

The Protestant reformation is recognized as beginning October 31, 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the castle church in Wittenburg Germany.

1. He was not trying to leave the Catholic Church and start a new denomination
2. He was seeking to reform the Catholic Church and bring them back to Scripture as their guide and authority.
3. That did not go well...but it spread throughout Europe to France (John Calvin), Scotland (John Knox), England (William Tyndale), Switzerland (Ulrich Zwingli) and more and beyond.
4. As it spread it became known as the Protestant Reformation...and that is where we got our start!

Five statements distinguished the theology of the Reformation from the theology of the Roman Catholic church in the 16th century: We know these statements as the 5 Solas.

1. *Sola scriptura* is the belief that because Scripture is God's inspired Word, it is the only inerrant, sufficient, and final authority for the church.
2. *Solus Christus* is the assertion that Christ alone is the basis on which the ungodly are justified in God's sight.
3. *Sola fide* maintains that the believer receives the redemption Christ has accomplished only through faith.
4. *Sola gratia* proclaims that *all* of our salvation, from beginning to end, is by grace and grace alone.
5. *Soli Deo gloria*, that only God receives glory for our salvation.

During these 5 weeks in October we will look at each of these 5 solas, beginning today with Sola Scriptura

## **2 Peter 1:16-21**

*Sola Scriptura* means that only Scripture is our sufficient authority

1. Why begin with this one?
2. Satan is a master schemer, and he knows that if he is to have any hope of bringing down believers, he will have to get their eyes off of the Word of God.
  - a. That is how he did it in the garden all the way back in Genesis 3
  - b. Satan's first step was to lead Eve to doubt God's word.
  - c. He asks the first question found in the Bible, "has God really said?" and it was meant to cast doubt on God's Word...and it worked!
3. This is why he spurred the Catholic Church of the 16th century to burn Bible translators, Bibles, and printing presses! If Satan could keep the Bible out of the hands of common man, he could keep them ignorant, blind, deaf, and dumb.
4. "*I perceived how it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except that the Scripture was plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue.*" William Tyndale of England

5. Sola Scriptura is critical...because it puts parameters on what God has said...it puts a period at the end of revelation so to speak.

6. *The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.* Abstract of Principles

2 Peter 1 affirms the primacy of the Scriptures.

*16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"-- 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.*

Peter was an eyewitness of His majesty.

1. He is clearly pointing us back to their experience on the mount of transfiguration.
2. In Matthew 17:1-8 Jesus takes Peter, James, and John to a mountain alone and is transfigured before them.
  - a. Jesus' face shone like the sun and His garments became as white as light.
  - b. He was seen in His glory as He will be seen when He comes again.
3. Moses (representing the Law) and Elijah (representing the prophets) appeared to them, talking with Jesus.
4. They heard the voice of the Father out of a cloud say... "*This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!*"
  - a. They saw with their eyes
  - b. They heard with their ears
  - c. They were personal witnesses.

But listen to what Peter says next...

*19 So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.*

The prophetic Word of God is even more sure than his own personal experience.

1. Peter is saying, the Word of God is more sure than our eyes, our ears, or our testimony
2. 1 John 1:1-3 *What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life-- 2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us-- 3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ*
3. This is true. We saw...we heard...we touched, and experienced, but the prophetic word is more sure....the Apostles themselves are subject to the prophetic Word of God

4. “The difference between us and the papists is that they do not think that the church can be ‘the pillar of the truth’ unless she presides over the word of God. We, on the other hand, assert that it is because she reverently subjects herself to the word of God that the truth is preserved by her and passed on to others by her hands.” — John Calvin of France

5. The Scriptures are true and trustworthy regardless of what we see or don’t see, hear or don’t hear, experience or don’t experience!

20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

The writers were carried along by the Holy Spirit like a sailing ship is carried along by the wind.

1. For Peter, it was as if the writers of Scripture raised their spiritual sails and allowed the Spirit to fill them with His powerful breath of revelation as they penned His divine words.
2. This is inspiration

2 Timothy 3:16-17 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

God’s Word is sufficient!

1. It is sufficient to instruct you, correct you, and train you for righteous church life.
2. It is sufficient to instruct you, correct you, and train you for righteous family life.
3. It is sufficient to instruct you, correct you, and train you for righteous decisions of every kind.
4. It is sufficient to adequately equip you for every good work that there is! This ONE BOOK!

Sola Scriptura means that only Scripture is our sufficient authority.

1. We don’t need a pope to tell us anything for God!
2. We don’t need a priest to tell us what to believe or what to do
3. We have the very Word of God.

*The Scriptures of God are my only foundation and substance in all matters of weight and importance.*  
John Knox of Scotland

This book is where we must get, not only our sermons from, but our worldview, and culture!

1. When confronted with the challenges of our day related to marriage, gender, entertainment standards, etc. we must begin and end with the Bible. What does the Bible say about that? *Sola Scriptura*
2. When confronted with decisions related to education, college, and careers, we must begin and end with the Bible. What does the Bible say about that? *Sola Scriptura*
3. When confronted with clothing style and choice, entertainment preferences, and stewardship of time and resources, we must begin and end with the Bible. What does the Bible say about that? *Sola Scriptura*

## **Conclusion:**

Luther is put on trial, so to speak, at the Diet of Worms because of his writings.

1. He is told to recant...take it all back and say he was wrong, or face the consequences: burning at the stake.
2. Can I think about it?
3. The next day, he stands before the council and gives his famous quote: *Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of the popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God....Here I stand; I can do no other.*  
Martin Luther of Germany
4. May we have the same conviction...and may our lives prove it!