



ST LUKE'S
LIVERPOOL
a church for all people

**Ideas that
Changed
the World**



Bible Studies
Term 4 2017

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Introduction

Corruption in the church. Political turmoil and intrigue. A clash of new ideas and ancient pagan religions. Courageous and extraordinary individuals. Doctrinal disputes that were matters of life and death.¹

These things make up what is often called the 'Reformation', that time of European history from around 1517 to the turn of the century. The Reformation is a critical period in the history of Christian faith and practice. The events, and the theology which produced those events still shape much modern Protestantism.

Indeed, they are **ideas that changed the world**.

The Reformation rediscovery of the gospel revolutionised the Medieval understanding of the Christian life. It gave rise to key slogans:

- Sola gratia (Grace Alone)
- Sola fide (Faith Alone)
- Solus Christus (Christ Alone)
- Sola Scriptura (God's Word Alone)
- Soli Deo gloria (God's Glory Alone)

In these studies, our aim is to have a better understanding of what it means to be saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone found from God's Word Alone. It will lead us to the incontrovertible truth that glory belongs to our God alone.

¹ Kirsten Birkett, The Essence of the Reformation

Grace Alone

Ephesians 2:1–10; Romans 6:1–4

1. List the ways people say there are different ways for a person to be acceptable to God and have a good relationship with him.
2. Each of the following passages talks about people having right relationships with God. Fill in the table.

	Deut 7:6–8	Eph 2:1–10	Tit 3:3–7	1 Pet 2:4–10
What is the natural state of humanity before God?				
What did God do?				
What was done to deserve or merit God's action?				

Read Romans 6:1–4

3. How does our understanding of grace alone affect our view of sin? (see 6:1)

4. 'A Christian can sin because they're covered by the grace of God anyway.' Discuss this statement in light of Rom 6:1–4.

5. How might this understanding of God's grace affect
 - a. Prayer

 - b. Evangelism

 - c. How we conduct our church gatherings

 - d. Our assurance of salvation

6. Have you accepted God's gift of grace?

7. How can I encourage others to walk as God created us to?

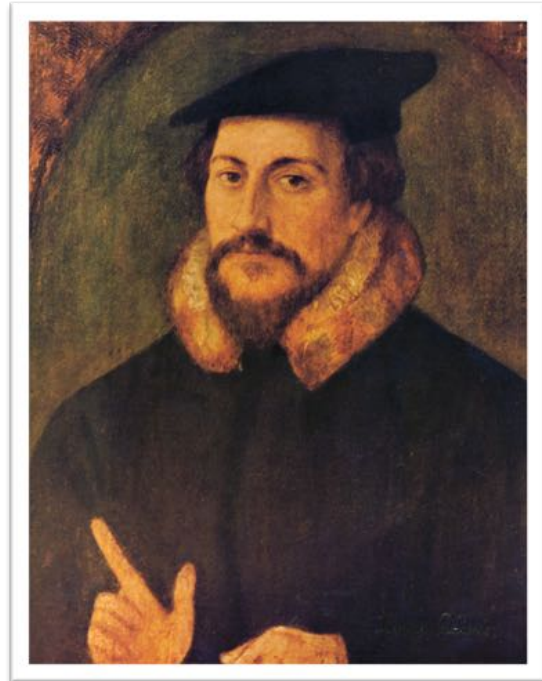
Prayer Points

John Calvin

1509-1564

John Calvin, after Augustine, is the most influential theologian since the writing of the New Testament. He was born in 1509 in north-western France. By the time he went to the University of Paris, the Protestant Reformation was having a significant impact across Europe.

Calvin was forced to flee Paris in 1534 when, in a Roman Catholic crackdown, his mentor Nicolas Cop (the rector of the University of Paris) was accused of heresy over a lecture that it is thought Calvin helped him to write.



In 1536 Calvin stopped over in Geneva as he journeyed to Strasbourg. It was here that he was convinced by a fellow Reformer, William Farel, to stay and work to reform the church in Geneva. This became his major life's work.

Five hundred years after it was published in 1536, Calvin's Institutes of Christian Religion is still one of the most influential and significant theological works ever written. In the Institutes Calvin shows that it is by the grace of God alone that we can approach a holy God, through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. He explains that it is not of ourselves that we can attain salvation by works of some kind, but that it is a gift from God alone. As Calvin wrote: "Faith, then, brings a man empty to God, that he may be filled with the blessings of Christ".

Calvin had a very organized mind. He organized Protestant theology and the Geneva Church, taking the church away from the traditional Catholic order of worship. His reforms influenced the whole city as he attempted to bring everything—be it cultural, economic, social or political activity—under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Under Calvin's lead, Geneva moved from being one of Europe's most immoral cities to being the Protestant capital of the Reformed Church.

Faith Alone

Romans 5:1–11

1. 'By penance we make satisfaction for our sins' (Cardinal George Pell). Discuss the ways in which people attempt to 'make up for' their sins.

Read Romans 5:1–11

2. How does God declare you to be righteous (or justified)?
3. How do you obtain access to God's grace?
4. What did you do to deserve Christ's death for you?
5. What works can contribute to your salvation?
6. What does our future hold if we are justified?

7. If we receive salvation by grace through faith alone, does this mean we are no longer accountable for our actions? (see James 2:14–26)
8. What effect does justification by faith alone have on
- a. Assurance of salvation
 - b. Evangelism
 - c. Arrogance
 - d. Legalism
 - e. Ritualism
9. Do you have faith in what God has done in making you righteous through the death of Jesus?
10. Are you justified by faith in Jesus Christ alone?

Prayer Points

Martin Luther

1483-1546

Martin Luther was born in Saxony, Germany, in 1483. He went to university in Erfurt, where he graduated with two degrees in 1505. Luther was set to study law, but a narrow brush with death by lightning is said to be the reason behind his decision to become an Augustine monk in 1506. Luther was horrified at the corruption within the church of his day, and despaired at his own sinfulness. Still, he continued his theological study, taking on a third degree in 1512. But he was profoundly changed by reading Paul's letter to the Romans.



Luther realized that the righteousness of God was not primarily a characteristic of God to be feared, but an activity of God. God is righteous when he declares that the unrighteous who have faith shall be righteous. Seeing that we are justified by faith and not by what we do meant that Luther could not sit by while poor peasants were offered salvation for their dead parents in exchange for money at a Roman Catholic fundraiser.

Luther drew up ninety-five theses for debate, which he posted upon the door of Wittenberg's Castle Church in 1517. He rejected the Catholic teaching that sin could be absolved through papal indulgences, since grace was given by God alone. When Luther's theses were printed and distributed through Europe there was a huge backlash against the church. Papal indulgences dropped across the continent as people understood that they could be made right with God through faith in Christ's sacrifice rather than through human effort or giving money to the church.

In 1521 Luther was pressured to formally retract his teachings. Instead, in front of the Emperor, the princes and the papal hierarchy, Luther famously declared:

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason... I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything... Here I stand, I can do no other.

Christ Alone

Hebrews 9:1–28; 4:14–16

Read Hebrews 9:1–10

1. List the activities involved in Old Testament sacrifice.
2. What were the difficulties with that sacrificial system?

Read Hebrews 9:11–22

3. What is the significance of blood in this passage?
4. What has the blood of the Christ achieved?

Read Hebrews 9:23–28

5. Why has Jesus' sacrifice superseded the old system of sacrifice?

6. Does the writer see the sacrifice of Christ as something repeated/repeatable, or as something that happened just once?

Read 1 Timothy 2:5–6

7. Is there any place for priests to connect you to God or praying to saints/Mary/ancestors etc.?

Read Hebrews 4:14–16

8. How does Jesus' role as a great high priest affect our:

a. Times of personal weakness

b. Assurance of salvation

c. Approach to God in prayer

9. Have you put your faith in Christ alone?

Prayer Points

Thomas Cranmer

1489-1556

Thomas Cranmer was the most significant figure in the Protestant Reformation in England. He was Archbishop of Canterbury (i.e. leader) of the Church of England when the church broke away from Rome. Born in Nottinghamshire in 1489, Cranmer became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1533 under Henry VIII.



In 1548, with the support of Henry's son Edward VI, Cranmer replaced parts of the Latin Mass with English (prayer and confession). He put an English Bible in every parish church, and started reworking the Mass itself.

The following year Cranmer published a new English prayer book (which he improved in 1552), rejecting the central Catholic teaching of transubstantiation (i.e. that the bread and wine actually became the body and blood of Christ). Cranmer taught that Jesus Christ alone is the perfect sacrifice for our sins and therefore there is no need for a continued priestly sacrifice. Under Cranmer, Holy Communion stopped being a sacrifice and became a remembrance meal.

When Edward died and Catholic 'Bloody' Queen Mary took the throne, she executed almost 290 protestant dissenters, including Archbishop Cranmer.

In jail awaiting execution, Cranmer cracked and recanted of his Protestantism. However, in the moments before his execution, he switched again, recanting his previous recantation and reaffirming his rejection of Catholicism. As he was being burnt Cranmer forced his right arm—the arm that had scribed the original recantation—into the flames in a visual display of allegiance to the Bible's teaching of Christ's sacrifice once for all.

God's Word Alone

Psalm 19:7–11; 2 Timothy 3:14–17

Read Psalm 115:2–8 and 33:4–11

1. What picture do we get of the idols made by the hands of men?

Read Psalm 19:7–11

2. What are the characteristics of the Word of the Lord?
3. What does following the Word of the Lord lead to?

Read 2 Timothy 3:14–17

4. What does this tell us about
 - a. The authority of the Scriptures?
 - b. The purpose of the Scriptures?
 - c. The sufficiency of the Scriptures?

5. What are some ways that we can use the Scriptures to teach, rebuke, and train in righteousness?

6. Read the following verses and note down what each verse tells us about the Word of God and the role it should play in the life of a believer
 - a. Acts 20:32

 - b. 1 Corinthians 10:11–12

 - c. Ephesians 6:17

 - d. Hebrews 4:12

 - e. 2 Peter 1:20–21

7. How does the word of God feature in your life?

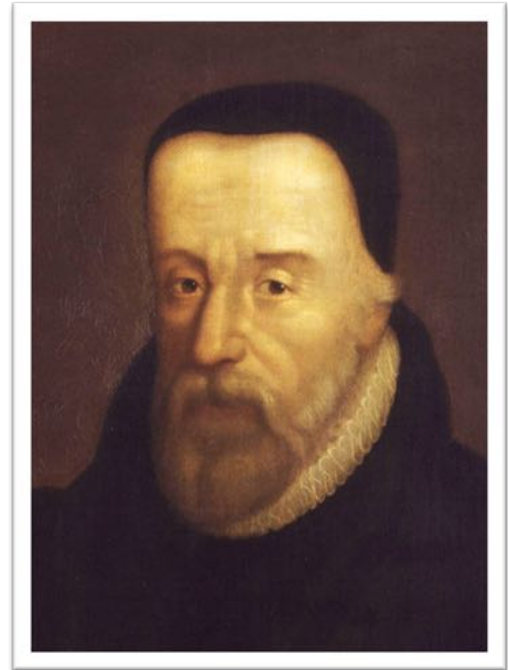
Prayer Points

William Tyndale

1494-1536

William Tyndale is one of the most significant figures in English history. He gave the nation its first English Bible and in doing so gave the country a unified language.

William Tyndale was born in England and studied theology at Oxford. At university he was horrified that there were no subjects on the Bible as part of his degree, so he formed small reading groups of fellow students to study the Bible in the evenings. Later he made it his life's work to produce a Bible for the common man. He said to a corrupt clergyman that if God spared his life, he would cause a boy that drives the plough to know more of the Scriptures than he did.



The Catholic Church in England would not allow the production of the English Bible, so Tyndale worked in secret in Germany. In 1526 Tyndale completed translating the first English New Testament. Despite strenuous efforts by Catholic bishops and other church officials (including the burning of Bibles and people), thousands of copies of Tyndale's New Testament were printed and smuggled into England.

In 1535, while working on translating the Old Testament from Hebrew into English, Tyndale was arrested and imprisoned. After a year in jail he was sentenced to death by strangulation and burning. As Tyndale died, his final cry encapsulated his unwavering mission to bring the word of God to the people: "Lord! Open the king of England's eyes."

Shortly after his death the political tide turned in England, and Tyndale's Bible was published legally under another name.

God's Glory Alone

Psalm 96

1. Why do people seek fame and glory? List the different ways that a person might seek fame and glory.

2. Read the following verses. What do they teach us about the glory of God?

Psalm 19:1-4a

Exodus 14:1-18

3. Read the following verses. What do they teach us about the glory of humanity?

Psalm 8:3-6

Isaiah 40:6-8

4. How is humanity's problem with God described in terms of God's glory in Romans 1:18-23

5. What do we learn of God's glory in 2 Corinthians 4:4

6. What do the following verses teach us about our response to God's glory?

Psalm 96:1-5

1 Corinthians 10:31

7. How might we subtly seek our own praise and glory in life?

8. How might our efforts in salvation rob God of his glory?

9. If all of life is to be lived to the glory of God, how do we prevent false humility or mere religious duty infecting our life?

Prayer Points

Final Reflections



What shines out from what I've learnt?



What questions do I still have?

How can I find answers to these questions?



How will I apply what I've learnt to my life?

***To see the lost saved by Christ
and see the saved live for Christ***

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