

Why Was the Reformation Important? Why Is It Still Today?

The sixteenth century Protestant Reformation called the church back to the biblical sources (formal principle) and back to the central message of the Gospel of justification by faith alone (material principle). The controversy revolved around the authority of Scripture over the traditions of the church, the primacy of grace over the meritorious nature of religious works, the orientation of the whole of life towards the glory of God over against a spirituality marked by the veneration of the saints and unbiblical practices. These unresolved issues are still with us and urge us to believe that the need for a biblical reformation is not over in Europe and throughout the world.

After presenting the story of my family and how the gospel came to us, Luther's visit to Rome in 1511 will be used as a narrative to present the Catholic gospel then and to present it as it is now. A sketch of the Catholic gospel it will be presented in biblical perspective and the need for the Reformation to continue will be argued for.

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I. Introduction

- A. How the Gospel entered my family and my life

- B. How and why what Roman Catholicism had taught us was not the Gospel

- C. Why the Reformation mattered then and matters now!

II. Year 1511: the Catholic gospel when Luther visited Rome

- A. The Holy Stairs to Heaven

- B. Religious Works as Necessary

- C. The Church as Mediator of God's Grace

III. Year 2017: The Catholic gospel if you visit Rome now

- A. The Holy Stairs are still there: Indulgences are still dispensed
- B. The Church as Mediator of God's Grace
- C. The basic theological framework is still the same

IV. What's the problem with the Catholic gospel?

- A. Where does God speak?
- B. What is humanity's problem?
- C. How one is reconciled with God?
- D. A blurred gospel

V. What is at Stake then?

- A. Only a matter of different emphases? Or slightly different languages and history?
- B. Same Words, Different Meanings
- C. Ultimately a Galatians 1:6-9 issue or a Philippians 1:15-18 issue?

VI. Conclusion: Why the Reformation is Not Over!