Unity in diversity : English puritans and the puritan reformation, 1603-1689

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Chapter 6

Unitas within *Diversitas*:
Downame, Rous, and Crisp

6.1   Introduction

While recent academic trends have focused more on Reformed theological diversity, such findings do not suggest either a radical break with the past or the absence of a greater theological consensus and unity among its doctrines and piety, but rather an ongoing concern for further Reformation through a clarification of its doctrines and an interaction with confessional boundaries.[1] While there were debates and discussions that were clearly held within confessional limits and that dealt more with preferences for wording or ordering of doctrines than substantial differences, there were those discussions which threatened to rise to a confessional level (e.g. hypothetical-universalism) and those which crossed over (e.g. Socinianism, Arminianism) and which were taken more seriously.[2] Suggestions of Reformed theological unity should not minimize substantive differences where they do exist; nor should diversity within the tradition be exaggerated at the cost of its unity or *sensus unitatis*.[3]

      Given the current academic atmosphere and tendencies towards deconstruction, it is essential to clarify how unity and diversity worked within Puritanism. Thus, in this chapter I will consider unity and diversity within Puritanism by comparing and contrasting the social contexts and theologies of Downame, Rous, and Crisp (with accents

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[1] Richard A. Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition: A Historiographical Introduction," in *Drawn into Controversie: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Mark Jones (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 11-30; esp. 29-30. Another reason for theological variance has to do with concerns over heresy and heterodoxy; thus religious writers would often clarify a prior doctrine or expand on it in order to solidify confessional teaching and suggest its possible parameters. More broadly, Emidio Campi and Willem van Asselt have argued that the Reformed tradition should not be seen as a static movement, but as one that evolves in different but interrelated patters and directions. It is possible to see mainstream Puritanism as a subtype of broader Reformed orthodoxy, with its own challenges, patterns, and currents. See Campi, *Shifting Patters of Reformed Tradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013); and Willem J. van Asselt, "Reformed Orthodoxy: A Short History of Research," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 11-26.

[2] Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition," 23-29; Sarah Mortimer, "Human and Divine Justice in the Works of Grotius and the Socinians," in *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy, 1600-1750*, ed. Sarah Mortimer and John Robertson (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 75-94; Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 13-38, 177-204. Jan Rohls sees internal polarities between strict Calvinists and those more broadly oriented as the impetus for criticisms of Arminius and his followers, whereas the latter were more tolerant of differences in theological viewpoints. Jan Rohls, "Calvinism, Arminianism and Socinianism in the Netherlands until the Synod of Dort," in *Socinianism and Arminianism: Antitrinitarians, Calvinists and Cultural Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, ed. Martin Mulsow and Jan Rohls (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 3.

[3] Edwardus van der Borght, "The Unity of the Church and the Reformed Tradition: An Introduction," in *The Unity of the Church: A Theological State of the Art and Beyond*, ed. Edwardus van der Borght (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 5.

to Baxter). I will assess whether any of their distinctive traits pressed or crossed over consensus on the confessions. Based on these findings, in the next chapter, I will suggest the concept of metanarrative as a way to understand *unitas* within *diversitas*, and propose a working definition for *Puritanism* going forward. As we shall see, current academic pessimism on defining Puritanism, while duly noted, should be overturned; the phenomena of Puritans and Puritanism and their classification has had a long and esteemed existence within the literature, and even with its irradiant confusion and perceived lack of a "static spiritual or moral 'essence,'" the terms are not going away.[4] Further, too much deconstruction and proposals of *Puritanisms* are, in the end, equally unhelpful, since though they curb notions of "rigid" monolithicism, they undermine Puritanism's greater social and theological coherence, especially as expressed among confessionally minded Puritans.[5]

6.2 Reformed Theological Unities and Diversities

The topic of Reformed theological diversity has been the subject of several recent works, and relates, by implication, to the thesis proposed by R. T. Kendall's *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, among others.[6] Kendall has suggested that the differences between Calvin and his successors, such as Theodore Beza or William Perkins, as, for instance, on the extent of the atonement or the nature of faith, showed a radical shift in emphasis and break with the earlier Reformed tradition rather than a natural progression of variegated development.[7] This thesis, known as "the Kendall thesis," has been sufficiently repudiated; Muller, Trueman, Van Asselt, Helm, Beeke, and others have shown convincingly that while differences between Calvin and his successors do exist they are consistent with the trajectory of Calvin's thought and are consistent with the earlier Reformed tradition.[8]

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[4] Catherine Gimelli Martin, *Milton among the Puritans: The Case for Historical Revisionism* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 32.

[5] John Coffey has aptly called Puritanism an "evolving, protean phenomenon" while giving assent to "Puritanisms." John Coffey, "Puritanism, Evangelicalism and the Evangelical Protestant Tradition," in *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities,* ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2008), 261.

[6] R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Basil Hall, "Calvin against the Calvinists," in *John Calvin,* ed. G. E. Duffield (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 19-37; Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); James B. Torrance, "The Incarnation and 'Limited Atonement,'" *The Evangelical Quarterly* 55 (1983): 83-94; Charles Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology: The Doctrine of Assurance* (Edinburgh: The Handsel Press, 1985).

[7] Kendall, *Calvinism and English Calvinism*, 1-9, 29-41, 51-78, 151-66, 197-208; Graham Redding, *Prayer and the Priesthood of Christ in the Reformed Tradition* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2005), 98-101.

[8] The "Kendall thesis" in substance was proposed before Kendall's work. See Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 158-221. For repudiations of the "Kendall thesis," see Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 63-104; Carl R. Trueman and R. S. Clark, "Introduction," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. S. Clark (London: Paternoster, 1999), xiii-ixx; Van Asselt, "'Scholasticism Revisited.' Methodological Reflections on the Study of Seventeenth-century Reformed Thought," in *Seeing Things Their Way: Intellectual History and the Return of Religion*, ed. Alister Chapman, John Coffey, and Brad S. Gregory (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 154-174; Paul Helm,

Thus, differences among the Reformed of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on the extent of Christ's satisfaction or the particular ordering of the divine decrees or the nature of faith and assurance, to name but three, should not be seen as a profound break with the past, but rather as a continuous line of Reformed exegesis, growth and development.[9]

This is important to note because when one considers diversity within the Reformed tradition, one has to understand that doctrines and clarifications of those doctrines develop over time; further, by the time of the confessional consensus brought about by the Westminster Assembly and thus the codification of English Reformed orthodoxy, there had already been a robust and diverse Reformed culture of ideas which is seen in the many Reformed confessions of the sixteenth century, and evidenced by the debates within the Assembly itself.[10] That there was a pervasive harmony across the Reformed confessions suggests the greater unity among the Reformed, even when at their most controversial, and a desire to find common ground.[11]

Many of the differences among the Reformed were held within confessional limits; others threatened to cross over or did cross over; yet, even within internal Reformed debates in the seventeenth century, there was an overarching unity and common theological ancestry. While such debates sufficiently contradict an older academic notion of a "rigid orthodoxy" when referring to seventeenth-century Reformed theology, they nonetheless confirm the core identities of such orthodoxy, and suggest a tradition that was to a large extent unified, even if varied in its background and sources.[12] We will now turn to Reformed theological unities and diversities within Puritanism more generally, and then we will examine how these relate to Downame, Crisp, and Rous, and then draw some conclusions.

Calvin and the Calvinists (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999); and Joel R. Beeke, *Assurance of Faith: Calvin, English Puritanism, and the Dutch Second Reformation* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991). Though the "Kendall thesis" has been supplanted by current scholarship, there are still remnants of it in recent scholarship, as in John Spurr's *English Puritanism, 1603-1689* (New York: Palgrave, 1998), 166-70.

[9] Muller, *After Calvin*; Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Durham: Labyrinth Press, 1986). See also I. John Hesselink, "The Revelation of God in Creation and Scripture," in *Calvin's Theology and Its Reception: Disputes, Developments, and New Possibilities*, ed. J. Todd Billings and I. John Hesselink (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2012), 19-21; Joel R. Beeke, "Faith and Assurance in the Heidelberg Catechism and Its Primary Composers: A Fresh Look at the Kendall Thesis," *Calvin Theological Journal* 27:1 (1992): 39-67.

[10] See Jan Rohls, *Reformed Confessions: Theology from Zurich to Barmen* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 29-264; Chad Van Dixhoorn, ed., *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643-1653, Volume 1: Introduction and Supplementary Materials* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly: Reading Its Theology in Historical Context* (Philipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2009); Robert S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord: Politics and Religion in the Westminster Assembly and the "Grand Debate"* (London: T&T Clark, 1985), 175-94.

[11] For instance, the Heidelberg Catechism (HC) contains no article on predestination. This absence is because HC was an "ecumenically-protestant" document which sought to encompass Zwinglian, Bullingerian, Calvinist and Philippist notions. See Lyle D. Bierma, *The Theology of the Heidelberg Catechism: A Reformation Synthesis* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013); and Bierma, ed., *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism: Sources, History, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005).

[12] Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition," 30.

6.3   Reformed Theological Unities and Diversities within Puritanism

Questions of Reformed theological diversity and debates within seventeenth-century British Puritanism have also gained recent academic attention.[13] That there was a rich and vibrant diversity among the Reformed theologians of the seventeenth century on various aspects of its Reformed *loci* seems without question. Varying facets of Christ's satisfaction, millennialism, supralapsarianism, covenant, justification, and assurance were all at the forefront of seventeenth-century debate.[14] While the Westminster Assembly and its standards represent a mammoth achievement in theological consensus, its various internal debates are suggestive of its underlying diversity. Thus, the codification of Reformed theology within the seventeenth century was not an end to its differences but rather a *litmus test* of its orthodoxy.

Debates among of the Reformed of the seventeenth century may be classified as *internal* or those that did not press confessional boundaries, and those which were *external* and threatened to or did in fact cross over such boundaries. Such differences should not be minimized for the sake of unity, nor should they be exaggerated at the cost of unity. Even when the Reformed were at their most polemical, there was still an overarching theological consensus both with the past and among themselves.[15] British Puritans generally agreed on the existence of a covenant, for instance, though this too was developed over time, and had near unanimous consent on predestination and its practical implications.[16] This is not to minimize significant areas of contention, but rather to suggest that while the pastors and theologians of British Puritanism engaged in debate with one another and often employed harsh rhetoric, there was still a clear sense of confessional unity on most of the other *loci*. As Muller has pointed out, there was an understanding among Reformed theologians that the confessions were "specifically worded to exclude certain positions," but also "very carefully worded either to discourage certain positions without overtly condemning them or to allow a significant breadth of theological expression within and under the confessional formulae."[17] This understanding fostered a rich and vibrant interpretive confessional tradition that allowed for *unitas in diversitate* and *diversitas in unitate*.

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[13] See, for instance, Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition," 12-30; Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations,* 2nd ed. (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 1-22; 293-320; Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., "Puritan Polemical Divinity and Doctrinal Controversy," in *The Cambridge Companion to* Puritanism, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 206-22; Richard A. Muller, "John Calvin and Later Calvinism: The Identity of the Reformed Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 130-49; and Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 1-12.

[14] Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition," 17-29.

[15] For the "Calvinist consensus" in the English Church, see Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c. 1530-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 262-319.

[16] J. Mark Beach, *Christ and the Covenant: Francis Turretin's Federal Theology as a Defense of the Doctrine of Grace* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 19-76; Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

[17] Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition," 29.

It is my contention that though there were significant points of dispute among the Reformed of the seventeenth century, there was nonetheless a greater sense of unity and harmony among its variants.[18] This is evident in the numerous conciliatory works of the period, as Jeremiah Burroughs's *Irenicum* (1645), which sought to restore peace among the orthodox godly; in the similar aims and methods of the contested godly (as Peter Sterry);[19] in doctrinal agreements and the various bodies of divinity; and in combined efforts to combat Socinianism and Arminianism.[20] Further, studies of orthodoxy and heresy, and the often-blurred line between the two, have also been the subject of more than one recent monograph, and suggest, at times, possible misrepresentation for polemical ends.[21] Thus, given the current academic atmosphere on the codification of early modern Reformed theology and its reception throughout the seventeenth century, it is essential to attempt to shed some further light on this discussion, and strive to decipher how diversity and unity worked within the spectrum of English Puritanism.[22] That there was a mainstream of Reformed opinion among English divines is without question: the various confessions and creeds of the period prove this point, as does the often-intense debate of the Westminster Assembly, the period's pamphlet wars, the polemics and proliferation of heresiographies, the numerous "bodies of divinity," catechisms, and countless practical works, all of which served to solidify Reformed doctrine and practice.[23] But there is more here than either a bare assent to the circulating Reformed theology or a blatant dissent among sectaries: There was a wider spectrum of unity and diversity, of unity amid diversity and diversity amid unity.[24]

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[18] This unity can be seen in social contexts and theology; e.g. covenant and predestination. See Beach, *Christ and the Covenant*, 24; Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, eds., *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996).

[19] Wallace, *Shapers of English Calvinism,* 51-86.

[20] Burroughes purportedly put on his study door the motto: "Variety of opinions and unity in opinion are not incompatible." Quoted in Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Lebanon: Northeastern University Press, 1994), 168.

[21] Ariel Hessayon and David Finnegan, ed., *Varieties of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century English Radicalism in Context* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 1-50; 161-82; 241-60; David Loewenstein, *Treacherous Faith: The Specter of Heresy in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-22, 191-236; David Loewenstein and John Marshall, eds., *Heresy, Literature and Politics in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-10; 108-59; Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., *Shapers of English Calvinism, 1660-1714* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 9-50; Muller, *After Calvin*, 63-104; Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 377-477; Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: "Orthodoxy," "Heterodoxy," and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 2-10; David Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and His Contemporaries: Religion, Politics, and Polemics in Radical Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1-16.

[22] R. N. Swanson, ed., *Unity and Diversity in the Church* (Oxford, 1996); Wallace, *Shapers of English Calvinism*, 3-8.

[23] I here use "Reformed" in a broad sense to refer to the theologians and theologies that stood within the Reformed community during and after its confessional codification; thus it refers to the Reformed tradition from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century.

[24] Thus, for instance, when one strips away polemics, there often remains an overarching sense of unity or a sharing of a common Reformed ancestry and reliance on authority and sources (e.g. both Rutherford and Eaton's shared use [and misuse] of Luther). Again, this is not to minimize substantial differences where they existed or to belittle significant departures from Reformed orthodoxy, but only to assert that the rhetoric of the seventeenth century was often laced with all sorts of unjustifiable charges.

As prior chapters have shown, in English Puritanism there was a strong consensus and continuity with core doctrines of the Reformation and often dissent only in matters of emphases or ordering of doctrines.[25] While it is true that at times dissent is more substantial (and thus potentially presses confessional boundaries), such as how a sinner is to be justified (*eternal justification, neonomianism*) or how deeply one is to experience God in this life (*mysticism, biblical authority, inner light*) or beliefs about the law and gospel (*antinomism, legalism*), it is equally true that even within this complex diversity there was still a greater overarching sense of unity and continuity with the earlier English and Continental Reformations.[26] Thus, for instance, all three authors (Downame, Rous, and Crisp) shared a reverence for the vernacular Bible and its importance in defining religious experience; even at their most mystical the Bible was the guiding rudder.[27] All three authors in this study, though representative of variant strains, stood within mainstream Puritanism, though others, such as John Eaton, moved beyond the mainstream and beyond Reformed orthodoxy. Indeed, as Nicholas Tyacke has argued, in the seventeenth century, there was "a radical puritan continuum," and, as I will argue in the next chapter, a *Puritanism*.[28] And even with the myriad of complexities and nuances involved in the various formulations of the *ordo salutis* and such concepts as union with Christ and justification, there was still a harmony among theologians and religious writers on what union generally was and its benefits for the Christian.[29] The authors in this book drew on a vast wealth of theological inheritance and cited numerous and diverse sources, and yet all

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[25] Muller, "Diversity in the Reformed Tradition," 25-29.

[26] See Polly Ha and Patrick Collinson, eds., *The Reception of the Continental Reformation in Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); John Schofield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 149-204; and Patrick Collinson, *Godly People: On English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1983), 245-72.

[27] John Coffey warns of "the folly of trying to understand the ideas of Puritan writers without reference to their principal intellectual source, the Bible itself." Coffey, *Religion and the British Revolutions*, 81. Thus, one must duly consider the importance of biblical language and its categories, giving consideration to "scholastic, humanist, and Ramist influences on Puritan thinking" which emphasized more literal readings of the biblical text.

[28] Nicholas Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603-1640* (London: Friends of Dr. Williams's Library, 1990), 20-1; Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c. 1530-1700* (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 2001), 116; Matthew Reynolds, *Godly Reformers and Their Opponents in Early Modern England: Religion in Norwich, c. 1560-1643* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 7.

[29] For union with Christ and justification in the Reformed theology of the period, see J. V. Fesko, *Beyond Calvin: Union with Christ and Justification in Early Modern Reformed Theology, 1517-1700* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 13-33, 251-68, 300-17, 380-84. Fesko shows the departure of later Reformed theology from Calvin on the logical importance of union and justification as it pertains to sanctification. He questions whether Calvin was normative for the later Reformed tradition and concludes that Calvin, while revered, was but one of many early modern sources. I concur with Fesko that Calvin was indeed one voice in the Reformed chorus, and with Muller that Calvin's influence on later Reformed theology was prominent in many areas but not as the original source of their thought. This should not be seen as a defense or a condoning of the "Kendall thesis;" rather, only to comment on the actual source citing of the seventeenth century. Calvin was indeed influential, being cited by orthodox and heretic alike, but the status of Calvin as the supreme originator of everything seventeenth-century Reformed does not seem to have arisen until the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. For more on this, see Richard A. Muller, "Reception and Response: Referencing and Understanding Calvin in Seventeenth-Century Calvinism," in *Calvin and His Thought, 1509-2009*, ed. Irena Backus and Philip Benedict (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 182-201; Muller, *After Calvin*, 63-104.

agreed that mystical union was always "in Christ;"[30] nor, for that matter, did they conceive of such benefits aside from a sanctifying Spirit; thus, among the Puritans, as has elsewhere been asserted, living the Christian life was utmost in their minds.[31] Indeed, James R. Martel has observed that Thomas Hobbes was not alone in his interest in the Holy Spirit, and that such notions of a personal connection to the Spirit were markers of distinguishing Puritanism from both Catholicism and ceremonial Anglicanism.[32]

This is not to say that the Reformed were always congenial towards one another, or that sometimes-fierce debates never occurred. Rather, I would suggest that even within the polemical furor of the Reformed there were still striking similarities. For instance, Samuel Rutherford, one of the most virile attackers of antinomism and enthusiasm (in his *A Spiritual Antichrist*) was equally charged for holding such doctrines himself because of his own endorsement of personal experience and affectionate religion, and which competes even with the most mystical utterances of Rous or Saltmarsh.[33] Rutherford's criticisms were as often based on inference as on evidence; in keeping with common Reformed polemic, he was free and loose with all kinds of charges against those he disagreed with.[34] That such books as Thomas a' Kempis's *Imitatio Christi* were read and endorsed by both mainstream authors and radicals is further suggestive of similar or shared kinds of piety, as does their reliance on the major authors and sources of the Reformation.[35] Bernard of Clairvaux was not only a favorite of Calvin's, but also among the Puritans.[36] Piety and the godly life were the strongest points of unity within English Puritanism and were, arguably, its *sine qua non*, as were notions of the covenant, predestination, and mystic union.[37] When one removes polemical jargon from even the most virile of pamphlets (or better, places them within their context of controversy), there often remains a sense of unity and similar aims, and a common theological method. This is

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[30] Belden C. Lane sees "union with Christ" as the chief theme within Puritan experience. Lane, "Puritan Spirituality," in *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality,* ed. Philip Sheldrake (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 519.

[31] Andrew Cambers, *Godly Reading: Print, Manuscript and Puritanism in England, 1580-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 243-5. Cf. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*.

[32] James R. Martel, *Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 179.

[33] John Coffey, *Politics, Religion, and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 114-45. Cf. and cp. the many *Letters* of Rutherford (comp. 1664) with Saltmarsh's *Sparkles of Glory* (1647) and Rous's *Mystical Marriage* (1631).

[34] Coffey, *Mind of Samuel Rutherford,* 114-45.

[35] Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 34; J. Sears McGee, *The Godly Man in Stuart England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 107ff. See also Maximilian von Habsburg, *Catholic and Protestant Translations of the Imitatio Christi, 1425-1650: From Late Medieval Classic to Early Modern Bestseller* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 107-78; Ha and Collinson, *The Reception of Continental Reformation in Britain*. Cf. Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[36] Anthony N. S. Lane, *John Calvin: Student of the Church Fathers* (London: T&T Clark, 1999), 87-114; Charles L. Cohen, *God's Caress: The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 6.

[37] As I will argue in Chapter 7, Puritanism cannot be equated with isolated doctrines or experiences; rather, Puritanism, while chiefly a movement of piety and godly reform, has to be seen as a cluster of traits interacting and interwoven at a specific period in time.

the case with such vehement opponents as John Owen and Richard Baxter, who, though they hated each other, were united in their vision for the godly life and in their use of scholastic method and acceptance of the Westminster Standards.[38]

That there was some variance or variety within Reformed expression seems uncontested (such as minor differences in definition or emerging uses over the course of scholastic development), but to what extent were these Reformed writers at liberty to formulate their own distinctive theologies or to digress from the *status quo*; to what extent did they receive or inherit a theological language from those who went before; and do such differences reflect a radical departure or do they suggest continuity? Using Downame, Rous, and Crisp as case studies, I will here attempt to answer these questions. In short, Downame, Rous, and Crisp had much more in common among them than they differed, though they were not all cast from the same stone. Their disagreements did not press confessional boundaries, even though some of their contemporaries did push them. Thus, even in the instance of how to understand the doctrine of justification, whether to place its occurrence within time or eternity, there was a sense of greater unity among the Reformed, and a shared acknowledgement that whenever justification is to be placed, it was a free and gracious act of a sovereign God and without consideration of meritorious works (in this sense there was a common understanding among the Reformed and a consistent repudiation of Roman Catholicism).[39] Though there was a sense of unity in ascribing justification to unmerited grace, this is not to minimize differences where they do exist or suggest that they were inconsequential; numerous mainstream authors were vehemently opposed to eternal justification and believed that it led to lawless living; this seems to have been the motive for Baxter's suggestion that faith constitutes a "hot pepper corn" tossed into the fray, which, in turn, received criticisms for compromising the doctrine of grace. However the pendulum swung, Reformed theologians were quick to safeguard the doctrine of justification from both notions of undue liberty and a new legalism.[40]

But where did Downame, Rous, and Crisp agree most? Their unity can be seen (1) in their social contexts, (2) in their theological convictions and heritage, and (3) in their pursuit of the godly life. Whatever Puritanism was, it was first and foremost a movement of committed evangelical Protestantism.[41]

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[38] For a comparison of Owen and Baxter and their similar aims, see Cooper, *John Owen, Richard Baxter and the Formation of Nonconformity*, 55-86, 137-68, 303-11.

[39] McKelvey, "That Error and Pillar of Antinomianism," 223-62; Robert J. McKelvey, *Histories that Mansoul and Her Wars Anatomize: The Drama of Redemption in John Bunyan's Holy War* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 44-73.

[40] Tim Cooper, *Fear and Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: Richard Baxter and Antinomianism* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001), 1-12, 15-45, 87-151; Hans Boersma, *A Hot Pepper Corn: Richard Baxter's Doctrine of Justification in Its Seventeenth-Century Context of Controversy* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1993), 41-56.

[41] Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 3; Margo Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 11.

6.4   Unity in Society

Any study of or attempt at understanding Puritanism must give due consideration to its social contexts and the greater narrative of the English Reformation.[42] That Puritanism was a movement within a certain identifiable period of time has been shown in Chapter 2. Downame, Rous, and Crisp, all lived within the Jacobean and Caroline eras of English history, and were members of Stuart Puritanism. They all witnessed radical change in the English Church as it strived to fashion its own identity in the wake of numerous political and theological controversies. All three authors sought to advance their brand of Puritanism through the pen and godly communion. They directly influenced the reading culture of "the godly," and radiate internal tensions and trajectories within that society.

Of the three writers discussed in this book, two of them were clergy (Downame and Crisp) and one was a politician (Rous). All three were respected in their spheres, though Crisp, by far, received the most criticism for his alleged antinomism, and challenge to precisianist piety. All three were educated at major English universities (Downame and Crisp at Christ's College, Cambridge; Rous at Broadgates Hall, Oxford, and Leiden University); and all three studied theology, though Crisp seems to have been the most educated, having earned a D.D. Their lives thus reflect Puritanism's greater concern for education, and in particular for a well-educated ministry, and strove to "keep justification by faith from becoming justification of illiteracy."[43] Richard Greaves commented, "The Puritan problem was to prevent such an occurrence, and in doing so to avoid the pitfalls of an educated but equal congregation of saints and an uneducated congregation subservient to the whims of the clergy."[44]

All three were concerned with a Puritan Reformation of the English Church, and strived within their own spheres to bring it about through preaching, teaching, publishing, and politics.[45] Their sermons and treatises reflect growing concern over many social ills from the theater to poverty to drunkenness to Sabbath breaking; they were equally concerned for the poor as for the nobility.

6.5   Unity in Reformed Theology

While Downame, Rous, and Crisp, shared similar social contexts and agreed on the need for a further Reformation of the church, for the downfall of the papal antichrist, for an eradication of Arminianism, and for the advance of theological education, they were also united in many aspects of their respective theologies, showing significant agreement on (a) Doctrine of God and Humanity; (b) Predestination and Assurance; (c) Covenant of

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[42] See Todd, *Christian Humanism,* 1-21; Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 1-15; Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1986), 1-23.

[43] See Morgan, *Godly Learning*, 1-8, 23-40, 121-41.

[44] Richard L. Greaves, *The Puritan Revolution and Educational Thought: Background for Reform* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 8-9.

[45] Patrick Collinson, "Elizabethan and Jacobean Puritanism as Forms of Popular Religious Culture," in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), 32-57.

Works and Grace; (d) Justification and Sanctification; and (e) The Christian Life and Piety. Their social and theological contexts thus reflect the unities and diversities within British Puritanism and its *sensus unitatis*. We will now turn to a more thorough comparison of these themes.

6.5.1   *Doctrine of God and Humanity*

One of the greatest (if not *the* greatest) threats to mainstream Reformed orthodoxy during the seventeenth century was from the Socinians, those who challenged the doctrine of the Trinity on rational and sometimes spiritual grounds. The doctrine of the Trinity was thus hotly contested between the Reformed orthodox and the heretics. While significant agreement existed among the Reformed, there were pressing challenges to this doctrine by the Socinians which demanded greater articulation and clarification. Indeed, much of the Reformed distinctions on the Trinity were formed in polemics against Socinianism and a growing appreciation for the scholastic method. Many of the Reformed wrote in defense of the Trinity or otherwise sought to clarify its doctrine, and thus contributed to a swelling "body of divinity," which helped to clarify, sustain, and defend classical Trinitarianism.[46]

One of the most influential manuals of divinity in Stuart Puritanism was Ames's *Medulla Sacrae Theologiae* (1627), which Downame, Rous, and Crisp would have been familiar with. While Downame, Rous, and Crisp may have varied in minor aspects of understanding the Triune God or in presenting their views somewhat differently, there was a prominent consensus as to God's existence, character, person, and work. This Stuart-Puritan consensus is reflected in Ames's *Medulla.* They believed human language about God to be analogous and that ultimately God was characterized by incomprehensibility.[47] The essence of God is thus understood fully only by God; or, as Ames put it, "God as he is in himself cannot be apprehended of any, but himself...Dwelling in that inaccessible light, whom never man saw, nor can see."[48] There was significant agreement on the *incommunicable* attributes belonging only to God, such as eternity, infinity, simplicity, omnipotence, omniscience and immutability, and on the *communicable* attributes that are shared with human beings, such as life or goodness.[49] They believed in one divine essence and argued that God was not an abstraction but a

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[46] On the unity in the Reformed orthodox doctrine of God, see Dolf te Velde, *The Doctrine of God in Reformed Orthodoxy, Karl Barth, and the Utrecht School: A Study in Method and Content* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 246-55. See also Paul C. H. Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1-15, 69-123, 172-216, 320-28; Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution,* 1-38, 147-204, 233-41. For a thorough explication of the Reformed orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, see Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 4: The Triunity of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 143-381.

[47] See Larry Siekawitch, *Balancing Head and Heart in Seventeenth-Century Puritanism: Stephen Charnock's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2012), 77-118, 147-92. Cf. Ralph M. McInerny, *The Logical of Analogy: An Interpretation of St. Thomas* (New York: Springer, 1971).

[48] Ames, *Marrow of Theology*, 9.

[49] See Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 3: The Divine Essence and Attributes* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 212-26.

living being. He thus enjoys himself in infinite self-love and subsists in three distinct Persons. All three Persons are active in creation and salvation, and have different, though complimentary, roles.[50]

Thus Downame, Rous, and Crisp, being fully Trinitarian, restated traditional Christian concepts drawn from the Bible, creeds, church fathers, and medieval scholastics, all of which were interpreted through the earlier Continental Reformation and their own English dogmaticians in what may be classified as a Reformed Thomistic and Scotistic understanding of the doctrine of God.[51] For the Puritans, the Trinity was an essential article of faith, and one that was defended in their copious manuals of divinity.[52] The doctrine was also used to promote experiential piety and love towards God, and became a basis for fostering devotion to the Triune God.[53] Further, historians have seen the Trinity as a central dogma in understanding as diverse Puritans as John Owen and Jonathan Edwards.[54]

As they shared a common belief in the doctrine of God, so they shared belief in the doctrine of humanity and specifically its fall into sin and inability to achieve perfection or repentance on its own without the intervention of grace. Downame, Rous, and Crisp all believed in the total depravity of the sinner and thus restated and confirmed Reformed orthodox thought on this subject, though they varied in matters of emphasis.

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[50] Ames, *Marrow of Theology*, 9-23.

[51] See, for instance, Christopher Cleveland's *Thomism in John Owen* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2013), 11-18, which sets forth a case for "Reformed Thomism" among seventeenth-century theologians and moves the discussion of this theme beyond that of Peter Martyr Vermigli and Jerome Zanchi; and Simon J. G. Burton's *The Hallowing of Logic: The Trinitarian Method of Richard Baxter's Methodus Theologiae* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 14-15, which sees "Nominalized Scotism" in Baxter's Trinitarianism. Cf. John Patrick Donnelly, "Calvinist Thomism," *Viator* 7 (1976): 441-55; Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism in Vermigli's Doctrine of Man and Grace* (Leiden: Brill, 1976); and Otto Grundler, *Thomism and Calvinism in the Theology of Girolamo Zanchi, 1516-1590* (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1961).

One of the possible ways in which Thomas was appropriated among seventeenth-century divines was in their conviction that knowledge of God was possible through analogical reasoning by way of using Aristotelian arguments of causation. Of course, such appropriations of medieval metaphysics were generally subservient to biblical reasoning and the systematic task at hand, and while Thomas was more influential in the doctrine of God than has often hitherto been acknowledged, so too was Scotus and other medieval scholastics. Further, it seems likely that both Thomas and Scotus were employed or appropriated at varying stages of a Protestant scholastic's career, often dependent the polemical needs of the day, and thus as Van Asselt has stated "terms like Scholasticism, Aristotelianism, Thomism, and Scotism can no longer be seen as referring to purely static entities." See Willem J. van Asselt, "Reformed Orthodoxy: A Short History of Research," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy,* ed. Herman Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 25; and Randall J. Pederson, "Review of Cleveland, *Thomism in John Owen*," *Westminster Theological Journal* 76:1 (2014): (forthcoming).

[52] See, for instance, Edward Leigh, *A Systeme or Body of Divinity, Consisting of Ten Books* (London, 1654)*,* 204-15.

[53] See, for example, Lewis Bayly's *The Practice of Piety,* ch. 1.

[54] See and compare Trueman, *The Claims of Truth: John Owen's Trinitarian Theology* (Cornwall: Paternoster, 1998), 1-46; and his *John Owen, Reformed Catholic,* 35-66, with Amy Plantinga Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All: The Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 1-18; Steven M. Studebaker and Robert W. Caldwell III, *The Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards: Text, Context, and Application* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 105-24.

6.5.2   *Predestination and Assurance*

The doctrine of predestination, while a hotbed of controversy between the Reformed orthodox and Arminians, was another prominent point of consensus for Downame, Rous, and Crisp. The doctrine has been called the defining feature of Puritanism.[55] Though Downame, Rous, and Crisp formulated the doctrine in slightly different ways (each adapting it to their own contexts), they agreed that predestination was *double*; that is, they agreed that predestination consisted of both positive and negative aspects or of *election* and *reprobation*; they also agreed that predestination was chiefly a consolatory doctrine in that it alleviated (rather than caused) anxiety for the elect. Predestination was important to their theologies because it magnified the sovereignty of God and salvation as an unmerited gift of God. Thus, it had both polemical and practical uses.[56] Further, they agreed that predestination does not remove or take away the liberty or conscience of secondary causes; nor does predestination mean that the human will is forced or coerced by God but rather acts willingly and without compulsion so that sinners are responsible for their sins. While the doctrine was important in their disputes with Arminians and Roman Catholics, its chief value lay in its devotional implications, and thus it was a prominent feature of their practical divinity, and was used to foster assurance for the believer, predestination being immutable and from eternity.

6.5.3   *Covenant of Works and Grace*

Alongside predestination, the notion of the covenant has also been seen as a central character of the Reformed orthodox writers of the seventeenth century, thus following earlier motifs in the Reformed theology of Zwingli, Calvin, and especially Bullinger. Again, as with the other Reformed *loci*, there was some variance in expression and growth over the first half of the seventeenth century.[57] Of all three authors, Downame seems to have been the most consistent with the greater burgeoning tradition. Crisp made his own distinct contributions in emphasizing the unconditional nature of God's grace and equating the Old (Mosaic) Covenant with the covenant of works and the New Covenant with the covenant of grace. Rous's notion of mystical union with Christ was undoubtedly made possible by a covenant of marriage binding God to God's people. Though none of the three authors were as fluent in the minutiae of scholastic definitions that would later characterize such covenant theologians as Cocceius or Turretin, they were nonetheless proficient in the biblical exegesis which gave rise to later developments of the doctrine.[58]

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[55] Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, "Introduction: The Puritan Ethos, 1560-1700," in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), 6-9.

[56] See Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 79-111, 191-6.

[57] David Zaret, *The Heavenly Contract: Ideology and Organization in Pre-Revolutionary Puritanism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 128-98.

[58] For the role of biblical exegesis in the rise of federal theology, see Brian J. Lee, *Johannes Cocceius and the Exegetical Roots of Federal Theology: Reformation Developments in the Interpretation of Hebrews 7-10*

As Van Asselt has commented, the rise of federal theology was "fostered by a desire to produce a system that was eminently practical and which promoted genuine devotion (*pietas*) to God." Thus, for Cocceius, "theology has to do with the manner in which one acquires the love of God (*ratio percipiendi amoris Dei*)."[59] This inner motive was at the core of British Puritanism; thus Cocceius's *doctrina est pietas* echoes Ames's earlier *doctrina est Deo vivendi*. Though federal theology has often been derided for its scholasticism, it is important to note that federal theologians generally disassociated themselves from the *quaestiones stultae* of the medieval scholastics.[60] Though trained in both philosophy and theology, these theologians believed in *Sola scriptura* and used reason to analyze and assess but always with an eye to its limits and depravity. Their ultimate intent was not speculation but devotion (*doctrina secundam pietatem*).[61]

6.5.4   *Justification and Sanctification*

Downame, Rous, and Crisp all believed that justification was by free grace alone without any consideration of merit or works. Justification was believed to have been "in Christ," though there were differences as to the placement of justification, either within time at the moment of believing (Downame, Rous) or at the cross (Crisp).

Differences between mainstream authors and so-called high Calvinists on justification were generally limited to its placement (e.g. before faith or at the moment of faith) rather than consisting of more substantial differences regarding its cause. Much of the variance among Puritans on this doctrine had, again, to do with its practical implications: What did a justified sinner look like? How does he or she behave? Does he or she have to prepare for it? Such questions gave rise to self-analysis and became a disputing point within Puritanism, and relates directly to the subject of assurance, its possibility and consoling properties.[62] The doctrine of preparation for faith, articulated chiefly by Thomas Hooker, argued for several stages of the soul's humiliation prior to justification or conversion.[63] Both the mature John Cotton and Tobias Crisp criticized this doctrine for introducing works into the process of salvation and thus compromising the freeness of divine grace.[64] Whatever differences in emphasis that existed between the precisianist and

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(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 14-18, 23-72; and Willem J. van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius, 1603-1669* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 106-31.

[59] Van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 1.

[60] Van Asselt, "Reformed Orthodoxy: A Short History of Research," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy,* edited by Herman Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 21. Van Asselt states that Cocceius's protests against scholasticism are seen in a very narrow sense; that is, in introducing superfluous issues into theological discourse. Van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 102.

[61] Van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 1, 125.

[62] Joel R. Beeke, "The Assurance Debate: Six Key Questions," in *Drawn into Controversie: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Mark Jones (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 263-83.

[63] See Perry Miller, *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 50-77; and Norman Pettit, *The Heart Prepared: Grace and Conversion in Puritan Spiritual Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

[64] See John H. Ball III, *Chronicling the Soul's Windings: Thomas Hooker and His Morphology of Conversion* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1992), 73-200; William K. B. Stoever, *"A Faire and Easie*

the antinomian, they were essentially agreed on the formal doctrine of justification.[65] Rhetorically, both sides chided the other for either legalism or libertinism, but, having inherited the doctrine of justification from the Reformers, they were generally united in the *nature* of justification; that is, in *forensic declaration*; in distinguishing between *justification* and *sanctification*; and in believing that the *formal cause* of justification was the alien righteousness of Christ. Como suggests that the doctrine of justification before faith evolved out of mainstream Puritanism and was nothing more than an embellishment of the doctrine of justification through the alien righteousness of Christ.[66] There is agreement on the nature of sanctification as well, all three distinguishing between justification and sanctification with the latter being coterminous with the former and progressive throughout one's life. As mentioned before, where Downame and Rous differed from Crisp was in how far sanctification could go in confirming one's faith or status as a member of the elect; Downame and Rous saw such marks as evidences for faith while Crisp preferred to move away from discerning the signs or marks of grace to more objective grounds.

<center>6.5.5   *Law and Gospel*</center>

Was there a consensus on the use of the law for Downame, Rous, and Crisp? At first glance, it would seem that there were radical differences between how the precisianists and antinomians understood the role of the law to be. While this divergence is truer of more radical antinomians, such as Eaton, who arguably found no positive use for the law at all, the same could not be said of Crisp, who, as we have seen allowed for a somewhat positive use within Christian conduct. When Crisp did disparage the law, it was in respect to the law's power to condemn believers, or to discourage them in any way. This oppressive nature of the law was abolished in Christ, and had no place in the gospel, which brings comfort to the elect. In contrast, both Downame and Rous allowed for the law to, in some sense, induce humility and contrition in the believer, but even there the emphasis was not on what the law could do, but on what it could not do. It could not bring comfort or serve as grounds for assurance. Downame, Rous, and Crisp, all maintained that Christian's were free from the curse of the law, and agreed to its limited place within the godly life. They all feared that an overemphasis on law would produce a "meere morall Puritane."[67]

Way to Heaven": Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1978); and Stoever, "The Covenant of Works in Puritan Theology: The Antinomian Crisis in New England" (PhD. diss., Yale University, 1970).

[65] McKelvey, "Eternal Justification," 226-37.

[66] David R. Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004)*,* 203. Cited in McKelvey, "Eternal Justification," 231-32.

[67] Robert Bolton, *Instrvctions for a Right Comforting Afflicted Consciences*, 3rd ed. (London, 1640), 70. Cf. Matthew Meade, *The Almost Christian Discovered; Or, the False-Professor Tried and Cast* (London, 1662), 38-49.

6.5.6   *The Christian Life and Piety*

Even with prominent consensus on major doctrinal themes, perhaps the greatest point of agreement between Downame, Rous, and Crisp has to do with their shared vision for piety and the godly life. Puritanism as a whole excelled in producing treatises that were of a more practical bent and dealt with how to live the Christian life.[68] Thus, Puritanism is best understood as a variant of Reformed orthodoxy, which laid emphasis on the experiential aspects of faith. Indeed, Hambrick-Stowe has said, "At its heart…Puritanism was a devotional movement, rooted in religious experience."[69] Downame's chief contribution to Stuart Puritanism was his *Christian Warfare,* a representative work known to have been authored by him; Rous's chief work, *The Mystical Marriage*, was published to promote deeper piety and fellowship with the divine among his Reformed readers; and Crisp's sermons, as a whole, dealt more with promoting his brand of piety than in expositions of particular doctrines or criticisms of individual thinkers. Thus, the *sine qua non* of the Puritanism of these authors is their overtly experiential emphasis. Their chief end, especially in doctrinal instruction, was to instruct laity in both doctrine and life, to balance head and heart, and to prepare their readers for heaven.

6.6   Conclusion

Downame, Rous, and Crisp represent three different strains within Puritanism (*precisianist, mystical,* and *antinomian*). Though there were disagreements among them as to certain features of core doctrines, these differences were often only matters of emphasis or ordering and did not cross confessional boundaries. While their theologies were not identical, and had significant variances in emphasis, they were united both in their social contexts and in their understanding of major doctrines and adherence to confessional orthodoxy. Their distinct theologies were variants of Reformed orthodoxy, and existed under the umbrella of British Puritanism, and thus reflect the elasticity of confessionally minded Puritans, and attest to *unitas* within *diversitas*:

First, they were united in their social contexts in their vision for the reform of the English Church and the advance of the Puritan Reformation. They shared a reverence for the vernacular Bible and biblical exegesis, and had a common distaste for popery and Arminianism. They had a desire to see Christians educated in theology and godly living, and conceived of the Christian life in terms of a spiritual battle.

Second, they were in significant agreement on confessional topics such as the doctrine of God and the order of salvation. They inherited a doctrine of God from prior generations in what may be classified as "Reformed Thomism" or "Christian Aristotelianism," and were in harmony on the Person and Work of Christ and the activity

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[68] For overviews of the Puritan ethos of godly discipline, see Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 77-8, 100-2, 129-32, 196-7, 203-5, 215-18, 237-8, 245-6, 292-3; and Bernard Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and Its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649-1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 1-12, 87-220.

[69] Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 1-53, 278-88.

of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. Though they had various emphases and went about the assurance problem in different ways, they essentially agreed on the nature of predestination, covenant, justification, sanctification, and providence. Their chief theological concern was to glorify God and to promote Christian piety, which was defined according to the parameters of the Bible, and the tradition they inherited from former generations. Their bequest consisted of both vocabulary and content from the earlier English and Continental Reformations. They prized education as a means to achieve godliness, but not as an end in itself.

While recent historians have recovered the varieties of religious experience the English religious culture of early modernism, and have pitched the idea of *Puritanisms* as a way of sorting out the definitions problem (see Chapter 1), when one considers *unitas* and *diversitas* as they relate to Downame, Rous, and Crisp, one can reasonably conclude that there is *unitas* within *diversitas*. Whether *Puritanism* or *Puritanisms* better account for this *unitas in diversitate* is the subject of the next chapter.