

教理問答書作成に至る長い過程を、連続したものとして考えるよりも、何度かのスタートのやりなおしの末にやっと正しいスタートを切ってゴールに到達したというように、何かドラマチックにとらえようとする考えからきているように思われる。そしてその根底には、「ウェストミンスター大小教理問答書」という素晴らしい完成品を重んじるあまり、その完成にいたる直接の過程のみを真に生産的な仕事として評価する視点があるように思われる。しかしながらわれわれは、教理問答書作成の長い過程の全体を、**trial and error**を重ねつつも、完成に向けて粘り強く続けられた一貫した努力として正当に評価しなければならない。(以下次号)

追記

本稿執筆後に松谷好明氏の新著『ウェストミンスター神学会議—その構造化—』札幌、一麦出版社、2000・1・1. が出版された。本稿で引用された前著の後編となる詳細な内容の労作である。本稿と重なる部分もあるので比較検討していただきたい。

A History of the Preparation of the Westminster Catechisms (I)

ABSTRACT

The Westminster Shorter Catechism is one of the most famous and widely used catechisms that has ever been produced in the tradition of the Protestant Church. It is fairly well known that this catechism, together with other documents, was composed by the Westminster Assembly of Divines held in the midst of the English Revolution. However, under what circumstances it was taken up, and how it was prepared and reached its final form are not generally known, nor properly researched as yet. So in this paper I have tried to investigate the process of its preparation in more detail and more exactly than hitherto has been done.

The first step towards its preparation may be said to have been taken when the committee to draw up a directory for public worship was going to draft a directory for catechising as a part of its work. Some scholars, however, want to distinguish this intended directory for catechising from the catechism itself. Among other things, I have tried to prove that this directory was one with the catechism, and the preparing of the catechism was a long, consistent process of work from its beginning to the final formulation of the two catechisms.

Key Words: Westminster Assembly, Directory for catechising, Catechism