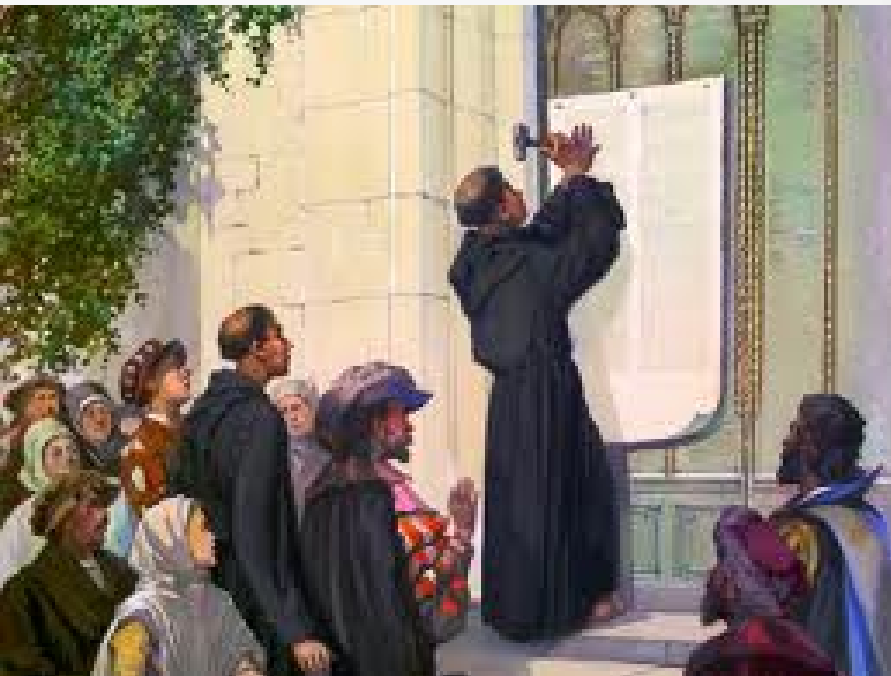


What is Reformed Theology

Basics of our faith



Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Pastor Fred Greco
Arnaldo Espinel

Review

Lesson 1: Definitions

- Theology is “The systematic study of the person and work of God”
- “Re-form”, give another form, shape, go back to the origins
- Reformed Theology is God centered
- Sola Scriptura: Scriptures are authoritative, inerrant, breathed-out and sufficient (2 Tim 3: 16-17)
- God makes Himself known to man through General and Special revelation (WCF I.1; Psalm 19:1-2; Rom 2:14-15).
 - Semen religionis / Sensus divinitatis => however, not sufficient to get saving faith
 - We know about God through creation, but not know (love) Him and His will
 - Read Eph. 2:8-10 – Special revelation is necessary => Heb. 1:4 and enough!!!



Review

Lesson 1: Definitions

- Augustinianism (Doctrine of Grace) vs. Pelagianism
- The Reformation did not start with Luther, but centuries before:
 - Scripture alone are authoritative
 - Only two sacraments
 - Salvation is from Christ alone (grace alone, faith alone), not the church
 - Preaching must be Scripture-centered
 - Reading the Bible in vernacular languages
 - Reject indulgencies

Review

Lesson 1: Definitions

Reformation inspired by:

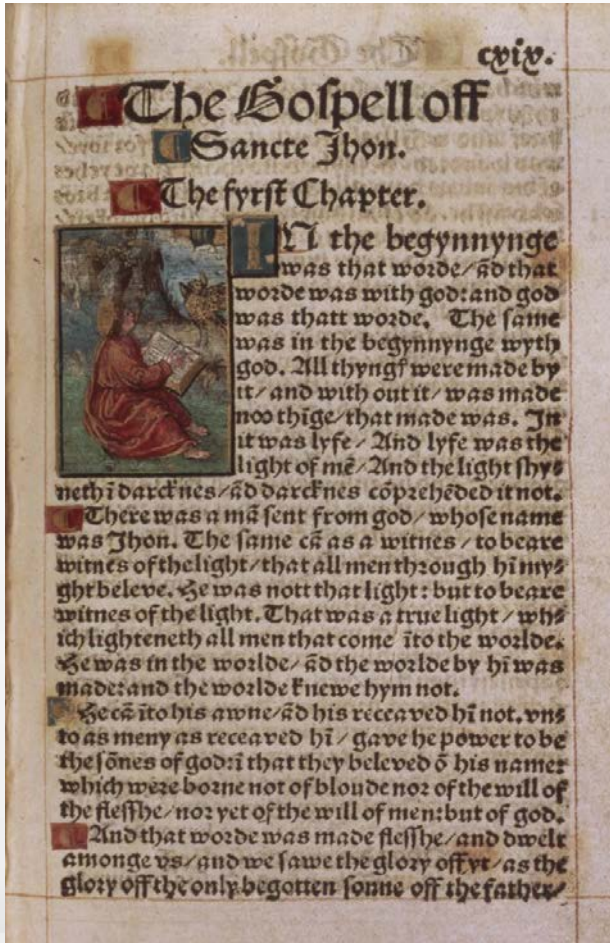
Renewed interest in
study of the Scripture

Re-emphasis in the
historic doctrines of
grace



Outline

Class plan



- Definitions in Theology.
- **Reformed theology is systematic**
- Sola Scriptura
- Covenant Theology
- Faith Alone
- *Ordo salutis*
- Five points of Calvinism
- The Church
- Worship
- Baptism
- The Lord's Supper

13 weeks plan

Reformed Theology is God

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Centered

- It is systematic: understands doctrines in a coherent and unified way
- Inspiration carries unity
- Defines system of internal doctrine (not from an anthropologic approach)
- Doctrines are interrelated (Christ and redemption)



BTW, this is not God's blue eye... it is the **Helix Nebula**

We want to understand God by His word

Reformed Theology is God Centered

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology



BTW, this is not God's blue eye... it is the **Helix Nebula**

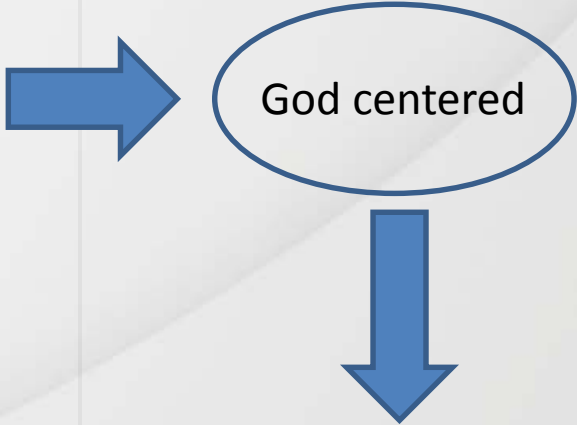
- God's Revelation vs. Theology
 - Show
 - Reception / perception

We want to understand God by His word

Understands the Natures of...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

- God: Person, character, attributes
- The Son: Satisfy the Father
- Man: God's image bearer
- Salvation: effected by God
- Ethics: Reflection of God's character



Humanism / Existentialism:
Man's perspective = Intrinsic,
man-made essence

On purpose

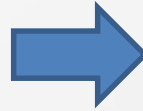
Versus

Characterizes man
From God's perspective
= extrinsic, God's made
essence

Some Examples are...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Goal of Redemption: God's glory or manifestation of fallen human value?



"God's glory" is Reformed

God's sovereignty: Limited by human freedom (man autonomous) or man freedom is limited?



"Free will is limited by God's sovereignty" is Reformed

Our understanding of these topics...

Determines our understanding of all other doctrines

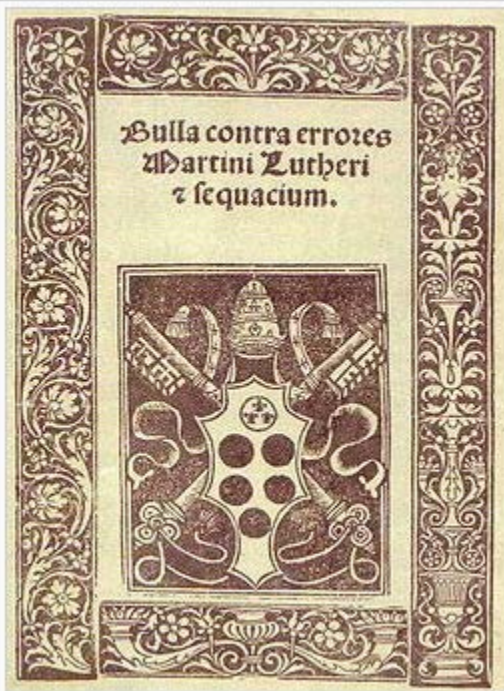


Reformed Theology is...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Catholic!

- Reformed Theology is not just 5 points or five Solas (can you name them?)
- Catholic means...?
- Re-form is not re-start something new... it is to go to the sources
- Not all was bad in Christianity. Doctrines were good but human traditions, deviations and corruption happened
- What would have happened without *Exurge Domine*
- They did not understand *Semper Reformanda*



Pope Leo X (Giovanni Di Lorenzo de Medici)
Bull against errors of
Martin Luther,
without a doubt

Reformed Theology is...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Evangelical!

- Synonym of “Protestant”, also of “Christian”
- Causes of Reformation:
 - Authority, formal cause (controversy)
 - Justification, material cause (core issue)

Sola Scriptura = Ultimate authority of Scriptures

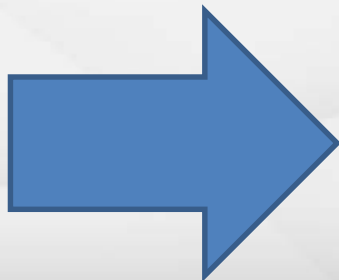
Sola Fide = Justification by faith alone, not only means referred to the *Evangelion*, like some Roman Catholics think

However, God is...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Incomprehensible! *Finitum non capax infinitum*

- Doctrine of God's incomprehensibility
- But not completely: we can understand Him in order to be redeemed and have fellowship with Him
- Doctrine of Scripture and Theology proper: God, Trinity, Creation, Providence, and anthropology



Nature and character of God Himself

However, God is...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Please read Deut. 29:29

“His essence is incomprehensible... but in each of His works... (shows Himself in a way) that (we) cannot plead ignorance”
Calvin on what we are able to know about God

Infinite! (no-ended) – *via negationis*

- Incommunicable attribute: God cannot create a second god
- But we can understand God, we don't need to be “Gnostics” (gnosis = knowledge)
- Immutable, Immense, etc.
- But we are also “like” God and we can talk!
- *Via affirmatas*: Holy, sovereign, just
- *Via eminentia*: Unlimited, Omniscient (all science or knowledge), Omnipotent, etc.

However, God is...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Self-Sufficient!

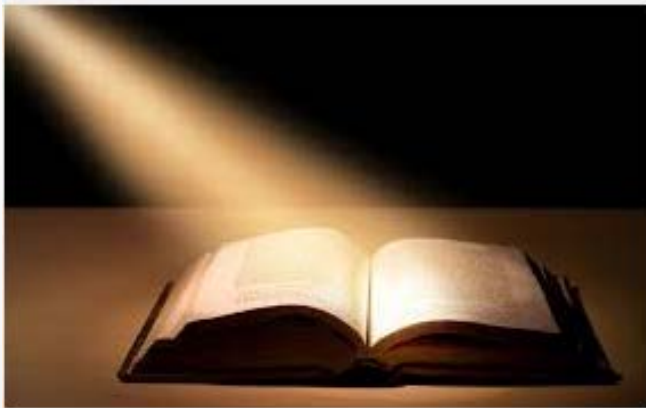
- God only is the ground of his own being
- God is self-existent
- God is pure being (we are dependent, contingent, derived)
- No prior cause, not even Himself
- **God is Eternal!**



However, God is...

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

Holy (set apart)!

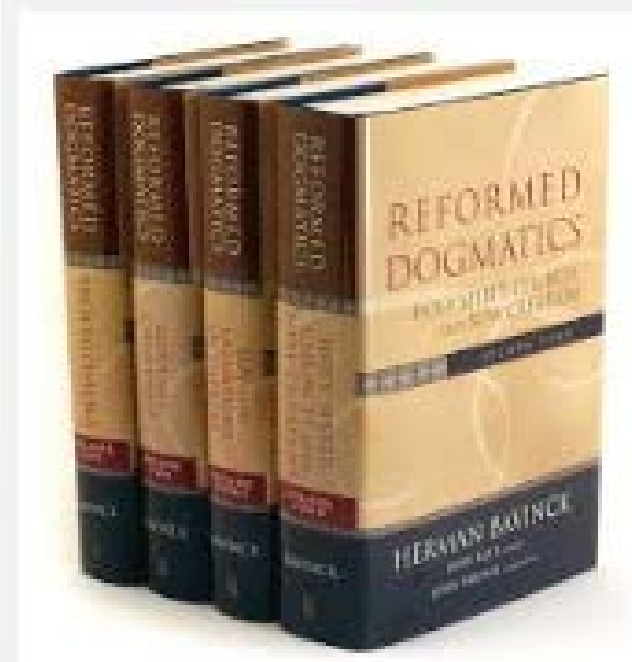


- Reformation focuses on the revealed Doctrine of God
- Revelation of God's character:
 - Different than ours
 - Majesty of God
- Distortion of God's character is idolatry (Calvin)
- Idolatry is exchanging the glory of God for a lie, putting the creature above God (Rom 1:22-25)
- *Fabricum idolarum* (Calvin)

Introduction to Dogmas

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

- Dogma: “It seems to me”, “I am certain”, “it is my conviction”
- Dogmatics, or Systematic Theology, deals with the *dogmata*, or accepted doctrines of the church
- Can be private or may be an official position in the church
- Not only exist in religion, also in science



Their subject matter is derived from Scriptures

Conclusion

Lesson 2: Systematic Theology

- We must believe, preach and teach the **WHOLE** counsel of God (Sproul)
- Humanism is idolatry, because is based upon *homo mensura* (principle established by Protagoras, Greek philosopher and Sophist)
- Rigorous attention and devotion to the biblical doctrine is the only way Christians have to get to know God.

C Next class: Sola Scriptura