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THE URGENT NEED FOR REFORMATION TODAY

Ecclesia Reformata Reformanda Est (The Church, having been Reformed, is still to be Reformed).

Scripture alone is our ultimate authority on all matters of faith and conduct.

Christ alone is the Head of the Church, and He is the only mediator between God and man.

Salvation is by the Grace of God alone, received by Faith alone.

Everything is to be done for the glory of God alone.

These great Reformation principles challenge us to regular and rigorous self-criticism and constant re-evaluation of our personal lives, congregations, missions, families and society.

Apathy and Inertia

The general tendency in most churches is to regard the *status quo* as normative and right. "We have always done it this way" takes on the force of authority. The common practice is frequently lifted above Scripture and popular approval is assumed to have some Divine authority! However, Scripture alone is our final authority for all matters of Faith and conduct.

Superstitions

We applaud the Reformers for challenging the customs and superstitions of their day in the light of Scripture. Indeed, where in the Bible were we taught to pray for the dead? Venerate angels and saints? Use images? Worship Mary? Believe in the existence of purgatory? Require ministers to be celibate priests? Pray through the rosary? (Ten prayers for Mary, for every one Our Father!)

Unbiblical Inventions

Where in the Bible do we read of popes, cardinals, monks, nuns, inquisitions, transubstantiation, and the assumption of Mary or the infallibility of the pope?

Freedom

The Reformers, by championing Scripture alone as our ultimate authority, freed the Church from many unbiblical heresies, superstitious beliefs and burdensome practices. However, we would be much deceived were we to assume that the Church of today is not similarly in need of Biblical Reformation and Spiritual Revival.

Dare to Evaluate Ourselves

Our beliefs and practices must always be subjected to examination and re-examination in the light of Scripture. Our life, programmes, activities, institutions, publications and personnel must continually be subjected to evaluation in the light of the Word of God. We need to dare to look at ourselves and our ministries in the mirror of God's Word, under the searchlight of Scripture.

Reformation Today

We dare not allow inertia and stagnation to take root. The Church, having been Reformed, is still to be Reformed. Reformation is an on-going, life-long responsibility and duty.

Putting Feet to our Faith

Some have regarded the work of Reformation as having been complete by adopting the confessions and catechisms of the 16th Century Reformation movement. However, it is not enough to have the Truth in our head, we need to love the Truth in our heart and live it in our life.

The Truth on Fire

The motto of Reformer John Calvin was: *"Promptly and sincerely in the service of my God."* His emblem was a heart aflame in the hand of God. We need doctrinal backbones of steel and we need Holy Spirit fire in our bellies. The Truth on fire was the goal of the Puritans. Head and heart, doctrine and devotion, in balance, all for the glory of God alone.

The Curse of Complacency

The greatest enemies of Reformation are apathy and complacency. We dare not settle for less than God's best. God gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him.

Transformation

As heirs of the Reformers we need to build upon the firm foundations laid by faithful men and women of the past. But we are expected to build and progress further. The work of the Reformation is not yet complete. Much remains to be done. So much in our homes and hearts, communities and congregations, needs to be transformed by the powerful Word of God (Obtain: [*The Greatest Century of Reformation*](#)).

Restoration

We need to renew our minds by studying the Scriptures. We need to revitalize our devotional lives by praying through the Psalms. We need to restore the prayer meeting to the central place it belongs in the life of the local church. Our congregations need to become Houses of Prayer for all nations, making disciples, teaching obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded.

First Things First

We need to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, delighting ourselves in the Lord, humbling ourselves, praying, seeking His face and turning from our wicked ways. We need to rekindle the fires of spiritual zeal by working for Biblical Reformation, applying the Lordship of Jesus Christ to all areas of life.

Our Lord Jesus Christ declared: ***"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...."*** John 14:23

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther: *"If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition, every portion of the Truth of God's Word, except precisely that point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, then I'm not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Him. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battle front besides is mere flight and disgrace - if he flinches at that point."*

So what are some of the issues that we need to address today?

The Church Needs a New Reformation

We want God to bless our countries. But we cannot expect God to bless those who are in rebellion to His Laws. Our societies need Reformation and our churches need Revival.

Hijacked

It would appear that Humanism has hijacked many churches. Theistic Evolution is uncritically accepted, worldly entertainment and rock music predominates in all too many youth groups. Antinomianism and egalitarianism are pervasive. All too many churches seem to be more conformed to the world than transformed by the renewing of their minds.

Neutralised and Distracted

Compromise, cowardice and corruption are pervasive. Many churches are neutralized by a eschatology of defeat and retreat. Escapism and defeatism have sucked the life out of all too many congregations. Rapture fever and an end-times obsession have so distracted all too many congregations that they are ineffective in fulfilling The Great Commission.

Worldliness

What is needed if we are to rescue our churches from worldliness and work for Biblical Reformation and Spiritual Revival?

A World War of Worldviews

In this clash of civilizations, the battlegrounds are found in classrooms and on university campuses, in bookshops and market places, in pulpits and parliaments, in homes and hearts.

Bold Evangelism

We need field workers of the Reformation like the Lollards, singing and reading Scripture and preaching the Gospel in the common language, in the market places, highways and byways and from door-to-door.

Action

We need to remove idols, re-emphasise Reformed doctrine, revive worship, renew prayer, revitalise our families, restore Biblical economics, Reform society, re-establish Christian schools and restrict government to Biblical limits.

Reformations need literature, leadership training and itinerant evangelists.

Steps to Reformation

Reflect on the state of our churches, families and souls.

Realise how far we have fallen.

Remember how the Lord led and spoke to us in the past.

Recognise the dangers of antinomianism, egalitarianism, secular humanism and worldly music.

Repent of worldliness and wickedness and do thorough restitution.

Remove those things that are detestable to God.

Return to God in repentance, faith and humility.

Revive the prayer meeting.

Re-emphasise Reformation doctrines in our preaching and teaching.

Restore missionary vision and the Bible study as central to our Church life.

Renew devotion to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all areas of life.

Resolve to honour the Lord's Day as a day of rest and worship.

Re-emphasise the Reformation doctrines.

Re-orientate our Discipleship programmes.
Refocus on the Biblical Worldview.
Recommit all members to regular evangelism.
Reform our society, applying the Lordship of Christ to all areas of life.

Family

Our families need Reformation. Parents, particularly fathers, need to teach and train their children in the Law of God - both by instruction and by example (Obtain: ***Reforming Our Families***).

Congregation

Our congregations need Reformation, we need to revive the prayer meeting, get back to the Bible, move the congregation away from entertainment to Biblical education, spiritual edification, and enlist every member in fulfilling The Great Commission (Obtain: ***Biblical Principles for Africa***).

Community

Our communities need Reformation. We need to clean up our communities and apply the Lordship of Christ to all areas of life.

Country

Our country needs Reformation.

"If My people who are called by My Name will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, I will forgive their sin and I will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

Mobilisation

We need to inform, inspire and involve. We need to motivate and mobilize, we need to educate and enlist. It is essential that we are informed, inspired, and involved in fulfilling The Great Commission, working for Reformation and praying for Revival, applying the Lordship of Jesus Christ to all areas of life.

Battlegrounds

We are involved in a world war of worldviews. The battlegrounds include the rewriting of History, the education of the next generation, the entertainment industry, the news media, religious institutions and political institutions, both local and provincial, and national.

Reformation FIRE Conference

Join us for the [Reformation FIRE Conference](#) in Franschhoek, **30 October**. The theme is: Reclaiming Africa for Christ. There has been a tremendous response to the [95 Theses for Reformation Today](#), launched at last years' Reformation Celebration. Our Mission teams have distributed [Reformation FIRE Manuals](#) to Christian Action Network members throughout Africa. Reformation FIRE Seminars have already been held at 20 venues in 7 different countries in Africa this year. This is part of a Back to the Bible for Reformation and Revival movement.

Resources for Reformation

Our Mission has been producing books and audio-visual materials to empower churches dedicated to working for Reformation and praying for Revival. These strategic resources include: [The Greatest Century of Reformation](#); [The Power of Prayer Handbook](#); [Reforming Our Families](#); [Biblical Principles for Africa](#); [Practical Discipleship](#); [Discipleship Training Manual](#);

[Reformation FIRE Manual](#); [Victorious Christians – Who Changed the World](#), and [War Against God](#).

Reformation Celebration

If you are in the Cape Town area, please join us for the **Reformation and Revival** events, including the **Guided tour of the Huguenot Museum (10:00 – 11:00)** and [Reformation Day Celebration](#) service at the Huguenot Monument in Franschoek at **12 noon**, or invite Reformation Society speakers to address your school or church.

Applying the Lordship of Christ to All Areas of Life

God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts, His ways are higher than our ways. The Reformation sets about to restore Biblical principles to all areas of life. This is God's world, and we need God's Word to be obeyed in every area of life.

Is your conscience captive to the Word of God?

Is your desire to obey God promptly and sincerely with your whole heart aflame in the hand of God?

We need doctrinal steel in our backbones and Holy Spirit fire in our bellies.

May the Lord fill us, and empower us, with His Holy Spirit - to be faithful to His Word and effective in His service.

May the examples of these Reformers inspire us to go back to Bible, to love God wholeheartedly and to fear God alone, to work for Biblical Reformation and to pray for spiritual Revival.

May God find us faithful to His Word and effective in His service as we work for Biblical Reformation and pray for Spiritual Revival.

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See also:

[The Greatest Century of Reformation](#)

[Practical Steps to Reformation](#)

[Why Celebrate the Reformation](#)

[Are You Praying for Revival?](#)

[What Can I do to Help My Church Glorify God?](#)