

Formal & Material Principles of Various Religious Bodies*

Formal Principle: the basis (or bases) for what is believed (the standard)

Material Principle: the main doctrine of a religious body

religious body	formal principle	material principle
Lutheran	Scripture alone	justification by grace through faith in Christ
Romanists	Scripture, traditions, reason	a system of works-righteousness
Zwinglism	free work of Holy Spirit	absolute divine causality
Calvinism	Scripture alone	God's sovereign will
Episcopal	Scripture, authority of the church, reason	no uniform principle
Fundamentalists	personal decision	the Bible
Arminian (Methodist)	Scripture, teachings of ancient church, reason	the 'perfected' man
Pentecostals	Holy Spirit, inner feeling	Baptism with Holy Spirit
Perfectionists	Holy Spirit, emotion	entire sanctification
Inner Light (Mennonites)	Bible, mystical experience of Christ	mystical pietism
Liberals	the human experience	love

* In this chart there has been an extensive use of The Religious Bodies of America by F.E. Mayer.