

**Subject: *Scripture Alone***

**Scripture: *Psalm 119:103-105***

Today we recognize and celebrate the 505<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a time in Church history known as the Reformation. Although we remember and respect men like Martin Luther for their influence in this movement, the movement itself was not man-centered, but God-centered. The Reformation was a shift in the focus and priorities of the church. These reformers focused on five Biblical principles which came to be known as the Five Solas, from the Latin *sola*, which means alone or only.

### **Five “Solas” of the Reformation**

- *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone)
- *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone)
- *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone)
- *Solus Christus* (Christ Alone)
- *Soli Deo Gloria* (For the Glory of God Alone)

The key word in each of these truths is the word “alone.” The Roman Catholic Church claimed to believe in Scripture as their source of authority, but in reality it was not in Scripture alone. They believed the authority for the church and Christians was Scripture plus church traditions and teachings of the pope. The same thing was true for each of these five main truths. It was Christ plus the Church instead of Christ alone. It was grace plus human merit instead of grace alone. It was faith plus works instead of faith in Christ alone. It was for the praise of human goodness and effort instead of the glory of God.

We celebrate the Reformation for its focus on Biblical truth and the glory of God in salvation. About five years ago we experienced a solar eclipse as the moon partially blocked out the sun for a brief time. The sun did not change, but for a time its bright glory was hidden. In the same way before the truths that were considered to be most glorious were not changed or destroyed, but they had been hidden or corrupted. God used the reformers to uncover these precious biblical truths to shine again.

### **1. The absolute authority of Scripture**

The Bible is the Word of God. It is the final authority for our faith (what we believe) and practice (how we live).

### **2 Timothy 3:13-17**

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (literally, God-breathed). The Bible contains the very words of God. Since all Scripture comes from God all of it is important. When the Bible speaks, God speaks.

### **2. The perfect integrity of Scripture**

Since God is the author and He cannot lie, we know the Bible is 100% trustworthy. It is inerrant and infallible. That means it has no error and it cannot be wrong. We know there are many false teachers and false teachings in the world (vs. 13). Some say there is no absolute truth. Like Pontius Pilate, they ask: “What is truth?” We have the truth.

**John 17:17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Scripture is accurate in every way. It is historically and scientifically accurate, so we reject the false teaching of evolution. It is spiritually and doctrinally accurate, so we reject all false teaching.

**Matthew 16:13-18**

Peter understood the truth about Christ when many people were mistaken. Scripture is truth that God has revealed to us, written down and preserved for us. Men can be wrong; church traditions can be wrong; personal opinions can be wrong.

### **3. The complete sufficiency of Scripture**

Scripture may not tell us everything we want to know, but it tells us everything we need to know. Look at **2 Timothy 3:15-17**.

- Scripture tells us all we need to know for salvation (vs. 15)
- Scripture tells us all we need to know for Christian living (vs. 16-17)

**Acts 2:42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. We don't believe in apostolic succession, but we do believe in the succession of apostolic doctrine found in the New Testament.

**Acts 20:32** And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

God's Word is sufficient for evangelism, edifying, and equipping God's people.

**Psalms 19:7-11**

Someone asked an experienced Bible teacher: "What is the best translation of the Bible?" He said it's when you read and study the Bible and translate that into your everyday life.

We need a new Reformation and a renewed focus on biblical truth in our generation. We live in dark days of apathy and apostasy. R. C. Sproul was right when he said: "Because the darkness of heresy and immorality constantly creeps in, the church must always be seeking to rediscover the light." As the reformers boldly proclaimed and bravely stood for truth in those days, we must stand for truth today.

Does the principle of Scripture Alone really matter? The reformers, the Puritans, and our spiritual forefathers thought it mattered. It mattered so much they were willing to suffer and die for it. Does it really matter to Liberty Baptist Church? Does it really matter to you and your family?