

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

A Short Course on Church History

The *Always* Reforming Church

¹ Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— ²and all the brothers who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to **a different gospel**— ⁷ not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: **If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.**

Galatians 1:1-9 (ESV)

The Reformation was not principally a _____ movement about moving away from Rome and its corruption; it was a _____ movement, about moving toward the _____.

The Catholic **Counter-Reformation**

I. The setting:

Protestant churches breaking away ...

The Ottoman Empire ...

Emerging “spirituality” ...

A Catholic church slow to respond ...

1537: “Advice Concerning the Reform of the Church”

Bishops and cardinals must ...

Bribery, indulgences, violations of church law, prostitution, etc. must all cease.

II. The emergence of **Ignatius Loyola**

His conversion:

His contrast with Martin Luther:

His “spiritual exercises”:

The Society of Jesus:

In the summer of 1539, Loyola filed a petition with Pope Paul III to establish a new religious order. In September of 1540, a papal bull formally established the “Society of Jesus” (or the Jesuits, as they would later be called).

Let all members know, and let it be not only at the beginning of their profession, but let them think over it daily as long as they live, that the society as a whole, and each of them, owes obedience to our most holy lord, the pope, and the other Roman pontiffs, his successors, and to fight with faithful obedience for God. And however much he may be learned in the Gospel, and however he may be taught in the orthodox faith, let all Christians profess themselves under the Roman pontiff as leader, and vicar of Jesus Christ. For the greater humility of our society, and toward the complete self-mortification of each one, and in order to aid the abnegation of our own wills to the greatest extent, let each one, besides that common obligation, be devoted to this by special vow. So that whatever the present or other Roman pontiffs order that concerns the saving of souls and the spread of the faith, and to whatever provinces he shall wish to send us, this let us strive to accomplish as far as in us lies, without any turning back or excuse; whether he shall send us to the Turks, or to any other infidels, even those living in the lands that are called the Indies; or to any heretics or schematics, or believers, whatever.

In addition to taking the usual three vows of _____, _____ and _____, Jesuits also vowed specific obedience to the pope and to carry out whatever task the pope might deem necessary.

They were formed along _____ lines.

Aimed to restore the Roman Catholic Church to its former position of _____ and _____ worldwide.

Focused on 3 main activities:

- 1) Founded _____ throughout Europe
- 2) _____ efforts
- 3) Stop the spread of _____

III. The Council of Trent

Everything the Protestant Reformation stood for was vigorously and violently _____.

The Reformers emphasized JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH _____.

The Council of Trent declared that justification is the result of two causes:

- 1) A righteousness that is _____ to the disciple but is added to our account in the eyes of God
- 2) A righteousness that is _____, infused into the disciple.

Luther, Calvin, Grebel and other Reformers emphasized salvation by _____ ALONE.

The Council of Trent emphasized God's grace and human effort/cooperation.

"Pray as though everything depended upon God alone, but act as though it depended upon you alone for salvation." - Loyola

The Reformers taught the spiritual authority of _____ ALONE.

The Council insisted on the supreme teaching office of the Roman Church, popes, bishops, etc. as essential interpreters of the Bible. In addition, In Roman Catholicism, "the Word of God" encompasses not only the Bible, but also the Apocrypha, the Magisterium (the Church's authority to teach and interpret divine truth), the Pope's ex cathedra pronouncements, and an indefinite body of church tradition, some formalized in canon law and some not yet committed to writing.

The Council of Trent reached the following **conclusions**:

- The _____ interpretation of the Bible was final. Any Christian who substituted his or her own interpretation was a _____.
- Christians needed faith and _____ for salvation.
- The Bible and Church tradition were _____ powerful authorities for guiding Christian life.
- _____ were valid expressions of faith. But the false selling of indulges was banned.

Effects of the Council:

- 1) More tightly organized _____
- 2) _____ of Catholic doctrine and practice
- 3) Normative standards up to modern times
- 4) Clear demarcation from biblical _____

IV. Why the Reformation **still matters**:

The Reformation still matters today because _____ is still our supreme authority for faith and practice.

The Reformation will still matter as long as the Bible isn't recognized by all Christians as our final authority for faithfulness and flourishing—for individuals, families, churches, and denominations.

The Reformation still matters today because the _____ is still the only hope for the salvation of sinners.

The reformers affirmed the Scriptures in that justification is by grace alone (sola gratia), through faith alone (sola fide), in Christ alone (sola Christus), to the glory of God alone (soli Deo gloria).

Many distorted "gospels" still prevail today ...

The Reformation still matters today because the church still needs to be _____.

No church is perfectly conformed to the Scripture, and no church's gospel message is wholly unthreatened by heresy, neglect, or spiritual drift. Churches are communities of sinners who've been redeemed and become disciples—but they remain sinners, still. Because of this reality, pastors should lead churches to embrace what might be called "reformational instincts"—a ruthless commitment to placing every doctrine, practice, and priority under the microscope of Scripture and alongside the measuring stick of the gospel.

- Nathan Finn

Next week: A Great Awakening – Edwards and Whitfield