

Forde: Is there a “mission to convert the Jews”?

common heritage. But speaking for myself at least, if I thought there was something about Christ that would hurt the Jews or rob them of their heritage, I don't think I could preach him to anyone. Centuries of acrimony and tragedy, of course, makes it an extremely sensitive issue and one can approach it only with infinite care and openness, realizing that one has, if anything, as much to learn as to give.

Does this mean advocating a “mission to convert the Jews”? Perhaps here too we need to or can learn something from Luther. Luther, I think, simply did not share the views of much modern so-called “evangelicalism” when it came to the idea of “missions to convert” people. He believed that we must all live, from day to day, under the promise of the grace of God, and that none of us are going to be “converted” finally, at least this side of the grave. To that end, the Word of God must be preached to save us from wrath, sin, and our own fantasies so we can turn to face our brothers and sisters in love, care, and patience. So we should seek to preach, to teach, to discuss, to dialogue, whatever it may be, in the hope that we all may indeed find each other and be one under the grace of the electing God.