

The Reformed conceptualisation of morality

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This article distinguishes, on the one hand, between the characteristic features of Reformed ethics and Reformed conceptualisations of morality on the other. With this distinction in mind, the article first highlights – by drawing on the work of some contemporary Reformed theologians and their interpretation of some key figures and texts from this tradition – the centrality of categories such as belonging, gratitude, the law and holiness for a Reformed understanding of ethics. This discussion opens a window onto some features related to the conceptualisation (or conceptualisations) of morality in the Reformed tradition.

Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications: The article emphasises four aspects in this regard, namely that Reformed ethics is grounded in faith and doctrine, that ethics and the practical Christian life belong at the heart of the Reformed faith, that Reformed ethics is an ethics of freedom and that the theological logic of the Reformed tradition implies a deeply historical and contextual vision.

Keywords: Reformed ethics; conceptualisations of morality; Calvin; Philip Ziegler; Dirkie Smit.

Introduction

Given the theme 'The Reformed conceptualisation of morality' that I was asked to address,¹ I grappled in the process of writing this article with the question of the difference between the Reformed (or *a* Reformed) conceptualisation of morality and the characteristic features often ascribed to Reformed ethics. Although these two aspects overlap, they are not the same. The conceptualisation of morality signifies a more formal way in which Reformed approaches understand morality (and its relationship to the Reformed faith), while the characteristic traits of Reformed ethics can point to the more material content of such an ethical paradigm. Therefore, I decided to address the question of a Reformed conceptualisation (or conceptualisations) of morality via the detour of first focusing on possible characteristic features of Reformed ethics. From the emphases that come to the fore describing some core characteristic elements of the ethical approaches associated with the Reformed theological tradition, one can glean some perspectives on how this tradition conceptualises morality. In the process, one can indicate some shared convictions with other traditions and some particular features that seem vital for this tradition's self-understanding and identity.

With this in mind, the first part of the article will look at some attempts to summarise and highlight key features of Reformed ethical approaches, drawing on few overview articles of some contemporary Reformed theologians (such as Philip Ziegler & Dirkie Smit). In the second part of the article, I will give some intimations of the implications of these perspectives for mapping some contours for a Reformed conceptualisation of morality. I can further note that the notions of 'morality' and 'ethics' are often used in a fluid and interchangeable way in the literature on philosophical and theological ethics. But for the purposes of this article, 'ethics' – for the most part – refers to the study of 'morality'. As such it denotes a field of inquiry that engages with questions such as 'What constitutes good and moral action and decision-making?', 'What constitutes good and moral people?' and 'What constitutes a good and moral society?' (cf. Smit 2007:380–381). 'Morality', in turn, refers to the content of ethical inquiry, including the lived expressions of the category of 'the good' in its various forms.

Some characteristic features of Reformed ethics

When attempting to highlight some characteristic features of Reformed ethics, it is first of all necessary to note that the Reformed tradition is not unambiguously uniform or unified, and that speaking of *the* characteristic elements of Reformed ethics is to invite contestation and critique.

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One should, therefore, at the outset affirm the words with which the South African Reformed theologian Dirkie Smit starts a dictionary entry on 'Reformed Ethics':

From the beginning, the Reformed tradition was a diverse, even ambiguous movement, developing in different communities around several influential leaders, including John Calvin (1509–64), but also other formative figures, finding support in many countries and taking on a variety of local forms ... The story of Reformed ethics is therefore complex ... It is impossible to do justice to its richness. (Smit 2011:661; cf. Smit 2013:265)

This said, one can say – given the particular elements of Reformed theology and doctrine – that how the Reformed tradition thinks about ethics and morality is, as Philip Ziegler puts it in his chapter on 'Reformed Ethics' in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, 'marked by certain recurrent perspectives, patterns and emphases' (Ziegler 2020:577). Ziegler goes on to organise the distinctive characteristic traits of Reformed ethics under the four themes of belonging, gratitude, law and holiness. For him, these themes are recurrent emphases of how the Christian life is understood in a Reformed key and thus provide an apt way of indicating some of the characteristics of Reformed ethics. For the purposes of this essay, it is worthwhile to look a bit closer at Ziegler's discussion of Reformed ethics, which he summarises well in the heading he uses for his discussion: 'A Holy Life of Lawful Action in Joyful Gratitude to the God to Whom We Belong by Grace' (2020:580).

In his discussion of the key theme of 'belonging', Ziegler points to the 16th-century Reformer John Calvin's description of 'the sum of the Christian life' in the *Institutes* as a life marked by belonging to God. Calvin draws on Paul's claim in 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 and – famously – states:

We are not our own: let not our reason nor our will, therefore, sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: in so far as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is ours. Conversely, we are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive towards him as our only lawful goal. (1960:690)

Ziegler perceptively remarks that for Calvin:

Significantly, this belonging is conceived not so much as a settled status as a lively subjection, a continuous yielding to the reality of a present divine possession and leading. The mainsprings of the moral life are not located in remote divine sovereignty and the inscrutable decree, but rather in the more proximate work of Christ made present and pressing by the Spirit. (2020:581)

Dirkie Smit also points in his discussion of Calvin's ethics to this key conviction of Calvin that we do not belong to ourselves, and that this knowledge brings both comfort and claim. Smit goes on to note how this theme is influential and formative in many Reformed confessions and confessional statements, such as the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Theological Declaration of Barmen (1934), the 1993 Brief Statement of Faith of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the 1997 Debrecen litany of the World Alliance of Reformed

churches on economic justice and ecological destruction (Smit 2011:662).

Ziegler also notes that this emphasis on belonging as comfort and task is not only limited to Calvin, and he refers in this regard to Zwingli, Jonathan Edwards, Schleiermacher, Barth, Berkouwer as well as documents such as the Heidelberg Catechism (with its famous answer to the question about one's sole comfort that 'I belong – body and soul, in life and in death – not to myself but to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ') and the catechism of the Presbyterian Church, USA, with its title 'Belonging to God' (2020:581–582).

As a second key theme or leitmotif for Reformed ethics, Ziegler proposes the notion of gratitude, which functions 'as the primary subjective correlate to the objective reality of Christian belonging to God' (2020:583). The impulse for a disciplined Christian life is therefore not abstract obligation or the scheme of punishment and reward, but it is rather gratitude that forms, in John de Gruchy's words, 'the springboard for Christian ethics' (Ziegler 2020:583; cf. De Gruchy 1991:170). Ziegler refers in this regard, next to some key Reformed theologians, again to the Heidelberg Catechism and specifically to the answer to question 86 that we should do good works 'so that with our whole life we may show ourselves grateful to God for his goodness and that God may be glorified through us'. Therefore, 'Ethical action arises out of gratitude and is its active expression' (2020:583).

A third central characteristic feature of Reformed ethics that Ziegler emphasises relates to the law, and in particular to how it is summarised in the two tables of the Decalogue (Ex 20:1–17; Dt 5:4–21) and the restatement in the double love commandment (Mk 12:30f. and other parallels in the gospels). The strong emphasis on the law in Reformed ethics is because 'it promises to shape and direct that outworking of Christian belonging and gratitude' (2020:585). Therefore, ever since the 16th-century Reformed theologians, confessions, catechisms, and moral treatises have provided expansive expositions of and commentary on the Decalogue as fundamental for ethical reflection and instruction. Ziegler refers in this regard to Calvin's *Institutes*, Bullinger's *Decades*, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, Zwingli, Lambert Daneau's *Ethices Christianae* (1577) and the Westminster Confession (2020:585–587). But it is especially Calvin's engagement with the Decalogue that Ziegler rightly sees as exemplary and formative, also for how it not only points to what is prohibited but also, and more fundamentally, to what is positively commanded. Such an understanding of the law:

[P]resses inward to the matter of motivation, disposition, and will, as well as outward into all spheres of economic, social, political, ecclesiastical, and family life, attempting to elicit the depth of its meaning and the full range of its implications for guiding Christian life. (2020:586)

Given the emphasis on the law, it is not surprising that Reformed theologians have displayed an interest in divine

command ethics (or example, Mouw 1990). It should further be noted that the moral law (also when understood as claim, command or task) is never to be stripped of its intimate connection with the gift of God's salvation through grace and the gift of God's Spirit. The law is thus not to be seen as a burdensome yoke but as a merciful blessing, and it is therefore integral to the movement of God's grace (Ziegler 2020:587). In this sense, one can speak of the law not only with adjectives such as 'rigorous' but also describe it as 'gracious' and 'beautiful' (see, for example, in this regard also Serene Jones' article 'Glorious Creation, Beautiful Law' in Jones 2006:19–39).

As a fourth distinctive feature of Reformed ethics, Ziegler proposes 'holiness'. In a similar way in which gratitude functions as the subjective correlate to the objectivity of belonging to God, holiness can be seen as the subjective correspondence to the outworking of Christ's gracious use of the law through the Spirit's power. Ziegler points to how this theme is ubiquitous in Reformed theology and that the doctrine of sanctification and the matter of Christian holiness is crucial for understanding morality in a Reformed key. The life and works of holiness are, however, not the cause of our salvation but its consequence. Despite the different ways holiness is emphasised in the Reformed tradition, the central feature is indeed that holiness 'is to be assigned to the unmerited gift and working of the Spirit, and thus be confessed to be naught but "grace upon grace" (Jn 1:16)' (2020:588).

In recent decades, one interesting discourse, also among Reformed ethicists, centres on how the emphasis on grace relates to the important category of virtue in ethics, and the virtue ethics approach more generally. Whereas some have pointed to polarity and tension in this regard, others have called attention to possible overlaps and convergences (cf. Nolan 2014).

The pursuit of holiness is, furthermore, a continuing vocation and should serve as a challenge to any static understanding of the tradition. Renewal and reform are, therefore, always a gift and a task marked by an eschatological tension. As Ziegler puts it:

(T)he dynamism of a Reformed ethics, including its inalienable self-critical posture and its structural resistance to both idolatry and tyranny, as well as its capacity to negotiate moral pluralism, are in no small part attainable to this eschatological tension between the necessity and impossibility of attaining a human holiness genuinely adequate to God. (2020:589)

Much can be added to these four themes highlighted by Ziegler. Still, for the goal of this article it provides an informative and helpful lens onto notions that indeed function as recurrent patterns, perspectives and emphases in Reformed approaches to ethics. One can show how these themes of belonging, gratitude, law and holiness overlap with the descriptions in other similar overviews that aim to indicate the core characteristic features of Reformed ethics or how it amends them or can be amended by them. To this, we

could add the reminder that being Reformed is about more than the mere adherence to some theological tenets, points or characteristics. It is about embodying a specific ethos and pathos (cf. Smit 2009:26–30). It is about exhibiting a 'Reformed habit of mind' (Gerrish 1999:3–20).

A Reformed conceptualisation of morality?

In discussing the theme of 'the Reformed conceptualisation of morality', I want to highlight, furthermore, some aspects that are not merely related to the particular content of Reformed ethics and its main tenets (its 'concepts'), but that can be seen as more formal and general marks of how the Reformed tradition (as a tradition with various strands) approaches matters related to ethics, morality and the question of the good in different yet overlapping ways (its 'conceptualisations'). I will make four remarks in this regard and comment on them briefly.

Reformed ethics is grounded in faith and doctrine

The first remark relates to the Reformed conviction that ethics and faith are inextricably interwoven. Morality and doctrine are closely intertwined. One can thus speak of an overall picture in which theological and confessional convictions play a decisive role, albeit that it is also the case that there are, as Dirkie Smit has pointed out, 'noteworthy exceptions in the Reformed tradition that argue that ethics should be general, philosophical, and natural' (2011:663–664). One can also think of more recent attempts to retrieve the idea of 'natural law' for Reformed ethics (see Grabill 2006; VanDrunen 2010, 2014), but this emphasis has also invited critical commentary. Jennifer Herdt, for instance, argues that 'Calvin himself did not expect the natural law to serve as a source for substantive action-guiding moral norms' (2014:414).

It is, of course, true that Reformed ethics share many of the characteristics associated with other approaches to ethics, and, more particularly, approaches to Christian ethics. However, it also has a distinctive character that lies in how, in Ziegler's words:

[T]he particular elements of the Reformed faith and doctrine – for example, the emphasis upon the transcendent sovereignty of God and efficacious divine grace, human depravity under sin, the unity of the one covenant of grace, the reality of regeneration in the power of the Spirit, the construal of the world as a theatre for the accomplishment of salvation and the manifestation of divine glory – dispose the moral field so as to locate and orient human agency within it. (2020:577)

Therefore, the moral life is not separated from the Christian life, and moral action is understood as indexed by Scripture, grace, faith and Christ within the framework of an economy of grace and gratitude. Therefore, 'Reformed Christians pursue the moral life as a function of their faith and the very form of their piety: for this reason, a Reformed ethic is

broadly equivalent to a doctrine of the Christian life' (Ziegler 2020:578).

Because of the conviction that Reformed ethics is a thoroughly theological exercise, we can thus say that ethics and faith are tightly linked. The reform of life is linked to the reform of doctrine and vice versa. This emphasis on the importance of particular faith convictions for morality might of course raise questions on the implications of such an approach for the important dialogue on the search for a common morality and the accompanying plea for (religious) tolerance and understanding in pluralistic societies. But more on this in the conclusion of this article.

The Reformed faith sees ethics as central

A second comment on the Reformed conceptualisation of morality concerns the fact that a special feature of this tradition is that the moral life and ethics are indeed viewed as extremely important. It is thus not merely a matter of ethics being grounded in – and determined by – faith but also that the Reformed faith requires and produces a strong emphasis on ethics. Hence, the frequent emphasis that faith (understood as gift and task) has everything to do with our personal and public life. Therefore, as Dirkie Smit points out, it is typical of Reformed faith that ethics is so central. As he writes:

Interest in discipleship, sanctification, the third use of the law, respect for human dignity, calling, covenant, social life, public responsibility, political participation, issues of freedom and justice, democracy and social well-being, culture, scholarship, education – belongs integrally to the Reformed vision. (2011:662)

Smit also points out how the close link between Scripture and ethics is therefore taken for granted, with Scripture being normative 'not only for matters of faith but also of life' (2011:662). Faith is to be lived out. The gospel is to be preached 'and also heard' (cf. Smit 2013:231–245, with reference to Calvin's addition of the words *atque audiri* to the confessional statement that the true church is there where the gospel is rightly preached and the implications thereof). Faith clearly has implications for obedient living, and it has everything to do with public life. The Reformed faith is, therefore, to use the well-known phrase by Nicholas Wolterstorff, an expression of 'world-formative Christianity' (1983:3).

Wolterstorff writes as follows about a change of view during the Reformation that indicates the Reformed understanding of the fact that the gospel relates to society:

Then in the sixteenth century a profoundly different vision and practice came forth from the 'reformed' church in Switzerland and the upper Rhine valley. The structure of the social world was held up to judgment, was pronounced guilty, and was sentenced to be reformed. World-formative Christianity, as I propose to call it, came out of history onto center stage. (1983:3)

Wolterstorff does, however, admit that in growing up in the Reformed tradition, he did not see much of this world-

formative impulse so prominently part of this tradition's origins. But he nevertheless states that 'in speaking of Calvinism as *world-formative* Christianity, it is my intent to emphasise its impulse towards the re-formation of the *social world*' (1983:10).

The social impact of Reformed Christianity and Calvinism have, of course, received influential descriptions from the famous German social historians Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch. Weber emphasised the role of a Calvinist ethic for a free market economy and famously described the transformative effect of a Protestant doctrine of vocation. Hereby everyday secular activities are filled with religious significance and living out one's faith in worldly affairs is seen as a high calling. In Calvinism, the social activity undertaken to the glory of God intensified in order to secure certainty of salvation under the shadow of the doctrine of predestination, resulting in what Weber called 'worldly asceticism' (Ziegler 2020:579).

Ernst Troeltsch modified Weber's analysis. He points to how the doctrine of God in Calvinism is expressed in the idiom of divine law. Troeltsch also draws on the doctrine of election, but in contrast to Weber it is not so much the anxiety about election but rather a certain confidence therein that permeates the moral life. This result in a high sense of mission and responsibility in the world. What both Weber and Troeltsch, however, affirms is the fact that Reformed Christians understood their moral action in the world as a fundamental aspect of their piety. The claims of Weber and Troeltsch about Reformed Christianity and Calvinism have received extensive criticism. Yet, Smit's comment is illuminating: 'As genealogical claims ('Calvinism caused ...') they are difficult to maintain, but as indications of deep affinities they remain instructive' (2011:663).

Ziegler, in turn, views the analyses of Weber and Troeltsch as too reductive, albeit that they rightly discern that for Reformed Christians their morality is predicated on their understanding of doctrine and faith convictions. Yet, they overreach to describe the doctrine of divine predestination and the radical divine law as such as the determining description of the moral field, thus bypassing:

[A]lmost all of the extensive soteriological, Christological, and pneumatological discourses in which the relationship between the God of the Gospel and the Christian life is actually set forth in Reformed theology. (Ziegler 2020:580)

The main thrust of the theses of Weber and Troeltsch does, in effect, illuminate the Reformed worldview and the attempts in Reformed Christianity to provide a comprehensive worldview. One can think here of the neo-Calvinism associated with Abraham Kuyper, and more specifically also the particular (and ambivalent) form it took on in South African history. As Smit writes: 'In South Africa ... this legacy was important both in the justification of the apartheid worldview and in the struggle against this ideology' (2011:663).

Reformed ethics as an ethics of freedom

A third comment on a Reformed conceptualisation of morality concerns with the centrality of the notion of freedom and the specific way in which it is understood in this tradition. The Reformed understanding has been greatly shaped by Calvin's influential discussion of Christian freedom in his *Institutes* (3.19; 1960:833–849), in which he follows accounts such as that in Galatians and of Luther. Hence, freedom is seen as a prime necessity for the Christian life as it is a fruit of justification through grace.

Calvin sees the freedom of Christians as consisting of three parts. The first part relates to the fact that Christians are free from the condemnation of the law given the union with Christ. This implies the freedom from works righteousness. The second aspect relates not so much to freedom from the law but rather to freedom for the law – freedom to observe the law in service of God. The third part is about the freedom to use *adiaphora* (or 'things indifferent'). If Scripture does not prohibit the use of these things, then they can be used and enjoyed as we see fit. This is not an excuse, though, for sinful indulgence, and it is also vital that love and concern for the other must shape the exercise of freedom (cf. Haas 2004:103; cf. Smit 2009:17–18). This emphasis that one can be indifferent to things indifferent has not only challenged moralism but often brought about a reforming impulse that led to fundamental changes in church and society. As Smit comments about the freedom from *adiaphora*: 'This critical potential often would liberate Reformed believers from established practices and institutional forms regarded by others as divinely ordained and unchangeable' (2011:662).

The centrality of the notion of freedom for Reformed ethics continued to mark the tradition after Calvin. Swiss theologian Karl Barth is also well known for his stress on the importance of freedom, as seen in his description of evangelical ethics as an ethics of freedom. Freedom for him is not merely the freedom of choice (it is not the freedom of 'Hercules at the crossroads') but instead he contextualises freedom 'within the covenant of grace in which God's loving is free and God's freedom is loving' (Migliori 2010:13).

The emphasis in the Reformed tradition on indifferent things or *adiaphora* (as also the case in the Lutheran tradition) has not meant that there could not be times when certain things should not be viewed as *adiaphora* or indifferent things but indeed as essential as the gospel is at stake. In these circumstances, a state or stance of confession (a *status confessionis*) is required. This may even result in new confessional documents. In the church and theological struggles in apartheid South Africa, we have the example of the Belhar Confession (1982, 1986) – a confessional document that resulted from the fact that the justification of apartheid and its implicit and explicit racism was seen as immoral and a travesty of the gospel. The Accompanying letter to the Belhar Confession, therefore, begins as follows:

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 at stake. In our judgment, the present church and political situation in the country ... calls for such a decision. (URCSA n.d.:1)

For many, the Reformed understanding of freedom, therefore, does not merely imply the freedom from and for the law or from things indifferent but also the freedom to confess one's faith in essential matters, such as when the gospel itself is seen as being at stake. This requires a process of communal discernment and courage.

Reformed ethics as deeply historical and contextual

The reference to the Belhar Confession and the possibility of new confessions in the Reformed tradition, as well as the well-known Reformed slogan of *ecclesia reformata semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei* ('the Reformed churches always being reformed according to the Word of God') – a statement that is often evoked but probably developed during the Dutch 'Nadere Reformatie' and only found its current form after World War II – point to a fourth comment that can be made about the Reformed conceptualisation of morality. Theological and moral views are not cast in stone and are open to continuous interrogation, reformulation and reformation in terms of contemporary insights and needs. This self-critical willingness to be examined anew and, if needed to be transformed in the light of Scripture, often made Reformed ethics, as Smit notes, 'deeply historical and contextual' (2011:662). Ethical convictions and practices are therefore provisional and temporary, awaiting new evidence, argumentation and experience. This points to the historical responsibility to discern and respond accordingly. Scripture is also read through this process of communal discernment.

This also implies the risk of new articulation. Faithful and liberating Christian speech is not merely about the repetition of ideas from the past. It is not about merely re-stating what, for instance, authoritative figures such as Augustine, Luther or Calvin have said. The best interpreters of a tradition understand this well. One can think in this regard of how the Belhar Confession draws on the Reformed confessional tradition but moves beyond mere repetition. Or one can think of Barth's engagement with Calvin. More than a century ago, in the Introduction of his *The Theology of John Calvin* (originally published in 1922), Barth (1995) made the point of a creative engagement with a figure like Calvin in a powerful manner:

(W)e do not have teaching by repeating Calvin's words as our own or making his views ours ... (T)hose who simply echo Calvin are not good Calvinists, that is, they are not really taught by Calvin. Being taught by Calvin means entering into dialogue with him, with Calvin as the teachers and ourselves as the students, he speaking, we doing our best to follow him and then – this is the crux of the matter – making our own response to what he says. If that does not happen we might just as well

be speaking Chinese; the historical Calvin is not present. For that Calvin wants to teach and not just say something that we will repeat. The aim, then, is a dialogue that may end with the taught saying something very different from what Calvin said but that they learned from or, better, through him. (p. 4)

The emphasis on Reformed ethics (and theology in general) as deeply historical and contextual can thus be seen as one of the hallmarks of the Reformed approach to morality. This makes continuous moral dialogue and even argumentation part and parcel of the tradition as part of a search with others (a catholic search, one can say) for truth and truthfulness. This also raises the opportunity and responsibility to think about the nature of the commitment to the Reformed tradition in various contexts. In the South African context, this has given rise to a vigorous and productive discussion on what it, for instance, means to be Black and Reformed (cf. for example, Boesak 1984) or African and Reformed (cf. for example, Tshaka 2014).

Yet, if one looks at historical expressions of churches and views in the Reformed tradition, it seems as if a more static and fossilised understanding of ethics reigns, often by ahistorical (and even fundamentalistic) or acontextual treatments of Scripture, the confessions, doctrines and current realities. This leads, of course, to internal conflicts within the Reformed tradition that often find form in different approaches to and views on ethical matters.

Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be seen that Reformed ethics is indeed a story of many stories. Yet, one can also note some underlying recurring emphases and perspectives that make it possible to give some profile to a Reformed conceptualisation of morality. The article indicated that the particular nature of Reformed convictions stamps a Reformed understanding of the Christian moral life. Do these specific commitments mean that a Reformed ethical paradigm insulates this tradition from dialogue on urgent discussions on morality as initiated and demarcated by this current research project? I don't think that this is necessarily the case. Many resources within the Reformed tradition actually open the tradition up for other sources of wisdom, also regarding morality. It is, for instance, interesting to note that it was the vision of the 16th-century Genevan Academy that wisdom comes down not only from Moses but also from the Egyptians and the Greeks (cf. Vosloo 2017:261–262). Hence the need to be open, for instance, to other sources of wisdom in the sciences and the arts.

The attention to Reformed conceptualisations of morality intimate how the Reformed tradition may provide resources to challenge reductive accounts of moral rationality that lacks the kind of grounding in a particular tradition to transform lives and society in a way that gives life to all living creatures and the rest of creation. And, hopefully, the way in which morality is conceptualised and given content in the Reformed tradition can also contribute to shared

moral commitments in our polarised world by providing resources that can enrich our moral imaginations for life-giving action in our world.

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