

Amazing Grace: Intro to Reformed Theology

Week 2 – *The Authority of Scripture*

Brief recap of week 1

- Theology – The Study of God
- Actions follow Beliefs (a good theology matters, Romans 12:2)
- Reformed Theology – An expression of the Christian faith that is centered and grounded on the Sovereignty of God in all things
- If God is sovereign, then he sovereignly speaks through his word

Authority of Scripture

- 16th Century Reformation, authority was the issue of the day.....who or what spoke for God?
- Clergy, Tradition, Scripture
- Martin Luther – scripture alone speaks for God and binds the conscience (Sola Scriptura)
- Rebirth of Religious Liberty
- Reaffirmation of the Canon (the rule or standard) – 39 OT Books, 27 NT Books

Inspiration of Scripture

- The Bible *is* the very word of God
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (breathed out by God)
- Origin of Scripture is God-centered (From God through the prophets and apostles)

Inerrancy and Infallibility of Scripture

- Inerrancy – without error (accuracy and precision)
- Infallibility – incapable of error; incapable of failing (reliability and trustworthiness)

Why does it matter? (practical application)

- Sufficient for all of life (Deut. 6:5-9; Matthew 4:4; John 20:20-31)
- Source of absolute truth (John 14:6; Ephesians 6:14)
- Radical call to obedience (Joshua 1:7-8; John 14:15; James 1:22)
- Universal clarity and interpretation (Ephesians 4:12-16)
- Supernatural power (Psalm 19:7-9; John 8:32; Romans 1:16)

*“Unless I am convicted by scripture and plain reason--I do not accept the authority of popes and councils for they have contradicted each other--my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe.” – **Martin Luther, 1521***

Discussion Questions:

1. Pastor Rob described how the doctrine of “sola scripture” (scripture alone) arose in the midst of the Protestant Reformation. What problems were the Reformers attempting to address? How does sola scriptura help correct false teaching?
2. How does scripture help us to maintain a God-centered theology? What are some of the main temptations to turn away from scripture or to deny what it teaches? What are some of the ways you are personally tempted to doubt scripture? How does reading scripture with others (like in a Bible study) or studying how Christians have interpreted scripture over time help us as we read the Bible ourselves?
3. One common misconception is that if scripture alone (sola scriptura) is the highest authority, being revelation from God, then “only scripture” (solo scriptura) is useful for learning anything, but the scriptures also acknowledge that there is “natural revelation” and other methods of learning about the world (scientific methods, etc.). How is God’s revelation in scripture different than God’s revelation through nature? Does scripture alone mean biology or physics or other forms of scientific study are useless, why or why not?
4. Share some of the challenges you have faced in reading scripture or in studying the Bible (could be something that confused or troubled you, or it could relate to your difficulty in reading the Bible consistently, whatever comes to mind). Was there anything Pastor Rob said which has encouraged you to push through those challenges?
5. Is there anything else that stood out to you as you listened to Pastor Rob’s message?