emphasis on the founding and organization of the local Church over any "universal, invisible theory" of a Church. Mason establishes well that Jesus founded the Church, not at Pentecost when all the theologians insist, but prior to his ascension. When Jesus was with them, he establishes, the body of assembled believers, (*the ecclesia*) which 1) had the Gospel, 2) were baptized believers, 3) had an organization, 4) had the proper Head, 5) had both the proper ordinances, 6) had the Great Commission, and 7) had met and were meeting prior to Pentecost. That is a description of a founded Local Church. NOT invisible, NOT catholic, but founded and local. Awesome!

### **Objective 3. The Churches organization and ordinances,**

The following sections were read and used to investigate Thiessen's claims on this objective.

Thiessen's Chapter 36 The Foundation of the Church, The Manner of the Founding, and The Organization of the Churches pg 412-421

Thiessen's Chapter 37 The Ordinances of the Church pg 422-431

Cambron Chapter 7 Ecclesiology Section VII Discipline in the Local Church pg 222-223

Cambron Chapter 7 Ecclesiology Section VIII Ordinances in the Local Church pg 223-228

Ryrie Chapter 72 – Types of Church Government pg 405-411

Ryrie Chapter 73 – Qualified Leadership for the Church pg412-420

Ryrie Chapter 74 Ordinances for the Church pg421-427

Erickson Chapter 51 The Government of the Church pg 1069 -1087

Erickson Chapter 52 The Initiatory Rite of the Church: Baptism pg 1089-1106

Erickson Chapter 52 The Continuing Rite of the Church: The Lord's Supper pg 1107--1128

Ryrie and Cambron do not pussy foot around with a Church office of Deaconess as does Thiessen. The implication of the neo-evangelical<sup>1</sup> is that the King James translators describe our

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1 From Theopedia <http://www.theopedia.com/Neo-evangelicalism> “The Neo-Evangelical movement was a response among orthodox evangelical Protestants to the separatism of fundamentalist Christianity beginning in the 1930s. The term was coined by Harold Ockenga in 1947, to identify a distinct movement within the broader evangelical fundamentalist Christianity of that day. What has been termed a split within the fundamentalist movement, came about as they disagreed among themselves about how Bible-believing Christians ought to respond to an unbelieving world. ... Neo-evangelicals held the view that the modernist and liberal parties in the Protestant churches had surrendered their heritage as Evangelicals by accommodating the views and values of the world. ... The term neo-evangelicalism no longer has any reliable meaning except for historical purposes. It is still self-descriptive of the movement to which it used to apply, to distinguish the parties in the developing fundamentalist split prior to the 1950s. The term is now used almost exclusively by conservative critics, to distinguish their idea of Evangelicalism from this movement. They claim that a loss of Biblical authority was evident early, which would later bear fruit in more and more accommodation: ...



sister Phebe as a 'servant', instead of a 'deaconess' in Romans 16:1, in an attempt to detract from such a woman held office of the Church. Certainly the epistles to Timothy and Titus are the detraction of such an unBiblical office without help from any translators, but neo-evangelicals, and Thiessen himself, have already dismissed these epistles as just Paul's opinions. It is unfortunate that Thiessen pussy foots with neo-evangelicals instead of standing on the clear inerrant Scriptures and decrying such foolishness.

Concerning the ordinances Cameron shoots strait keeps it concise, defeats Catholic Sacramental Doctrine and hangs tight to all the Baptist distinctives, including the two ordinances. While Thiessen hobnobs with Ironside to pretend that any saved person is a member of the catholic church and eligible to receive the Lord's Supper of some group, Cambron denies it. He states:

“No one but a baptized child of God should participate in the Lord's Supper. Those who ate with Him at the Last Supper had been baptized. Baptism is the symbol of the commencing of the new life, and the Lord's Supper is a symbol of that life.”

Clear, concise and Biblical, you have to love Cambron's argument here.

#### **Objective 4. as well as the Churches mission and destiny.**

The following sections were read and used to investigate Thiessen's claims on this objective.

Thiessen's Chapter 38 The Mission and Destiny of the Church pg 432-439

Cambron Chapter 7 Ecclesiology Section V The Gifts to the Body pg 220-221

Ryrie Chapter 75 - The Worship of the Church pg 428-432

Ryrie Chapter 76 – Other Ministries of the Church pg433-436

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**neoevangelicals deny, or too severely qualify their belief in, the doctrine of biblical inerrancy**

Erickson Chapter 54 The Unity of the Church pg 1129- 1146

While Thiessen dismisses the Biblical commissioning of the Church when considering the mission of the Church, Ryrie and Cambron make it paramount. It is hard to understand how one's systematic theology could not, but Reformed Augustinian Theologies do not consider the Great Commission the mission of the Church. Thiessen does not; Erickson does not, Hodge does not; even Strong, the Reformed Baptist does not. What Thiessen considers "The Missions of the Church" Ryrie lists under "Other Ministries of the Church." Therein he considers 1) The Ministry of Discipline, 2) The Ministry of Widows, and 3) The Ministry of Charity. Such is a more Biblical approach which leaves the real mission of the Church as the real mission of the Church.

**Objective 5. How this age closes with final apocalyptic events is researched.**

The following sections were read and used to investigate Thiessen's claims on this objective.

Thiessen's Chapter 38 The Mission and Destiny of the Church pg 432-439

Schofield, C. I., "Prophecy Made Plain", chap II "God's Purpose in this Age" pg 21-37

I found no other theologians who addressed this particular objective under ecclesiology. It seems a fitting ending, and Thiessen herein appropriately points out that the Church will not convert the world and it will occupy a place of blessing and honor throughout eternity, however such considerations are given under eschatology by others. C. I. Schofield does make both points abundantly clear in his short work on prophecy. In light of Catholic eschatology, and the lack of dispensational grasp among most Protestants it certainly needs a greater herald.

## **Q&A From Chapter 35 Introductory: Definition And Founding Of The Church pg 403-411**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences.

In consideration of Objective 1. The theological issues of the church AND Objective 2. The Church definition and founding:

### **1. What is Thiessen's primary definition of Church?**

Ans pg 405-407 Thiessen's does not readily give a definition of Church, nor does he address the misgivings about its definition. He points out 3 things the church is not, (not Judaism improved, the kingdom, or a denomination) and then says the church (yet undefined) is considered in two senses, catholic (universal) and local. Finally on pg 408 under his universal sense he gives a secondary definition of "A group of people called out from the world and belonging to God."

### **2. What is a good working definition of Church?**

Ans Ryrie pg 394, Cambron pg 213 The 'Church' is an English rendition, (not a translation or a transliteration) for the NT word '*ecclesia*' which is properly defined as: the called together (often misnomered 'called out') assembly of believers in Jesus Christ. Although the assembly is not to be confused with a catholic church, a universal body or an invisible church, there are a few uses of the *ecclesia* to refer to the people themselves whether assembled or not.

### **3. Where does the English word 'church' come from?**

Ans pg 407 "The English word 'church' comes from the Greek word *kuriakos*, which means 'belonging to the Lord.' This adjective occurs only twice in the New Testament: It is used of the Supper of the Lord (1Cor 11:20) and of the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10)"

**4. How would you contend Thiessen's assertion that Matt 16:18 (the built Church) is speaking specifically of a catholic, universal Church?**

Ans pg 407 The Bible Says in Mt 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The word *ecclesia* is used in 4 ways, #1 a local assembly, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth ...”; #2 local assemblies, “unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace ...”; #3 the body of living believers unnumbered “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it ...”; and #4 the complete body of Christ, “Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it ...”; but NEVER as a catholic body assembled and organized to be head over any other part of the body! In Mt. 16:18 Jesus is speaking speaking of the church as in sample #4, as the complete body of Christ.

**5. How would you contend Thiessen's assertion that 1Cor 15:9, Gal 1:13, and Phil 3:6, with cf Acts 8:3 (the persecuted Church) is speaking specifically of a catholic, universal Church?**

Ans pg 407 The Bible Says 1Co 15:9 “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God...”, Ga 1:13 “For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: ...”, Php 3:6 “Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless ...”, Ac 8:3 “As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.” The word *ecclesia* is used in 4 ways, #1 a local assembly, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth ...”; #2 local assemblies, “unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace ...”; #3 the body of living believers unnumbered “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it ...”; and #4 the complete body of Christ, “Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it ...”; but NEVER as a catholic body

assembled and organized to be head over any other part of the body! In these references the church is referenced as in sample #3, as the body of living believers unnumbered .

**6. How would you contend Thiessen's assertion that Eph 5:25,26, and 27 (the sanctified Church) is speaking specifically of a catholic, universal Church?**

Ans pg 407 The Bible Says Eph 5:25-27 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” The word *ecclesia* is used in 4 ways, #1 a local assembly, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth ...”; #2 local assemblies, “unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace ...”; #3 the body of living believers unnumbered “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it ...”; and #4 the complete body of Christ, “Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it ...”; but NEVER as a catholic body assembled and organized to be head over any other part of the body! In these references Christ is speaking speaking of the church as in sample #4, as the complete body of Christ.

**7.How would you contend Thiessen's assertion that Eph 1:22, 5:23, and Col 1:18 (the headship of the Church) is speaking specifically of a catholic, universal Church?**

Ans pg 407 The Bible Says Eph 1:22 “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, ...”, Eph 5:23 “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ...”, Col 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” The word *ecclesia* is used in 4 ways, #1 a local

assembly, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth ...”; #2 local assemblies, “unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace ...”; #3 the body of living believers unnumbered “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it ...”; and #4 the complete body of Christ, “Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it ...”; but NEVER as a catholic body assembled and organized to be head over any other part of the body! In these references God is speaking of the church as in sample #4, as the complete body of Christ.

**8. How would you contend Thiessen's assertion that 1Cor 12:28, Eph 3:10 and Heb 12:23 (other references to the Church) is speaking specifically of a catholic, universal Church?**

Ans pg 407 The Bible Says 1Co 12:28 “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues ...”, Eph 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, ...”. Heb 12:23 “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,” The word *ecclesia* is used in 4 ways, #1 a local assembly, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth ...”; #2 local assemblies, “unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace ...”; #3 the body of living believers unnumbered “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it ...”; and #4 the complete body of Christ, “Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it ...”; but NEVER as a catholic body assembled and organized to be head over any other part of the body! In these references the church is referenced as in sample #3, as the body of living believers unnumbered

**9. What is horribly wrong with Thiessen's lead sentence of “II The founding of the Church”?**

Ans pg 408 Thiessen's lead sentence of “II The founding of the Church” implies that there are two churches founded, a Universal (Catholic) Church and local churches. Later he calls the Universal (Catholic) Church the 'true church' (pg 414) making it clear which one he believes in.

**10. Why does Thiessen insist that 'both' Churches he defends were founded at Pentecost?; and refute this premise.**

Ans pg 409-410 Thiessen says that 1Cor 12:13 “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit ....” dictates that the church was founded at Pentecost because that is when believers were first baptized in the Holy Spirit. If this were the case the Holy Spirit would be more founder of the Church than Christ was. It was not necessary for the Church to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be founded as a local assembly of baptized believers. They were already commissioned, given the ordinances, had a business meeting and were assembled for a prayer meeting before the Pentecost filling. That is amply sufficient for its founding by Jesus Christ.

**Q&A From Chapter 36 The Foundation of the Church, The Manner of the Founding, and The Organization of the Churches pg 412-421**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences.

In consideration of Objective 3. The Churches organization and ordinances:

**1. With growing disdain for Thiessen's ecclesiology give his primary, secondary and tertiary sources for the foundation of his catholic church.**

Ans pg 412-413 It is very un-Baptist and ergo very troubling that Thiessen never uses the Holy Bible as his primary source. In defending the founding of a catholic church he uses “The consensus of Biblical writers on this subject” (pg 413) as his primary source; citing that *'petra'* and *'petros'* is “nowhere confounded in literature” makes secular literature his secondary source; and his tertiary sources involve “those who heard him say this” and “Jesus spoke Aramaic and we cannot tell whether the distinction in terms was made in the Aramaic!” Nowhere in this consideration does he use or treat the Holy Scripture as the authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired word of God on the subject. Indeed that he would be more concerned about exactly what Jesus said in Aramaic than exactly what was recorded and preserved in His Greek is very very troubling.

**2. Thiessen completely eludes the elementary Greek consideration of Matthew 16:18 which any freshman Greek student could infer, what is it?**

Ans pg 412-413 It is elementary in Greek that pronouns will always agree in gender with the nouns which they point to. In Matthew 16:18 the *os* ending on *Petros* (Peter) makes it a masculine noun, and the *a* ending on both *tauta* (this) and *petra* (rock) make them feminine nouns. Thus the 'this(F) rock(F)' upon which Christ will build his church cannot be Peter(M). It is clearly the *aletheia*, truth(F), presented previously by Peter(M); the truth(F) presented was that “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” and this(F) is indeed the cornerstone upon which Christ founded his church. (Notice the feminine ending *a* on *aletheia*, truth, making 'truth' a feminine noun.) Elementary.

The words of Matthew 16:18 with their direct English translation below each Greek word are:

καγω δε σοι λεγω οτι συ ει πετροω και επι ταυτη τη πετρα

And also I unto thee I say that thou art Peter (M) and upon this (F) the rock (F)

οικοδομησω μου την εκκλησιαν και πυλαι



I will build my the church (F) and the gates  
 αδου ου κατισχυσουσιν αυτηω  
 of hell not shall prevail against it (F)

**3. Thiessen completely eludes the elementary Greek consideration of Matthew 16:18 and instead gently pokes at the errant Roman Catholic doctrine of ecclesiology; how so and why?**

Ans pg 412-413 In regards to Thiessen's catholic church not being built upon Saint Peter, as the Romans built their catholic church, Thiessen can only cite “the consensus of Biblical writers”, the confirmed use of 'petra' or 'petros' in secular literature, and the speculative possibilities of what Jesus may or may not have said in Aramaic. He then muddies up his allegations even more by testing the likely hood and trends of Jesus speaking of himself in the third person. These are indeed not the defenses of a Bible believer, nor do they display any propensity to believe the written Word of God as a final authority.

**4. A mainstay and errant treatise of Saint Augustine's ecclesiology is that the church that Jesus founded was but an embryo and must needs 'evolve' into the more matured fully developed establishment that Augustine himself helped fashion; what is Thiessen's position on this philosophy?**

Ans pg 414 Thiessen and other Reformed Augustinian Theologians must needs conform to a mainstay and errant treatise of Saint Augustine's ecclesiology that the church that Jesus founded was but an embryo and must needs 'evolve' into the more matured fully developed establishment that Augustine himself helped fashion. Such a premise is supported when Thiessen says “The universal or true Church ... was not 'organized' but 'born' “, and thus called “the church of the

firstborn ones.<sup>2</sup>” Completely ignoring the Holy Scriptures that are given “that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” Thiessen then says “At first there was no organization, ... gradually, however, ... Because the believers were already members of the true Church, they felt impelled to organize local churches ... for the common good.” He even musters the rash accusation that “it is doubtful whether the Scriptures contemplate rigid denominational organizations” (pg 415) as if God did not know how to document for the needs of an evolution of some Church. This with his later reference to the 'primitive church' contrasted with the developed catholic church is absolute and unfounded balderdash.

### **5. What is obvious but never examined in Thiessen's Section III “Organization of Churches”?**

Ans pg 415 Thiessen must talk of the organization of local churches because there is never any organization of Thiessen's, Rome's or the Reformed Augustinian Theologian's catholic Church. The Bishops with their Dioceses, along with Synods of Presbyters with theirs, is all fabricated without a shred of information from the Bible. Indeed in the Bible there is never a body of believers given any authority over another local church; even the apostles only provided recommendations to churches where they were founders but not members.

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2 This reference is taken completely out of context by Thiessen to make it say what he wants to believe. The whole sentence says “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” (Heb 12:22-24)

**6. Why should Thiessen and Reformed Augustinian Theologians say “We prefer to speak of the organization of *churches*, rather than of the *Church* “?**

Ans pg 415 Thiessen and Reformed Augustinian Theologians say “We prefer to speak of the organization of *churches*, rather than of the *Church* “ because the leading indicator that there is no catholic church is found in the Bible being silent about its organization. No where in Scripture will you find an apostle usurping an authority over any group of local churches. All instructions, organization, and communications are directed at local churches, none at any catholic church.

**7. What is wholly absent from Thiessen's defense for “the fact of organization”?**

Ans pg 415 It is disturbing that Thiessen attempts to defend the 'fact of Church organization without opening a Bible and looking at the act of church organizing. Paul did write to Timothy on the subject stating “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” He then expands on how the churches should be organized with two distinct offices, as prescribed in one of our Baptist distinctives.

**8. What does Thiessen site for his authority for officers of the Church, and what does he omit?**

Ans pg 417-419 Rather than use the Holy Scriptures as his authority for the local church offices Thiessen states “If early practice is to be our guide today, then there are to be in the churches the same offices.” Shame, shame on Thiessen.

**9. What is brazenly wrong with Thiessen's presentation of an office of 'Deaconess'?**

Ans pg 420 Three gross errors of Thiessen's preference for an office called 'deaconess' 1) Thiessen has already established that his perception of 'early practice' is to be his guide when for a true theologian the Scripture should be our guide and final authority; 2) The Holy Scripture provides no characterization or qualifications of such an office even if Thiessen can imagine such; and 3) I Timothy 2 would clearly invalidate any such office with women not allowed to lead, usurp authority, teach, or lead in prayer. Shame, shame on Thiessen for attempting the defense of such an idea.

### **Q&A From Chapter 37 The Ordinances of the Church pg 422-431**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences.

In consideration of Objective 3. The churches organization and ordinances:

**1. No matter how long you study your Bible you will never find the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church which Thiessen lists; what are they?**

Ans pg 422 Thiessen lists the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church as: “ordination, confirmation, matrimony, extreme unction, penance, baptism and the eucharist.”

**2. Thiessen's definition of 'sacrament' does not build a large enough wall of separation from an ordinance; reinforce this wall.**

Ans pg 422 Thiessen tampers with the word 'sacrament' with out the brazen exposure that it deserves and he implies that the catholics have 'evolved' the word from its origins to make it more palatable. He says “Originally this word meant *to make sacred, to dedicate to gods or sacred uses.*” He is careful not to expose that all of its uses, including uses to which catholics 'evolved' the word towards, includes a mystical attachment to the act or item. In other words when something is declared a sacrament, it leaves the ordinary, leaves the physical and becomes

metaphysical, it takes on a mystical, spiritual ability to alter the physical. Baptist's insistence on the ordinances being called just that and never called a 'sacrament', especially a 'holy sacrament' is to 1) ensure the complete separation from the catholic use of these symbols; 2) to emphasize that they are symbols that have a witnessing and mental image only, and no mystical or metaphysical effect, and 3) to ensure that these symbols do not take on any initiation rites of their own, or 'means of grace', as protestants call it, as in the catholic use wherein they actually, mystically perform the uniting with the body of Christ (which they call the Holy Catholic Church); wherein they actually, mystically perform the crucifying of and, the eating and receiving of, the body of Christ; and wherein they actually, mystically drink of his actual blood. Baptist's will always be staunch about these definitions. There are but two ordinances and by a Bible believer they will never be referred to as 'sacraments.'

**3. After Thiessen's inadequate coverage of the mysticism within sacraments, he accuses G. Campbell Morgan of being mystical concerning baptisms that are not directly connected to water; use Heb 6:1-2 to refute what he says about Morgan's doctrine.**

Ans pg 423 Although Hebrew 6:1-2 states that one of Christianity's first principles of the oracles of God is the 'doctrine of baptisms' (plural) Thiessen refused to believe there is any baptism other than water baptism. G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945) was an extraordinary, expository Bible preacher and teacher, who's 90 essays in *The Fundamentals* were foundational to fundamentalists; and Thiessen accuses that his explanations of Baptism are 'mystical.' Morgan, the Bible, and John the Baptist, point out that there is a baptism other than water baptism; "Mt 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with

fire:” Jesus will baptize (wholly immerse) with the Holy Ghost, but Thiessen will not hear of it. Morgan, the Bible and the Apostle Paul distinguish a baptism into the Body of Christ, creating our union with Christ. “1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Our union with Christ is accomplished by being (God's words) “baptized into one body”; but Thiessen will not hear of it. The precedence has been well established and Thiessen ignores and dismisses Holy Scripture to believe that all baptisms in the Bible are water baptisms.

**4. Thiessen shares and sites Ironside's argument that like views on baptism are not required for communion at the Lord's table, refute this.**

Ans pg 425-426 As Ironside states it “Scripture never intimates that like views of baptism are required to fit saints for communion at the Lord's table. ...” Thiessen, and evidently Ironside, believe that everyone who is saved is immediately made a member of the holy catholic church and is thus eligible to receive communion at the Lord's table. In actuality a believer is eventually made a member of a local body of believers, which is what Christ organized, commissioned, and authorized; the local body of believers administers the ordinances to its members; (more particularly the ordained ministers in the office of bishop/pastor and deacons (plural) administer the ordinances to its members) and that new believer is not one of those members until they have administered the ordinance of baptism and made a member eligible for receipt of communion at the Lord's table. Ergo a Scriptural baptism accepted by like views of a body of believers called a local church is indeed required to fit saints for communion at the Lord's table. Thiessen again dismisses this logic in his closing paragraph of this chapter on page 431.

**5. What verses commissioning the ordinance of communion does Thiessen, dismiss from Scripture?**

Ans pg 426 Words of instruction about the ordinance of the Lord's Supper found in Luke 22:17-20 are reported by Thiessen as being 'not certainly authentic.' Thiessen, Robertson and Plummer then only have the testimony of St. Paul, and Thiessen has already clarified that he does not consider St. Paul's testimony to be God's testimony either. There is a very dangerous precedence in Thiessen, a precedence of dismissing Scriptures like “And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” (Luke 22:17-20)

**6. How did Thiessen aptly connected the dots of John 8, Eucharist, transubstantiation and the Roman Catholic teaching?**

Ans pg 426-427 Thiessen aptly shows the connection of John 6:35 “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” to Bengel's assertion that this is related to the Holy Supper, which W. K. Kelly connects to the Roman development of the sacrament of Eucharist, which includes transubstantiation, “ a doctrine which must be 'repudiated by all Romanists or Protestants save by such as are utterly blinded by superstition.' Thiessen then reports that “The Roman Catholic Church interprets the words of Christ literally, when He says: “This is my body,” He does not

say, *This is the figure of my body* – but *This is my body* (2 Council of Nice, Art. 6)” This provides a fine summary of the whole error about this ordinance.

### **7. What is the Lutheran position on The Lord's Supper?**

Ans pg 428-429 According to the Lutherans “the communicant partakes of the true body and blood of Christ, *in, with, and under* the bread and wine. The elements themselves remain unchanged, but the mere partaking of them after the prayer of consecration communicates Christ to the participant along with the emblems. This is know as the doctrine of consubstantiation. “

### **8. Luther and Calvin did not land very far from the Roman Catholic teaching of Holy Eucharist; where did the reformed view take it and what does Thiessen think of their position?**

Ans pg 429-430 The reformed position on the Lord's Supper is “Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporeally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of His death : the body and blood of Christ being then not corporeally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves to their outward senses. (Westminster Confession, XXIX, vii.)” To this Thiessen says “It may be questioned whether even this view does not go beyond the teaching of Scripture. The Biblical view seem to represent the Lord's Supper as a memorial to the death of Christ...” Bravo Thiessen. The Reformers did not go far enough from Catholicism, the Reform view did not go far enough from the Reformers, and Thiessen, here, finally, goes away from the Reformed View, but again, he does not go far enough.



## **Q&A From Chapter 38 The Mission and Destiny of the Church pg 432-439**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences.

In consideration of Objective 4. The Church's mission and destiny.

### **1. According to Thiessen what are the 7 missions of the Church?**

Ans pg 432-436 Thiessen supposed that the 7 missions of the Church are: 1) to Glorify God, 2) to Edify itself, 3) to Purify itself, 4) to Educate its Constituency, 5) to Evangelize the World, 6) to Act as a Restraining Force, and Enlightening Force in the World, and 7) to Promote All that is Good.

### **2. If the mission of the Church is in the Commission of Christ what did Thiessen hit or miss?**

Ans pg 432-436 and Matt 28:19-20 In Matthew 28 Jesus commissions the Church to “19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” This threefold commission might be aligned with Thiessen's 7 as follows 1) to 'preach the Gospel to every creature' aligns with Thiessen's 5<sup>th</sup> to Evangelize the world, 2) to 'Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the the Holy Ghost' aligns with nothing that Thiessen mentions, and 3) to 'teach them to observe all things' might in some way align with Thiessen's 4<sup>th</sup> 'to Educate its Constituency.'

### **3. Explain the inconsistency between Christ's commission to the Church and Thiessen's listing of missions of the Church.**

Ans pg 432-436 Thiessen's inconsistency with what Christ commissioned for His Church and what he lists as the mission of the Church likely stems from differing understandings of 'mission of the Church'. In obvious literal understanding the Mission of the Church would involve what the Church was commissioned to do, but Thiessen seems to consider the mission of the Church to be what the Church seems to accomplish, (his item 1, 5, and 6) what is done to the Church, (his item 2 and 3) and what Thiessen wants that the Church would do (his item 4 and 7).

**4 Is it the mission of the Church to edify itself and purify itself?**

Ans pg 433 Although Thiessen considers edifying itself and purifying itself as missions of the Church they are not what the organized Church proper sets out to include in its mission statement. Saints are to edify one another, and saints are to purify themselves. Thiessen considers Church discipline under its purification but in general admits that the Bible teaches that Christ is the one who edifies the Church, and Christ is the one who purifies that Church. Ergo these do not truly fit as missions of the Church.

**5. Is the 'Acting as a Restraining Force in the World' really a direct mission of the Local Church?**

Ans pg 435 Although the believers are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” it is the Holy Spirit present in the believer which is the restraining force in the world. Again Thiessen considers the Church to be the whole of all saved believers and not an organization, yeah an organism, headed and commissioned by Christ. Acting as a Restraining Force in the World, is not a directed mission of Christ's organized body of believers.

**6. Rather than use Scripture, Thiessen uses analogy to support his idea that it is a mission of the Church to 'Promote all that is Good'; how does this connect him to neo-evangelicalism?**

Ans pg 436 According to Theopedia “The Neo-Evangelical movement was a response among orthodox evangelical Protestants to the separatism of fundamentalist Christianity beginning in the 1930s. The term was coined by Harold Ockenga in 1947, to identify a distinct movement within the broader evangelical fundamentalist Christianity of that day. ... What has been termed a split within the fundamentalist movement, came about as they disagreed among themselves about how Bible-believing Christians ought to respond to an unbelieving world. The neo-evangelicals urged that fundamentalists must engage the culture directly and constructively, and they began to express embarrassment about being known to the world as fundamentalists. .... The term is now used almost exclusively by conservative critics, to distinguish their idea of Evangelicalism from this movement. They claim that a loss of Biblical authority was evident early, which would later bear fruit in more and more accommodation: which they perceive to have happened wherever neo-evangelicals deny, or too severely qualify their belief in, the doctrine of biblical inerrancy ... the Fundamentalist name does not apply to the Evangelical movement because of the neo-evangelical division.”<sup>3</sup> Although Thiessen states “The work of reformation must be definitely subordinated to the work of evangelization .... So also in the case of philanthropy” he gives this 'promoting of social good - reformation' equal weight in the Church's mission statement. It has a neo-evangelical social-gospel flavor no matter how he rationalizes the Church's devoting itself to 'social service.'

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3 From Theopedia <http://www.theopedia.com/Neo-evangelicalism>

**7. What is the unstated necessity for Thiessen giving good justification that 'The Church Will Not Convert the World'?**

Ans pg 436-437 The Roman Catholic Church has a mixed up eschatology wherein the Catholic Church would convert the world and usher in the millennium kingdom for Christ. Thiessen refutes this concept without alluding to the Roman Catholic error.

**8. What overriding error in Thiessen's ecclesiology is insignificant in his section on the destiny of the Church?**

Ans pg 436-437 Thiessen considers every believer a part of the Church rather than just a part of the family. This generalization causes error in his consideration of the founding, organization, and mission of the Church, because founding, organization and commissioning of the Church is only done in a local church level. After the rapture, when considering the destiny of the Church, there will be but one *ecclesia*, or gathering, of the believers and Thiessen's generalizations about there being only one-all-inclusive church will indeed be accurate.

## **Detailed Chapter Outlines – TH504 Systematic Theology IV**

### Part VII Ecclesiology

Chapter 35 Introductory: Definition And Founding Of The Church pg 403-411

Chapter 36 The Foundation of the Church, The Manner of the Founding, and The Organization of the Churches pg 412-421

Chapter 37 The Ordinances of the Church pg 422-431

### **Chapter 38 The Mission and Destiny of the Church pg 432-439** **Outlines of Chapter 35 Introductory: Definition And Founding Of The Church pg 403-411**

- I. The Definition of the Church
  - A. The Church is NOT Judaism Improved and Continued
  - B. The Church is NOT the Kingdom
  - C. The Church is NOT a Denomination
  - D. The Church is Considered in Two Senses
    1. IN the Universal Sense
      - a) The Word Used
      - b) The Figures Used
    2. The Local Sense
- II. The Founding of the Church
  - A. The Time of the Founding
  - B. The Founding of Other Local Churches

## **Outlines of Chapter 36 The Foundation of the Church, The Manner of the Founding, and The Organization of the Churches pg 412-421**

- I. The Foundation of the Church
  - A. The Universal Church
  - B. The Local Church
- II. The Manner of the Founding
  - A. The universal or true Church
  - B. The Local Church
    - 1. In the beginning
    - 2. Later
- III. The Organization of Churches
  - A. The organization of the universal, catholic Church dare not be addressed
  - B. The Local Church Organization
    - 1. The Fact of Organization
      - a) They had Church Offices
      - b) They Had Stated Times of Meeting
      - c) They Regulated Church Decorum
      - d) They Raised Money for he Lord's Work
      - e) They Sent Letters of Commendation
    - 2. The Officers of the Church
      - a) Pastor Elder Bishop
      - b) Deacons

c) Deaconess

3. The Government of the Church

## **Outlines of Chapter 37 The Ordinances of the Church pg 422-431**

I. Baptism

C. Perpetual Obligation

1. because Christ asked to be baptized
2. Christ Commanded His disciples to baptize
3. The Apostles and early disciples taught and practiced baptism

D. All baptisms are water baptisms

1. Not a Baptism of Spirit
2. G. Campbell Morgan was being *mystical* in his teaching otherwise

E. Communion with a Church before baptism into a Church is justified pg424

F. Baptism means immersion but Calvin said baptism does not need immersion pg 425-426

G. IF baptism is primarily a symbol

IV. The Lord's Supper

A. The Scriptural Teaching

B. The Roman Catholic Teaching

C. The Lutheran and High Church Teaching

D. The Reformed Teaching

**Outlines of Chapter 38 The Mission and Destiny of the Church pg  
432-439**

I. The Mission of the Church

E. To Glorify God

F. To Edify itself

G. To Purify itself

H. To Educate its Constituency

I. To Evangelize the World

J. To Act as a Restraining Force, and Enlightening Force in the World

K. To Promote All that is Good.

V. The Destiny of the Church

A. The Church Will Not Convert the World

B. The Church Will Occupy a Place of Blessing and Honor

1. The Church will be united to Christ

2. The Church will Reign with Christ

3. The Church will be an Eternal Testimony



## Appendix Who is Dr. Henry Clarence Thiessen ?

The Master's College was founded as Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary on May 25, 1927 to meet the need for a fundamentalist Baptist school on the West Coast. The intention was to provide a biblical and Christ-centered education consistent with those doctrines of the historic Christian faith.

Dr. William A. Matthews, pastor of Memorial Baptist Church of Los Angeles, became the founder and first president. The seminary was extended an invitation to be temporarily housed at Calvary Baptist Church in the Los Angeles area. Several more moves followed until the seminary moved onto its own property in Los Angeles in 1942.

Dr. Mathews died at his home on August 18, 1943. He was succeeded by presidents C. Gordon Evanson, Floyd Burton Boice, and **Henry C. Thiessen**. In 1946, the seminary became a graduate-level school and initiated a separate undergraduate and liberal arts program. **Following Dr. Thiessen's death in 1947**, Dr. Herbert V. Hotchkiss and Dr. Milton E. Fish, a Harvard graduate, strengthened the school scholastically and spiritually.

August 14, 1959 marked a change, as Dr. John R. Dunkin became president, succeeding Dr. Carl M. Sweazy, who returned to full-time evangelism. The new president continued the scriptural position of the school's leadership. TMC campus

Almost a year later, the school acquired the Happy Jack Dude Ranch in the town of Newhall, approximately forty miles north of Los Angeles. It comprised twenty-seven acres with a tree-shaded nucleus of seven buildings, some of which could be remodeled for college use. By May 1961, the school occupied the main portion of the new campus. The foreman's house became King Hall, which now houses the Student Life and Campus Activities offices. H. Vider Hall, which now includes offices for several departments, was once used as a dorm for students, and before that a barracks for the "dudes" of the ranch.

The R. L. Powell Library, named after a faithful trustee of the school, became the first new building, dedicated in 1961. Henry Vider supervised the construction of Rutherford Hall, what was then both the dining hall and administration building. In February 1965, Hotchkiss Hall, named after faculty member Dr. Herbert V. Hotchkiss, became the first new student dormitory.

Under Dr. Dunkin's leadership, the college pursued accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Expansion of the college, including construction of Reese Academic Center, a new science and lecture hall, helped pave the way. To facilitate accreditation of the undergraduate program, the seminary moved to Tacoma, Washington in 1974, resulting in the founding of Northwest Baptist Seminary. Accreditation was granted in 1975.

After twenty-five years of service Dr. Dunkin stepped down as president to become chancellor, and was appointed President Emeritus in 1989. The John R. Dunkin Student Center, a two-story complex overlooking Placerita Canyon, serves as a reminder of his dedication.

In May 1985, John MacArthur became the next president of the college, in addition to his responsibilities as pastor-teacher at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California and Bible expositor on the "Grace to You" radio broadcast. The name of the school was changed to The Master's College. With the exposure of the college through MacArthur's radio ministry, the school became one of the fastest growing Christian colleges in America. The Master's Seminary

Initial planning for additional graduate programs for students at the College began soon after MacArthur became president. The Master's Seminary started in 1986 with the specific goal of producing Bible expositors. Today, under the leadership of senior vice president Dr. Richard L. Mayhue, the seminary has over three hundred students enrolled and is located 15 miles (24 km) away on the grounds of Grace Community Church. The seminary is steeped in the tradition of conservative, premillennial Dispensationalism <sup>4</sup>

from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Master%27s\\_College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Master%27s_College)

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4 From: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Master's\\_College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Master's_College), although wikipedia is not a trusted source for citing one's research it was the only available source that revealed Dr. Thiessen as a past president of Master's College.

In a 5 March Correspondence Dr. Sumner Corrects me:

1. Thiessen was not Reformed. He was a Baptist.
2. Thiessen was not Augustinian. He was a moderate Calvinist who denied unconditional election, limited atonement and irresistible grace.
3. Thiessen was not a neo-evangelical. He was a Fundamentalist and a separationist.
4. Thiessen was not a past president of MacArthur's Master's College. He was a past president of the Los Angeles Baptist College and Seminary and went to Heaven long before the school was divided, the Seminary going north to Tacoma and becoming the Northwest Baptist Theological Seminary and the college taken over by MacArthur. Mac renamed it Master's College, but Thiessen had nothing to do with that, of course.

I knew Thiessen personally. He was a good man. I heard him teach the entire Book of Revelation in one sermon one night (he was pretrib and premil) when he had just become president of L.A.B.C & S.

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### Who was G. Campbell Morgan

Morgan was born on a farm in Tetbury, England, the son of Welshman George Morgan, a strict Plymouth Brethren pastor who resigned and became a Baptist minister, and Elizabeth Fawn Brittan. He was very sickly as a child, could not attend school, and so was tutored.[1] When Campbell was 10 years old, D. L. Moody came to England for the first time, and the effect of his ministry, combined with the dedication of his parents, made such an impression on young Morgan that at the age of 13 he preached his first sermon. Two years later he was preaching regularly in country chapels during his Sundays and holidays.

In 1883 he was teaching in Birmingham, but in 1886, at the age of 23, he left the teaching profession and devoted himself to preaching and Bible exposition. He was ordained to the Congregational ministry in 1890. He had no formal training for the ministry, but his devotion to studying of the Bible made him one of the leading Bible teachers in his day. His reputation as preacher and Bible expositor grew throughout England and spread to the United States.

In 1896 D. L. Moody invited him to lecture to the students at the Moody Bible Institute. This was the first of his 54 crossings of the Atlantic to preach and teach. After the death of Moody in 1899 Morgan assumed the position of director of the Northfield Bible Conference. He was ordained by the Congregationalists in London, and given a Doctor of Divinity degree by the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1902.[1] After five successful years in this capacity, he returned to England in 1904 and became pastor of Westminster Chapel in London. During two years of this ministry he was President of Cheshunt College in Cambridge.[2] His preaching and weekly Friday night Bible classes were attended by thousands. In 1910 Morgan contributed an essay entitled The Purposes of the Incarnation to the first volume of The Fundamentals, 90 essays which are widely considered to be the foundation of the modern Fundamentalist movement. Leaving Westminster Chapel in 1919, he once again returned to the United States, where he conducted an itinerant preaching/teaching ministry for 14 years. Finally, in 1933, he returned to England, where he again became pastor of Westminster Chapel and remained there until his retirement in 1943. He was instrumental in bringing Martyn Lloyd-Jones to Westminster in 1939 to share the pulpit and become his successor. Morgan was a friend of F. B. Meyer, Charles Spurgeon, and many other great preachers of his day.[1]

Morgan died on 16 May 1945, at the age of 81.

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#### External links

- \* The G. Campbell Morgan Archive
- \* Text of G. Campbell Morgan, The Man and His Ministry by John Harries from wikipedia.com

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