QUESTIONING MY BACKGROUND

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Introducing a series in which I reflect on things that my younger self would never have questioned.
Category: Observations

I grew up within a Christian tradition that might be broadly called "Reformed" or "Conservative Evangelical" and this tradition has shaped much of my thought and Christian experience. However, my adult life has been spent working alongside Christians from very different backgrounds and experiences which has inevitably caused me to broaden my outlook and to call into questions some of the background that I inherited.

These days, though my core beliefs have not shifted very much, I would be reluctant to call myself reformed, conservative or even evangelical - though the reasons for the latter are more social and political than theological. I realise that this statement might surprise or even offend some of my friends, but I don't make any apologies. If you are worried about me, let me assure you that I still believe in the key importance of the Scriptures, the centrality of the cross and the need for justification by faith in Christ (more of this one in the next post). I fit within the historic tradition of evangelicalism; but, these days the term evangelical carries too much extraneous baggage for me to be happy using it to describe myself (resist the urge to accuse me of "worldly compromise" on this one, I will return to the theme later).

Over the next few posts (I've no idea how many there will be, nor how frequently they will appear), I'd like to explore some of the issues where I find myself experiencing some degree of tension with my background.

The point of these reflections is not to try and convince others to think the same way I do. I respect the fact that there are those who disagree with me (in some cases, very strongly). However, I do believe that the issues that I will be raising lead on to some implications that are of use to all strands of the church, whether you agree with me or not.