

The Five Solas of the Reformation

Day 1; Session 1

- Over the next 4 days, we'll be looking examining Reformed Theology together.
- The way I hope to see the days unfold is as follows.
- Today, Day 1, we'll look at **The Foundation of Reformed Theology**.
- Tomorrow, Day 2, we'll look at **Reformed Theology from a Systematic Perspective**.
- Day 3, we'll look at **Reformed Theology from a Redemptive-Historical Perspective**.
- Day 4, we'll look at **The Implications of Reformed Theology**.

- To start us off today as we begin looking at The Foundation of Reformed Theology, I want us to firstly look at the historical basis of the Reformation.
- But rather than just looking at the history of the church during the Reformation, I thought I'd do it with a connection to what's known as the Five Solas of the Reformation.
- I want to go back further than the set time period and deal with people who through the history of the church have stood for the true Gospel.
- One of the arguments against the reformation is that it was a break-away movement from the one church.
- That it was introducing ideas and thoughts and doctrine which were novel and new.
- I want to show you that this was not the case.
- The doctrine of the Reformation are biblical doctrines, and were held and taught from the earliest part of the church.

1. Scripture alone.

- So the first Sola we'll look at is SOLA SCRIPTURA.

- By the Bible Alone.
- When the Reformers used the words *sola Scriptura* they were expressing their concern for the Bible's authority.
- What they meant is that the Bible alone is our ultimate authority.
- Not the pope, not the church, not the traditions of the church or church councils, still less personal intimations or subjective feelings, but Scripture only.
- Other sources of authority may have an important role to play.
- Some are even established by God such as the authority of church leaders, the authority of the state, or the authority of parents over children.
- But Scripture alone is truly ultimate.
- Therefore, if any of these other authorities depart from Bible teaching, they are to be judged by the Bible and rejected.
- The historical figure we'll look at related to Sola Scriptura is John Wycliffe.

John Wycliffe (sola Scriptura)

- Any of you heard of Wycliffe?
- Today, they're famous as a missions group that are primarily focused on Bible translation.
- And they're named after this great man, John Wycliffe.
- He was born in Yorkshire, England in 1330.
- Pretty much slap bang in the middle of the Dark Ages – especially spiritually.
- They were called the Dark Ages because that was exactly what the European world was.
- Dark.
- Socially, politically, intellectually.
- And above all, spiritually.
- The church dominated life, and it was very rich in money and property.

- It owned 1/3 of all the land in England.
- It was also very corrupt, demanding money from the poor in exchange for the pardon of sin.
- In this time, the Black Death of the bubonic plague hit in 1348.
- Historians estimate that anywhere between 1/3 to 1/2 of the population died.
- The whole country pretty much ground to a halt and there were not enough left living to bury all the dead.
- In this time, Wycliffe escaped unharmed.
- But it affected him greatly – he saw the plague in a spiritual light.
- So he spent much time on his knees crying to God in repentance and asking for God to show the path to follow.
- And as he read the Bible, which was only available in Latin at this stage, he found the light and path to follow.
- And here he realised his fellow countrymen were in complete darkness.
- They had no Bible and most could not read Latin, while a huge proportion could not read at all.
- And it was this that he turned his lifework to.
- When he was 16, he went to study at Oxford.
- He became a Doctor of theology in 1372, and was regarded as Oxford's leading theologian.
- He wrote his book *Civil Dominion* where he said that the ungodly lose their right to rule if they blatantly lead sinful lives.
- This critique of the church was possible because he had support from aristocracy.
- Wycliffe not only criticised the corrupt practices of the church, but he also pointed to the wrong doctrines that lead to such corruption.
- For him, the Church was the body of Christ, therefore the only head was Jesus.

- The papacy, the pope, he said, was an office created by man, not God.
- In the Eucharist, Roman Catholic church believes in what's known as Transubstantiation.
- Wine and bread turn into the body and blood of Christ.
- This was accepted by the church as official church stance in 1215.
- To Wycliffe, this was not biblical.
- So he repeatedly attacked this, calling it a blasphemous deceit.
- Wycliffe's run-ins with the church were not because he was a prickly man.
- It was a result of his understanding of Scripture.
- He came to see that only the Bible can be the authority for what we believe.
- This led him to see the need of having the Bible translated into English.
- And so Wycliffe and his team of scholars started the work of translating the Bible into English.
- Remember, this was before the invention of the printing press, and so each book had to be written by hand.
- Wycliffe died before this work was completed.
- And over 30 years after his death, the Council of Constance branded his writings as heretical and ordered his books and bones be burnt.
- His remains were dug up in 1427 and burned and the ashes scattered.
- And today, Wycliffe is considered one of the prime movers whose life and work would influence the coming of the Reformation.
- And he displayed the ethos that is Sola Scriptura.

2. Christ alone.

- The next is SOLUS CRISTUS.
- By Christ Alone.
- The church of the Middle Ages spoke about Christ.

- A church that failed to do that could hardly claim to be Christian.
- But the medieval church had added many human achievements to Christ's work, so that it was no longer possible to say that salvation was entirely by Christ and his atonement.
- This was the most basic of all heresies, as the Reformers rightly perceived.
- It was the work of God plus our own righteousness.
- The Reformation motto *solus Cristus* was formed to repudiate this error.
- It affirmed that salvation has been accomplished once for all by the mediatorial work of the historical Jesus Christ alone.
- His sinless life and substitutionary atonement alone are sufficient for our justification, and any "gospel" that fails to acknowledge that or denies it is a false gospel that will save no one.
- The historical figure related to Solus Cristus is Athanasius.
- **Athanasius (solus Cristus)**
- Athanasius was the key opponent of Arius in the Arian controversy.
- Athanasius lived between 296 and 373.
- He steadfastly refuted the lowering of Christ, and insisted that He was both fully human and fully God.
- Emperor Constantine actually saw his stance as being divisive and not helpful for the good of the church, and so banished him.
- He was exiled 5 times.
- At a time when a lot of people were pandering to Constantine and watering down their convictions to gain favour, Athanasius stood firm.
- For him, it was a key point of salvation.
- Unless Christ was both truly God and truly Man, there was no hope for salvation.
- Through his life, he was accused of much and marginalised in a great way.
- Yet he stayed the course.

- And although he did not see the full victory of his stance, after his death, Arianism was never a force.

3. Grace alone.

- The next is SOLA GRATIA.
- By Grace Alone.
- The words *sola gratia* mean that human beings have no claim upon God.
- That is, God owes us nothing except just punishment for our many and very wilful sins.
- Therefore, if he does save sinners, which he does in the case of some but not all, it is only because it pleases him to do it.
- It is because of GRACE.
- Indeed, apart from this grace and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit that flows from it, no one would be saved, since in our lost condition, human beings are not capable of winning, seeking out, or even cooperating with God's grace.
- By insisting on "grace alone" the Reformers were denying that human methods, techniques, or strategies in themselves could ever bring anyone to faith.
- It is grace alone expressed through the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ, releasing us from our bondage to sin and raising us from death to spiritual life.
- **Augustine (sola Gratia)**
 - Augustine is a huge figure in the early church.
 - He was born in 354AD in North Africa in what is now modern-day Algeria.
 - His father was a pagan – non-believer.
 - His mother, Monica, was a devout believer, and prayed for her son Augustine from his birth.
 - For the longest time, these prayers seemed to be unanswered because Augustine lived in sin.

- Especially sexual sin.
- As he battled with the truth of the Gospel, one great barrier was his sexual obsession.
- He wanted to be rid of his sexual obsession, but also not really.
- So he records in his *Confessions*, which are his autobiography, that his prayer at the time was literally, “Give me chastity...but not yet.”
- At 17, he began living with a woman and had a son with her, but never married her.
- He started reading and studying, and at 19, he became the professor of rhetoric at Carthage.
- So here he was, having achieved so much that the world could afford, and yet searching for truth as he struggled with issues of sin.
- He was a man totally wrapped up in the world, but not satisfied by it.
- This spiritual struggle lasted 9 years.
- During that time, he tried out various different options and belief systems.
- He became a Manichaein, which was a literally a mix of various religions.
- Yet through all this, Monica, Augustine’s mother, never stopped praying for her son.
- At the age of 29, he became the professor of rhetoric in Milan.
- He was turned off by Manichaeism, but wasn’t yet fully convinced by Christian doctrine.
- His conversion came at the age of 31.
- He was in a garden in Milan despairing for his life and weeping and calling God for deliverance from sin.
- Suddenly, he heard the voice of a young child from a neighbouring house singing a children’s song, which went “Take and read, take and read”.
- Without delay, he took up the nearest book, which was the NT and read Romans 13:13-14.

- *Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.*
- There and then, Augustine passed from death to life.
- Immediately he went to tell his mother, who was close at hand because she'd followed Augustine to Italy.
- And her mourning was turned to joy.
- As a Christian, while visiting a city by the name of Hippo in 391, Augustine was ordained.
- 4 years later, when the old bishop of Hippo died, Augustine became the bishop of Hippo.
- He was a deeply spiritual man, and conscious of sin – his autobiography Confessions is something you should all read.
- In it, he tells the story of how as a teen, he stole fruit from a neighbour's tree.
- It wasn't simply a childish prank, nor was it because they were hungry.
- He realised that the reason was simply the thrill of doing something wrong – the inherent sinfulness in every man.
- At a time when doctrinal controversy was all around, such a man with deep and strong biblical convictions was of a huge benefit to the church.
- Augustine was involved in several disputes.
- One was against the Donatists.
- These were the people who broke away and were re-baptising.
- He was against that.
- And wrote on the sufficiency of the sacraments because of Christ, not because of the merit of the minister who they're conveyed through.
- His greatest work was against Pelagianism.
- Pelagianism taught that you had the ability in yourself to be saved if you really wanted.

- That mankind was essentially good, not sinful and grace was not really necessary.
- Augustine knew that the sinner needs grace.
- Without it, he has no hope of being acceptable to God.
- Pelagianism was attacking the very heart of the Christian Gospel.
- Either man can save himself or he can't.
- Either salvation is all of grace or it isn't.
- There could not be some middle ground.
- And Augustine wrote of the complete sovereignty of God and the sinfulness of man.
- Augustine died in 430.
- His influence was felt for centuries after.
- The Protestant Reformation is very much a refinding of the true biblical doctrine clearly enunciated by Augustine after the errors of the Catholic church.

4. Faith alone.

- The next is SOLA FIDE.
- By Faith Alone.
- The Reformers never tired of saying that "justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone."
- When put into theological shorthand the doctrine was expressed as "justification by faith alone" the article by which the church stands or falls, according to Martin Luther.
- The Reformers called justification by faith Christianity's material principle, because it involves the very matter or substance of what a person must understand and believe to be saved.
- Justification is a declaration of God based on the work of Christ.
- It flows from God's grace and it comes to the individual not by anything he or she might do but by "faith alone" (sola fide).

- We may state the full doctrine as: Justification is the act of God by which he declares sinners to be righteous because of Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.
- **Martin Luther (sola Fide)**
- Famous man.
- Born in 1483 in Germany.
- His parents wanted him to be a lawyer, so entered university with that aim.
- He got both his bachelor's and masters quickly, but his life was changed in 1505 when he was caught in a frightening thunderstorm.
- When lightening struck the ground near him, he cried out in fear, "Help me, St Anne I will become a monk!"
- He could have let that oath slide, but he stayed true to it and in July 1505, he became a monk.
- And he threw himself into that life with full enthusiasm.
- He wrote, "If anyone could have earned heaven by the life of a monk, it was I."
- But the life of a monk brought him no peace.
- He was plagued by a deep sense of sin.
- He did as the church prescribed, and confessed his sin.
- But he realised that in that most crucial act, he was at his most selfish.
- Because he was confessing sin and performing penance out of an over-riding desire to save his own skin.
- He struggled with sin.
- Not whether it was big or little, but whether it was confessed.
- He was frightened that even after 6 hours of confessing sin, he could walk out and remember another sin which he had forgotten to confess!
- Luther continued in this spiritual wilderness for several years.

- He sought after God, but there was no comfort.
- In fact, he was increasingly terrified and angered by the wrath of God.
- By this point, he was teaching theology at Wittenberg.
- And it was the study of the Bible that was to bring a light bulb moment for him.
- For Luther, one particular verse was especially troublesome.
- Rom 1:17, *For in it [the Gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith.*
- His struggle was this.
- These words spoke of the holiness of God, and his unchanging hatred of sin and sinners.
- How could he ever achieve the kind of holiness that would turn away the anger of God against him?
- He failed to realise what *the righteous shall live by faith* really meant.
- He thought it was referring to his requirement.
- He did not yet realise that the Gospel is the saving power of God to everyone who believes in Christ because it reveals the righteousness of God.
- And this righteousness is nothing other than Christ's perfect obedience to His Father's will in life and death, even death on a cross.
- Just as the believer's sin was borne by Christ, so Christ's righteousness is given to the sinner, even though they are ungodly, and it is counted to him as righteousness.
- God brought saving truth to Luther by the very verse that troubled him so.
- He realised that the faith was not his, but Christ's.
- And he writes that I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through gates that had been flung open.
- Once this truth came, everything else in the Bible started to fall into place and make sense together as a whole.
- At the time, Roman Catholic practice was to sell things called Indulgences.

- They were guaranteed release from purgatory after a certain number of years.
- They were sold by the church to individuals for them or their dead relatives.
- The church justified this by saying that they had a vast pool of unused merit which had been stored up by the good works of Jesus and the saints.
- They had done works more perfect than God's law required for their own salvation, so had leftover.
- Whenever money was needed for building projects, this was the method that was used.
- In 1570, Pope Leo X was building St Peter's Basilica in Rome.
- To raise money, he extended the sale of indulgences.
- And selling these indulgences in and around Wittenberg where Luther was was a monk called Tetzel.
- He was a born salesman, and even had a catchy jingle – once the coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory heavenward springs.
- This enraged Luther.
- He preached against this practice.
- But decided to up the ante by writing 95 theses stating the evil of indulgences.
- And at noon on 31 Oct, 1517, he nailed them to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg.
- While he was attacking the abuse of indulgences, it called into question the idea of indulgences.
- And this was an undermining of the church's authority.
- Soon enough, the Pope got involved and ordered Luther to desist.
- Luther saw that the authority the Pope took on for himself was unscriptural and freed himself from that authority.
- And it is in this context that Luther's famous words come.

- “Unless I am convinced by the testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear arguments that I am in error, for popes and councils have often erred and contradicted themselves, I cannot withdraw, for I am subject to the Scriptures I have quoted. My conscience is captive to the Word of God. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. So help me God.”
- This was too much for the church, and Luther was condemned.
- Luther is rightly considered to Father of the Reformation.
- And the reformation in great deal was a re-discovery of the 5 solas.
- Soli Deo Gloria, Solus Christus, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, Sola Scriptura

5. Glory to God alone.

- The last of the Solas of the Reformation is SOLI DEO GLORIA.
- To God Alone be the Glory.
- Each of the great solas is summed up in the fifth Reformation motto: soli Deo gloria, meaning “to God alone be the glory.”
- It is what the apostle Paul expressed in Romans 11:36 when he wrote, “to Him be the glory forever! Amen.”
- These words follow naturally from the preceding words, “For from him and through him and to him are all things” (v. 36), since it is because all things really are from God, and to God, that we say, “to God alone be the glory.”
- **John Calvin (soli Deo Gloria)**
- Among the figures of the Reformation, John Calvin is a giant.
- J.I. Packer writes that it was Calvin who orchestrated Protestant theology, although it was Luther who wrote most of the tunes.
- Funny way to say Calvin did incredible work in systematising Reformed theology.
- His influence today is wider than any of the other reformers.
- Presbyterians follow in his footsteps.
- But so too do many others, even those who would not call themselves reformed.

- Many baptists, independents, anglicans, and even charismatic's hold huge chunks of Calvin's theology, even if they don't realise it themselves.
- This is because Calvin didn't just start up a denomination, but a way of thinking about what the Bible teaches and a whole worldview that goes with it.
- Calvin was originally French, and trained as a lawyer.
- In 1533, he was converted.
- And as being a protestant was illegal, he had to flee.
- He fled to modern-day Switzerland.
- 8 yrs later, he ended up permanently in Geneva.
- There he wanted to create a godly city filled with Christian citizens devoted to proper faith and practice.
- Calvin made Christian doctrine easier to understand.
- He systematised it.
- Institutes is huge!
- Calvin's main contribution is through His Institutes of the Christian Religion, which is the basis to what is very much Reformed Theology.
- Calvin is mainly linked with predestination.
- But that is because predestination, which the Bible clearly teaches, is a result of the main emphasis of his Institutes and Reformed Theology.
- That main emphasis is the absolute sovereignty of God.
- Especially in relation to the standing of man.
- Calvin tried to make as great as possible the distinction between the glory and sovereignty of our God and the fallen-ness of man in sin.
- So we've covered the Five Solas of the Reformation.

- Sola Scriptura – By God’s Word Alone.
- Solus Cristus – By Christ Alone.
- Sola Gratia – By Grace Alone.
- Sola Fide – By Faith Alone.
- Soli Deo Gloria – For the Glory of God Alone.
- How do these combine?
- The Christian life is by these five Solas ALONE.
- We are saved, and we live as Christians, by the way God’s Word ALONE gives us.
- And that salvation and Christian life that we read in God’s Word Alone shows us that is by the completed work of Jesus ALONE.
- And that completed work of Jesus that we read in the Bible is given to us by grace ALONE.
- And that free gift of grace is received by faith ALONE.
- And all that we have – salvation and the Christian life we now live that we have is for the glory of God ALONE.

The Doctrine of Scripture

Day 1; Session 2

- This is going to be a real quick look at what is known as the Doctrine of Scripture.
- In seminary, we spend at least one semester on this topic.
- Today, I'm going to give you a rundown in a bit over an hour.
- So as you can imagine, it's not going to be terribly detailed.
- But if you want, you can check out some more material for yourselves that I've included.
- The Bible is a collection of 66 books.
- 39 OT, 27 NT.
- These books were written by about 40 different men over 1600 years from 1500BC to 100AD.
- Just looking at these facts, it makes Bible a very special book.
- In fact, it is unique in the history of all books.
- No other book has been written by so many men over so long a time in so many places.
- But there is something that makes the Bible even more special.
- **The Bible is REVELATION.**
- God reveals Himself to us through His Word, the Bible.
- For us to know God, He has to reveal Himself.
- Otherwise, He'd never be known.
- If God chose to hide Himself, no one would ever be able to find Him.
- Our knowledge of God comes because God condescends, comes down, to communicate with us.
 - Parents speaking to little babies.
- And God has chosen to communicate with us through His written Word.
- The Bible.
- That is why we place such great emphasis on the Bible.
- It is not God in the sense that we worship the Bible.
- But it is the revelation of God.

- In it, God reveals what He's like, what He has planned, and where we are to fit into that plan.
- Now because the Bible is the revelation of God, two things then follow.
- And I'll give you the theological terms here.
- **Firstly, the Bible is INFALLIBLE.**
- This means that the Bible is not misleading.
- All that the Bible states is truthful and entirely trustworthy.
- And the Psalmist speaks of this in 19:7 when he declares, *The law of the LORD is perfect.*
- The infallibility of the Bible has to do with the character of God.
- People are fallible.
- And a lot of times, what we say and what we do don't match up.
- But with God, what He says ALWAYS comes to pass.
- ¹⁰ *As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. – Isaiah 55:10-11*
- He says it, and He means it.
- That is why the Bible, God's revelation of Himself, is infallible.
- **Secondly then, when we look at the Bible as revelation, we see that the Bible is INERRANT.**
- If you read books on the Doctrine of Scripture, you will see these two terms usually put together.
- The Bible is infallible and inerrant.
- It means that it is free of error.
- As Proverbs 30:5 says, *Every word of God is flawless.*
- **So whenever the Bible speaks on the content of our belief (doctrine), or the pattern of our lives (ethics), or records the actual events (history), it speaks the truth, without error.**
- If infallibility speaks of the whole of the Bible, then inerrancy speaks of the individual parts.
- The whole of the Bible does not mislead.
- And the individual parts of the Bible are not wrong.
- The Bible is a completely trustworthy guide, and every word in it is true.

- So why is the Bible, the revelation of God, infallible and inerrant?
- Because it is breathed out by God.
- And this is the next point.
- **The Bible is INSPIRED.**
- We have different meanings of inspired these days.
- It sort of means stimulating, or interesting.
- That person was an inspirational speaker.
- That story inspired me to be more giving.
- But when we speak of the Bible as being inspired by God, we don't mean that God nudged the writers.
- And then out of that stimulation, the writers went off and did their own thing and came up with a book to include in the Bible.
- When we speak about God inspiring the Bible, we talking in a very literal way.
- A literal understanding of the word.
- Inspired literally means "breathed by".
- **And the Bible, God's revelation, was "breathed by" God.**
- 2 Timothy 3:16 says, *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*
- That word "God-breathed" is what we are talking about.
- Theoneustos is translated as inspired in some versions.
- But the NIV has it really correct.
- God breathed out the Bible.
- In other words, God was directly involved in the writing of the Bible.
- That's what 2 Tim 3:16 is saying.
- And so too 2 Peter 1:20-21.
- *Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*
- Again, the point here is that the Word of God was not the fanciful writings of men.

- It was God who directed it.
- But the question is how involved was God in this process?
- There are lots of theories that can be summed up in 3 positions.
- **First is DICTATION.**
- Basically, what this is saying is that the human authors were bypassed in writing the Scriptures.
- They were simply the human keyboard that God typed up His Word on.
- This view can explain some of the Bible where it seems that God's Word is directly put down on paper.
- As in the prophets, or even visions and trances.
- But this does not explain the majority of the Bible that seems to show distinct differences in the style, or lack of style, of the authors.
- And statements such as Luke's where he writes, *It seemed good to me*" (Luke 1:3).
- Dictation is unlikely.
- Because the human writers' intentions and personalities show up in the writings.
- The writers did not become human keyboards while God was word-processing the Bible.
- In fact, this view is not held by any theologian of note who does not have other weird views.
- **The next is ACCOMMODATION.**
- The thought here is that God reduces Himself to the limits of the human authors.
- And because God limits Himself to man, human mistakes are inevitable.
- Just like light that passes through a stained glass is coloured, the revelation of God is tainted by the weaknesses and failings of the human writers.
- This directly contradicts and opposes the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible.
- This view is held by liberals, and must be avoided.
- **The final idea for inspiration is by SUPERVISION.**
- This theory holds that in the process of inspiration, God sovereignly supervised and ordered everything (background, family, all the circumstances) in the life of the author so that what he wrote were genuinely His words, but also the very Word of God.
- So the words were genuinely the words of the authors and addressed their immediate situation.
- But also, in God's providence, they are God's word to His people in every age.

- So if we have the idea of the stained glass again, God is like the architect who so designs the stain glass so that exactly that kind of light, colour, and mood is created when the light shines through it.
- This is obviously the view I hold to and the view I want you to hold to.
- Also, when we think of inspiration, we have to remember 2 things.
- **The inspiration is VERBAL INSPIRATION.**
- In other words, it's not just the general ideas that God was supervising and inspiring.
- The very words that were used are inspired.
- Strictly speaking, this means that only the original copies of the written Word of God is inspired.
- But in practice, the distinction between the Bibles we have today and the original manuscripts is an academic one. (speak on this later)
- **And the inspiration is PLENARY INSPIRATION.**
- Plenary means complete.
- What this means is that the inspiration extends to the whole Bible.
- Not just the parts that seem important.
- Red letter Bibles.
- God caused ALL of Scripture to be written.
- This is not the same as saying that all parts of the Bible are equally significant in laying out the Bible's message.
- When you look at a masterpiece, a tiny part of the background in the corner is not as important as the central figure.
- But they are both equally the product of the artist's brush.
- So what we have so far is this.
- The Bible is God's revelation.
- As such it is infallible and inerrant.
- And God inspired, breathed out this revelation to human authors.
- Does God continue to reveal and inspire?
- The answer to that has to be no.
- **The Bible is COMPLETE.**

- We do not need anything more than what's contained in the Word of God as we have it to be saved and to grow in maturity as Christians.
- Deut 4:2 says, *Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.*
- And in the NT, Revelation 22:18-19 says, *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.* ¹⁹ *And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*
- The Bible is not to be added to.
- It's not to be diminished.
- In other words, it's complete.
- **And so when we think of the completeness of Scripture, we often speak of the CANON of Scripture.**
- Canon comes from the Greek word which means rule or standard.
- If I were to go into detail about the Canon of Scripture and how it came to be, that'd be another several hours.
- But it is an important issue.
- Always has been.
- The common view, which is wrong, is that at some point, people decided to promote the books we have in the Bible as being Scripture.
- The books of the Bible didn't somehow ascend to become the holy writing.
- They were always considered holy, inspired, divine.
- Even in the lifetime of Paul and Peter, they're writings were considered part of Scripture.
- 2 Peter 3:16 says, *He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*
- The realising of the canon was not a case of choosing which books to include in the Bible, but looking closely to see which books should be excluded.
- OT was the 39 books of the Jewish canon.
- NT was the books written by apostles.
- So what we have is this so far.

- The Bible is God's revelation.
- As such it is infallible and inerrant.
- And God inspired, breathed out this revelation to human authors.
- And He has now stopped doing this, giving us a complete Bible.
- What then follows is this.
- **Since the Bible is God's revelation and it comes to us by His inspiration, the Bible is AUTHORITATIVE.**
- What is meant by this is that simply, the Bible should be heard and obeyed.
- Because it is the Word of God.
- That authority is based on two types of evidence.
- **INTERNAL and EXTERNAL.**
- Internally, there are several layers of evidence to support the authority of the Bible.
- But I want to focus on the 2 main ones.
- Firstly, the **testimony of the writers**
- themselves.
- In Acts 1:16, it says there, *and [Peter] said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas..."*
- Referring the OT, the Holy Spirit spoke through the mouth of David.
- Put another way, the words of David in the OT were inspired by God and so is God's revelation and has authority.
- If you look through the OT, you see time and again, "Thus says the LORD..." pointing to inspiration, and so authority.
- In the NT, we have a similar thing. But I want to point out 1 part.
- 1 Timothy 5:18.
- *For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain" and "the worker deserves his wages."*
- This verse basically means pay your pastors enough so that he can concentrate on doing what he was called for, teaching the church, without worrying about where his next meal is going to come from.
- What's really interesting about the verse is this.

- Both quotes Paul says is Scripture.
- The Word of God.
- The first about the ox is from Deut 25:4.
- From the OT.
- The second is from Luke 10:7.
- What is Paul saying about Luke?
- That he wrote Scripture.
- That it wasn't his fanciful ideas.
- That it was the inspired revelation of God through Luke.
- And again, the passage that we looked at before.
- 2 Peter 3:16.
- Paul's writing is what?
- Scripture.
- So the testimony of the writers themselves points to the authority of what they have written.
- Second is the testimony of Jesus.
- And I think this is the clincher as far as authority goes.
- As Christians, Jesus is our Lord and Saviour.
- In other words, not only did He save and redeem us, but we belong to Him.
- He rules us.
- And so His attitudes should be our attitude.
- And what is Jesus' attitude to Scripture?
- Matthew 5:17 spells it out.
- *Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*
- So internally, within the Bible itself, we see that the testimony of the writers and of Jesus Himself is that the whole of the Bible is God's special revelation which is to stand for all time.
- Then how about external evidence?

- How can we trust the Bible as a document?
- I want to give you just one piece of evidence here.
- A lot of people question the reliability of the Bible as a document.
- The basic question behind this is, “Since the Bible has been re-written so many times, can we really trust it now?”
- A lot of people think that the Bible was written in one language.
- Then translated into another.
- Then another.
- And so on until we had English, and Korean somewhere down this line of translation.
- The complaint is that because it’s been re-written and re-translated so many times, it must have been corrupted.
- Sort of like Chinese whispers.
- You start off with “tennis balls” and end up with “Dennis falls”.
- But this is not how the Bible has come to us.
- The Bible has not been re-written.
- Take the NT.
- The original writers wrote it in Greek.
- Although we don’t have the originals, we have more than 6000 copies in the original Greek.
- The earliest copies we have date from less than 100 years after the original was written.
- These manuscripts match 99.5% with each other.
- There is only 0.5% difference between all the manuscripts that we have.
- And those differences are not hugely important ones on major teaching of the Bible.
- They are relatively minor things like “Jesus” in one version, and “Jesus Christ” in another version.
- We have today a remarkably accurate compilation of the original.
- It is fair to say that for all intents and purposes, what we have is pretty much what God inspired the original writers to write.
- God in His wisdom didn’t leave the autographs.
- Us being human, we’d probably idolise it.

- So when we translate, we translate from the original to whatever language.
- English, Japanese, Korean, Turkish, Italian.
- In fact, the bible has been translated into over 1200 different languages.
- So what we have is this.
- The Bible is God's revelation.
- Infallible and inerrant.
- The Bible is through God's inspiration.
- The Bible is complete.
- And finally, the Bible is authoritative.
- This is important.
- Vital.
- We live in an age where we pick and choose what to believe.
- We hear statements like, "To me, God is..."
- It's not about our opinions.
- It's about the objective revelation of God as He has breathed out in the complete and authoritative Scriptures.
- We cannot pick and choose.
- We need to understand the Bible.
- And when I say understand, I don't mean trying to make the Bible fit into our own minds.
- We must try to fit our minds, as limited and as fallen as they are, into that of God's Word.
- We must literally stand under the Word of God.
- If it says something, then it holds. Forever.
- We don't umm and argh thinking that the Bible is culturally irrelevant. It is completely true.

The Five Points of Calvinism

Day 2: Session 3

- To understand the reason why the Five Points of Calvinism came to be, we need to quickly survey the theological conflict that occurred in Holland during the 1600s.
- In 1610, the followers of a Dutch seminary professor by the name of James Arminius (who had died the year before) put together Five Articles of Faith based on his teachings.
- The Arminians presented these 5 points as a Remonstrance (protest).
- They objected to parts of the Belgic Confession of Faith and the Heidelberg Catechism.
- Their five articles can be summarised as:
 1. God elects or reprobates on the basis of foreseen faith or unbelief.
 2. Christ died for all men and for every man, although only believers are saved.
 3. Man is so depraved that divine grace is necessary for faith or any good deed.
 4. This grace may be resisted by man.
 5. Whether all who are truly regenerate will surely persevere in the faith is a point which needs further investigation.
- In response, a national synod was called to meet in Dort in 1618.
- The purpose was to examine the views that Arminius taught in the light of Scripture.
- It was a serious re-examining of Scripture undertaken by 84 Dutch delegates, and 27 from German states, Switzerland, England, and Scotland.
- Over 7 months, they met over 154 sessions.
- The Synod of Dort in conclusion rejected as heretical the 5 doctrines of the Arminians.
- The Synod insisted that salvation was a work of grace from beginning to end.
- They rejected the view that the sinner saved himself, or even contributed to his own salvation in any way.

Total Depravity – Humanity's Complete Inability to Save Itself

- Because of the Fall, human beings are unable of themselves to savingly believe the Gospel.

- The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; their heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt.
- Their will is not free, it is in bondage to their evil nature.
- Therefore, they will not - indeed cannot - choose good over evil in the spiritual realm.
- Consequently, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring a sinner to Christ - it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives them a new nature.
- Faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation - it is God's gift to the sinner, not the sinner's gift to God.

Unconditional Election – God’s Choice to Save Whom He Chooses

- God's choice of certain individuals for salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will.
- His choice of particular sinners was not based on any foreseen response of obedience on their part, such as faith, repentance, etc.
- On the contrary, God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He has selected beforehand.
- Faith and repentance are the result, not the cause of God's choice.
- Election therefore was not determined by, or conditioned upon any virtuous quality or act foreseen in a person.
- Those whom God sovereignly elected, He brings through the power of the Spirit to a willing acceptance of Christ.
- Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

Limited Atonement – Christ’s Work Applied to the Elect

- Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them.

- His death was substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners.
- In addition to putting away the sins of His people, Christ's redemption secured everything necessary for their salvation, including faith, which unites them to Him.
- The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, therefore guaranteeing their salvation.

Irresistible Grace – The Holy Spirit's Effective Call in Salvation

- In addition to the outward general call to salvation, which is made to everyone who hears the Gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation.
- The external call (which is made to all without distinction) can be, and often is, rejected.
- The internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion.
- By means of this special call, the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ.
- He is not limited in His work of applying salvation by man's will, nor is He dependent upon man's co-operation for success.
- The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to co-operate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ.
- God's grace, therefore, is irresistible; He never fails to save those to whom His effectual call is extended.

Perseverance of the Saints – God Strengthens His People to Persevere

- All who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved.
- They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end.

- These Five Points have become to be called TULIP.
- Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, Perseverance of the saints.
- So according to Calvinism, which is biblical Christianity, salvation is accomplished by the almighty power of the triune God.
- The Father chose a people, the Son died for them, and the Holy Spirit makes Christ's work effective by bringing the elect to faith and repentance, thereby causing them to willingly obey the Gospel.
- The entire process (election, redemption, regeneration) is the work of God and is by grace alone.
- Thus God, not man, determines who will be the recipients of the gift of salvation.
- What is the difference between classical Arminianism and Calvinism?
- One proclaims a God who saves.
- The other speaks of a God who enables man to save himself.
- One makes salvation depend on the work of God alone.
- The other on the work of man.
- One regards faith as part of God's gift of salvation.
- The other as man's own contribution to salvation.
- One gives all the glory of saving believers to God.
- The other divides the praise between God, who made salvation possible, and man, who made it work.
- Calvinism, and Reformed Theology, declares loudly and clearly that *God alone saves sinners*.

Ordo Salutis

Day 2: Session 4

Introductory Reflections

1. 1 Corinthians 1:17-25
2. Romans 10:13-17

INTRODUCTION

- God has decided to bring sinners to salvation through the preaching of the Gospel.
- *It pleased God through the folly of what we preach (the Gospel) to save those who believe,* says the Bible at 1 Co 1:21.
- This is why Christ gave the Church the task of going into the world to preach the Gospel to every person.
- The Bible underlines the way of salvation.
- *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ (Rom 10:17).*
- It is not about emotions or experiences.
- It is about the truth of the Gospel preached.

WHY SOME?

- But the question arises, why do some people accept the Gospel when they hear it, while others do not?
- Why does the Gospel bring conversion to some, while to others, it just hardens their hearts?
- **It is not because of the GOSPEL**
- It is the same Gospel that is preached to one person as it is preached to another.
- Jesus is freely offered in the Gospel to all sinners without exception.
- It's false to think that salvation is only offered to the elect.
- It is offered to all.

- As Rom 10:13 says, *For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*
- There is nothing in the Gospel itself that prevents any person from accepting the offer of salvation contained in it.
- **It is not because of PEOPLE**
- If one person accepts the Gospel and another person does not, we can be mistaken in thinking that one man had a better nature than the other.
- We might imagine that one was more sinful by nature than the other.
- But this is not true.
- The Bible tells us that all people are by nature dead in trespasses and sins.
- Eph 2:1, *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.*
- And there is no person who will ever accept the Gospel of their own natural will and desire.
- 1 Co 2:14, *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*
- The simple truth is that if God were to leave people to their own power, and their own natural desire, no person on earth would ever accept the Gospel.
- And yet, people do accept the Gospel.
- So why?

EFFECTUAL CALLING.

- People who accept the Gospel not only hear it preached, but are also regenerated by the Holy Spirit.
- That is why they are the effectually called.
- This process is as follows:
 - The Gospel is preached to people.
 - All who hear the Gospel are dead in sin.
 - They cannot believe it because they consider it to be foolish.
 - In some, the Holy Spirit regenerates.

- This is new birth, new creation, being raised up from the dead.
- It is a miracle above all other miracles.
- It restores a person spiritually.
- As a result, the Gospel has a powerful effect.
 - What seemed foolishness before now stabs at the heart.
 - And what before seemed only as the words of men is now received as the real truth, the word of God which effectively works in those who believe. (1 Thess 2:13).
- An analogy is Lazarus in John 11.
- Lazarus was dead.
- He couldn't hear or do a thing because he was dead.
- Yet Jesus walked up to his grave and commanded him to come out.
- This is similar to what happens when a sinner hears the Gospel.
- In spiritual deadness, it goes in one ear and out the other.
- But when the Holy Spirit calls on them in their deadness, they are brought back to life.
- Some people say this makes people little more than robots.
- It is said those who do not receive the HS cannot be saved even if they want to be.
- And those who do receive the HS are saved even if they don't want to be.
- In other words, this teaching is said to leave no place for man's own will.
- This is extremely far from the truth.
- **No one is lost against their own WILL.**
- The natural person doesn't want the things of God.
- Matthew 12:33-37
- **All choices come from the HEART.**
- **Words and deeds reveal our NATURE.**
- **Because of sin, we are free to do what we WANT, but not free to do what we SHOULD.**

- People don't want to be saved in the way that God requires.
- It is never a person's will to accept salvation through Jesus Christ alone.
- And this is not God's fault, as this is not how he was created.
- And God has not forced mankind to feel this way.
- It is a result of mankind's free choice in the Garden of Eden.
- **Regeneration is an act of CREATION, not COERCION.**
- Coercion is forcing a person to act against their own will.
- Creation is creating in a person a new will.
- Regeneration is giving a person a new heart.
- When we speak of this work, we speak of **IRRESISTIBLE GRACE.**
- And this is not God making people do what they don't want to do.
- What we mean is that God changes people so that they do what they did not want to do before.

EFFECTS of the Call

- Three things are bound to happen.
- **We will see the TRUTH of the Gospel**
- As a blind man whose sight has been restored.
- This person will see the truth of the Gospel for what it is – the means of salvation.
- **We will see the REALITY of our sin**
- Such a person will feel their need of Jesus as their substitute who died to pay the price for their sins.
- This will not be something forced upon them.
- It will rather be something that they feel deeply because of their renewed nature.
- **We will see that REPENTANCE and TRUST in Jesus is the only way**
- This desire will be because they now realise their own need.
- So the work of the HS is not to force people to be saved.
- But it opens their eyes, and turns them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God so they may receive forgiveness of sins.

DANGERS

- In being certain of our own effectual calling, there is a danger to avoid.
- **It's not about EMOTIONS.**
- Some may have strong feelings or extraordinary experiences without being regenerated.
- Effectual calling may be sudden.
- But it may also be in a gradual way.
- There may be strong feelings, but it is not always so.

ORDO SALUTIS (ORDER OF SALVATION)

ELECTION

Before creation, because of His sovereign good pleasure, God had chosen some people to be saved.

CALLING (EFFECTUAL CALL)

God summons people to Himself through the human proclamation of the Gospel so they respond in saving faith.

REGENERATION

God secretly and sovereignly imparts spiritual life to those who have been called.

CONVERSION

We willingly respond to the Gospel call, repenting of sin and placing faith in Christ for salvation.

JUSTIFICATION

An instantaneous legal act of God in which He declares that our sins are forgiven and Christ's righteousness is ours.

ADOPTION

An act of God in which He makes us members of His family.

SANCTIFICATION

A progressive, lifelong work of God and man that frees us from sin and makes us more like Christ.

PERSEVERANCE

All those who are justified will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians to the end of their lives.

GLORIFICATION

God will finally remove all trace of sin from the Christian and give him a resurrection body.

The Covenantal Framework

Day 3: Session 5

Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation.¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.¹¹ And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end,¹² so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

*¹³For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself,¹⁴ saying, “**Surely I will bless you and multiply you.**”¹⁵ And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.¹⁶ For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation.¹⁷ So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath,¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.¹⁹ We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. – Hebrews 6:9-20*

INTRODUCTION

- This passage puts something very important in perspective about the covenant.
- The whole function of the covenant, and especially the of the covenant signs, is to assure us of God’s favour.
- This passage talks about God confirming His promise by the covenant, a mechanism which He put in place in order to assure us of His purposes in salvation toward us.
- When you struggle with doubt, usually corresponding to that doubt is a struggle with assurance.
- One of the things that God has spent the most time on in His Word from the very beginning is the assurance of believers.
- When Abraham was wavering in his faith in Gen 15-17, God assured him with the signs of the covenant.
- When David was wavering in his faith in 2 Samuel 7, God assured him with a covenant, establishing David’s line on the throne.
- When we waver in our faith, about the purpose of God towards us, we have signs of the covenant – Communion and Baptism.
- So the covenant functions to assure believers of God’s steadfast purpose.
- He comes to us and says, “I will do this. And I not only promise it to you, I bind Myself by oath, and since there is no one greater than me, I bind myself by my own oath, to perform the promises I have made to you.”

- And the whole Bible is essentially the working out of God's covenant.
- God's covenant, then, is the **GOSPEL**.
- And God's covenant gives us **ASSURANCE**.
- Ursinus wrote in Heidelberg Catechism, *What is your only comfort in life and in death?*
 - *That I am not my own, but belong - body and soul, in life and in death - to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to Him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.*
- This rich comfort has been the hope and faith of God's people.
- The comfort is that despite the ferocity and despair of sin that surrounds us and is in us, the God of all comfort (2 Cor 1:3) has mercifully condescended to save His people from their sins (Matt 1:21) by means of a covenant.

THE COVENANT IS CRUCIAL TO CHRISTIANS

- **It is how we know GOD**
- Because God has mercifully condescended to reveal Himself to us by means of a covenant, then we cannot know Him correctly if we ignore His chosen means of expression.
- **It is how we know WHAT TO DO**
- God has commissioned His people to proclaim, teach, and defend the Gospel.
- This Gospel is God's covenant promises.
- So if we fail to know the covenant, we cannot fully and faithfully proclaim, teach, or defend the Gospel.
- **It is how we know SCRIPTURE**
- If we do not understand the covenant, we cannot properly understand the Bible.

- If everything in the Bible is intricately interwoven with the theme of the covenant, then we can't know any part of Scripture properly without the covenantal foundations.
- To miss the covenant is to miss the Bible.
- **It is how we GROW**
 - **ASSURANCE**
 - **STEADFASTNESS**
 - **BOLDNESS**
 - **THANKFULNESS**
- If we recognise and embrace God as our covenant Lord and know what He has done, we cannot help but grow in these areas.

THE COURSE OF THE COVENANT

- God has worked out His covenant throughout the course of history.
- So God's covenantal work in salvation is also known as **REDEMPITIVE HISTORY**.
- It flows from Genesis to Revelation.
- It is unified with the promise, **"I will be your God and you will be My people."**

The CONTENT OF THE COVENANT

- The covenant is a **BINDING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP**.
- The covenant **INVOLVES CONDITIONS**.
- In a covenant between two people, each person makes certain binding promises, agreeing that God will serve as judge and avenger against the person who breaks the agreement.
- A covenant between people assumes general equality and agreement between the persons involved.
- Equal participants can make suggestions as to conditions.

- But no such bargaining is possible between the sovereign Lord and His finite creatures.
- The covenant is **SOVEREIGNLY ADMINISTERED**.
- We find this in all the covenants God makes with people (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Christ).
- The servants do not set any terms or conditions for the Lord.
- Instead, it is God who sovereignly and graciously imposes all stipulations, conditions, sanctions, promises and rituals.
- God's Covenant is **UNILATERAL**, not **BILATERAL**.
- God's covenants declare His lordship in salvation and over all creation.
- So the Lord-Servant covenants in the Bible are not mutual compacts between equals.
- They are sovereignly and unilaterally imposed bonds.
- Adam does not offer God any advice.
- Abraham does not negotiate any clauses.
- David does not propose any terms.
- The covenant is exclusively the Lord's gracious and sovereign mandate.
- The covenant **FOCUSES ON UNION AND COMMUNION**.
- The covenant is not some hollow, legal relationship between God and His servants.
- It is a bond of union and communion.
- The Lord as husband has laid down His life in service to His bride, and His servants as the bride are to respect and honour the husband.
- Likewise, the Lord as Father warmly loves, protects, and disciplines His people as children who are to obey, reverence, and rejoice in the presence of their Father.
- So God's covenant is a *God-ordained bond of union, peace, friendship, and service between the Lord and His people*.
- As we follow this map, we will end with the final picture.
- The LORD began His work of union and communion by covenanting with Adam as our representative in Creation.
- But Adam violated that initial covenant and so the Lord graciously provided another covenant – a covenant for the fallen, a covenant of salvation or redemption.

- Immediately after the Fall, the LORD progressively reveals this gracious, redemptive covenant through His promises to the fallen Adam; His preservation of the world after Noah; His promise of a people and land to Abraham; and His greater revelation of these promises to Moses, David, and the prophets.
- Each new stage beautifully develops from and expands upon the previous.
- Like pixelated image growing in resolution.
- Ultimately, this single, unified, and glorious redemptive covenant culminated in the work of Christ, the Last and True Adam, our representative who, in covenant with the Father before the world began, restored the union and communion that the First Adam discarded.

The THREE COVENANTS

The COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

- The first covenant we consider in the scope of Reformed Theology does not directly include human beings.
- But it is absolutely important.
- The Covenant of Redemption involves the parties who work together to effect human redemption – The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.
- This covenant is rooted in eternity.
- God’s plan of redemption wasn’t a reaction or a plan B.
- God worked out His plan of redemption before creation, and even before the Fall.
- The covenant of redemption demonstrates the harmony within the Trinity.
- The covenant of redemption stresses the complete and total agreement between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the plan of salvation.
- This covenant defines the roles of the Persons the Trinity in redemption.
- The Father sends the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- The Son enters this world by incarnation voluntarily.
- He is not a reluctant Redeemer.
- The Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to us for our salvation.

- The Father is pleased to send the Son and Spirit in to the world.
- And They are pleased to carry out their respective missions.
- John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that He SENT His only begotten Son into the world.
- The initiative for redemption belongs to the Father.
- The Son willingly subordinates Himself to this sending.
- The Son delights in doing the will of the Father.
- During His earthly ministry, Jesus often spoke of His willingness to carry out the Father's plan.
- He said that doing the Father's will was His "food" (John 4:34).
- He promised His disciples that they would inherit the Kingdom the Father had prepared for them from the beginning (Matt 25:34).
- All this points backwards to eternity.
- To the unity of purpose of all three members of the Trinity.
- Just as the act of creation was a Trinitarian work, so the work of redemption is Trinitarian.
- The Father sends the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- The Son accomplishes the mediatorial work of redemption on our behalf.
- And the Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to us.
- The Covenant of Redemption tells you that when Christ dies for you, it makes your salvation absolutely certain.

The COVENANT OF WORKS

- The initial covenant God made with mankind was a Covenant of Works.
- Westminster calls it Covenant of Life.
- Some theologians call it Covenant of Creation.
- In this covenant, according the Westminster Confession, "life was promised to Adam; and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience." (7.2)
- It is important to note that a condition is attached to this first covenant.
- The condition is personal and perfect obedience.

- This is a condition of works, and this is the covenant's chief stipulation.
- Life is promised as a reward for obedience, for satisfying the condition of the covenant.
- The stipulation of obedience indicates clearly that this covenant was not unconditional.
- Genesis 2:15-17
- *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to **work it and keep it**. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, **but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**"*
- God has given no blanket promise that all people will enjoy eternal blessing no matter how they respond to His law.
- Law is given at the beginning, and obedience to it functions as a stipulation for covenant blessing.
- The obedience required is perfect and personal.
- The idea of partial or imperfect obedience is excluded.
- Man is created in God's image and is given the ability and duty to mirror and reflect God's holy character.
- There is no room for the slightest transgression.
- This is why it's called the Covenant of Works.
- Because the condition of the covenant is the obedience of Adam – the work of Adam.
- At this point, you may be confused, thinking, "Hang on, is salvation by works possible?"
- Salvation by works is impossible not because it's a conceptual impossibility.
- It's impossible because it's a moral impossibility.
- We are rebellious human beings fallen in Adam.
- And we have no hope for moral capacity to fully obey the law of God.
- In Eden, the penalty for violating the covenant's terms was death.
- This penalty was not limited to spiritual death, nor would the penalty's execution be delayed.

- On the day the transgression occurred, that Adam and Eve did not die physically immediately is already a display of God's mercy and grace.
- The original mandate was clear – rebellion is death.
- And this obedience had to be perfect, and personal.
- Personal refers to individual obedience.
- The covenant of works made no provision for obedience to God's law by one person on behalf of another.
- This feature is introduced in the Covenant of Grace.

The COVENANT OF GRACE

- The Westminster Confession declares this about the Covenant of Grace.
- "Man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace; wherein He freely offered to sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe." (7:3)
- This covenant is made between God and sinners, while the Covenant of Works was made between God and His unfallen creatures.
- Once that covenant was violated and the Fall had occurred, mankind's only hope was rooted utterly in grace.
- The Covenant of Grace does not completely replace the Covenant of Works.
- God still exercises His just judgment on lawbreakers.
- So the Covenant of Grace is in addition to the Covenant of Works.
- All human beings are included in the Covenant of Works.
- Humanity can try to ignore or reject it, but humanity cannot escape it.
- We are all under the sanctions of the Covenant of Works.
- And so we desperately need the Covenant of Grace.
- And the Covenant of grace actually makes it possible for the Covenant of Works to be fulfilled.

- While we are justified by grace through faith, our salvation is ultimately accomplished by the fulfilment of the Covenant of Works.
- This is achieved by the second Adam, Jesus Christ, who by His perfect and personal obedience fulfils the requirements of the Covenant of Works.
- What is so gracious about the Covenant of Grace is that God accepts Christ's obedience in our place.
- Christ does for us what we are incapable of doing.
- Where we have not been personally obedient, God accepts the perfect, vicarious obedience of Christ in our place.
- The Covenant of Grace is seen throughout the pages of the OT in specific covenants that God makes with Abraham, Moses, David, Israel.
- Those covenants are expansions of the covenant of grace.

Promise & Fulfilment

Day 3: Session 6

- **TYPES & ANTITYPES**
- Type and antitype is not about someone who likes to use a keyboard vs someone who likes to use a pen and paper.
- The computer hases and the computer have-nots.
- Or the paper and pen hases, and the paper and pen have-nots.
- The literal meaning of the word type is a model or representation of something that is more real and fully the original.
- Prototype – experimental model.
- Type is a model.
- When you type something up, you're getting something which is not the original, but points to the original in some way.
- This is what we mean by type and antitype.
- Type are the things in the Old Testament that ultimately point to Christ.
- I'll give you a definition that will be helpful.
- ***A type is a real person, place, object, or event that God ordained to act as a predictive pattern or resemblance of Christ's person and work.***
- Let's unpack that definition.
- *A type is a real person, place, object or event... – it is true, real, and factual.*
- *...that God ordained... - it doesn't resemble Christ's person or work by accident, but by divine plan.*
- *...to act as a predictive pattern or resemblance... - the same truth is found in the picture and the fulfilment.*
- *...of Christ's person and work. – the truth in the picture is enlarged, heightened, and clarified in the fulfilment.*
 - Eg – Passover Lamb is a type of Christ.
 - The Passover was a real event.
 - The Lamb was a real object.

- The truths of substitutionary sacrifice and redemption by blood were found in both the type and the antitype.
- These truths were enlarged, heightened, and clarified in the antitype.
- The antitype was the God-man – not just a lamb.
- And He redeemed from spiritual and eternal bondage, not just physical and temporary bondage.

TYPES OF TYPES

- With that understanding in place, let's look at some types of types.
- **PERSONS**
- Adam, as a representative man, was a type of Christ (Rom 5:19)
- **PLACES**
- Jerusalem is a type of heaven (Gal 4:22, 26; Heb 12:22; Rev 21:2)
- **OBJECTS**
- The tabernacle was a type of God's dwelling with men through Christ (John 1:14; Heb 9:8-9)
- **EVENTS**
- Noah's flood typified the sudden destruction to come at the end (Matt 24:37-39)
- **OFFICES**
- The prophet, priest, and king were all anointed with oil and typified Christ was anointed with the HS to be the greatest prophet (Acts 3:22), the greatest priest (Heb 3:1) and the greatest king (Rev 7:14).
- **ACTIONS**
- The sprinkling of blood on the mercy-seat typified the sacrificial death of Christ which gave access to the Father (Lev 16:9,10; Heb 9:11, 12)
- **INSTITUTIONS**
- Passover.

The OFFICES of Israel POINTING to Christ

- Let's look at this in the context of the **three offices** of the OT.
- **PROPHET – PRIEST – KING**
- And connected with the **redemptive historical narrative** of the Bible.
- **CREATION – FALL – REDEMPTION – RECREATION**

Created in God's Image

- What does this mean?
- The best way to think of this is to look at three adjectives.
- Created in God's image in:
 1. In knowledge
 2. In righteousness
 3. In holiness
- Let's look at this in detail, and then at the end, fill in this table.

Man

- When God created man, He created him in God's own image.
- Man originally had true knowledge, holiness, and righteousness.

Knowledge: Man as PROPHET

- That man was created after God's image in knowledge means that Adam, while he was without sin, was able to understand God's revelation of Himself in the world of the Garden of Eden.
- When Adam named the animals in Gen 2:20, he wasn't simply thinking up collections of sounds to latch onto a creature.
- He was expressing the true nature of things.
- For example, when Adam sees the woman God created, He called her Eve.

- Eve means life-giver and he calls her that because he knew in his connectedness to God that the purpose of the woman was to be the mother of all the living people. (Gen 3:20)
- In other words, Adam while he was without sin was a prophet in the highest sense of the office.
- We think of prophets as merely people who tell the future.
- But biblically, prophets were people who could SEE the truth of God.
- That is why in the OT, prophets were often referred to as seers – see-ers.
- Adam in creation was able to truly know and see God without any distortion.

Holiness: Man as PRIEST

- It also says that God created man after His own image in holiness.
- This means that while Adam was without sin, he was wholly consecrated to God.
- He was totally set apart, devoted to God.
- A word that means totally set apart and devoted is “holy”.
- Adam was holy.
- He had holiness.
- He was holy because he found his supreme delight in God alone.
- Before sin, Adam was far from afraid in the presence of the Lord.
- Rather, he was at peace there.
- He was set apart for the Lord in all things, by a willing desire.
- He was, in a very real sense, the true priest.

Righteousness: Man as KING

- God created man after His own image in righteousness.
- Righteousness is about obedience to God.
- He who does what God will have him do does that which is righteous.
- And one of the things that God commanded Adam to do was to rule over the earth.
- So it is right to say that Adam, before the fall, was a King.
- For a king is someone who rules.

- Adam ruled over all the world that God had placed under his dominion.
- Because Adam knew God's will (as a prophet), and desired to serve God alone (as a priest), he was also able to do the works of righteousness as king over creation.

	PROPHET	PRIEST	KING
CREATION	KNOWLEDGE	RIGHTEOUSNESS	HOLINESS
FALL	IGNORANCE	SIN	GUILT
REDEMPTION	Knowledge	Holiness	Righteousness
RECREATION	KNOWLEDGE	HOLINESS	RIGHTEOUSNESS

- So man was in effect, **prophet, priest and king**.
- When Adam sinned and fell, we sinned and fell with him.
- And so all people, apart from Jesus, became **ignorant, sinful, and guilty**.
- And the whole message of the Bible is about what God has done to save some men from this lost condition.
- To move them from a state of **ignorance, sin, and guilt** to **knowledge, holiness, and righteousness**.

Israel

- The OT outlines what God did to prepare for the day when He would send His Son to save His people.
- It involved choosing His people – Israel.
- And from Israel, men were chosen by God to serve as **prophets, priests, and kings**.
- At first, these offices were not clearly separate from each other.
- Abraham was a prophet (Gen 20:7), was also a priest by offering up sacrifices (Gen 13:4), and had a kingly function (Gen 14:1-2, 13, 17-24).

- But once Abraham's family grew large enough to be a nation, God appointed different men to hold these offices alongside each other.
- God appointed Moses as the prophet and promised that other prophets would follow until the last great prophet came (Deut 18:15-20).
- He also appointed Aaron as the High Priest (ex 29:29).
- Later, God reveals that the succession of priests would end when Christ comes (1 Sam 3:35ff).
- And when David was set as king of Israel, God also promised that his line would continue until the Son was born and HE would sit on the throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; Ps 2; 72; 110).
- While there were unfaithful examples, God worked through the faithful men.
- Through faithful prophets, God gave His true word.
- Through faithful priests, God showed how there could be no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood.
- Through faithful kings God showed how His people were to obey Him in all things.
- But in all of this, God showed that human effort was not enough and salvation would never be fully and perfectly accomplished until the promised Messiah came.

Jesus

- When Jesus at last came, He not only completed each of these three offices, but He also united them in one great work of redemption.
 - **On Earth**
 - He spoke as no man before and spoke the truth – PROPHET.
 - He made the once for all sufficient sacrifice of Himself on the cross – PRIEST.
 - He claimed authority over men, as either Saviour or Judge – KING.
 - **In Heaven**
 - By His Spirit He has given us the Bible and applies it to our hearts – PROPHET.

- He applies the benefits of His sacrifice to the elect through the Word and seals this as a guarantee through the sacraments – PRIEST.
- All authority in heaven and earth now belongs to Him, until all the enemies of Christ are put down, including death itself – KING.

Conversion

- So Christ becomes our Saviour in terms of these three offices.
- Man by his fall became ignorant, sinful, and guilty.
- He can only be saved when ignorance is replaced by true knowledge.
- Sinfulness by holiness.
- Guilt by true righteousness.
- So what is necessary for the CONVERSION of the sinner?
 1. *He must know what none can teach him except Christ, by His Word and Spirit. He must know his own sin and misery, and the work of Jesus Christ as the only remedy.*
 2. *He must feel his need for the cleansing blood of Jesus. And He must hold that Christ's sacrifice is sufficient.*
 3. *He must cease to live a life of slavery to sin by receiving Christ, which means to rest on Him alone for salvation as He freely offers it in the Gospel.*
- So a person is only saved if and when Christ alone becomes their prophet, priest, and king.

Church

- No church in this life is perfect.
- But no church is a true church unless it acknowledges Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King.
- And this is done by three definite marks:
 1. *The Faithful Preaching of the Word*

2. *The Right Administration of the Sacraments*

3. *The Exercise of Church Discipline*

The Moral Law

Day 4: Session 7

▪ GOD'S WILL REVEALED

- It is man's duty to obey God.
- The reason for this is that God is the Creator and mankind the creature.
- Because God created mankind, He therefore has a right to require what He wants from mankind.
- Because mankind is a creature, we have no right to go on our own way, and do our own thing.
- The only right way for mankind is to obey God.
- So the will of God is the rule by which mankind should live.
- This will of God for mankind was first revealed to man in the **MORAL LAW**.
- This moral law is summarised in the Ten Commandments, with the Ten Commandments summarised by Christ's two great commandments of love.
- The Moral Law was first given to Adam through the Covenant of Works as the rule of his obedience.
- This was essentially the same as the Ten Commandments, which were later given through Moses.
- **TEN COMMANDMENTS** were not in the same **FORM**, but had the same **MEANING** as the Covenant of Works.
 - A helpful analogy would be light and splitting into its spectrum.

▪ THE LAW WAS UNIVERSALLY GIVEN

- That the law always meant the same thing is seen in Rom 2:14-15.
 - The Gentiles **DID NOT RECEIVE** the Law.
 - The Gentiles **OBSERVE** the law.
 - Therefore, the Gentiles **HAVE** the law.
- The Gentiles have the "work" of the law written on their hearts.

- It's not the "word" of the law.
- In other words, the form is different, but the meaning is the same.
- The question then crops up: why?
- Why did God again reveal the moral law if it was already written in the hearts of people from the beginning?
- ***The answer is because of sin.***
- Sinful people have tried very hard to get rid of their own inner sense of God's moral law.
- Paul says that men have tried to suppress the truth of God.
- While this was never completely successful, it was necessary for God to reveal His moral law again in the Ten Commandments.
- For only in this way could sinful people clearly see what God required.
- Because mankind did everything they could to forget the moral law of God placed in their own heart and conscience, it was very necessary that God speak to him again to reveal His holy will.

- **THE LAW HAS UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY**
- The Ten Commandments weren't just given to the people of Israel.
- Nor was it given so that Israel could earn their salvation by keeping the law.
- The Bible clearly teaches this is not true.
- The law was given because of sin. (Gal 3:19)
- It was given, in other words, so that all of God's people would come to see how sinful they really are.
- It was given just as much for us today as for the people of God in the OT times.
- **So the Law is needed BEFORE we come to Christ.**
- **But the Law is also need AFTER we come to Christ.**
- We are not to forget the law after Christ has saved us.
- Christ's salvation does not cancel out the Law.
- **The Law DRIVES us to Christ in order to be saved.**
- **And Christ BRINGS us to the Law because we are saved.**

- John 14:21

- **TYPES OF LAWS**

- There are other laws in the Bible besides the Moral Law.
- There are 3 types.
- **MORAL, CEREMONIAL, and CIVIL.**
- Ceremonial laws have to do with the sacrificial worship of the tabernacle and temple.
- Civil laws have to do with how Israel was to be governed and the rules they lived by in day to day life.
- Ceremonial no longer apply.
- They have been fulfilled in Christ.
- Civil is no longer in the same way as the true Israel of God is no longer a geopolitical nation as it was in the OT.
- But the Moral Law of God, contained in the Ten Commandments and the Two Commandments of Love, continue on.
- Jesus Himself said that He didn't come to abolish the Law, but to fulfil it (Mat 5:17).
- Fulfilling the Moral Law is about saving us so that we too might turn from our sin and being to walk in the way of God's commandments.

- **LAW & LOVE**

- A false idea is that law and love are contradictory.
- The idea here is that law requires one thing, while love dictates another.
- This idea has been called by different names – eg, Situational Ethics.
- But the basic premise is that love may be against law and law may be against love.
- And the proponents of this view sometimes try to portray Jesus as a person who went against the law to fulfil the law of love.
- This is totally contradictory to the teaching of the Bible.
- In matt 5:17, Jesus clearly shows He came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it.

- Furthermore, He warned His disciples against breaking any of the commandments, or teaching others to do so. (Matt 5:19)
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus refuses to be bound by traditional understanding and interpretation of the Law, but He did show how absolute the Law really is.
- In fact, Jesus' standards are far superior and rigorous than the human understanding set by Jewish tradition.
- So far from teaching there is conflict between law and love, Jesus taught that love leads to keeping of the law. (John 14:15; 14:21; 1 John 5:3)
- So it is a wrong conception of love when there is a tendency to oppose the law of God.
- If we only love ourselves, we will feel led to do things God forbids.
- But if we love God supremely, then our neighbour as ourselves, it will be our desire to do the will of God.
- And so love will lead to the keeping of the law.

- **ONE LAW THROUGH ALL TIME**
- One false teaching fails to see that unity of the OT and NT.
- And this is in Dispensational Theology.
- The basic error in this teaching is the thought that the law of God is to be seen differently in the two testaments.
- One form of this error is to say that the people of God in the OT were required to keep the law of God first, and then were saved by God as a reward for their obedience.
- But we notice in Exodus 20:2 that this is not true.
- When God delivered His people out of slavery in Egypt, it was not because they had kept the Ten Commandments.
- He first delivered them, and then gave them the Ten Commandments.
- So they were not expected to try to keep the law in order to be saved.
- Rather it was – **OBEDIENCE because they were ALREADY SAVED.**
- And this is exactly the same in the life of the Christian.

- The NT does not say that we are first to try keeping the law of God, and then we will be saved.
- It teaches us that we must be saved first and then strive to keep God's commandments.
- A second, more dangerous error is that because Jesus has kept the law of God for His people, we don't need to keep the Ten Commandments.
- This is Antinomianism.
- In other words, it teaches that the NT believer has no need to pay attention to the Ten Commandments, that it is now redundant.
- In fact, we have a greater obligation to keep God's commands because we have been saved.

- **THE LAW'S PERFECTION**

- **In the Ten Commandments, we have expressed the WHOLE WILL OF GOD.**

- We do not need new additions to this list.
- They are sufficient.

- **In the Ten Commandments, we have a DIVINE ORDER IN THE ARRANGEMENT.**

- The first 4 teaches us true worship of the true God.
- The last 6 teaches us true service of the true God.
- So the Ten Commandments have an order.
- And the principle behind the order is the centrality of God.
- God is supremely important.
- The whole 10 are about God – not simply 1-4 about God and 6-10 about man.

- **In the Ten Commandments, we have an ABSOLUTE UNITY.**

- We cannot break one, without in effect breaking the rest.
- The first 4 Commandments are about **WORSHIP of God.**
 - The first commandment is concerned with the **OBJECT of true worship.**
 - The second commandment is concerned with **HOW we truly worship.**
 - The third commandment is concerned with the **ATTITUDE of true worship.**
 - The fourth commandment is concerned with the **TIME of true worship.**

- The final 6 are about **SERVICE of God.**
 - The fifth commandment is concerned with **OBEDIENCE IN SERVICE.**
 - The sixth commandment is about **HONOUR IN SERVICE.**
 - The seventh commandment is about **RESPECT IN SERVICE.**
 - The eighth commandment is about **OWNERSHIP IN SERVICE.**
 - The ninth commandment is about **WORDS IN SERVICE.**
 - The tenth commandment is about **CONTENTMENT IN SERVICE.**

The Cultural Mandate

Day 4: Session 8

Introductory Text

And God blessed them. And god said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” – Genesis 1:28

- Here, God charges Adam and Eve, the first man and woman to rule the earth.
- However, they are not to tend the creation any way they see fit, but for God’s glory.
- Adam and Eve were each created to be God’s stewards.
- The Cultural Mandate is the church’s directive to affect EVERY area of life for Jesus, who is Lord of all.
- The Cultural Mandate is an all-inclusive concept that extends to every sphere of life where man’s mind and hands are employed to control and utilise the processes of nature for the good of all.
- With this basic idea, let’s first look at the Lordship of Jesus, and then move on to how that affects our understanding of work.

The LORDSHIP of Christ

- **Over the SECULAR and the SACRED.**
- *For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. Romans 14:8*

The Christian LIFE is under the LORDSHIP of Christ

- ERRORS:
- Being SILENT when Scripture SPEAKS.
 - ANTINOMIAN.
 - IGNORING God by IGNORING His Word.

- Thinking LIBERTY = LICENCE.
- Freedom FROM sin is not freedom TO sin.
- SPEAKING when Scripture is SILENT
 - LEGALIST.
 - PRETENDING to be God by PRESCRIBING.
- The right way.
- SPEAK when Scripture SPEAKS; Be SILENT when Scripture is SILENT.

The ABUNDANT life is characterised by LIBERTY & RESPONSIBILITY

- LIBERTY is freedom from sin and its curse.
- RESPONSIBILITY is freedom to live for God in obedience to His Word.

PRINCIPLES for Christian living

- Christ alone is LORD.
 - Only Christ's RULES MATTER.
- CREATION is FOR Christ.
 - It is GOOD, not WELL
- Creation is GOOD
 - It is INTERNAL things, not EXTERNAL things that DEFILE us.
- FREEDOM in Christ is not OPPORTUNITY for the flesh.
 - Free from SIN and free to OBEY.
- Man-made RULES USURP Christ's Lordship.

WORK

- **Being IDLE is WRONG.**
- *And we urge you brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. – 1 Thessalonians 5:14*
- The unemployed are not being condemned.
- Not about people who want to work, but can't.

- About people who have work and can work, but don't.
- Paul is addressing the issue of work.

For Christians, WORK isn't just WORK

- It isn't work as the world understands it.
- We need to understand work BIBLICALLY.
- From God's perspective.
- The modern conception of work is dangerous and harmful, and it is hurting people.
- The world is shrivelling and dying because they don't have a radical, revolutionary doctrine of work that God gives.
- The Christian view of work is unlike anything else in any other religion or thought process in this world.
- And people are losing out for the lack of it.
- We need to recover a true God-centred doctrine of work.

For Christians, WORK isn't just MONEY

- The world says work is what you do for a paycheque.
- And that paycheque is what allows you to do what you really want to do.
- Few people today work for the sake of the work they do.
- Most people work in order to achieve their real aim – money or status.
 - Doctor must be for healing or relieving people of suffering and hurt.
 - Lawyer for the sake of justice and truth.
- We need to recover a biblical doctrine of work.

For Christians, WORK isn't just a JOB

- Work isn't just about the job you have 9-5.
- It's anything you are engaged in.
- We have to respond in the right way when it comes to the things we do.

For Christians, work is:

The GRACIOUS EXPRESSION of CREATIVE ENERGY in the SERVICE OF OTHERS.

- Unpack this with 2 practical guidelines and 2 motivational principles.
 - These all need to be held together.
 - I'll give the practical guidelines first, but it has to be held with the motivational principles.
 - Otherwise, you won't see the true radical nature of the biblical doctrine of work.
 - You need to see the radical nature of the biblical doctrine of work.
 - You MUST see it.
 - Because:
 - **The BIBLICAL DOCTRINE of WORK is the only way to find TRUE REST.**
 - Christians have a work that arises from rest, but the world has a restless work.
-
- So the motivational principles then.

The reason you work is to REFLECT God.

- **God:**
 - **CREATED this world → CREATION**
 - **CAME to this world → INCARNATION**
 - **Will REDEEM this world → RESURRECTION**
 - **Will RESTORE this world → CONSUMMATION**
- God loves this world that He made.
- We're not being redeemed OUT of this world.
- We're being redeemed FOR this world.
- So all work should be an *expression of creativity* and bringing order out of chaos.

The reason you work is to PLEASE God.

- We have to work to please God.
- Not your market segment.
- Not your human boss.

- God becomes your market segment.
- God becomes your boss or manager.
- At first, this could be the last thing you want.
- Because if you're working for God, then you can't stretch out that lunch break.
- You can't slack off during the day.
- If you work in a company and your boss or supervisor is away, isn't it always a slower pace at work?
- But thinking this way is missing the point.
- PLEASING is not APPEASING.
- When the Bible says you ought to live in order to please God, that's not the same as saying you ought to live in order to appease God.
- There's a huge difference.
- You can either do your work in order to feel good about yourself, to have self esteem, and maybe, even to appease God.
- Plenty of people are good and moral and they do what they have to do diligently and they say, "Well, I'm being this good, even though I don't have to. So God has to listen to me. He has to answer all my prayers."
- That's appeasing, not pleasing.
- So what does please mean?
- When the Bible says live in order to please God, it means to live for the sheer pleasure of giving pleasure to God.
- Unless you've experienced the grace of God, unless you know you're not saved by your own work, unless you know that God saves you because of Jesus' work, then when you go to help the poor, or when you go to your job or no matter what you do, as good as it seems to be, you always do it out of self-interest.
- You never do the job or help the person out of the sheer joy of the job or the person.
- You're always doing it in order to get something – from them or from God.
- But if you know that God loves you because of what Jesus has done.
- If you know God embraces you because of Christ's work.

- Then you know you're accepted already.
- And so now, when you go out into the world to do whatever work, you do it for the sheer joy of pleasing your Master.
- You don't love people in order to get something out of them.
- You love them for themselves.
- You don't help people because it makes you feel good about yourself.
- You do it simply because the poor are valuable people.
- You don't do things for God in order to get things from Him.
- You do it simply to give joy to His heart because of what He's done for you.
- In other words, it's impossible to do anything of true virtue unless you've experienced the grace of God in the Gospel.
- Until you know you're not saved by your works but by the grace of God, everything you do is filled with self-interest.
- And therefore, everything you do is filled with performance anxiety.
- Everything you do will burn you out eventually.
- This is the great irony.
- Until you learn to work for God's sake, for people's sake, and for the work's sake instead of money or status, the work will not fulfil you.
- That's why Jesus said you have to lose yourself to find yourself.
- If you work for personal fulfilment, you will never find true satisfaction.
- Because work will be too important, or too unimportant.
- Either you'll work yourself to death, or you'll bore yourself to death.
- But if you work for God, you'll get all the fulfilment you could possibly imagine.
- There will be a quiet, there will be a rest.
- There's a work that arises out of deep rest.
- The Letter to the Hebrews speaks of a rest for the people of God.
- When you know, understand and accept the Gospel of what Jesus has done for you, you enter that rest.
- The rest from yourself and the need to find yourself through your work or any other means that is bound to fail.

- Instead, you work in response to that rest.
- And what does that mean?
- You always work excellently and diligently and as doing it for the Lord.
- But you don't overwork.
 - Chariots of Fire.
 - Eric Lidell, Harold Abrams.
 - They're both sprinters who make it to the Olympics, running for GB.
 - They're rivals for the 100m gold medal.
 - And in the movie, there's a scene where Lidell says to his sister, "I believe God made me for China, I want to be a missionary. But I also believe He made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure."
 - When I run, I feel His pleasure.
 - Soo, when I answer God's calling and seek to please Him because I know I'm His child, I feel His pleasure.
 - Lidell trained hard and worked at it strenuously to win the gold medal.
 - On the other hand, do you know what Harold Abrams says?
 - I'm 24 and I've never known contentment. I'm forever in pursuit, but I don't even know what I am chasing. When I run, I have 10 seconds to justify my existence."
 - Do you see it?
 - Here are 2 men, both working very hard.
 - One with joy, one without.
 - One with rest, one without.
 - One doesn't even know why he's working so hard, the other knows exactly why.
 - And the point of the movie was that there was a limit to Lidell's work.
 - He ran for the pleasure of God and he worked very hard.
 - But he had a limit.
 - He chose not to run on Sundays.
 - So in the Olympics, he find the finals of the 100m is on a Sunday.

- It's clearcut to him.
- He won't run.
- Here was a man who worked like crazy, but there was a border, there was a boundary.
- There was a limit.
- He didn't overwork.
- Because he worked for God, and he had God's rest.
- If we have God's Sabbath rest, it means we can work but not overwork.
- I don't mean simply a Sunday of not working.
- I'm talking about the depths of your heart.
- The true rest of the Gospel in our hearts that allows us to strive with our very best in all facets of life.