

The Christian & The Word



Introduction: The Reformation and Scripture

A. Events Leading Up to the Reformation

- Political and Economic Power and Church Decay
 - East-West Schism of 1054 (Catholic and Eastern Orthodox)
 - “Babylonian Captivity of the Church” (Avignon Papacy , 1309–1376)
initiated by Philip IV of France
 - “Papal Schism” (1378–1417)
- Theological Drift and Church Decay
 - Scripture not in the hands of the laity (only in Latin)
 - Salvation and Works
 - Purgatory, Mass, Penance, and Indulgences
- Previous Attempts at Reform
 - e.g., Waldensians, Hus, Wycliffe, Savonarola

Introduction: The Reformation and Scripture

A. Events Leading Up to the Reformation

B. Scripture, Reform, and the Protestant

- *sola gratia* ('by grace alone')
- *sola fide* ('by faith alone')
- *sola scriptura* ('by Scripture alone')
 - Subsidiary authority of Creeds, Councils, and Tradition
- *solus Christus* ('Christ alone')
- *solī Deo gloria* ('glory to God alone')

Ephesians 2:4–10

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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- *semper reformanda* ('always reforming')

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- A. Events Leading Up to the Reformation
- B. Scripture, Reform, and the Protestant
- C. Sola Scriptura

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.

(Westminster Confession of Faith I.6)

Introduction: The Reformation and Scripture

- A. Events Leading Up to the Reformation
- B. Scripture, Reform, and the Protestant
- C. Sola Scriptura
- D. Translation of Scripture into Vernacular Languages (not just in Latin!)

Introduction (part 2): General & Particular Revelation

A. General Revelation

(creation, and the sense of God in all human souls)

B. Particular Revelation

(the acts of God, and the inspired Scriptures that record and interpret them)

*¹ The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*

*⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple;*

(Psalm 19:1, 7)

Romans 1:18–20

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Introduction (part 2): General & Particular Revelation

A. General Revelation

(creation, and the sense of God in all human souls)

B. Particular Revelation

(the acts of God, and the inspired Scriptures that record and interpret them)

- We need particular revelation in order to comprehend the saving work of God.
- Scripture also provides the “spectacles” required to interpret properly God’s creation (Jean Calvin).

I. The Self-Testimony of Scripture

What does God say about his Word? What does God's Word say about itself?

(and how did believers read their Bibles during the Old and New Testament eras?)

Psalm 19:7–11

- ⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple;
- ⁸ the precepts of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
- ⁹ the fear of the Lord is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules of the Lord are true,
and righteous altogether.

Psalm 19:7–11

- ¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.
- ¹¹ Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

Matthew 4:1–11

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written,
“ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”

Matthew 4:1–11

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’
and

“ ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

Matthew 4:1–11

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.’ ”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

2 Timothy 3:14–17

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 3:15–16

¹⁵ And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

II. The Church and Goals of Reading Scripture

A. Doctrine and Theological Reading

B. Ethics and Pietistic Reading

C. Antiquity and Historical Reading

D. Worship and Devotional Reading

E. Redemptive History and Narrative Reading

II. The Church and Goals of Reading Scripture

Doctrine, Ethics, History, Worship, Redemptive History...

All of these are necessary in right measure, because the whole story of the Bible directs us to good theology, piety, history, and devotion.

Scripture records God's revelation of his redemptive actions throughout history, in order to instruct us in his gracious salvation and our right response as faithful worshippers and kingdom agents.

III. Christians and The Word: How Ought We to Respond?

2 Timothy 3:16–17

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

III. Christians and The Word: How Ought We to Respond?

- Thankfulness and Worship
- Committed to Regular Study of God's Word
(personal, group, sermons, etc.)
- Active Participants in Sanctification and Christian Growth Directed and Motivated by God's Word
(personally and corporately)
- Good Students of the Word
(Spirit-directed careful reading, reading oriented to all the "goals", pursuing the author's intent, studying alongside others, orthodoxy and orthopraxis)