

Longing for the God Transcendent

Reformation 2013

Psalm 73:25 *Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.* (ESV)

Psalm 73:25 provides the perspective needed to comprehend the meaning of life and the purpose of human existence. It points to the reality after which the whole world seeks.



INTRODUCTION

In the Reformation there was a recovery of the biblical portrait of God and the doctrine of His gracious salvation, liberating God's people from the bondage of the doctrines of men.

- *At the time of the Protestant Reformation:*
 - *the institutional church claimed power over the salvation of men.*
 - *the institutional church claimed to mediate the grace of God.*
 - *men claimed to be building the church through trafficking God's grace.*
- *A Reformation is needed in our day because:*
 - *Christians often attempt to mediate God's grace through creative methods and means.*
 - *Christians often present the Gospel by as a philosophy that accommodates the flesh.*
 - *men claim to be building the church, gaining converts by appealing to people's felt needs.*

While particular errors may vary from generation to generation, the remedy is always a return to the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

THE HUMAN NEED

We live in a society that focuses on felt needs and the church has followed that lead. However, devoting attention to felt needs distracts from the deepest, most genuine need.

- *Every human being senses that there is more to life than current experience reveals.*
- *Felt needs are not a good indicator of what is really lacking.*

THE ULTIMATE QUESTION

The Reformers realized that humanity's insatiable longing is related to a fundamental question that has plagued humanity since the Fall: "Who is God and how can we know Him?"

- *This problem is the result of sin.*
 - *When Adam and Eve sinned, they died spiritually and were cut off from God.*
 - *Since we were created in God's image, our identity is wrapped up in knowing Him.*
- *Humanity's quest to "know God" is tainted by sin and pursued by idolatry.*
- *Attempts to fill this longing is unsuccessful because:*
 - *The temporal can never replace the eternal.*
 - *The finite can never replace the infinite.*

"You awaken us to delight in Your praise: for You made us for Yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in You." ~ Augustine

FULFILLMENT IN GOD ALONE

Men like Augustine and Luther discovered that nothing in this life can satisfy the deep longing in the souls of men. They discovered fulfillment in the reconciliation with God proclaimed in the Gospel. We need to hear the Gospel everyday to remind us that nothing in this world can satisfy. And we need to proclaim it to a world, searching in futility for fulfillment.