

Sola Scriptura: Worldview Formation, Renewing the Church, and Evangelism

The doctrine of Sola Scriptura has very pertinent implications for our understanding and practice of the Christian Faith. Our purpose in this session is to learn from three great Christians and their application of Sola Scriptura. John Calvin believed the doctrine impacted what we might call today "world view formation." Jacob Spener believed that the doctrine was essential for any spiritual renewal of church life. And finally, Billy Graham believed the doctrine was intimately related to the "secret" of his remarkable ministry. Over and over again in his evangelistic preaching, Graham would declare: "The Bible says."

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I. Introduction: The Reformation's Emphasis upon the Doctrine of Sola Scriptura

- A. The Definition of Sola Scriptura

- B. The Truthfulness and Power of Scripture

- C. The Sufficiency of Scripture

II. The Bible and Worldview Formation: A Reformation Perspective

- A. The Reformers believed that the contemporary Roman Catholic Church's doctrinal teachings and her educational institutions stood in need of serious "reformation". The Reformers believed an overhaul of Christian education was imperative. Evangelical Christians needed a new "world view", or way of viewing their lives and their contemporary societies.

- B. The Reformers believed that Holy Scripture should be the basis of Christian education. Luther wrote: "I would advise no one to send his child where the Holy Scriptures are not supreme. Every institution that does not unceasingly pursue the study of God's word becomes corrupt. .. I greatly fear that the universities, unless they teach the Holy Scriptures diligently and impress them on the young students, are wide gates to hell."
- C. The Reformers believed highly in the value of creating catechisms.

- D. The Reformers believed that the knowledge of God as revealed in Scripture describes who our Triune God is, who we are and how we obtain salvation through Christ. Nonetheless the knowledge of man such as the liberal arts has value but does not trump special revelation.
- E. The Reformers believed that fathers in families had a special responsibility to teach their children the catechism.

III. The Bible in Renewing the Church: A Reformation Perspective

- A. The Spiritual Counsel of William Tyndale.
- B. The Spiritual Counsel of Martin Luther for Christian Living and Church Renewal: Psalm 1.
- C. The Spiritual Counsel of Jacob Spener for Christian Living and Church Renewal: Psalm 1.

IV. The Bible in Evangelism: A Reformation Perspective

- A. Evangelist Billy Graham struggled for a time regarding the authority of the Bible.
- B. Evangelist Billy Graham engaged in the confident use of the Bible in evangelism. He would frequently declare: “The Bible says...”
- C. Like the Reformer William Tyndale, Billy Graham cited Hebrews 4:12 as a warrant for his belief that the Bible possesses very real spiritual power.

V. Concluding Remarks about the Doctrine of Sola Scriptura and the Evangelical Faith