

Belydenis van Belhar

Belhar Confession

IsiVumo SaseBelhar

1986

Teks en Kommentaar · Text and Commentary · IsiQulatho neNgcaciso

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Belhar

Begeleidende Brief • Accompanying Letter • Incwadi eKhaphayo Lukholo

Inleidende opmerkings

Belydenisse kom dikwels saam met 'n nota van verduideliking of begeleidende brief:

- Die geloofsbelydenis van Nicea soos finaal in 381 in die stad Konstantinopel aanvaar, is met 'n brief aan die keiser van die dag gestuur. Hy moes die besluite amptelik as staatshoof goedkeur.
- Ook die Nederlandse Geloofsbelydenis is met 'n begeleidende brief aan die Katolieke koning gestuur om die goeie bedoelings van die Protestante met die belydenis te verduidelik.
- Die verklaring of belydenis van Barmen uit Duitsland in 1934 het ook 'n inleiding. Hier word verduidelik dat dit 'n verklaring van die Belydende Kerk is. Hierdie kerk het teen die sterker wordende Nasionaal-Sosialisme getuig.

Die Belharbelydenis was van die begin af in sy konsepvorm (1982) vergesel van 'n begeleidende brief. Hierdie brief is 'n belangrike rigtingwyser vir die verstaan van die belydenis self. Daarom moet ons die brief ernstig neem en altyd saam met die belydenis lees.

Die brief het vier paragrawe. Hieronder is daar 'n kort verduideliking van elke paragraaf voordat die woorde van die brief (in kursief) self volg:

Introductory remarks

A note of explanation or an accompanying letter is very often sent with confessions:

- The Nicene Creed as accepted finally in the city of Constantinople in 381 AD, was sent with a letter to the emperor of the day. He had to approve the decisions officially as head of state.
- The Dutch Confession of Faith was sent with an accompanying letter to the Catholic-minded king to explain the good intentions of the Protestants with the confession.
- The Declaration or Confession of Barmen in Germany in 1934 also has an introduction. It explains that it is a declaration of the Professing Church. This Church testified against the stronger growing National Socialism.

From its beginning the Belhar Confession in its concept form (1982) was supported by an accompanying letter. This letter is an important indicator for understanding the confession itself. Therefore we must take the letter seriously and must always read it with the confession.

The letter has four paragraphs. At the beginning of each paragraph is a short explanation before the letter itself follows (in italics):

Amanqaku atshayelelayo

Izivumo lukholo ngalo lonke ixesha zidla ngokuphuma amanqaku acacisayo okanye incwadi ekhaphayo.

- Isivumo- lukholo saseNicea esagqityezelwa ngo381, savunywa kwisixeko saseConstantinopole, sathunyelwa nencwadi kwiKaizar yelo xesha. Kwafuneka amkele izigqibo ngokusesikweni njengentloko yombuso.
- Nesivumo-likholo saseNetherlands sathunyelwa nencwadi ekhaphayo kwiKumkani eyonayo yomKatolika ecacisa ngeenjongo ezilungileyo zamaProtestanti.
- Isibhengezo okanye isivumo-lukholo saseBarmen saseHolland sowe 1934 sasinentshayeleyo. Kwacaciswa ukuba sisibhengezo seCawa esoHlwayayo. Le Cawa yayingqina ngamandla ngokuchaseneyo nothando olukhulu lobuzwe (nationalism) kunye nemfundiso yokuba amashishini abalulekileyo abephantsi kwezandla zikarhulumente kwaye ubutyebi belizwe babelwe kubantu bonke ngokulinganayo (socialism).

Isivumo-lukholo saseBelhar kwesekuqaleni kwemo yokusekwa kwaso sasinencwadi ekhaphayo. Le ncwadi isisikhokelo esibalulekileyo esinika ingcaciso eyayo ngesivumo-lukholo. Kuloko kubalulekile ukuba le ncwadi siyithabathele ingqalelo sisoloko siyifunda kunye nesivumo-lukholo.

Le ncwadi inemihlathi emine. Ngezantsi apha kukho ingcaciso emfutshane ngomhlathi ngamnye phambi kokuba walandele amazwi (amagama abhalwe ngendlela eyodwa) ale ncwadi.

Verduidelikende notas

Die eerste paragraaf lê klem op die erns van die situasie waarin die evangelie self op die spel gekom het. Dit vra 'n radikale geloofsbesluit in die vorm van 'n belydenis. Diegene wat hier bely, is bewus dat hulle self tot die situasie bygedra het, en aanvaar saam verantwoordelikheid vir dit waarteen bely word.

1. Ons is daarvan bewus dat daar in die lewe van die kerk oomblikke kan ontstaan van soveel erns dat die kerk die noodsaak kan voel om opnuut sy geloof te bely in die lig van 'n spesifieke situasie. Ons is daarvan bewus dat so 'n daad van belydenis nie ligtelik gedoen word nie, maar slegs as geoordeel word dat die hart van die evangelie self op die spel staan en bedreig word. Na ons oordeel verg die kerklike en politieke situasie binne ons land en veral binne die Ned Geref Kerk-familie tans so 'n beslissing. Ons doen hierdie belydenis dus nie as 'n teologiese gespreksbydrae of as 'n nuwe samevatting van al ons geloofsgoedere nie, maar as 'n kreet uit die hart, as 'n dwang wat ons opgelê is om die evangelie ontwil in die lig van die oomblik waarin ons staan. Ons bely saam met vele ons skuld daarin dat ons

Explanatory notes

The first paragraph emphasises the seriousness of the situation in which the Gospel came into play. It asks for a radical faith decision in the form of the confession. Those who are confessing here, are aware that they contributed to the situation and together they accept responsibility for that which is confessed.

1. We are deeply conscious that moments of such seriousness can arise in the life of the Church that it may feel the need to confess its faith anew in the light of a specific situation. We are aware that such an act of confession is not lightly undertaken, but only if it is considered that the heart of the gospel is so threatened as to be at stake. In our judgement, the present church and political situation in our country and particularly within the Dutch Reformed Church family calls for such a decision. Accordingly, we make this confession not as a contribute to a theological debate nor as a new summary of our beliefs, but as a cry from the heart, as something we are obliged to do for the sake of the gospel in view of the times in which we stand. Along with many, we confess our guilt, in that we have not

Amanqaku acacisayo

Umhlathi wokuqala ungqina ngemeko ethile apho iVangeli ngokunokwayo ebonakala idlale indima khona. Ifuna isigqibo sokhoko esigqibeleleyo esikwimo yesivumo-lukholo. Abobangqinayo ngokunokwabo, bayaqonda ukuba bazibeka ngokunokwabo kwimo leyo kwaye bevuma nabo koko kuchaswayo.

1. Siyaqonda ukuba kwimbali yeCawe kubakho amathuba awodwa abangela ukuba iCawe ibone ukuba kufuneka ilungqine ngokutsha ukhoko lwayo ngokubhekisele kwimeko ethile. Siyaqonda ukuba iCawe ayifuni nje ilungqine ukhoko lwayo ngolu hlobo, kambe yenjenjalo kuphele xa iqinisekile ukuba umongo weendaba ezimnandi usemngciphekweni. Ngokweembono zethu imeko eCaweni nakwilizwe lakowethu ibiza loo nto namhlanje, ngakumbi ngokubhekisele kwiiCawe zomzi we Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerke. Ke ngoku xa sivuma esi sivumo-lukholo asifuni nje ukuvakalisa uluvo lwethu malunga neendawo ezithile zethiyoloji, koko sityhila intlizyo yethu siziva sinyanzelekile ngenxa yeendaba ezimnandi kweli xesha siphila kulo. Kunye nabaninzi nathi siyalivuma ityala lethu lokuba kwixesha elidlulileyo asingqinanga ngokucacileyo ngalo mba, ke ngoku nathi

nie altyd duidelik genoeg hieroor getuig het nie en gevolglik medeverantwoordelik is daarvoor dat wat as sonde ervaar en bely is of as sonde ervaar en bely moes word, mettertyd gegroei het tot vanselfsprekendhede en Skrifvremde ideologieë en dat die indruk by vele geskep is asof die evangelie nie waarlik op die spel was nie. Ons spreek hierdie belydenis uit omdat ons oordeel dat allerlei teologiese argumente daartoe bygedra het om aspekte van die waarheid so eensydig te beklemtoon dat dit in die leuen verander het.

Die tweede paragraaf praat oor die gesag, die motief en subjek (die “wie”) van die belydenis:

Die gesag word - soos enige Gereformeerde belydenis - aan die Bybel as Woord van God ontleen.

Die motief is suiwer om die waarheid van die evangelie te verkondig en die geloofwaardigheid van die kerk se boodskap te beskerm.

Die subjek (die “wie” wat hier praat) van die belydenis is die kerk self en nie een of ander party of teologiese groepering nie. Daar word dus gepleit dat bymotiewe nie die positiewe gebruik of ontvangs van die belydenis sal verhinder nie.

2. Ons is daarvan bewus dat die enigste gesag agter so 'n belydenis en die enigste grond waarop dit uitgespreek kan word die Heilige Skrifte as die Woord van God is. Volkome bewus van die waagstuk verbonde aan so 'n daad, oordeel ons tog dat ons geen ander keuse het nie. Ons is boonop daarvan bewus dat geen ander motiewe of oortuigings, hoe geldig hulle ook al mag wees, ons die reg veroorloof tot 'n daad van belydenis nie. Dit moet 'n kerklike handeling wees ter wille van die suiwerheid en die geloofwaardigheid van die kerk en sy boodskap alleen. Sover dit moontlik is voor die mense verklaar ons hiermee dat ons enigste dryfveer geleë is in ons vrees dat die waarheid en krag van die evangelie self bedreig word in hierdie situasie. Ons wil geen groepsbelang dien, partyskappe bevorder, teologieë bevorder of bymotiewe verwesenlik nie. Terselfdertyd weet ons dat ons diepste bedoelinge slegs na ware beoordeel kan word deur Hom voor Wie alles oop en bloot is. Ons spreek hierdie belydenis nie uit vanaf sy troon en uit die hoogte nie, maar voor sy troon en voor die mense. Ons pleit daarom dat hierdie belydenis nie misbruik sal word deur enigiemand met allerlei bymotiewe nie en dat dit ook nie vanuit sulke motiewe teëgestaan sal word nie. Ons begeerte is om geen valse struikelblokke in die weg te lê nie, maar om heen te wys na die egte struikelblok, die rots Jesus Christus.

always witnessed clearly enough in our situation and so are jointly responsible for the way in which those things which were experienced as sin have grown in time to seem self-evidently right and to be ideologies foreign to the Scriptures. As a result many have been given the impression that the gospel was not really at stake. We make this confession because we are convinced that all sorts of theological arguments have contributed to so disproportionate an emphasis on some aspects of the truth that it has in effect become a lie.

The second paragraph speaks about the authority, the motive and subject (the “who”) of the confession. This authority – as any Reformed confession – is derived from the Bible as the Word of God.

The motive is purely to proclaim the truth of the gospel and to protect the credibility of the church’s message.

The subject (the “we” who are talking here) of the confession is the church itself and not one or other party or theological classification. The plea is therefore that ulterior motives shall not prevent the positive use or reception of the confession.

2. We are aware that the only authority for such a confession and the only grounds on which it may be made are the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God. Being fully aware of the risks involved in taking this step, we are nevertheless convinced that we have no alternative. Furthermore, we are aware that no other motives or convictions, however valid they may be, would give us the right to confess in this way. The Church for the sake of its purity and credibility and that of its message may only make an act of confession. As solemnly as we are able, we hereby declare before men that our only motive lies in our fear that the truth and power of the Gospel itself is threatened in this situation. We do not wish to serve any group interests, advance the cause of any factions, promote any theologies or achieve any ulterior purposes. Yet, having said this, we know that our deepest intentions may only be judged at their true value by Him before whom all is revealed. We do not make this confession from his throne and from on high, but before his throne and before men. We plead therefore, that this Confession should not be misused by anyone with ulterior motives and also that it should not be resisted to serve such motives. Our earnest desire is to lay no false stumbling blocks in the way, but to point to the true stumbling block Jesus Christ the rock.

sinetyala lokuba oku sisono, okanye obekumelwe kukwalathwa ukuba sisono, kusuke kwaba yinto eyamkelekileyo nekhokela ingqondo zabantu ngokunxamnye neziBhalo, baza abaninzi bacinga ukuba iindaba ezimnandi azibekwanga esichengeni. Sivakalisa esi sivumo-lukholo iba bubuxoki.

Umhlathi wesibini uthetha ngelungelo lokwenza isizathu kunye nabathabathi nxaxheba (“oobani”) besivumo-lukholo - llungelo lokwenza – njengasiphina isivumo-lukholo soHlaziyo-sisekelwe eBhayibhileni nje ngeLizwi likaThixo.

Isizathu- sicacisa ukungqina kwenyaniso yeVangeli nokukhusela inyaniso yokholo yomyalezo weCawe.

Abathabathi nxaxheba (abo bathethayo apha) ngesivumo-lukholo yiCawe buku kwaye ayingombutho othile okanye qela lithile lethiyoloji. Kucelwa ukuba (bymotiewe) ingakuhluphi ukusetyenziswa ngendlela okanye ukwamkelwa kwesivumo-lukholo

2. Siyaqonda ukuba isivumo asinagunya ngaphandle kokuba sibe sisekwe phezu kweziBhalo eziNgcwele, zona eziliLizwi likaThixo. Ke ngoko siyayiqonda ingozi esizifaka kuyo ngokwenza isivumo, kodwa asinakuthini. Siyayiqonda nendawo yokuba akukho nasiphi na esinye isizathu, nokuba sixabiseke kangakanani na, esisinika ilungelo lokwenza isivumo. Qha kuphela isivumo kufuneka sibe yinto eyenziwa yiCawe ngenxa kuphela yokusulungeka nokunyaniseka kwayo nomyalezo wayo. Kangangokuba kunokwenzeka phambi kwabantu singqina ukuba kuphela kwezizathu lixhala lethu lokuba inyaniso yeendaba ezimnandi namandla azo ziba sesichengeni. Asizimisela ukuba sixhase naliphi iqela, nokuba liqiza, nokuba yithiyoloji ethile, singenayo nayiphi na injongo esecaleni. Kambe ke siyaqonda ukuba imfihlelo enzulu yeenjongo zethu inokuqondwa kuphela nguThixo, yena ongenakufihlelwa nto. Esi sivumo asisivakalisi siphakamile sisesihlalweni sakhe sokulawula, kodwa sisivuma simi phambi kwabo nabantu. Ke ngoko sibongoza bonke ukuba esi sivumo singasetyenziswa ukuxhasa nayiphi na enye injongo esecaleni, kananjalo esi sivumo singachaswa ngeenjongo ezisecaleni. Asizimisela ukubeka isikhubekiso esingesiso endleleni, kambe sifuna ukwalatha kwisikhubekiso esisiso, ilitye elikhubekisa uYesu Krestu.

Die derde paragraaf vertel van die objek ("aan wie") van die belydenis: Dis nie gerig teen 'n spesifieke kerk of groep mense nie, maar teen 'n valse leer wat nou en altyd weer in die kerk kan opduik. Daar word gewys op die verleiding van die valse leringe wat deur ideologie as waarheid aanvaar word. Hierop volg die pleit om versoening en ook nederigheid - juis by dié wat die belydenis uitspreek.

3. Ons spreek hierdie belydenis nie uit teen spesifieke mense of groepe van mense of 'n kerk of kerke nie. Ons spreek hierdie belydenis uit teen 'n valse leer, teen 'n ideologiese verdraaiing wat die evangelie self in ons kerk en land bedreig. Ons versugting is dat niemand hulle sal vereenselwig met hierdie verwerplike leer nie en dat almal wat heeltemal of gedeeltelik daardeur verblind is hulle daarvan sal afkeer. Ons is terdeë bewus van die verleidelike aard van so 'n valse leer en weet dat vele wat daardeur gekondisioneer is in mindere of meerdere mate die halwe waarheid leer glo het as die volle. Ons betwyfel daarom nie talle van sulke mense se Christelike geloof, hulle opregtheid, eerlikheid, integriteit en goeie bedoelinge en in baie opsigte lofwaardige handelswyse nie. Juis omdat ons egter die krag van die misleiding ken, is ons daarvan bewus dat nie die erns, opregtheid en intensiteit van ons sekerhede ons vrymaak nie, dog slegs die waarheid in die Seun. Aan dié bevryding het ons kerk en ons land 'n intense behoefte. Ons praat daarom pleitend en nie beskuldigend nie. Ons pleit om versoening, dié egte versoening wat volg op bekering en verandering van gesindhede en ordeninge. Ons is daarby daarvan bewus dat 'n daad van belydenis 'n tweesnydende swaard is, dat niemand van ons die eerste klip kan gooi of nie self 'n balk in die eie oog het nie. Ons weet dat die gesindhede en optrede wat die evangelie teëwerk by ons almal aanwesig is en sal bly. Daarom is hierdie belydenis niks anders nie as 'n oproep tot voortdurende gesamentlike selfondersoek, stryd en bereidheid tot bekering in die Naam van ons Here Jesus Christus in 'n gebroke wêreld. Dit wil geen daad van selfregverdiging en onverdraagsaamheid wees, sodat ons terwyl ons vir andere preek, dalk self verwerplik sal wees nie.

Die vierde paragraaf wys op die implikasies van die belydenis. Dit vra van almal berou en bekering, die saamloop van veral die N G Kerkfamilie op 'n onbekende pad van versoening en geregtigheid. Dit vra ook die afbreek van onregverdige kerklieke en sosiale strukture wat oor jare heen gegroei het. Die brief eindig met 'n gebed en die vaste hoop dat die Here deur sy Gees ware vrede sal bring.

4. Ons bede is dat hierdie daad van belydenis nie valse struikelblokke in die weg sal lê en daardeur valse verdelinge

The third paragraph tells of the object ("to whom") of the confession: It is not aimed at specific people or groups of people or a church or churches, but against a false doctrine that can emerge now and always and again in the church. The deceiving nature of false doctrines that ideology has accepted as truth, is pointed out. Then follows a plea for reconciliation and also humility – in particular in those people who pronounce the confession.

3. This confession is not aimed at specific people or groups of people or a church or churches. We proclaim it against a false doctrine, against an ideological distortion that threatens the gospel itself in our church and our country. Our heartfelt longing is that no-one will identify himself with this objectionable doctrine and that all who have been wholly or partially blinded by it will turn themselves away from it. We are deeply aware of the deceiving nature of such a false doctrine and know that many who have been conditioned by it have to a greater or lesser extent learnt to take a half-truth for the whole. For this reason we do not doubt the Christian faith of many such people, their sincerity, honour, integrity and good intentions, and their in many ways estimable practice and conduct. However, it is precisely because we know the power of deception that we know we are not liberated by the seriousness, sincerity or intensity of our certainties, but only by the truth in the Son. Our church and our land have an intense need of such liberation. Therefore it is that we speak pleadingly rather than accusingly. We plead for reconciliation, that true reconciliation which follows on conversion and change of attitudes and structures. And while we do so we are aware that an act of confession is a two-edged sword, that none of us can throw the first stone, and none is without a beam in his own eye. We know that the attitudes and conduct that work against the gospel are present in all of us and will continue to be so. Therefore this Confession must be seen as a call to a continuous process of soul-searching together, a joint wrestling with the issues, and a readiness to repent in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in a broken world. It is certainly not intended as an act of self-justification and intolerance, for that would disqualify us in the very act of preaching to others.

The fourth paragraph points to the implications of the confession. It asks remorse and conversion from all, also to walk together on an unknown road of reconciliation and justice. It also asks for the dismantling of unjust church and social structures that have developed over many years. The letter ends with a prayer and the firm conviction that the Lord will bring true peace by his Spirit.

4. Our prayer is that this act of confession will not place false stumbling-blocks in the way and thereby cause and foster false divisions, but

Umhlathi wesithathu uthetha ngenkcaso (eyaphi) yesivumo-lukholo: Asibhekiswa kwiCawe ethile okanye kwiqela elithile labantu, kodwa nemfundiso yolahleko esoloko ivela kule mihla eCaweni. Kuboniswa ukuba kukho imfuno yokuba imfundiso yolahlekiso yenziwa ziindlela ezithile zokucinga kwabantu nje ngezinkwamkelwa njengenyaniso. Apha kulandelwa isicelo soxolelaniso kunye nokusithoba –ngakumbi kwabo basenzayo esi sivumo.

3. Ukuvakalisa kwethu esi sivumo asichasananga nabantu abathile okanye amaqela abantu okanye iCawe. Hayi, esi sivumo sikhaba imfundiso ebubuxoki ephazamisa iingqondo zabantu kangangokuba iindaba ezimnandi ngokwazo neCawe nelizwi zibe sesichengeni. Umnqweno wethu kukuba kungabikho bani uyilandelayo le mfundiso emelwe kukukhatywa, baze bonke abathe ngokupheleleyo okanye okwecandelo balahlekiswa yiyo babuye bavuleke amehlo. Siyaqonda ukuba imfundiso ebubuxoki elolu hlobo iba nomtsalane, yaye abaqhelene nokuphazanyiswa yiyo bathi iyinyaniso lo gama iyigqwethayo inyaniso. Ke ngoko asiluthandabuzi ukholo lobuKrestu lwabantu abaninzi abaphazanyiswe yile mfundiso, kwakunye nokunyaniseka kwabo nentembeko yabo, nokuzimisela kwabo ukwenza okulungileyo, nezinto ezininzi ezincomekayo abazenzayo. Kambe njengoko siwaziyo amandla empazamo siyaqonda ukuba umntu akakhululwa ngamandla okuqiniseka kwakhe, okanye ukunyaniseka kwakhe, nokuzimisela kwakhe ngokunjalo, koko kuphela ukhululwa yinyaniso ekuNyana kaThixo. Kanti ke inkululeko eswelwe yiCawe yethu nabantu bethu yile kanye. Ke ngoko asityholi bani, hayi, siyacenga. Isibongozo sethu sesokuba kubekho ukuxolelanisa okukoko okulandela inguquko nokuguqulwa kwesimo nemimiselo. Ngaphezu koko siyaqonda ukuba ukuvuma ukholo kukusebenzisa ikrele elintlangothi mbini. Kakade ngubani onokugibisela ilitye lokuqala ingubani ongenawo umqadi kwelakhe iliso? Siyazi ukuba isimo nezenzo eziphikisana neendaba ezimnandi zikho kuthi sonke, yaye ziyakuhlala zikho. Ke ngoko esi sivumo-lukholo lilizwi lokusiyala sonke eGameni likaYesu Krestu ukuba kweli hlabathi lonakeleyo sibambane ngokuzicikida sikwiphulo lokusukelana nokuguquka. Akuyiyo injongo yethu ukuzenza bhetele kunabanye nokungafuni ukubanyamezela, ze kuthi logama sishumayeza abanye nathi kanti sibe sifanelwe kukuchaswa

Umhlathi wesine – ubonisa iziphumo zesivumo-lukholo. Sicela kuthi sonke udano kunye nenguquko, ukuhamba kunye indlela siziCawe zosapho lwamaNG Kerk, indlela yoxolelaniso nobulungisa. Sicela kwakhona ukudilizwa kwezimo (structures) ezingezizo zobucawe kunye nezentlalo, ezakhula kwiminyaka emininzi eyadlulayo. Incwadi iqukumbela ngomthandazo kunye nethemba elungummangaliso elokuba uThixo uyakuzisa uxolo olululo ngoMoya waKhe.

4. Sithandaza ukuba esi sivumo-lukholo singadali imisantasa ebubuxoki ebangela izantlukwano ezingafanelekanga, koko

sal veroorsaak en bevorder nie, dog versoenend en verenigend sal wees. Ons is daarvan bewus dat so 'n daad van belydenis en 'n proses van versoening noodwendig veel pyn meebring. Dit verg die pyn van bekering, berou en skuldbelydenis. Dit verg die pyn van lewensvernuwing en -verandering, sowel individueel as gesamentlik. Dit plaas ons op 'n pad waarvan ons die einde nie kan voorsien of na ons eie wense kan manipuleer nie. Op dié pad sal ons onvermydelik intense groeipyne ervaar terwyl ons worstel om die vervreemding, die bitterheid, die onversoendheid en die vrees te oorwin. Ons sal sowel onself as mekaar nuut moet leer ken en beleef. Ons is terdeë daarvan bewus dat hierdie belydenis roep om die aftakeling van denk-, kerklike en samelewingstrukture wat oor baie jare heen gegroei het. Ons bely egter dat daar ter wille van die evangelie geen ander uitweg moontlik is nie. Ons bede is dat ons broeders en susters dwarsdeur die Ned Geref Kerk-familie, maar ook daarbuite, hierdie nuwe begin saám met ons sal wil maak, sodat ons saám kan vry word en saám hierdie weg van versoening en geregtigheid kan gaan. Ons bede is dat hierdie droefheid gevolglik 'n droefheid tot verlossing sal wees. Ons glo dat dit moontlik is in die krag van onse Here en deur sy Gees. Ons glo dat die evangelie van Jesus Christus hoop, bevryding, heil en ware vrede vir ons land kan en wil bring.

rather that it will be reconciling and uniting. We know that such an act of confession and process of reconciliation will necessarily involve much pain and sadness. It demands the pain of repentance, remorse and confession; the pain of individual and collective renewal and a changed way of life. It places us on a road whose end we can neither foresee nor manipulate to our own desire. On this road we shall unavoidably suffer intense growing pains while we struggle to conquer alienation, bitterness, irreconciliation and fear. We shall have to come to know and encounter both others and ourselves in new ways. We are only too well aware that this confession calls for the dismantling of structures of thought, of church, and of society, which have developed over many years. However, we confess that for the sake of the gospel, we have no other choice. We pray that our brothers and sisters throughout the Dutch Reformed Church family, but also outside it, will want to make this new beginning with us, so that we can be free together, and together may walk the road of reconciliation and justice. Accordingly, our prayer is that the pain and sadness we speak of will be pain and sadness that lead to salvation. We believe that this is possible in the power of our Lord and by his Spirit. We believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers hope, liberation, salvation and true peace to our country.

umnqweno wethu luxolelaniso nobunye. Siyaqonda ukuba ukuvakalisa isivumo nokusukelana noxolelaniso nakanjani na kuhambisana nentlungukazi. Kubiza intlungu yokuguquka nokuzohlwaya nokuvuma ityala. Kubiza intlungu yokuhlaziya ihambo nokuziphatha ngenye indlela wena uwedwa kanti nakunye nabanye. Kukwenza ungene endleleni ongayibonayo isiphelo sayo yaye ungenakho nokuyilawula ukuthi mayiye phi. Inene asinakuyihamba le ndlela ngaphandle kokuba sizive iintlungu ezingathethekiyo zokukhula, lo gama sijjisana kwidabi lokoyisa intiyo nobukrakra, ukungavisisani noloyiko. Kuya kufuneka siphinde siqonde thina ngokwethu size siqondane omnye nomnye. Siyazi kakuhle ukuba esi sivumo sikhangelene nokuguqulwa kweendlela zokucinga neenkqubo zaseCaweni nezasekuhlaleni ezithe zabakho kwisithuba seminyaka emininzi. Kambe singqina ukuba ngenxa yeendaba ezimnandi akukho ndlela yimbi. Umthandazo wethu ngowokuba abazalwane noodade bethu kuwo wonke umzi weeNederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, ewe, nabezinye iimvaba badlelane nathi kweli phulo lokuqala ngokutsha khon'ukuze siyixhamle kunye inkululeko siyixhambe kunye indlela yoxolelaniso nobulungisa. Ukutsho sithandaza ukuba le ntlungu ibe yintlungu ekhokelela ekusindisweni. Ke siyakholwa ukuba kunokwenzeka ngamandla eNkosi yethu ngoMoya wayo. Siyakholwa ukuba iindaba ezimnandi ezingo Yesu Krestu ziindaba eziphathelela izwe lakowethu ithemba nenkululeko, usindiso noxolo olululo. Ewe, iindaba ezimnandi zinako ukwenjenjalo, yaye zikholo oko.

Belhar Belydenis • Belhar Confession • Isivumo SaseBelhar

Kommentaar • Comment • iNgcaciso

Afrikaans

Die belydenis bestaan uit vyf onderafdelings wat ons "artikels" kan noem. Die eerste artikel herhaal en bevestig die oud-Christelike geloof in die drie-enige God wat die kerk tot stand bring. Hierop volg drie artikels oor hierdie kerk en haar rol in die wereld: die eenheid van die kerk (art 2), versoening in kerk en samelewing (art 3) en die stig van vrede en geregtigheid in die wêreld (art 4). Die vyfde artikel roep die kerk op om te doen wat bely is, al sou dit vervolging beteken. 'n Kort lofrede aan God sluit die belydenis af.

By die drie middelste artikels word eers "positief" bely, en dan volg die verwerping van die leer waarteen bely word. Hier volg Belhar die patroon van vorige belydenisse wat "antwoord" op spesifieke valse leringe. Duidelike voorbeelde van sulke afwysings kry ons in die Nederlandse Geloofsbellydenis (NGB) artikels 12, 13, 15, 29, en 35, Heidelbergse Kategismus (HK) Sondag 28-30, en dis te sien in die Dordtse Leerreëls met sy duidelike verwerpings in elke hoofstuk.

Die teks van Belhar soos in 1986 finaal deur die destydse NG Sendingkerk aanvaar, word hier onder kursief gedruk. Dit word van kommentaar voorsien wat onder andere deur lede van die Konvent van Kaapland in Junie 2004 gelewer is. Die kommentaar wil die band tussen die belydenis en die Bybel uitwys, asook die ooreenkomste met die Drie Formuliere, naamlik die NGB, HK en Dordtse Leerreëls. Ons wil ook wys hoe die verskillende dele van Belhar mooi bymekaar aansluit en vandag nog vir ons belangrik is.

Artikel 1

Ons glo in die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees wat deur sy Woord en Gees sy Kerk versamel, beskerm en versorg van die begin van die wêreld af tot die einde toe.

Ons glo in die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees

Die belydenis begin by God en eindig ook weer (in artikel 5) by lof aan God. Die hele belydenis is dus begrond in ons geloof in die Drie-Enige God. So het God Hom in die Bybel as Skepper, Verlosser en Heilige Gees vir ons kom bekendmaak. Dit word duidelik bevestig in tekste soos Matt 28:19 en 2 Kor 13:13. Só het die kerk teen allerlei dwalinge deur die eeue bely. Hierdie belydenis van een God en Drie Persone vind ons in die belydenis van Nicea, Athanasius en die Twaalf Artikels. Al drie hierdie belydenisse is spesifiek om ons geloof in die Drie-enige God gebou. En so het die Reformasie die geloof in die Drie-Enige God uitvoerig verduidelik en bevestig in NGB artikels 8-11, HK Sondag 8, en Dordt hoofstuk 1,7.

English

The Confession consists of five subsections we could name "articles". The first article repeats and confirms the ancient Christian belief in the Triune God who establishes the church. The following three articles deal with the church and her role in the world: the unity of the church (art 2), reconciliation in church and society (art 3) and bringing about peace and justice in the world (art 4). The fifth article calls the church to do what is confessed, even if it means persecution. The confession closes with a brief laudation to God.

Firstly, the three middle articles is followed by a "positive" confession, and then the doctrine is rejected against which is confessed. Here Belhar follows the pattern of previous confessions which "answer" to specific false doctrines. We find distinct examples of such denials in the Dutch Confession of Faith (DCF - Nederlandse Geloofsbellydenis) articles 12, 13, 15, 29, and 35, Heidelberg Catechism (HC) Sunday 28 - 30, and it can also be seen in the Canons of Dort with very clear rejections in every chapter.

The Belhar text, as adopted finally in 1986 by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church of that time, will be given in italics. It is provided with comments delivered, among others, by members of the Convent of the Cape in June 2004. These comments wish to point out the bond that exists between the confession and the Bible, also the similarities with the Three Ecumenical Creeds, namely the DCF, HC and the Canons of Dort. We will also indicate how the various parts of Belhar join together and are still today very important to us.

Article 1

We believe in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for his Church by his Word, and his Spirit, as He has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

The confession begins with God and also closes (in article 5) with laudation to God. Therefore, the entire confession is founded in our faith in the Triune God. So God has revealed Himself to us in the Bible as Creator, Redeemer and Holy Spirit. It is clearly confirmed in verses such as Mt 28:19 and 2 Co 13:13. This was the confession of the church against all kinds of heresies through the centuries. This statement of one God and Three persons we also find in the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed and the Apostles' Creed (Twelve Articles). All three these Creeds are built around our faith in the Triune God. And so the Reformation affirmed and explained the faith in the Triune God in detail in the DCF articles

IsiXhosa

Isivumo-lukholo simi singamacandelwana amahlanu esinokuwabiza "njengeziqendu" Isiqendu sokuqala siphinda kwaye siqononondisa ukhohlo lwakudala lobuthathu-bunye-bukaThixo olwamiswa yiCawe. Emveni koko kulandele iziqendu ezithathu ngale Cawe nendima yayo ehlabathini: ubunye beCawe (isiqendu 2) uxolelaniso eCaweni kunye nentlalo-ntle (isiqendu 3) nokumiselwa koxolo nobulungisa ehlabathini (isiqendu 4). Isiqendu sesihlanu sibiza iCawe ukuba yenze oko ikungqinayo nokuba kuthethe ukulandelwa. Ukubonga uThixo kuquka isivumo-lukholo

Iziqendu ezintathu eziphakathi zingqina kuqala "ngokuqinisekileyo" kulandele ukuchaswa kwemfundiso leyo kungqinwa ngokuchaseneyo nayo. Emveni koko kulandele iBelhar ngendlela ebhalwe ngayo ilandela izivumo-lukholo zangaphambili ezinika "impendulo" kwiimfundiso zolahlekiso. Imizekeliso ecacileyo yeemeko ezinjalo sizibona kwisivumo-lukholo saseNetherlands (NGB) iziqendu 12,13,15,29 kunye no 35, ikhathikhezi yase Heidelberg (HK) 28-30 nakwimfundiso yaseDordt neenkcazo zayo ezicacileyo kwisahluko ngasinye

Isicatshulwa sesivumo-lukholo saseBelhar njengokuba sagqityizelwa ngo 1986 saza samkelwa yiCawe eyayisakwaziwa njengeNG Sending sibhalwe ngezantsi apha ngohlobo oluthile olwahlukileyo. Sibonelelwe ngabahlalutyi ababengamalungu ayezimase iConvent (ingqungquthela eyodwa) yaseKapa eyayingoJuni ka 2004. Abahlalutyi bafuna ukubona okuthile phakathi kwesivumo-lukholo kunye neBhayibhile kwakunye nezivumelwano ezintathu zefomula, umz: isivumo-lukholo saseNetherlands, iKhatikhezi yaseHeidelberg kunye neemfundiso yaseDordt. Sifuna kwakhona ukubonisa indima ezahlukeneyo zeBelhar ezidityanise kakuhle ngako kwaye zisabalulekile kakhulu unanamhla

Isiqendu 1

Siyakholwa kuThixo oziqo zithathu emnye, uYesu noNyana noMoya oyiNgcwele, othi ngelizwi lakhe nangoMoya wakhe aziqokelele iCawe eyeyakhe, aze ayikhusele ayilondoloze ukususela ekuqaleni kwehlabathi kuse esiphelweni.

Siyakholwa kuThixo oziqo zithathu emnye, uYise noNyano noMoya oyiNgcwele

Isivumo-lukholo siqala ngoThixo size siphela kwakhona (isiqendu5) ngokubanga uThixo. Sisonke isivumo-lukholo sisekelwe kukholo lwethu kuThixo oziqo zithathu emnye.UThixo eBhayibhileni ubonwa njengoMnikhi –bomi, uMsindisi noMoya oyiNgcwele ozokusazisa. Lo nto iqinisekiswa ngokucacileyo kwezi zahluko zilandelayo; Mateyu 28:12 namaKorinte 13:13 Njengoko iCawe ibingqina phakathi kwamaxesha anzima ebudeni beminyaka. Esi sivumo soThixo oziqo zithathu emnye sisifumana kwisivumo-lukholo saseNicea, kwesika Athanasius kunye nesabaPostile (iziqendu ezilishumi elinesibini). Zontathu ezi zivumo-lukholo zicacile ekwakheni ukhohlo lwethu kuloThixo oziqo zithathu emnye. Njengoko aboHlaziyo baye bakhela ukhohlo

Die “ons” wat glo wil se dat dit nie ‘n enkele persoon is wat hier bely nie, maar die kerk. Aan die begin was dit natuurlik die belydende NG Sendingkerk in 1986, maar uiteindelik wil Belhar ‘n belydenis vir die kerk op alle plekke en nou tot ver in die toekoms.

wat deur sy Woord en Gees sy Kerk versamel, beskerm en versorg van die begin van die wêreld af tot die einde toe

Hierdie is ‘n direkte aanhaling van HK vr en antw 54: “Wat glo jy van die heilige, algemene, Christelike kerk? Dat die Seun van God... deur sy Gees en Woord ‘n gemeente van die begin van die wêreld af tot die einde toe vergader, beskerm en onderhou...”

Die band tussen die Drie-Enige God en die gelowiges – die ou en nuwe Israel - loop soos ‘n goue draad deur die hele Bybel. Jawhe, die God van Abraham, Isak en Jakob, is nie te bedink sonder sy volk nie (Gen 12; Hosea 11). Net so is die werk van Jesus Christus en die Heilige Gees nou aan die kerk in die Nuwe Testament verbind (Hand 1:8; 2:1-13; Kol 1:18) .

Hierdie band tussen God en die kerk is ook daer in die belydenisse van die vroeë kerk: geloof aan die kerk kom altyd direk na die geloof in die Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees. By Nicea is die kerk ‘n onderdeel van ons geloof in die Heilige Gees.

In HK vraag en antwoord 54, word God deur Sy *Woord en Gees* aan die kerk gebind. Dis hoe God sy kerk bymekaar bring. Die kerk is dus duidelik nie van ‘n menslike maaksel nie. Ons moet die kerk dus altyd sien as God se werk. Die kerk is daar om God te eer en nie in die eerste plek om mense se behoeftes te bevredig nie. Dis ook hoe Dortd 1,7 juis oor die uitverkiesing bely.

Dat God sy kerk nie net versamel nie, maar ook *beskerm en versorg*, sê dat die kerk altyd weer in gevaar kan kom. Dit wys reeds vooruit na artikel 5 wat praat van gehoorsaamheid wat tot stryd en lyding kan lei. Dit was dan ook so in Suid-Afrika as mens kyk na die tyd waaruit die belydenis kom. En dis vandag nog so dat gehoorsaamheid aan die evangelie stryd en lyding bring - hier en op verskillende plekke in die wêreld.

Dat die kerk egter veilig is, berus nie op haar eie planne of pogings om haarself te beskerm nie. Die kerk is veilig omdat Jesus Christus, die Hoof, ‘n ewige Koning is “wat nooit sonder onderdane kan wees nie” (NGB art 27). Christus is die Alfa en Omega (Openbaring 22:13). Dis daarom Hy wat bewaar van die begin van die wêreld af (alfa) tot die einde toe (omega).

8 – 11, HC 8 and the Canons of Dort 1, 7. The above given “we” wish to indicate that it is not one person who is confessing here, but the church. Of course, in the beginning in 1986 it was the DR Mission Church who was confessing, but eventually Belhar wants to be a confession for the whole church everywhere and then also far into the future.

Who gathers, protects and cares for his Church by his Word and his Spirit, as He has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end

This is a direct quotation of the HC, question and answer 54: “What do you believe of the holy catholic Church? That the Son of God ... from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself ... by His Spirit and Word ... a Church chosen to everlasting life...”

The bond between the Triune God and all believers – the old and new Israel – runs like a golden thread right through the entire Bible. Jawhe, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is not to be thought of without his people (Gn 12; Ho 11). Likewise, the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is closely associated with the church in the New Testament (Acts 1:8; 2:1-13; Col 1:18).

This bond between God and the church is also present in the creeds of the early church: faith in the church comes directly after faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the Nicene Creed the church is a component of our faith in the Holy Spirit.

In HC question and answer 54, His Word and Spirit bind God to the church. This is how God brings his church together. So the church is definitely not the work of humans. Therefore we should always see the church as the work of God. The church exists to honour God and not, in the first place to satisfy the needs of man. And that is also what the Canon of Dort 1, 7, confesses about the Election.

This, that God not only gathers his church together, but also defends and preserves his church, implies that the church may always be subject to danger. This also points to article 5, which says that obedience to God may lead to struggle and suffering. This was the situation in South Africa if one looks at the background and time whence this Confession comes. And today it is still the same, that obedience to the gospel results in struggle and suffering – here and in many places in the world.

The safety of the church does not rest with her own plans or efforts to defend herself. The church is safe because Jesus Christ, the Head, is an eternal King “ who can never be without subjects” (DCF article 27). Christ is the Alpha and Omega (Revelations 22:13). For this reason, it is He who preserves from the beginning of the world (alpha) to the end (omega).

Iwethu ngokucacileyo kuloThixo oziqo zithathu emnye kwaza komelezwa kwisivumo-lukholo saseNetherlands kwiziqendu 8-11, iKhatikhezi yaseHeidelberg 8 nakwiimfundiso zaseDortd isahluko 1,7.

U “si” okholwayo, uthetha ukuba ayingomntu omnye ongqina apha ukholo lwakhe kodwa yiCawe ngokubanzi. Ekuqaleni ibiyiCawe yeNG Sending engqinayo kodwa ekugqibeleni isivumo-lukolo saseBelhar seseCawe ngokubanzi kuzo zonke iindawo nakwixesha elizayo

othi ngeLizwi lakhe nangoMoya wakhe aziqokelele iCawe eyeyakhe, aze ayikhusele ayilondoloze ukusela ekuqaleni kwehlabathi kuse esiphelweni.

Oku kucatshulwe njengoko kunjalo kwiKhatikhezi yaseHeidelberg umbuzo nempendulo 54: “Ukhokelwe yintoni kwiCawe eNgcwele ekulo lonke ilizwe? Okokuba uNyana kaThixo ----- ngoMoya wakhe nangeLizwi lakhe waqokelela, wakhusele kwaye waxhasa iBanda lakhe kwasekuqaleni kwehlabathi kwada kwasa esiphelweni --”

Unxulumano phakathi koThixo oziqo zithathu emnye kunye namakholwa – uSirayeli omdala nomtsha luhamba njengocingo lwebhedu kwiBhayibhile yonke. UYehova uThixo kaAbraham, Isake noYakobi abanakwahlulwa nohlanga lwakhe (Gen.12; Hoseya 11). Njengoko kunjalo kumsebenzi kaYesu Krestu noMoya oyiNgcwele eCaweni yakalokunje kwiTestamente eNtsha (izenzo 1;8;2:1-13;Kol 1:18).

Olu nxulumano luphakathi koThixo neCawe yakhe lukhona kwisivumo-lukholo zeCawe yokuqala:Ukholo eCaweni luza emveni kokukholwa kuYise, kuNyana nakuMoya oyiNgcwele. Kwisivumo-lukholo saseNicea, iCawe isisahlulo sokholo lwethu kuMoya oyiNgcwele.

Ikhathikhezi yase Heidelberg umbuzo nempendulo 54 uThixo uzimanya neCawe yakhe ngeLizwi lakhe kunye noMoya wakhe. Yindlela uThixo ayidibanisa ngayo iCawe yakhe. Lo nto icacise ngokuphandle ukuba uThixo iCawe yakhe ayisekwangwa ngumntu. Kufuneka ngalo lonke lonke ixesha iCawe siyibone njengomsebenzi kaThixo.Icawe ikho ukuze imhlonelwe uThixo hayi ukuhlonelwa kuqala imiqweno yomntu. Kunjengoko iimfundiso zaseDortd 1,7 zingqina ngako.

UThixo akayiqokelelanga nje iCawe yakhe, kodwa ukwayikhusele ayondle, kuthetha ukuba iCawe ingasoloko ingena engxakini. Lo nto ibonise ngakumbi emva kwesiqendu 5 kuthetha ntoni ukuvisisana ekunokukhokela kukungavisisani. Bekunjalo nalapha eMzantsi Afrika xa umntu eqwalasela ngexesha lokwenziwa kwesi sivumo-lukholo. Kusenjalo unanamhla xa kuphulwa-phulwa kwiVangeli kuza ukungavisisani –apha nakwezinye iindawo ezahlukeneyo ehlabathini.

Ukuze iCawe ibe nokukhuseleka, akuxhomekekanga ekuzikhuseleni ngemigaqo-nkqubo yayo okanye ngemizamo yayo. ICawe ikhuseleke ngokuba uYesu Krestu eyiNtloko, eyiKumkani yaphakade “engasayi kuswela abo bayihlonelayo” (isivumo-lukholo saseNetherlands isiqendu 27). UKrestu unguAlfa noOmega (Izityihilelo22:13). Kungoko inguye okhuseleyo kwasekuqaleni kwehlabathi (Alfa) kude kuse ekupheleni (Omega)

Artikel 2

Ons glo aan een, heilige, algemene, Christelike kerk, die gemeenskap van die heiliges, geroepe uit die ganse menslike geslag.

Hierdie is 'n direkte aanhaling van die "merktekens" van die kerk soos in Nicea en die Twalf Artikels bely, en in NGB art 27 bevestig word. Die byvoeging van *geroepe uit die ganse menslike geslag* is oorgeneem uit HK vr en antw 54 waar hierdie belydenis verduidelik word. Alhoewel waarskynlik nie presies so bedoel nie, sou ons die drie middelste artikels van die belydenis kon verbind aan die eenheid (art 2), heiligheid (art 3) en Christelikheid (art 4) van die kerk, met die eerste en laaste artikels wat op na die algemeenheid van die kerk verwys. Belhar is deur 'n kerklike belydenis -'n belydenis van en oor die kerk, begrond in die belydenis oor God.

Ef 2: 11-22

Ons glo dat die versoeningswerk van Christus sigbaar word in die kerk as geloofsgemeenskap van diegene wat met God en onderling met mekaar versoen is;

Hierdie artikel laat val die klem op die sigbare (sienbare) eenheid van die kerk. Die sigbare eenheid hang nie af van hoeveel mense van mekaar hou nie: Dit groei uit die werk van Christus wat mense met God en met mekaar versoen. Die verwysing na Efe 2:11-22 plaas klem daarop dat dit hier juis gaan om mense wat gewoonlik vyande van mekaar is (Jode en nie-Jode, besnedenes en onbesnedenes). Hulle word volgens die Bybel deur hul eenheid met Christus Jesus nou "tot een nuwe mensheid verenig". Dit het die prys van Christus se liggaam, dood en kruis gekos om hierdie vrede tot stand te bring (Efe 2:16-17).

Ef 4: 1-16

dat die eenheid van die kerk van Jesus Christus daarom gawe én opdrag is; dat dit 'n samebindende krag is deur die werking van Gods Gees, maar terselfdertyd 'n werklikheid is wat nagejaag en gesoek moet word en waartoe die volk van God voortdurend opgebou moet word;

Hierdie sigbare eenheid het 'n twee kante: Aan die een kant is dit 'n geskenk van die Heilige Gees, en gebou op die eenheid van en in God (Efe 4:4-6). Maar terselfdertyd is dit 'n roeping (Efe 4:4) en iets waarop die kerk haar moet toelê (Efe 4:3). Eenheid is nie 'n opsionele ekstra op die agenda van die kerk waaraan mense maar by tye aandag gee nie: Dit behoort tot die wese en kernopdrag van die kerk. 'n "Onenige kerk" is strydig met die bedoeling van God vir die kerk.

Rom 12:3-8; 1 Kor 12:1-11; Ef 4:7-13; Gal 3:27-28; Jak 2:1-13

dat hierdie eenheid in vryheid gestalte kan vind en nie onder dwang nie;

Die Bybeldele wat Belhar hier aanhaal, kom almal uit die "etiese" dele van die briewe en uit die wysheid van Jakobus. Dit verklaar wat die belydenis eintlik wil sê: Dis alleen op grond van die genade (Rom 12), en op

Article 2

We believe in one holy, universal Christian Church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family

This is a direct quotation of the "signs" of the church as confessed in Nicea and the Twelve Articles, and is confirmed in the DCF article 27. The addition of gathered out of the whole human race is taken from the HC question and answer 54 that explains this confession. Although it is not meant precisely to be so, we can relate the three middle articles of the Confession with the unity (art 2), holiness (art 3) and the Christianity (art 4) of the church, with the first and last articles that refer to the universality of the church. Belhar is a confession of the church, in the deepest sense – a confession of and about the church, rooted in the confession about God.

Eph 2:11 – 22

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the Church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;

This article emphasises the visible (to be seen) unity of the church. The visible unity does not depend on how much people like each other. It grows from the work of Christ who reconciles people with God and with each other. The reference to Eph 2:11 – 22 emphasises that this concerns people who are often enemies (Jews and Gentiles, circumcised and uncircumcised). According to the Bible they are now "reconciled in one body" through the cross of Jesus Christ. The cost for accomplishing this peace was Christ's body and his death on the cross (Eph 2: 16-17).

Eph 4: 1-16

that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the Church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought; one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain;

This visible unity has two sides: On the one side it is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and built on the unity of and in God (Eph 4: 4-6). But at the same time it is a mission (Eph 4:4) and a task to which the church should apply herself (Eph 4:3) Unity is not an optional extra on the agenda of the church that people could attend only now and then. It belongs to the very nature and core of the church's commission. A 'disunited church' is in conflict with what God intended for the church.

Ro 12; 3-8; 1 Co12: 1-11; Eph 4; 7-13; Ga 3: 27-28; Jas 1: 1-13

That this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint;

All parts of the Bible quoted here are from the "ethical" parts of the letters and from the wisdom of James. It explains what the confession really wish to say: It is only by reason of the grace given to us (Rom 12),

Isiqendu 2

Siyakholwa kwicawe enye eNgcwele eyeyezizukulwana ngezizukulwana, ibubudlelane babaNgcwele ababizweyo bevela kuluntu xa lulonke.

Oku kucatshulwe njengoko kunjalo "kwiziphawuli" zeCawe ezingqinwa kwisivumo-lukholo saseNicea nakwisivumo-sokholo sabaPostile (iziqendu ezilishumi elinesibini), nanjengoko kungqinwa kwisivumo-lukholo saseNetherlands (NGB) isiqendu 27. Ufakelo "bevela kuluntu xa lulonke" kuthatyathwe kwikhathikhezi yaseHeidelberg umbuzo nempendulo 54 apho esi sivumo-lukholo sicaca khona. Naxa kungathethwa njalo, singazidibanisa iziqendu ezintathu eziphakathi zesivumo kubunye (isqendu 2)

KuNgcwele (isiqendu 3) kunye nobuKrestu (isiqendu 4) beCawe kunye neziqendu zokuqala nezokugqibela ezigqithiselwa kwiCawe ngokubanzi. Isivumo-lukholo saseBelhar singsivumo seCawe, isivumo esingecawe, esisekelwe kwisivumo esingoThixo

Kwabase-Efese 2:11-22

Siyakholwa ukuba umsebenzi kaKrestu wokuxolelanisa uyabonakale kuleCawe ububudlelane nokholo babo bathe baxolelaniswa noThixo nabathe baxolelaniswa omnye nomnye.

Esi siqendu sigxininisa kubunye obubonakalayo necawe. Ubunye obubonakalayo abuxhomekekanga kubungakanani babantu abathandanayo. Bukhula kumsebenzi kaKrestu oxolelanisa abantu kunyenoThixo, umntu kunye nomnye. Isalathiso saKwabase-Efese 2:11-22 kungxininisa oko kanye, ukuba abantu kanye abaziintshaba omnye komnye (amYuda nabo bengengawo abolukileyo nabo bangalukile). NgokweBhayibhile bamanywa nobunye babo noKrestu "kubunye obutsha bobuntu ibe lixabiso lomzimba kaKrestu, ukufa kwakhe nomnqamlezo wakhe owenza ukuba olu xolo lube nokuma (kwabase-Efese 2:16-17).

Kwabase-Efese 4:1-16

Ngenxa yoko siyakholwa ukuba ubunye beCawe kaYesu Krestu busisiphiwo, bukwangumyalelo; bungamandla abandakanyayo ngomsebenzi kaMoya oyiNgcwele, kodwa kananjalo buyinto ekufuneka iphuthunywe, ifunwe into ekufanele ukuba abantu bakaThixo bahlale bekhuthazwa ukuyakha.

Obu bunye bubonakalayo bunamacala amabini: Kwelinye icala busisiphiwo soMoya oyiNgcwele, kwaye busekelwe phezu kobunye bukaThixo nobukuThixo (Kwabase-Efese 4:4-6). Kodwa kwangaxesha –nye ikwalubizo (kwabase-Efese 4:4) kwaye iyinto apho iCawe kufuneka iyizamise (kwabase-Efese 4:3). Ubunye asiyonto nje eyodwa ekho kumgaqo-nkqubo weCawe, apho abantu kubakho amaxesha athile abayiqwalaselayo: Kufuneka ibe ngumyalelo osisiseko seCawe "Icawe engaqinisekanga" ichasene nenjongo kaThixo ngeCawe yakhe.

KwabaseRoma 12:3-8; 1 Kor. 12:1-11; Kwabase-Efese 4:7-13; KumaGalati 3:27-28; Yak. 2:1-13

Okokuba obu bunye bunokuphumeleliswa kuphela kukuqhutya yintiliziyo kungekho ngokunyanzelwa;

Izicatshulwa zeBhayibhile ezicatshulwe apha

grond van die Gees se werk (1 Kor 12; Efe 4), dat mense vry is om een te wees. Eenheid kan nie op mense afgedwing word deur dit as 'n politieke of kulturele ideaal voor te hou nie. Dit kom uit die "dwang" van die evangelie wat ons van ons selfsug vrymaak.

dat die verskeidenheid van geestelike gawes, geleenthede, agtergronde, oortuigings, soos ook die verskeidenheid van taal en kultuur, vanweë die versoening in Christus geleenthede is tot wedersydse diens en verryking binne die een sigbare volk van God;

In die aangehaalde Bybelverse gaan dit oor verskille in die gemeentes van die vroeë kerk: Jode teenoor Grieke (kultuur), base teenoor slawe (klas), geleerdes teenoor ongeleerdes (stand), mans teenoor vroue (geslag), en nog vele meer. Dit gaan ook oor hoe om die verskeidenheid positief te gebruik: die liggaam het baie lede wat elk 'n eie werk het, maar tog tot die eenheid bydra. Deurgaans klink die helder boodskap: In Christus en deur die Gees is en bly julle een liggaam. Dit maak gevolglik nie meer saak wie jy is of van watter agtergrond of klas jy is nie. In Christus is almal kinders van God.

Hier praat die belydenis die taal van HK vr en antw 55 waar "die gemeenskap van die heiliges" verduidelik word: Die gelowiges het almal saam en elkeen afsonderlik deel aan die Here se skatte en gawes. Elkeen is daarom verplig om sy/haar gawes "gewillig en met vreugde tot nut en saligheid van die ander lede aan te wend."

Dat die ware geloof in Jesus Christus die enigste voorwaarde is vir lidmaatskap van hierdie Kerk

As die kerk die vrug is van God se versoening in Jesus Christus, is dit net logies dat toegang tot die liggaam vir almal oop is wat Jesus in die geloof aanvaar. Enige ander voorwaarde sou beteken dat Jesus Christus se werk nie genoeg was nie. Dit sou die kerk soos 'n klub maak waar allerhande menslike vereistes vir lede geld.

Noudat positief oor die eenheid van die kerk bely is, sê Belhar wat nie langer aanvaar kan word nie. Belhar doen dit om vier keer "nee" te sê, om vier dinge te verwerp:

Daarom verwerp ons enige leer

wat óf die natuurlike verskeidenheid óf die sondige geskeidenheid so verabsoluteer dat hierdie verabsolutering die sigbare en werksame eenheid van die kerk belemmer of verbreek of selfs lei tot 'n aparte kerkformasie;

Die belydenis het reeds verskille tussen mense binne Christus se versoening gebring. Ook waar Christene op grond van sonde van mekaar geskeie is of wil wees, is reeds oor die versoening in een nuwe mensheid getuig. Daar bly dus geen ander weg oor as om 'n leer te verwerp wat hierdie versoeningswerk van Christus afswak of ontken nie. Want só 'n opvatting het direkte gevolge vir die sigbare eenheid van die kerk, en het - in die geskiedenis van die NG Kerkfamilie - tot aparte kerke gelei.

wat voorgee dat hierdie geestelike

and by reason of the work of the Spirit (1 Co 12; Eph 4) that people are free to become one. Unity cannot be enforced upon people by impressing it as a political or cultural ideal. It comes from the "constraint" of the gospel that frees us from our selfishness.

that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual services and enrichment within the one visible people of God;

The quoted Bible verses deal with the differences in the congregations of the early church: Jews as opposed to Greeks (culture), master as opposed to slaves (position), educated as opposed to the uneducated (class), men as opposed to women (gender) and many more. These verses also indicate how this variety can be used positively: the body has many members, each with their own function, but still promoting unity. Throughout the message comes loud and clear: In Christ and through the Spirit you are and remain one body. In consequence then, your background or class does not matter. In Christ we are all children of God.

The language here is the language of the HC question and answer, where "the communion of saints" is explained. All believers and each one separately, share in the Lord's treasures and gifts. For this reason everyone is under obligation to use his/her gifts "readily and cheerfully for the advantage and salvation of other members".

that the true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this Church;

Because the church is the fruit of God's reconciliation in Jesus Christ, it is only logical that admittance to the body would be open for all that accepted Jesus in faith. Any other condition would mean that the work of Jesus Christ was not sufficient. Then the church would be like a club where all kinds of human requirements apply to become a member.

Now that the unity of the church has been confessed, Belhar expresses what is no longer acceptable. Belhar does it by saying "no" four times, by rejecting four things:

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

Which absolutises either natural diversity or the sinful separation of people in such a way that this absolutisation hinders or breaks the visible and active unity of the church, or even leads to the establishment of a separate church formation;

The confession has already brought differences between people within the reconciliation of Christ. Also, where Christians, on the basis of sin, are or want to be separated, there has been witness of this reconciliation in one new humanity. So there is no other way but to reject a doctrine that weakens or denies this reconciliation work of Christ. For such an approach has direct consequences for the visible unity of the church and has resulted in separate churches - in the history of the DR Church

sivumo-lukholo saseBelhar, zivela zonke kwiindima zemikhwa esesikweni zeencwadi nakulwazi lukaYakobi Zingqina oko kufunwa ukucaciswa sisivumo. Konke kusekelwe kwiinceba (kwabaseRoma 12) nakumsebenzi woMoya (1Kor.12; Efese 4) ukuba abantu bakhululekile ukuba babebanye. Ubunye abunakunyanzelwa ebantwini ngokungathi kugcinwa izimvo zopolitiko okanye ezamasiko. Kuphuma kuphela "kukunyanzelwa" yiVangeli ukuze bube njengoxanduva olukhululekileyo lwethu.

Kwaye sikholwa ukuba ngenxa yoxolelaniso oludalwe nguKrestu, iindidi ngeendidi zeziphwiwo zoMoya namathuba neemvelaphi neembono, neenthetho ezahlukeneyo neenkqubo-ntalo ezingafaniyo, zisivulela ithuba lokuba sikhonze sakhane siluhlanga olunye olubonakalayo lelithixo.

Kule vesi yeBhayibhile ecatsulweyo kumalunga zahlukane ezazikho kumabandla eCawe yamandulo: AmaJuda aye nxa-mnye namaGrike (kwesithethe), izityebi zinxamnye namahlwempu (ngokweendidi zabantu) abafundileyo benxa-mnye nabangafundanga (ngokomgangatho wentlalo), amadoda enxa-mnye nabafazi (ngokwesini) kwakunye nokunye okuninzi. Kukwamalunga nendlela imbali esetyenziswa ngendlela eyiyo: umzimba unamalungu amaninzi apho ilungu ngalinye linomsebenzi walo kodwa lisebenzela ubunye. Kuvakala njengomyalelo wobumalusi. KuKrestu nangoMoya nihlala ningumzimba omnye. Oko akukhathaliseki ukuba ungubani na okanye usuka phi na okanye imvelaphi yakho iphuma kowuphi na umnombo. KuKrestu sonke singabantwana bakaThixo

Apha isivumo-lukholo sithetha intetho yeKhathikhezi yaseHeidelberg umbuzo nempendulo 55 apho "uluntu lwabangcwele" lucaciswa khona: Amakhohla ewonke kanti nangokobunye bawo asisabelo esixabisekile kwanezipho kuThixo. Kuloko umntu ngamnye enyanzelekile ukuba "abonakalise ukuzinikela ngochulumanco ngokutsha nangokuthobeka omnye komnye"

Ukuba ukholo lwenene lokukholwa kuYesu Krestu lulo kuphela oluyimfuneko ukuze umntu abe nokuba lilungu lwalwe kawe.

Xa iCawe isisiqhamo soxolelaniso lukaThixo ngoYesu Krestu, lo nto icacisa ngokuphandle ukuba ukungena kuwo umzimba ngabo bonke, kuvuleleke kumntu owamkela uYesu ngokholo. Naziphi na ezinye iimfuno zinokuthetha ukuba umsebenzi kaYesu Krestu awonelanga. Lo nto ingenza icawe njengombutho apho ezinye iimfuno zobuntu zijongeke zibalulekile kumalungu wayo.

Njengoko siqinisekile ngokungqina ngobunye beCawe, okuthethwa yiBelhar kukuba akunakuthatyathwa xesha lide kungamkelwa. IBelhar yenza ukuba sithi "hayi"

Amathuba amane sichase izinto ezine:

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba nayiphi na imfundiso ethi

Indawo ephambili kukungafuni kwabantu ngokwendalo, okanye kukwahlulahlulwa kwabo ngenxa yesono, ze ke le mfundiso ithintele okanye ichithe ubunye obubonakalayo nobusebenzayo beCawe, ide ibange ukusekwa kweeCawe azahlukeneyo.

Isivumo-lukholo nangoku sizise intlaba

eenheid werklik bewaar word deur die band van die vrede wanneer gelowiges met dieselfde belydenis van mekaar vervreem word ter wille van die verskeidenheid en vanweë die onderversoendheid;

Natuurlik is die eenheid van die kerk 'n geestelike (en Gees-telike!) saak. Kerke is byvoorbeeld ver van mekaar in dieselfde land en in die wereld. By tye kom ons as Christene bymekaar om te wys ons is een. Waar ons naby mekaar (in dieselfde dorp byvoorbeeld) is, en ons deel dieselfde belydenis, kan ons nie agter "geestelike eenheid" wegkruip nie. 'n Leer wat eintlik meer aan onversoendheid glo as aan eenheid, wat meen kerkeenheid is bloot "geestelik" (onsigbaar) en nie werklik nie, moet daarom verwerp word.

wat ontken dat 'n weiering om hierdie sigbare eenheid as 'n kosbare gawe na te jaag sonde is;

'n Lering wat sou inhou dat ons nie opreg na sigbare eenheid moet soek nie, staan teenoor die evangelie van Jesus Christus. Dis sonde om sigbare eenheid op te gee as iets wat te veel moeite vra of te lank vat om te gebeur. Vir Belhar is dit soos om 'n kosbare geskenk weg te gee voordat jy dit oopgemaak het.

wat uitgesproke of onuitgesproke, voorgee dat afkoms of enige ander menslike of sosiale faktore medebepalend is vir lidmaatskap van die kerk.

'n Leer wat iets by die "geloof alleen" voeg, is 'n valse leer. Daar is gelowiges wat wel toestem dat "geloof alleen" toegang tot die kerk verseker, maar in die praktyk "sluit" hulle hul kerk of gemeentes omdat net sekere mense daar kan kom. Sulke mense bedrieg hulleself (Jak 1:22). Hulle doen nie wat die Woord sê nie: "My broers, julle wat glo in ons Here Jesus Christus, die Here aan wie die heerlikheid behoort, moet mense nie volgens hulle uiterlike beoordeel nie. Maar as julle die mense na die uiterlike beoordeel, doen julle sonde..." (Jak 2:1, 9).

family.

which professes that this spiritual unity is truly being maintained in the bond of peace whilst believers of the same confession are in effect alienated from one another for the sake of diversity and in despair of reconciliation;

Of course the unity of the church is a spiritual (and Spirit like!) matter. For example, churches are far from each other in the same country and in the world. At times we as Christians come together to demonstrate that we are one. Where we live near each other (for example, in the same town), and share the same confessions, we cannot hide behind a "spiritual unity". A doctrine that believes more in irreconcilability than unity, which considers church unity as merely "spiritual" (invisible) and not real, must therefore be rejected.

which denies that a refusal earnestly to pursue this visible unit as a priceless gift is sin;

A doctrine that implies that we should not seek earnestly for visible unity, stands in opposition to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a sin to specify a visible unity as something that asks too much or takes too long to happen. For Belhar it is as if a priceless gift has been given away before it has been opened.

which explicitly or implicitly maintains that descent of any other human or social factor should be a consideration in determining membership of the Church.

A doctrine that adds something to "faith alone" is a false doctrine. There are believers who do agree that "faith alone" ensure admission to the church but in practice they "close" their church or congregations so that only certain people are allowed there. These people deceive themselves (James 1:22). They do not act as the Word tells them. "My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory with partiality. But if you show partiality, you commit sin..."

zahlakane phakathi kwabantu ngaphakathi kuxolelaniso likaKrestu. Kwaye apho ubuKrestu ngenxa yokonana kwethu kwazisa iyantlukano, lungqinwa ngoku luxolelaniso olunye olutsha ebuntwini. Ayikho enye indlela ekhoyo ngaphandle kokuba sichasane nemfundiso esingela phantsi okanye engavumi umsebenzi woxolelaniso lukaKrestu. Kuba injongo enjalo ilandela nqo ubunye obubonakalayo beCawe – kwaye ethe kwimbali yeeCawe zosapho lweNG yakhokela kwiiCawe ezahlukeneyo.

Kananjalo sikhaba nayiphi na imfundiso ehananisisayo ngokuthi obu bunye boMoya bugcinwe ngenene ngentambo yoxolo xa amakholwa anesivumo esinye athe ahlukaniwa ngenxa yokungafuni ngenxa yokungaxolelaniseki.

Ngenene ubunye beCawe yimeko yobuMoya. IiCawe ngokomzekelo ziqecelele enye kwenye kwilizwe elinye nakwihlabathi ngokubanzi. Ngamanye amaxesha nje ngamakholwa siyadibana sibonise ukuba sibanye. Apho sisondelele khona (ngokomzekelo kwidolopi enye) kwaye singqina ukhoko olunye asinakububaleka "ubunye boMoya" Imfundiso engakholelwa ngakumbi kuxolelaniso nje ngobunye ethetha ukuba ubunye "bubuMoya" kuphela (ababonakali) kwaye abunakwenzeka, kufuneka ichasiwe

Sikwakhaba nayiphi na imfundiso ekhanyela ukuba sisono ukukulandula ukubuphuthuma obu bunye obubonakalayo obusisiphiwo esinqabileyo

Imfundiso ebambelela kwinto yokuba singafuni bunye bububo bubonakalayo, ichasane neVangeli kaKrestu. Kusisono ukuthabatha ubunye obububo obubonakalayo nje ngento efuna into eninzi okanye eyakuthabatha ixesha elide. IBelhar ifuna nokunikhezela ngesipho esixabiseke kakhulu phambi kokuba usivule

Kananjalo sikhaba nayiphi na imfundiso ethi ngokuvakalayo okanye ithe cwaka ihananise ngokuthi ubulungu beCawe bukwxhomekeke kumlibo wokuzalwa okanye nakuyiphi na enye indawo enxulumene nemeko yomntu nenkqubo-ntlalo

Imfundiso ethi ifakela into ethile "kukholo lodwa" yimfundiso yolahlekiso. Kukho amakholwa avumayo ukuba "lukholo lodwa" olukuqinisekisa ekungeneni kweCawe, kodwa kwinkqubo ebonakalayo yemihla ngemihla "bavale" iCawe yabo okanye amabandla abo kuba kunokungena abantu abathile kuphela. Abantu abanjalo bayazikhohlisa (Yak.1:22) Abenzi oko kuthethwa liLizwi Bazalwana bam, nina nikhokelwa kwiNkosi yethu uYesu Krestu, uThixo ozuko lulolwakhe musani ukukhetha ubuso bomntu. Kodwa ukuba nikhetha ubuso bomntu nisebenza isono (Yakobi 2:1,9)

Artikel 3

Waar artikel 2 die band tussen versoening en eenheid "na binne" vaslê, kyk artikel 3 "na buite". Met ander woorde die klem val nou op die betekenis van die kerk as versoende gemeenskap vir die wêreld waarbinne sy leef.

2 Kor 5:17-21; Matt 5:13-16; Matt 5:9; 2 Pet 3:13; Open 21-22

Ons glo dat God aan sy kerk die boodskap van versoening in en deur

Article 3

Where article 2 establishes the bond between reconciliation and unity in "the inside", article 3 looks at "the outside". In other words the emphasis falls on the significance of the church as reconciling community for the world in which she lives.

2 Co 5:17-21; Mt 5:13-16; Mt 5:9; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21-22

We believe that God has entrusted to his Church the message of reconciliation in

Isiqendu 3

Xa isiqendu 2 sigxininisa unxibelelwano phakathi koxolelaniso nobunye "ngaphakathi" isiqendu 3 sona sijonge "ngaphandle" Namanye amazwi uqwalaselo luphezu kwemiqondiso yokuba iCawe luluntu oluxolelanisayo ehlabathini apho iphila khona

2 Kor. 5:17-21; Mat. 5:9; 2 Pet. 3:13; IsiTyh. 21-22

Siyakholwa ukuba uThixo iCawe yakhe uyiphathise udaba loxolelaniso olukho kuye

Jesus Christus toevertrou het; dat die kerk geroep is om die sout van die aarde en die lig van die wêreld te wees; dat die kerk salig genoem word omdat hulle vredemakers is; dat die kerk deur woord en daad getuies is van die nuwe hemel en die nuwe aarde waarop geregtigheid woon;

Die artikel begin met 'n letterlike oorskrif van vyf Skrifgedeeltes. Dit begin by die bekende en belangrike 2 Kor 5 waar die bediening van die versoening, m.a.w. die "prakties maak" van versoening, aan die kerk toevertrou word.

Hoe doen die kerk dit? Deur sout en lig te wees (Matt 5:13-16), vrede te maak (Matt 5:9), vroom en toegewyd in die wêreld te lewe (2 Pet 3) sodat die beloftes van die toekoms – veral geregtigheid (Open 21-22) - nou reeds kan waar word.

Ef 4:17-6:23; Rom 6; Kol 1:9-14; Kol 2:13-19; Kol 3:1-4:6

...dat God deur sy leweskeppende Woord en Gees die magte van sonde en dood, en daarom ook van onversoendheid en haat, bitterheid en vyandskap, oorwin het;

Vir mense uit die tyd van die Nuwe Testament is sonde aan 'n stryd tussen magte, owerhede, kragte, en geeste verbind. "Ons stryd is nie teen vlees en bloed nie..." (Ef 6:12). Die bediening van Jesus (byvoorbeeld sy genesings en ander wonderwerke) wys dat Hy teen hierdie magte stry en hulle uiteindelik aan die kruis oorwin (Kol 2:13-19). Hy is nou "verhewe bo die hele skepping" (Kol 1:15) en christene word aangespoor om die wapenrusting op te neem, terwyl hulle weet dat die oorwinning reeds behaal is (Ef. 6).

Hierdie deel van artikel 3 gryp terug na dieselfde *Woord en Gees* wat die kerk vergader en beskerm (artikel 1). Hier word nou bely dat die mag, die houvas van sonde en dood (in Rom 6 aan die doop verbind), regtig oorwin is. Nicea noem die Gees spesifiek "Heer en Lewendmaker". Dit word tweemaal in hierdie artikel herhaal.

Daar praat Belhar duidelik oor die magte wat vandag nog mense van mekaar vervreem: *onversoendheid, haat, bitterheid en vyandskap*. Hulle is mos dan ook oorwin, en het nou geen houvas meer op christene nie.

dat God deur sy leweskeppende Woord en Gees sy volk in staat stel om te leef in 'n nuwe gehoorsaamheid wat ook in die samelewing en wêreld nuwe lewensmoontlikhede kan bring;

Waar en hoe sal mense nou weet dat God regtig die magte van onversoendheid oorwin het? Die belydenis antwoord helder: Die "waar" is die kerk, en die "hoe" is die leefstyl, die voorbeeld van die Godsvolk wat leef in die krag van die Woord en die Gees. Ja, so helder moet hierdie lewe van eenheid en onderlinge versoening spreek, dat dit hoop gee vir 'n samelewing en 'n wêreld wat soek na *nuwe lewensmoontlikhede*.

dat hierdie boodskap ongeloofwaardig gemaak word en dat die heilsame uitwerking daarvan in die weg gestaan

and through Jesus Christ; that the Church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world; that the Church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker; that the Church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells;

The article begins with the literal rewriting of five parts of Scripture. It begins with the well-known and significant 2 Co 5 where the church is entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation, in other words, putting reconciliation "into practice".

How does the church accomplish this? By being the salt and the light of the world (Mt 5:13-16), by being peacemaker (Mt 5:9), by living in the world with godliness and dedication (2 Peter 3) so that the promises of the future - righteousness in particular (Rev 21 – 22) – may be realised now.

Eph 4:17- 6:23; Ro 6; Col 1:9-14; Col 2:13-19; Col 3:1 – 4:6

...that God by his life-giving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity;

For the people of New Testament times, sin was associated with a struggle between powers, authorities, forces, and spirits. "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood..." (Eph 6:12). The ministry of Jesus (for example, his healing powers and miracles) shows that He struggled against these forces and eventually conquered them on the cross (Col 2:13-19). He is now "over all creation" (Col 1:15) and Christians are exhorted to put on the armour, while they know that the victory has already been attained (Eph 6).

This part of article 3 reaches back to the same Word and Spirit that gather and protect the church (article 1). Here is the confession that the power, the grip of sin and death has really been conquered (in Ro 6 it is connected with baptism). Nicea specifically names the Spirit "the Lord and Giver of Life". This is repeated twice in this article.

Belhar very clearly states which powers still alienate people even today: irreconciliation, hatred, bitterness and enmity. But they have also been conquered and no longer have a hold over Christians.

that God by his life-giving Word and Spirit will enable His people to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world;

Now where and how will people know that God really conquered the forces of irreconciliation? The confession answers clearly: The "where" is the church, and the "how" is the lifestyle, the example of God's people who live in the power of the Word and the Spirit. Yes, this life of unity and mutual reconciliation must speak so clearly that it will give hope to a society and a world who are seeking new life possibilities.

that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work

ngangaye uYesu Krestu; Cawe leyo obiziweyo ukuba ibe yityiwa yehlabathi kwabokhanyiselo lwayo; iCawe ekuthiwa inoyolo kuba iyimbumba yabaxolisi; iCawe elingqina ngamazwi nangezenzo, ingqinela izulu elitsha nehlabathi elitsha elimiwa ngobulungisa.

Isiqendu siqala ngaphandle ngokubhala kwakhona izicatshulwa ezintlanu zeziBhalo. Siqala ngendawo eyaziwayo kwaye ebalulekileyo 2 Kor. 5 apho inkonzo yoxolelaniso, ngamnye amazwi "ukusebenza ngokubonakalayo okukuko" koxolelaniso, eCawe enikwe uxanduva lwalo

ICawe ikwenza njani oko? Ngokuba yityuwa kwanokhanyiso (Mat. 5:13-16) idale uxolo (Mat 5:9) izise imeko yobuThixo neyokunikela ehlabathini (2 Pet. 3) ukuze izithembiso zexesha elizayo-ngakumbi ubulungisa (IsiTyh.21-22) zibe nako ukuphumelela.

Kwabase Efese 4: 17 –6:23 KwabaseRoma 6; KwabaseKol.3:1-4:6

Siyakholwa ukuba uThixo uthe ngelizwi lakhe elidala ubomi nangoMoya wakhe uMniki-bomi wasoyisa isono nokufa, wathi ngokwenjenjalo wakoyisa nokungaxolelanisi nentiyo, ubukrakra bentliziyo nobutshaba

Ngexesha leTestamente eNtsha kubantu isono yayimfazwe edityaniswa namandla, uburhulumente, ubunganga kunye nobuMoya "Ngokuba um zamo wethu asingowokuzamana negazi nenyama" (Efese 6:12) Inkonzo kaYesu (umzekelo ukuphilisa kwakhe kunye neminye imisebenzi engummangalis) ibonisa ukuba ichasene nayiphi na imizamo kwaye yade yoyiswa emnqamlezweni (Kol.2: 13-19) Ngoku "ongowamazibulo kwindalo yakhe" (Kol. 1: 15) kwaye amaKrestu akhuthazwa ukuba abathathe izikrweqe zokulwa, njengoko besazi ukuba uloyiso sele lwaphumelelwa (Efese 6)

Le ndima yesiqendu 3 ibuyela kwakwimeko yeLizwi noMoya eCawe ehlanganiselwe lona nokhuseleko lwayo (isiqendu 1) Apha kuyangqinwa ukuba amandla, ukubambelela esonweni nasekufeni (Roma 6 okuhlanganiswe elubhaptizweni) ngoloyiso lwenene. Isivumo-lukholo saseNicea sichaza uMoya nje ngo "Thixo noMniki-bomi" lphindwa izihlandlo ezibini apha kwesi siqendu

Isivumo-lukholo saseBelhar sicacisa ngokuphandle ngamandla asacalula abantu unanamhla, ukungaxolelanisi, intiyo, ubukrakra, bentliziyo nobutshaba. Nako koyiswa akusenandawo yakubambelela kumaKrestu.

Kanjalo ngeLizwi lakhe elidala ubomi nangoMoya wakhe uMniki-bomi, uThixo abantu bakhe ubanika igunya lokumthobela ngendlela entsha enokuthi nakumzi jikelele nakwihlabathi, izekelise ngeendlela ezintsha zenkqubo-ntlalo

Kuphi kwaye baya kuqonda njani abantu ukuba uThixo ngenene wawoyisa amandla okungaxolelanisi? Oku kucaciswa ngokuphandle sisivumo-lukholo: u"kuphi" kubhekiswa eCaweni ze u "kanjani" kubhekiswe kwimpilo esiyiphilayo, umzekelo wohlanga lukaThixo oluphila kumandla eLizwi noMoya. Ewe ngokucacileyo kufuneka kushunyayelwe ubomi bobunye kwanoboxolelaniso ukuze bunike ithemba entlalweni nakwihlabathi elifuna inkqubo-ntlalo entsha

Siyakholwa ukuba olu daba lwenziwa lingabi

word indien dit verkondig word in 'n land wat op Christelikheid aanspraak maak, maar waarin die gedwonge skeiding van mense op rassegrondslag onderlinge vervreemding, haat en vyandskap bevorder en bestendig;

Hier beweeg Belhar vanuit die kerk na die samelewing – en spesifiek die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing wat op Christelikheid aanspraak gemaak het. In 'n politieke bedeling van wetlike, gedwonge skeiding op rassegrondslag word die “magte van vervreemding” wat in Christus oorwin is, lewend gehou (dit is *bevorder en bestendig*). Dit beteken is dat mense nie die evangelie se krag meer aanvaar nie, en dat die positiewe vrugte van versoening ondermyn word.

dat enige leer wat sodanige gedwonge skeiding vanuit die evangelie wil legitimeer en dit nie wil waag op die pad van gehoorsaamheid en versoening nie, maar uit vooroordeel, vrees en selfsug en ongeloof die versoenende krag van die evangelie byvoorbaat verloën, ideologie en dwaalleer is.

Belhar beoordeel nie politieke modelle nie. Dit veroordeel wel 'n valse leer wat die evangelie gebruik om gedwonge skeiding tussen mense te verdedig asof dit die wil van God in Christus sou wees. Só 'n leer berus volgens die belydenis nie op die oorwinning in Christus nie. Dit is die gevolg van *vooroordeel* (vasgelede idees van hoe ander mense is), *vrees* (bang vir kontak en saamleef met “hulle”, “die ander”) en *selfsug* (behoud van my bevoorregte posisie).

Ten diepste egter is hierdie valse leer 'n vorm van *ongeloof* dat die evangelie 'n krag is wat mense bymekaar kan bring. Hiervolgens is selfs Christus nie in staat om vyandskap en skeiding in vriendskap en gemeenskap te omskep nie. Só 'n lering word naderhand 'n ander evangelie, 'n ideologie, en word dus as 'n dwaalleer afgewys.

Daarom verwerp ons enige leer wat in die naam van die evangelie of die wil van God die gedwonge skeiding van mense op grond van ras en kleur in so 'n situasie sanksioneer en daardeur die bediening en beleving van die versoening in Christus byvoorbaat belemmer en van krag beroof.

Enige lering wat gedwonge rasseskering as evangelie of wil van God sou voorstel, moet daarom verwerp word. Die rede vir die verwerping is nie politiek van aard nie, hoewel dit - soos die begeleidende brief uitspel - sosiale implikasies het. Die leer word verwerp omdat dit die kerk se bediening van die versoening in die wereld sonder krag laat. Hoe maak jy die evangelie van die versoening prakties as party mense leer dat die evangelie presies die teenoorgestelde vra? Meer nog: hierdie valse leer keer dat mense in 'n verdeelde samelewing regte versoening kan belewe en daarin die ware evangelie, die versoening in Christus, kan sien en ervaar.

obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;

Here Belhar moves away from the church to the community – and specifically the South African community that claimed to be Christian. In a political order of legitimate, enforced separation on a racial basis, the “forces of estrangement” that were conquered in Christ, were kept alive (it was promoted and perpetuated). This means that people no longer accept the power of the gospel and that the positive fruit of reconciliation is undermined.

that any teaching which attempts to legitimate such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.

Belhar does not judge political models. But it does condemn a false doctrine that uses the gospel to defend an enforced separation as if it is the will of God in Christ. According to the confession, such a doctrine is not based on the victory in Christ. It results from prejudice (fixed ideas about what other people are like), fear (afraid of contact and living with “them”, “the other”) and selfishness (retaining my privileged position).

However, in the deepest sense, the truth is that this false doctrine is a form of unbelief that the power of the gospel can bring people together. According to this even Christians are unable to transform enmity and separation into friendship and fellowship. Such a doctrine eventually becomes another gospel, an ideology, and is therefore rejected as heresy, false doctrine.

Therefore we reject any doctrine which, in such a situation sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and colour and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.

Any doctrine that presents enforced racial separation as gospel or as the will of God must therefore be rejected. The reason for this rejection is not political in nature, although it has social implications, as the accompanying letter states explicitly. This doctrine is rejected because it leaves the ministry of reconciliation of the church without power in the world. How can you make the gospel of reconciliation practical when some people teaches that the gospel asks the exact opposite? Even more: this false doctrine teaches that people in a divided community can experience real reconciliation and can see and experience in it the true gospel, the reconciliation in Christ.

nakukholwa ze ke nempembelelo yalo encedayo ithintelwe, ukuba luvakaliswa kwilizwe elibanga ukuba lilelobuKrestu kanti kulo kuyanzelwa ukwahlulwa kwabantu ngokobuzwe, ze ke bangathembani koko bathiyane babe nobutshaba.

Apha isivumo-lukholo saseBelhar sisuka eCaweni siye kwinkqubo-ntlalo ngokucacileyo kwintlalontle yoMzantsi Afrika ethetha ngobuKrestu. Ngokwemeko yezopolitiko ezisemthethweni ezinyanzela ucalu-calulo lwabantu ngokobuhlanga, amandla ocalulo oyiswa nguKrestu kwagcinwa ubomi. Lo nto ithethe ukuba abantu abasawamkeli amandla eVangeli, kwaye basingela phantsi iziqhamo zoxolelaniso

Siyakholwa ukuba iyalahlekisa yaye iyimfundiso ezimesele ukuhlawula iingqondo zabantu nayiphi na imfundiso ethi ukwahlulwa kwabantu ngonyanzelo ngolu hlobo yinto esiyifundiswa ziindaba ezimnandi zikaThixo, ibe ikutyeshela ukuthobela umyalelo kaThixo iyihambe indlela yoxolelaniso, ize ithi ngenxa yokwenza ingaqalanga yaqonda nangenxa yokoyika nokungabakhathaleli abanye nakukuswela ukhoho isuke iwakhanyele amandla eeNdaba ezimnandi okuxolelanisa.

Isivumo-lukholo saseBelhar asichasi nkqubo ithile yezopolitiko. Sichasene nemfundiso yolahlekiso esebenza iVangeli ethethelela ukwahlulwa kwabantu ngokobuzwe nje ngentando kaThixo ngoKrestu. Imfundiso enjalo, ngokwesivumo-lukholo, ayisekelwanga phezu kolyiso lukaKrestu. Lonto yenziwa ngokuchasa (izimvo ezithile kwanjani babantu) uloyiko (ukoyika ukudibana kwanokuhlala “nabo” “nabanye”) kunye nempakamo (ukugcina isikhundla sam).

Ebunyanisweni le mfundiso yolahlekiso yindlela yokungakholwa ukuba iVangeli ngamandla adibanisa abantu. Okulandelayo uKrestu buqu akangomseki wobutshaba nokwahlula abahlobo kunye noluntu. Imfundiso enjalo yenye iVangeli, yimfundiso yeendlela ezithile zokucinga kwabantu (ideology) kwaye ithatyathwa nje ngemfundiso yobugqirha.

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba nayiphi na imfundiso ethi iNdaba eziMnandi zikaThixo okanye intando kaThixo ziyakuvuma ukuba abantu mabohlulwe ngonyanzelo ngokobuzwe nangebala kwimeko elolu hlobo, ze ke ngokwenjenjalo ithintele iphuthise ukuvakaliswa nokuxhanyulwa koxolelaniso olukho kuKrestu

Nayiphi na imfundiso ephakamisa ukonyanzela ukwahlulwa kwabantu ngokobuzwe nje ngentando kaThixo kufuneka ichasiwe. Isizathu zokuchaswa kwayo ayiyompembelelo yezopolitiko, naxa kunjalo njengoko isitsho incwadi ekhaphayo- inefuthe lezentlalo-ntle. Le mfundiso iyachaswa ngenxa yokuba yinkonzo yeCawe ukuxolelanisa ehlabathini ngaphandle kwamathandabuzo. Uyenza ibe nokubonakala njani iVangeli yoxolelaniso xa abanye abantu befundisa ukuba ibuzo okunye? Kwakhona le mfundiso yolahlekiso inqanda abantu abahlala intlalo yokwahlukana baphile ngoxolelaniso lwenene kwaye kulapho kwiVangeli yenene ekunokubonwa nokuxhanyulwa ngamava oxolelaniso kuKrestu.

Artikel 4

In hierdie artikel word geloof in die drie-enige God (art 1), die eenheid in die kerk (art 2) en versoening in kerk en samelewing (art 3) verder geneem na geregtigheid en vrede. Die artikel bely eers oor God in wie geregtigheid woon, dan oor die kerk wat hierdie geregtigheid - in navolging van God – prakties in die wêreld moet utoelief.

Deut 32:4; Luk 2:14; Joh 14: 27; Ef 2:14; Jes 1:16-17; Jak 1:27; Jak 5:1-6; Luk 1:46-55; Luk 6:20-26; Luk 7:22; Luk 16:19-31

Ons glo dat God Homself geopenbaar het as die Een wat geregtigheid en ware vrede onder mense wil bring;

Hoe maak God Homself bekend? Natuurlik in die Bybel. Hoe lyk hierdie God van die Bybel? Ons lei dit af uit Sy dade. “Hy is die Rots, sy werk is volmaak, **alles wat Hy doen, is regverdig**. Hy is die getroue God, **sonder onreg**, Hy is regverdig en betroubaar” (Deut 32:4, klem ingevoeg). In God is geen onreg nie. Daarom kan Hy ook nie onreg verdra of oogluikend toelaat nie.

Oor Jesus, gebore in Betlehem, sing die engele van vrede op aarde (Luk 2:14). Dis wat Jesus in sy laaste onderwysing ook leer: “Vrede laat Ek vir julle na...”, en dis wat Efesiërs 2:14 oor die nuwe mensheid bely: “Christus is ons vrede...”

God wil hierdie geregtigheid en vrede onder mense tot stand bring.

dat Hy in 'n wêreld vol onreg en vyandskap op 'n besondere wyse die God van die noodlydende, die arme en die veronregte is en dat Hy sy kerk roep om Hom hierin na te volg;

Hoe bring God nou hierdie reg en vrede (shalom as kosmiese vrede) tot stand in 'n wêreld vol van onreg en onvrede?

Deur in situasies van onreg vir reg te kies. Deur onvrede in vrede en heelmaking te laat verander. Waar mense dus swaarkry of arm is weens onreg in sisteme en die samelewing, is God vir hulle op 'n besondere manier daar: “Hy laat reg geskied aan verdruktes en gee brood aan dié wat honger ly. Hy beskerm die vreemdelinge en help weeskinders en weduwees, maar Hy versper die pad vir die goddelose”, sing Israel in Psalm 146. En hiertoe word die volk van die Here en die kerk vandag ook opgeroep: “Leer om weer goed te doen, sorg dat daar reg geskied, gaan die verdrukker teë” (Jes 2:17)

Daar is sommige wat hierdie deel van die belydenis op vae wyse aan “bevrydingsteologie” koppel. Hulle wil daarmee die belydenis teenstaan en afwys. Hulle standpunt kan om minstens twee redes bevraagteken word:

So 'n afwysing hou (eerstens) nie genoeg rekening met die Bybel se deurlopende getuigenis oor God se instaan vir reg en regloses nie. Daarom kan tereg bely word dat God Homself so **openbaar**. Dis net so 'n duidelike tema in die Skrif as byvoorbeeld regverdiging deur die geloof alleen. Dat God instaan vir reg, is 'n perspektief wat nou aansluit by ons Gereformeerde erfenis met

Article 4

In this article, belief in the Triune God (art 1), the unity of the church (art 2) and reconciliation in church and community (art 3) are taken further to justice and peace. This article firstly confesses about God in whom justice lives, then about the church that must bring this justice into effect – in imitation of God - in a practical way in the world.

Dt 32:4; Lk 2:14; John 14:27; Eph 2:14; Is 1:16 – 17; James 1:27; James 5:1 – 6; Lk 1:46-55; Lk 6:20- 26; Lk 7:22; Lk 16: 19-31

We believe that God has revealed himself as the One who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among men:

How does God reveal Himself? In the Bible of course. How does this God of the Bible look like? We can understand Him from His deeds. “He is the Rock, His work is perfect; **for all His ways are justice**. A God of truth and **without injustice**. Righteous and upright is He. (Dt 32:4 with emphasis inserted). In God there is no injustice. And for this reason He cannot tolerate injustice nor close His eyes to it.

In Bethlehem, the angels sang of peace on earth when Jesus was born (Lk 2:14). This is what Jesus also teaches in his last instruction: “Peace I leave with you...”, and this is what Eph 2:14 confesses about the new humanity: “For He Himself is our peace...”

God wants to establish this justice and peace among men.

that in a world full of injustice and enmity He is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged and that He calls his Church to follow Him in this;

How can God establish this justice and peace (shalom as cosmic peace) in a world full of injustice and discord?

By choosing justice in situations of wrongdoing. By changing enmity into peace and healing. Therefore, where people suffer or are poor as a result of injustice in systems and the community, God will be there for them in a special way: “(He) executes justice for the oppressed, (He) gives food to the hungry. The Lord watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and the widow, but the way of the wicked He turns upside down”, Israel sing in Psalm 146. And also today, the people of God and the church are called for this purpose: “Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor” (Is 1:16, 17).

There are people who link this part of the confession in a vague way with “liberation theology”. They want to use this to oppose and reject the confession. Their viewpoint may be questioned for at least two reasons:

Firstly, such a denial makes no allowance for the continuous evidence in the Bible of how God accepts responsibility for justice and those without rights. Therefore it can truly be confessed that God **reveals** Himself as such. This is just such a clear theme in Scripture as, for example, justification by

Isiqendu 4

Kwesi siqendu kuthatyathelwa phambili ukhlo kuThixo oziqo zithathu emnye (isiqendu 1) ubunye eCaweni (isiqendu 2) kunye noxolelaniso eCaweni nasentalweni (isiqendu 3) ukuya kubulungisa noxolo. Isiqendu singqina kuqala ngoThixo apho ubulungisa buhlala kuYe nangeCawe ekufuneka ibonise ukuphila okubonakalayo bobulungisa ehlabathini ngendlela kaThixo.

Deut.32:4; Luk 2:14; Yoh. 14:27; Kwabase Efese 2:14; Isaya 1:16-17; Yak. 1:27; Yak. 5:1-6; Luk 1:46-55; Luk. 7:22; Luk 16:19-31

Siyakholwa ukuba uThixo wazityhila engulowo uthanda ukudala ubulungisa noxolo lwenene phakathi kwabantu.

UThixo uzazisa njani? Ngokucacileyo ngeBhayibhile. Unjani lo Thixo weBhayibhile? Sikhokelwa zizenzo zakhe. “NguLiwa; ugqibelele umsebenzi wakhe **ngokuba zonke iindlela zakhe zisesekweni**. NguThixo wentembeko **tu ubugqwetha**, Lilungisa uthe tye yena (Deut.32:4 kugxininiswa okufakelweyo) KuThixo akukho bugqwetha. Kungoko naye engathwalisi bugqwetha okanye enze ingathi abubonakali

NgoYesu owazalwa eBethlehem, iingelosi zicula ngoxolo emhlabeni (Luk 2:14) Kuloko uYesu ebekufundisa kwimfundiso yakhe yokugqibela “Uxolo malube nani” kwaye kuko oko Kwabase Efese 2:14 bakungqinayo ngobuntu obutsha “UKrestu uluxolo lwethu ---”

UThixo ufuna obu bulungisa noluxolo bume ebantwini

Othi ngendlela eyodwa ehlabathini elizele zizenzo zentswela-bulungisa nobutshaba abe nguThixo wabahlelekileyo nabangamahlwempu nabaphethwe ngendlela engafanelekanga yaye neCawe yakhe uyibiza ukuba imlandele kule nto.

UThixo ubenza njani obu bulungisa nolu xolo (shalom-njengoxolo lwasesmhlabeni) ukuba bume kwihlabathi elizele yintswelo- bulungisa noxolo?

Kwiimeko zentswela-bulungisa sikhethe ubulungisa. Kwiimeko zokungabikho koxolo sikhethe uxolo ukuze kubekho utshintsho olugqibeleleyo. Apho abantu bafumana ubunzima okanye beziva behlwempuzekile ngenxa yenkqubo yentswela-bulungisa entlalweni yabo. UThixo usoloko ekho phakathi kwabo ngendlela eyodwa. Ulingiselela abacinezekileyo anike isonka kwabo balambileyo. Ukhuselela abaphumbukeli ancedo iinkedama nabahlolokazi, ayiphethule indlela yabangendawo ucala atsho uSirayeli kwiNdimiso 146 Ukusukela apho kwabizwa uhlanga lukaThixo neCawe yakhe yanamhla iyabizwa. Fundani ukwenza okulungileyo kwakhona yenzani ukuba kwenziwe ubulungisa ukuze abacinezweyo bakhululeke (Isaya 2:17)

Kukho abathile abadibanisa le ndima yesivumo-lukholo kunye neThiyoloji yomzabalazo Bafuna ukusichasa okanye basale isivumo-lukholo. Uluvo lwabo luthandabuzeka ngezi zizathu zibini zilandelayo:Ukusala kwabo kuqulathe (okokuqala) ungxaxasi ubungqina obukwiBhayibhile iyonke bokuba uThixo umele ubulungisa, hayi intswela-bulungisa. Kungoko kunokungqinwa ukuba uThixo unguThixo **ozityhileyo**. Yingongoma ecacileyo kwizibhalo ngokomzekelo unobulungisa

sy klem dat God oor alles en almal heers. En dis vandag 'n perspektief wat ingeskryf is ekumeniese (inter-kerklike) ooreenkomste oor ons christelike geloof.

Kritiek teen Belhar se bewoording neem (tweedens) nie kennis dat die belydenis self hier oor God se "besonderheid" getuig in die konteks van 'n *wereld vol onreg en vyandskap* nie. God staan nie by armes oor hul armoede of omdat Hy in 'n klassestryd op 'n besondere manier die God van die werkersklas is nie. Omdat daar in God geen onreg is nie, staan Hy in 'n situasie van onreg by mense wat ly weens hierdie onreg. Met respek: God kan nie anders nie. Dis soos God is.

dat Hy aan verdruktes reg laat geskied en brood aan die hongeriges gee; dat Hy die gevangenes bevry en blindes laat sien; dat Hy die wat bedruk is ondersteun, die vreemdelinge beskerm en weeskinders en weduwees help en die pad vir die goddelose versper; dat vir Hóm reine en onbesmette godsdiens is om die wese en die weduwees in hulle verdrukking te besoek; dat Hy sy volk wil leer om goed te doen en die reg te soek;

Hierdie aangrypende beskrywing van hoe God vir reg instaan, is niks anders as 'n opeenvolging van Bybelverse nie:

Hy herstel die reg van verdruktes (Jes 2:17). Hy gee kos vir honger mense, laat gevangenes vry en laat blindes weer sien (Ps 146:7-8). Dit word die tekens waaraan mense sou weet dat Jesus die Messias is (Lukas 7:21-23). God ondersteun bedruktes (Ps 146:8) en hef geringes op (Luk 1:48, 52). Hy het 'n besonder sagte plek vir regloses soos weduwees, wese en vreemdelinge. Dit blyk uit talle wette in die OT en word die toets vir geloof wat in dade oorgaan; die bewys van egte godsdiens voor God (Jak 1:27). Hy oorlaai armes met goeie gawes (Luk 1:53); seën hulle, en belowe aan hulle die koninkryk van God (Luk 6:20, 16:19-31). Hy veroordeel rykaards wat op selfverryking ingestel is en deur onregverdige praktyke – soos die uitbuiting van werkers – hul rykdom insamel (Jak 5:1-6).

Die volk van God word nou opgeroep tot bekering en sondebelydenis sodat God hulle kan leer om soos Hy vir reg en vrede in te staan (Jes 1:16-20).

Ps 146; Luk 4:16-19; Rom 6:13-18; Amos 5

dat die kerk daarom mense in enige vorm van lyding en nood moet bystaan, wat onder andere ook inhou dat die kerk sal getuig en stry teen enige vorm van ongeregtheid sodat die reg aanrol soos watergolwe, en geregtigheid soos 'n standhoudende stroom; dat die kerk as eiendom van God moet staan waar Hy staan, naamlik teen die onregtheid en by die veronregtes; dat die kerk as volgelinge van Christus moet getuig teenoor alle magtiges en bevoorregtes wat uit selfsug hulle eie belang soek en oor andere beskik en hulle benadeel.

Wat beteken dit prakties as die kerk - soos God - vir reg instaan? Die belydenis gee duidelike leiding vanuit die Skrif:

faith alone. That God is responsible for justice, is a perspective that corresponds closely with our Reformed heritage with the emphasis that God rules over all and everyone. And today, this is a perspective that is inscribed in ecumenical (inter church) agreements about our Christian faith.

Secondly, criticism against Belhar's wording does not take cognisance of the fact that the confession itself gives testimony here of God's "distinctiveness" in a world full of injustice and enmity. God does not stand by the poor because they are poor or because in a class struggle, He is in a particular way the God of the working class. As there is no injustice in God, He stands in a situation of injustice with the people who suffer because of this injustice. With respect: God can do no other. This is how God is.

that He brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry; that He frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind; that He supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly; that for Him pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering; that He wishes to teach His people to do what is good and to seek the right:

This moving, stirring description of how God stands in for right, is nothing but a succession of Bible verses.

He brings justice to the oppressed (Is 1:16,17). He gives bread to the hungry, He frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind (Ps 146:7 – 8). It becomes the signs whereby people will know that Jesus is the Messiah (Luke 7:21-23). God raises those who are bowed down (Ps 146:8) and exalts the lowly (Lk 1:52). He has a very special feeling for those without rights like widows, orphans and strangers. This is apparent in many of the laws in the OT and becomes the test for faith that proceeds to deeds; a testimony of true religion before God (James 1:27). He showers the poor with good things (Lk 1:53); blesses them and promises them the Kingdom of God (Lk 6:20, 16:19 – 31). He condemns the rich who are centred on self-enrichment and collect their riches by unfair practices – such as the exploitation of the workers (James 5: 1– 6).

The people of God are called to conversion and repentance so that God can teach them to stand up for right and freedom like Him (Is 1: 16 – 20).

Ps 146; Lk 4:16 – 19; Rom 6:13 – 18; Amos 5

that the Church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the Church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream; that the Church as the possession of God must stand where He stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the Church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control

ngokholo. Ukuba uThixo umele ukulunga yimeko edityaniswe kumafa oHlaziyo kugxininiswa ukuba uThixo ungumlawuli wako konke. Kule mihla siphila kuyo yimeko ebhalwe kuzo zonke iimvumelwano zobuCawe kwihlabathi jikelele malunga nokholo lwethu lobuKrestu.

Ugxeke ngokumalunga nokubhalwa kwesivumo-lukholo saseBelhar (okwesibini) akuthabatheli ngqalelo ukuba isivumo buqu singqina ngeenkukacha zikaThixo kwimeko yehlabathi elizele yintswela-bulungisa kunye nobutshaba. UThixo akamelanga amahlwempu ngokobuhlwempu bawo okanye enguThixo olwa imfazwe yodidi lwabantu abathile ngendlela ethile kuba enguThixo wodidi olusebenzayo. Kodwa ngenxa yokuba kuThixo akukho ukungalungi; ume kwimeko apho kuboniswa intswelo-bulungisa kubantu abasokola ngenxa yentswelo-bulungisa. Ngembeko UThixo akanakwenza ngenye indlela. Kunjengokuba enjalo.

Kananjalo abacinezweyo ubenzela ubulungisa abalambileyo abanike isonka, amabanjwa uyawakuhlula, iimfama azenze zibe nako ukubona, abantliziyo zidakumbileyo uyabazimasa, abangeneleli abakhusele, iinkedama abahlolokazi abancede, xenikweni axabanayo endleleni yabangendawo, yaye kuye ukukhonza uThixo ngendlela ecocekileyo nengenachaphaza kukubonelela iinkedama nabahlolokazi emngciphekweni wabo; ewe, abantu bakhe ufuna ukubafundisa ukwenza okulungileyo baphuthume ubulungisa

Le nkcazo eyothusayo ecacisa indlela uThixo amela ngayo ubulungisa akukho yimbi ngaphandle kwaleyo icaciswa ziivesi ezilandelayo zeBhayibhile

Ulungisa indlela yabo bacinezweyo (Isaya 2:17), unika ukutya kubantu abalambileyo, akhulule abanjanjweyo, abuyisele ukubona kwabazimfama (Ndumiso 146:7-8) Yimiqondiso leyo abantu bayakuthi babone ukuba uYesu unguMesiya (Luk. 7:21-23) UThixo uyabaxhasa abacinezweyo (Ndumiso 146a;8) aphakamise abathobekileyo (Luk. 1:48-52). Unovelwano kwababoniswa intswelo-bulungisa abanje ngabahlolokazi, iinkedama kunye nabaphambukeli. Kubonakala ngokucacileyo kwimithetho emininzi yeTestamente eNdala kwaye kuvavanywa ukhlo ngezenzo ezibonakalisa unqulo lwenene phambi koThixo (Yak.1:27) Uhluthisa abalambileyo ngezinto ezilungileyo (Luk. 1:53) abasikelele abathembise ubukumkani bukaThixo (Luk. 6:20;16:19-31). Ugweba izityebi ezizityebisa ngeendlela ezingezizo –nje ngokucinezela abasebenzi abaqweba ubutyebi babo (Yak.5;1-6)

Uhlanga lukaThixo lubizelwa enguqukweni nasekuvumeni izono ukuze uThixo abenokubafundisa ukuba bame njengaye kubulungisa noxolo (Isaya 1:16-20)

Indumiso 146;Luka 4:16-19; kwabaseRoma 6:13-18; Amos 5

Ke ngoko siyakholwa ukuba iCawe imelwe kukubanceda abantu nakuphi na uhlobo lwentlupheko abanokuba kulo, nto leyo ekwathetha ukuthi iCawe iyakungqina iphikisane nalo naluphi na udidi lwentswela-bulungisa, khon'ukuze ukugweba ngokwemfanalelo kugaleleke okwamaza nobulungisa nje ngomfula ongatshiyi. Siyakholwa ukuba iCawe eMnikazi wayo

Die kerk moet 'n **keuse maak** om te staan waar God staan: Omdat Hy die bron van reg is, staan Hy in situasies van onreg by die verontregtes. Dis hoe God in sy grootheid besing word (kyk weer mooi na Ps 146!); en dis hoe Jesus sy bediening (met 'n beroep op Jesaja 61) in Lukas 4 uitstippel. As navolgers van Jesus, as mense in diens van God (Rom 6:13), is die kerk geroep om die genadejaar, die hersteljaar, te help waarmaak. Die kerk staan waar God staan.

Die kerk moet **getuig teen ongeregtheid** en vir reg. Dit sluit in – soos die Bybel onder andere deur Amos, Hosea, Jeremia, Jesus en Jakobus illustreer – 'n duidelike getuienis teen mense met mag wat uit eiebelang ander mense se lot bepaal, en ander benadeel ter wille van hul eie voordeel.

Die kerk moet **hulp en praktiese bystand** gee aan mense wat swaarkry – maak nie saak watter vorm hierdie swaarkry aanneem nie, en dit maak nie saak wie dit is wat nood ly nie. Kyk na die barmhartige Samaritaan en die oproep van Jesus dat ons volmaak moet wees deur ons vyande lief te hê sonder aansien van die persoon (Matt 5:43-48).

Daarom verwerp ons enige ideologie wat vorme van veronregting legitimeer en enige leer wat nie bereid is om vanuit die evangelie so 'n ideologie te weerstaan nie.

'n Ideologie is 'n sisteem wat net party mense bevoordeel, maar hulle het gewoonlik die mag en veg om hierdie posisie te behou ten koste van ander. Waar 'n politieke of ekonomiese sisteem openlike onreg toelaat en mense alles sal doen om dit so te hou, kan dit 'n ideologie word. As die mense met mag boonop sê dis God se wil dat dit so is, raak dit nog gevaarliker. Mense is bereid om hulle lewens daarvoor af te gee. Hiervan sien ons baie voorbeelde in die wêreld vandag. Die evangelie, die goeie nuus van 'n regverdigende God, staan teenoor so 'n ideologie. 'n Lering wat so 'n ideologie rustig toelaat en help in stand hou, moet vanuit die ware evangelie verwerp word.

and harm others.

What are the practical implications when the church – like God – stands up for right? The confession gives clear guidance from Scripture:

The church must **make a choice** to stand where Christ stands: As He is the source of justice, He stands with the victimised in situations of injustice. So God is praised in His greatness (look again at Ps 146!); and this is how Jesus proclaims his ministry in Luke 4 (with a call to Isaiah 61). As followers of Jesus, as people in the service of God (Rom 6:13), the church is called upon to verify the year of grace, the year of reparation. The church stands where God stands.

The church must be able to **testify against injustice** and for right. This includes – as illustrated in the Bible among others by Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, Jesus and James – a very clear testimony against people with power who determine the destinies of other people for their own interests, and wrong others for their own advantage.

*The church must give **assistance and practical support** to people who suffer – it does not matter what kind of suffering and it does not matter who it is who is in need. Look at the Good Samaritan and heed the call of Jesus that we must be perfect by loving our enemies, irrespective of persons (Mt 5:43-48).*

Therefore, we reject any ideology which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the Gospel.

An ideology is a system that favours only some people, but they usually wield the power and fight to retain this position at other people's expense. Where a political or economic system openly allows injustice and where people will do anything to keep it so, it can become an ideology. Furthermore when these people in power say that it is God's will that it should be so, it becomes even more dangerous. People are prepared to lay down their lives for it. We see many examples of this in the world today. The Gospel, the good news of a righteous God, is in opposition to such an ideology. A doctrine that calmly allows and maintains such an ideology must be rejected out of the true Gospel.

inguThixo nje, Imelwe kukuma nkqi, ichase intswelo-bulungisa ibaxhase abo bangaphathwanga ngobulungisa, yaye iCawe iilandela uKrestu nje, imelwe kukungqina ichasane nazo zonke iziphatha – mandla noosomalungelo abalungiselela iziqu zabo kuphela kangangokuba basebenzise abanye bebasindanisa.

Kuthetha ntoni oko ngokucacileyo njengeCawe-njengoThixo- ukumela ubulungisa? Isivumo sinika isikhokelo esicacileyo esiphuma kwizibhalo.

ICawe kufuneka **ikhethile** ukuma apho uThixo ame khona. Ngokuba engumthombo wobulungisa, uma kwimeko apho kungekho bulungisa emela abo baboniswe intswelo-bulungisa. Yindlela uThixo kubungangamsha bakhe aculelwa ngayo (jonga kwakhona kakuhla kwiNdumiso 146) yindlela uYesu ayiyi kwimisebenzi yakhe (ngobizo kulsaya 61) icaciswe ngendlela eyiyi kuLuka 4. Njengebalandeli bakaYesu abantu abakumsebenzi kaThixo (KwabaseRoma 6:13) iCawe ibizelwe umsebenzi wenceba, umsebenzi wokwakha nowokunceda. ICawe ima apho uThixo eme khona.

ICawe kufuneka **ingqine ngokuchaseneyo nentswelo-bulungisa** imele ukulunga. Kuquka njengeBhayibhile ibonisa nje ngooAmos, Hoseya, Yeremiya, Yesu kunye noYakobi – ubungqina obucacileyo obuchasene nabantu abajonge iimfuno zabo.

Icawe kufuneka **inike uncedo kwaye ime ngokubonakalayo** nabantu abeva nzima-akukhathaliseki nokuba bubunzima ababufumana phi na, kwaye akukhathaliseki nokuba ngubani ofuna uncedo. Jonga kumSamaritayakazi olungileyo kwaye nesimemo sikaYesu sokuba siluthande utshaba lwethu singajongi buso bamntu (Mateyu 5:43-48)

Ke ngoko siyayikhaba nayiphi na imfundiso ezimisele ukulawula iingqondo zabantu ethi iindidi ezithile zokuphathwa kwabantu ngendlela ezingezizo zivumelekile, yaye sikhhaba nayiphi na imfundiso engavumiyo ukuthi ngenxa yeeNdaba eziMnandi zikaThixo iyichase inkqubo enjalo.

Inkqubo yendlela yokucinga kwabantu (ideology), yinkqubo ekholisa kuphela abantu abathile namandla okuyigcina nokuba abanye abantu abahambisani nayo. Apho inkqubo yezopolitiko okanye eyoqoqosho ibonakalisa ngokungafihlisiyo intswelo-bulungisa nokuba abantu benze unako-nako wokuba igcinwe le nkqubo. Xa abantu banokutsho ngamandla ukuba yintando kaThixo ukuba kubenjalo, lo nto ingaba nobungozi. Abantu bazimisele ukuba bangabeka ubomi babo esichengeni. Kuloo nto kungoko sibona imizekelo emininzi kwihlabathi lale mihla. IVangeli, eziziindaba ezimnandi zoThixo onobulungisa ichasene nenkqubo enjalo.Imfundiso evumela ngokuphandle inkqubo enjalo kwaye neyixhasayo neyincedayo ukuba ibe nokuma, kufuneka ichasiwe ngeVangeli yoqobo.

Artikel 5

Ef 4:15-16; Hand 5:29-33; 1 Pet 2:18-25; 1 Pet 3:15-18

Ons glo dat die kerk geroep word om dit alles te bely en te doen, in gehoorsaamheid aan Jesus Christus sy enigste Hoof, al sou ook die owerhede en verordeninge van mense daarteen wees en al sou straf en lyding daaraan verbonde wees.

Die belydenis sluit af: Die kerk moet nou alles bevestig deur woord (*bely*) en daad (*doen*). Dis wat navolging en gehoorsaamheid aan Jesus Christus vra. Wie egter opstaan vir die dinge wat Belhar bely - eenheid, versoening en geregtigheid - kan moeilikheid verwag. Die *owerhede* (mense in beheer) en *verordeninge van mense* mag dié wat vir die waarheid van die evangelie staan, straf en laat ly. In baie situasies vandag word die ware evangelie verdruk, heers daar nog verdeeldheid en onreg, en word christene vervolgt.

Die kerk staan egter net onder een Hoof, Jesus Christus, uit wie die hele liggaam groei (Efe 4:15-16). Soos die apostels van ouds mag dit van die kerk gevra word om te sê: " 'n Mens moet eerder aan God gehoorsaam wees as aan die mense!" (Hand 5:29). Christene moet hul optrede kan verduidelik (1 Pet 3:15). As daar dan straf en lyding (of ignorering) volg, getuig Petrus: "Dit is genade as iemand die pyn van onverdiende lyding verduur omdat hy aan God getrou wil wees" (1 Pet 2:19).

Jesus is die Heer.

Hierdie oerbelydenis uit die heel eerste gemeentes was 'n duidelike protes teen die verering van die keiser in die Romeinse ryk. Dit was 'n toewyding aan die Heer-skap van Jesus alleen. Talle christene is hieroor ter dood veroordeel. Teenoor alle magte en owerhede en stelsels – ook die kragte van globalisering - bely die kerk vandag steeds: Ons staan onder een Here, Jesus Christus.

Aan dié enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees, kom toe eer en heerlijkheid in ewigheid.

Die belydenis eindig soos dit begin het: By die Drie-Enige God. Aan hierdie God word – soos met die slotwoorde van die Onse Vader – lof en heerlijkheid toegebring. Met die woorde *in ewigheid* strek die belydenis as roemende kerk uit na "die lewe van die toekomstige eeu" (Nicea).

Article 5

Eph 4:15-16; Acts 5:29-33; 1 Pt 2:18-25; 1 Pt 3:15-18

We believe that, in obedience to Jesus Christ, its only Head, the Church is called to confess and to do all these things, even though the authorities and human laws might forbid them and punishment and suffering be the consequence.

The confession concludes: The church must now confirm all this through word (confess) and deed (do). This is what following and obeying Jesus Christ means. However, they who stand up for what Belhar confesses – unity, reconciliation and justice – can expect trouble. The authorities (people in control) and human laws may let those who stand for the truth of the Gospel, be punished and have them suffer. In many situations today the true gospel is oppressed, discord and injustice reign and Christians are persecuted.

However, only one Head rules the church, namely Jesus Christ and from Him the whole body grows (Eph 4:15 –16). As with the apostles from long ago the church may be asked to say: "We ought to obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29). Christians should be able to explain their conduct (1 Pt 3:15). If one then endures punishment and suffering (or is ignored), Paul testifies: "But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God" (1 Pt 2:19).

Jesus is Lord.

This ancient confession from the very first congregations was a clear protest against the worshipping of the emperor of the Roman Empire. This was dedicated to the Lord-ship of Jesus alone. Many Christians were condemned to death because of this. Against all powers and authorities and systems – also the forces of globalisation – the church still has to testify today: one Lord, Jesus Christ, rules us.

To the one and only God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be the honour and the glory forever and ever.

The confession ends as it began: with the Triune God. To this God – as the final words of the Model Prayer say – the power and glory forever. With the word forever, the confession reaches out to "the life of the world to come" (Nicea).

Isiqendu 5

Kwabase Efese 4:15-16; iZenzo 5:29-33; 1 Pet.2:18-25; 1 Pet. 3:15-18

Siyakholwa ukuba iCawe iyabizwa ukukuvuma nokukwenza konke oku, imthobela uYesu Krestu oyeyona Ntloko yayo, nokuba kuyachaswa ngabasemagunyeni nayiyimimiselelo yabantu, kanaanjalo nokuba okuvumayo nokwenza oku ezibizela isohlwayo nembandezelo.

Isivumo-likholo sivala: ICawe kufuneka ngoku konke ikomeleze ngelizwi (ukungqina) nangezenzo (ukwenza) Koko okufunwa kubalandeli nokuphula-phula uYesu Krestu. Lowo uchasana noko kuvunywa sisivumo saseBelhar –ubunye, uxoleleniso, kunye nobulungisa- angadibana nenkathazo. Izirhulumente (abantu abakulawulo) kunye nemimiselelo yabantu zinokucinezela zohlwaye abo bamele inyaniso kunye neVangeli.

Kwiimeko ezininzi kule mihla iVangeli yenene iyacinezelwa, kusekho iyantlukwano kwakunye nentselo-bulungisa kwaye namaKrestu asatshutshiswa.

ICawe iphantsi kweNtloko enye, uYesu Krestu, apho umzimba uwonke okhula kuyo (Efese 4: 15-16) NjengabaPostile bamandulo, kunokufunwa nanjalo kwiCawe, kuthiwe: "simelwe kukuthi sive uThixo kunokuba sive abantu" (iZenzo 5:29). AmaKrestu kufuneka abonakalise ngokucacileyo izenzo zawo (1 Pet. 3:5) Xa kunokulandelwa isohlwayo kunye neentlungu (ukungahoyi) ungqina atsho uPetros "Kuba oku kuyabuleleka, ukuba umntu uthwala intsizi, ngenxa yokumazi uThixo eve ubunzima esoniwa" (1 Pet. 2:19)

UYesu uyiNkosi

Esi sivumo sakudala samabandla okuqala, yayindlela yokuchasa uzukiso lukaKaiser kubukumkani bamaRoma. Yayikukuzinikela kubuThixo bukaYesu yedwa. Uninzi lwamaKrestu lwagwetyelwa ukufa malunga noku. Kuwo onke amagunya nezirhulumente neenkqubo –kunye namandla ehlabathi (globalization) –isangqina iCawe unanamhla ukuthi: Sime phantsi kweNkosi enye, uYesu Krestu.

KuThixo emnye, uYise nonyana noMoya oyiNgcwele, makube ludumo nobungangamsha ngonaphakade kanaphakade.

Isivumo sigqibela njengokuba besiqalisa: kuThixo oziqo zithathu emnye. Kulo Thixo –njengamazwi avalayo kuBawo wethu oseZulwini- kuzisa udumo nozuko. Ngala mazwi ngonaphakade kanaphakade siqinisekisa isivumo njengeCawe ezukisiweyo ukuya "kubomi benkulungwane ezayo" (Nicea).