

SCRIPTURE ALONE

Week 1

First CRC of Hanford



Life Group Study
Reformed Theology

Philippe de Champaigne's painting "Saint Augustine" depicts the saint with a burning heart and a quill, gazing towards a divine light labeled "Veritas" (truth). The painting, created around 1650, is a powerful representation of Augustine's intellectual and spiritual journey, emphasizing his devotion to God and his pursuit of truth.

Welcome

Ferdinand Pauwels' 1872 painting captures Martin Luther boldly nailing his 95 Theses to the Wittenberg door, sparking the Reformation with vivid detail and dramatic intensity.



Before the Life Group Meeting

- 1 If you're bringing a new person to the study, we recommend getting them study materials ahead of time so they can feel prepared.
- 2 Pray that the LORD will open your eyes and heart to receive the lessons he has to teach you in the study.
- 3 Read the scripture focus and any extra information in the study booklet.
- 4 Go through the questions and think about how you might answer them. We've provided space in the study for you to write down your answers if you'd like.

Luther at the Diet of Worms. Painted by the German artist Anton von Werner in 1877. The work captures Martin Luther's dramatic defense of his beliefs before Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and the assembly at the Diet of Worms in 1521, a key moment in the Protestant Reformation.



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Reformed Theologians

St. Augustine

St. Augustine (354–430), born in North Africa, was a pivotal Christian theologian whose works shaped Reformed theology. Initially a Manichean, he converted to Christianity, becoming bishop of Hippo. His writings, including *Confessions* and *City of God*, emphasized original sin, human depravity, and divine grace, profoundly influencing Reformed thinkers like John Calvin. Augustine's doctrine of predestination, asserting God's sovereign choice of the elect, became a cornerstone of Reformed soteriology. His stress on Scripture's authority and God's omnipotence reinforced sola scriptura and divine sovereignty in Reformed thought. Augustine's focus on grace as the sole means of salvation remains a lasting legacy in Reformed theology.



What We Believe

These questions focus on the foundation of the rest of the questions in the Life Group study. Make sure you understand what the scripture means before moving on to the rest of the questions.

- 1 Read 2 Timothy 3. What “power” is Paul talking about in verse 5?
- 2 What does Paul say will happen to all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus? What does Paul say will happen to evil people like Jannes and Jambres (see note)?
- 3 What are the sacred writings Paul mentions in verse 15? What does Paul tell Timothy the sacred writings are able to do for him?
- 4 John says that scripture is breathed out by God. What does that mean? Was scripture dictated to Paul, did he make it up on his own, or something else?

NOTE:

“Jannes was an opponent of Moses along with Jambres, and a model of those “of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith” who “oppose the truth” (2 Tim. 2:8; cf. Exod. 7:11–12, 22). Not named in Exodus, they were identified as Moses’ opponents in Second Temple period and rabbinic Jewish writings by the 1st century B.C.E. and were known by Christian and pagan writers. The pseudepigraphic work *Jannes and Jambres*, perhaps Christian and dated between the 1st and 3rd centuries but based on pre-Christian traditions, survives only in fragments.”

Mason, E. F. (2000). Jannes. In D. N. Freedman, A. C. Myers, & A. B. Beck (Eds.), *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible* (pp. 672–673). W.B. Eerdmans.

Engraving by Gustave Doré titled “Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh” (also known as “Aaron’s Rod Becomes a Serpent”), from his 1866 illustrated Bible (*La Grande Bible de Tours*).



Creeds and Confessions

Our World Belongs to God

Our World Belongs to God, adopted by the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) in 1986 and revised in 2008, is a contemporary testimony expressing Reformed faith in modern language. Developed under Rev. Morris Greidanus, it addresses issues like secularism, individualism, and environmental concerns, following a creation-fall-redemption framework. Written in free-verse poetry, it emphasizes God's sovereignty, the church's mission, and social justice, rooted in Scripture. Though not a confessional document, it's used in worship, education, and ecumenical outreach.



Our World Belongs to God

Relevant Cross References for 2 Timothy 3

- 2 Timothy 3:8 - Exodus 7:11-22
- 2 Timothy 3:11 - Acts 13-14
- 2 Timothy 3:13 - Revelation 22:11
- 2 Timothy 3:15 - Ephesians 6:4, John 5:39, Psalm 119:99
- 2 Timothy 3:16 - Romans 15:4, 2 Peter 1:20-21
- 2 Timothy 3:17 - 1 Timothy 6:11, Luke 6:40, 2 Timothy 2:21



God Speaks to Us

- 1 Paul compares Timothy to Jannes and Jambres. How have you been like Jannes and Jambres? How have you been like Timothy?
- 2 Paul speaks of numerous difficulties he's overcome in verses 10-11. How did he overcome these challenges? What difficulties do you face for your faith? What does it mean if we don't face challenges due to our faith given Paul's promise that all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (see verse 12)?

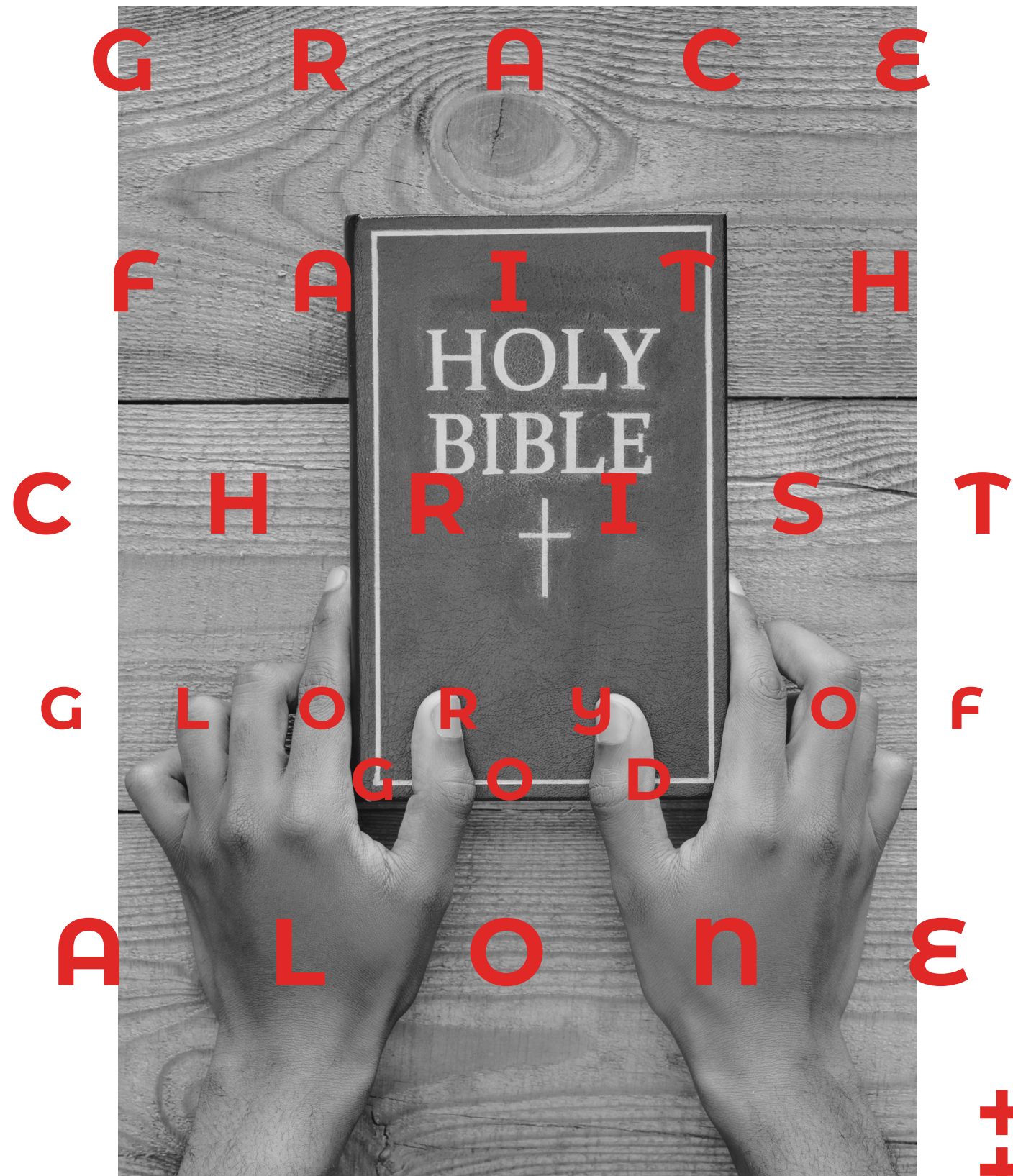


"Paul Instructing Timothy" 1904 by John Henry Dearle

God Speaks to Our Family

- 1 Paul loved Timothy like a son and encouraged him to live a life according to the scriptures. Did your parents encourage you in reading scripture? If so, how? If you have children, how do you encourage them to dig into the scriptures?
- 2 Our text says that scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. Should parents quote Bible verses while disciplining children? Why or why not?

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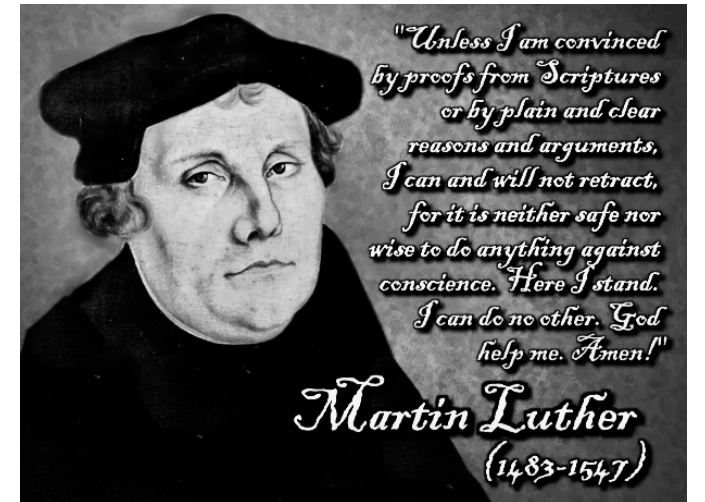
What is “Sola Scriptura”?

“Sola Scriptura” is Latin for “Scripture Alone”

“The doctrine of sola scriptura, simply stated, is that the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are sufficient to function as the regula fide, the “rule of faith” for the Church. All that one must believe to be a Christian is found in Scripture and in no other source. That which is not found in Scripture is not binding upon the Christian conscience.

The Bible claims to be the sole and sufficient rule of faith for the Christian Church. The Scriptures are not in need of any supplement. Their authority comes from their nature as God-breathed revelation. Their authority is not dependent upon man, Church or council. The Scriptures are self-consistent, self-interpreting, and self-authenticating. The Christian Church looks at the Scriptures as the only and sufficient rule of faith and the Church is always subject to the Word, and is constantly reformed thereby.”

- Dr. James White



CATECHISM

Our World Belongs to
God #31-33

- 31** God gives this world many ways to know him. The creation shows his power and majesty. He speaks through prophets, poets, and apostles, and, most eloquently, through the Son.

The Spirit, active from the beginning, moved human beings to write the Word of God and opens our hearts to God's voice.

For general revelation, see Romans 1 and Acts 14; for the inspiration of the Bible, see 1 Timothy 3:14-17 and 2 Peter 1:16-21; and for the full revelation in Christ, see Hebrews 1 and Colossians 1.

- 32** The Bible is the Word of God, the record and tool of his redeeming work. It is the Word of truth, breath of God, fully reliable in leading us to know God and to walk with Jesus Christ in new life.

For the nature of Scripture, see Luke 1:1-4, John 20:30-31, Acts 8:26-39, James 1:18, and references in paragraph 31.

- 33** The Bible tells the story of God's mighty acts in the unfolding of covenant history. As one revelation in two testaments the Bible reveals God's will and the sweep of God's redeeming work. Illumined and equipped by the Spirit, disciples of Jesus hear and do the Word, witnessing to the good news that our world belongs to God, who loves it deeply.

For God's mighty acts, see Acts 2 and 7; for our instruction, see Matthew 16:13-19, 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, 2 Timothy 3:14-17, and James 1:19-27.

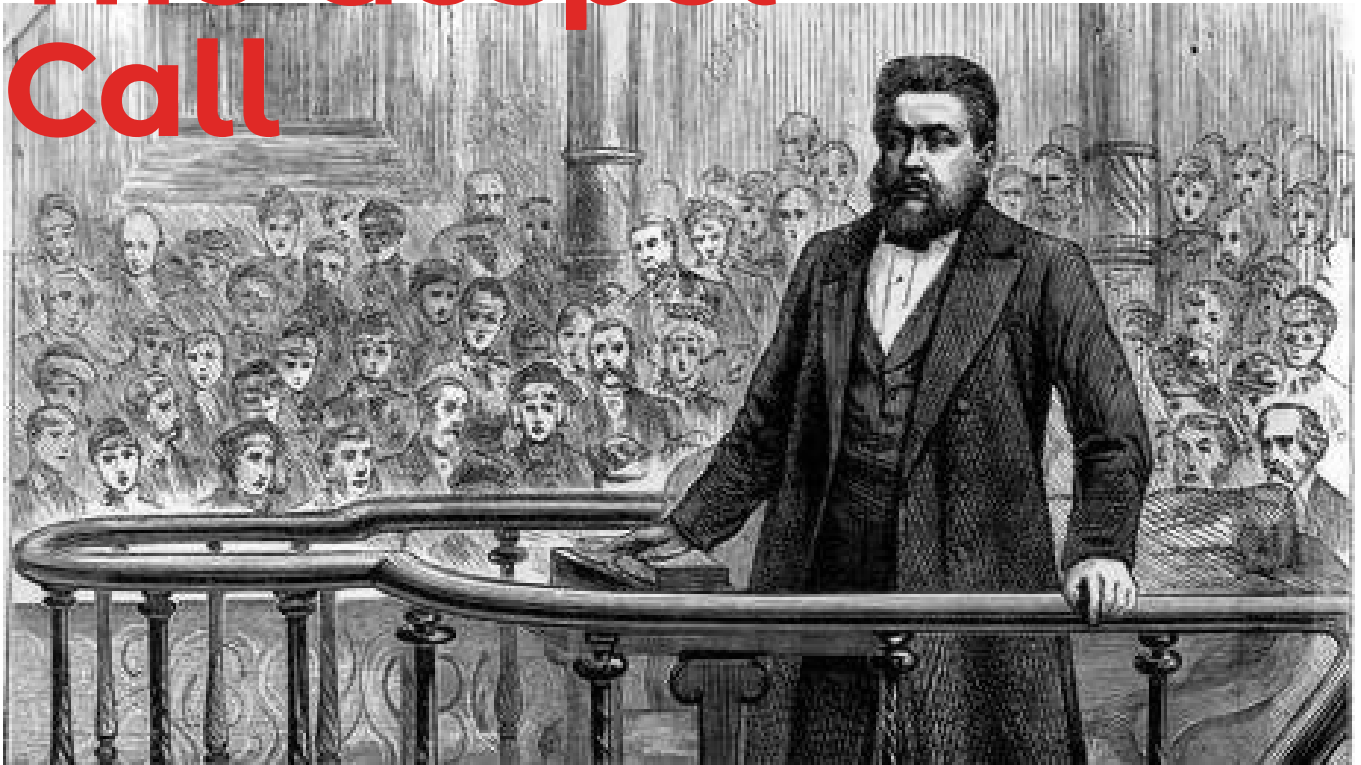
CORNER



God Speaks in Worship

- 1** The doctrine of Sola Scriptura (scripture alone) necessitates that we use scripture to guide our worship. The Reformed church adheres to the Regulative Principle of worship which states that everything we do in worship is founded upon the directions of scripture. Where would we find in scripture directing us to read scripture, pray, preach, and celebrate the sacraments in worship?
- 2** Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching." When in our worship service do we read scripture? Exhort? Teach?

The Gospel +++ Call



- 1 How would you answer someone who says the doctrine of Sola Scriptura is nowhere in scripture?
- 2 How would you answer the objection that the Bible is just one of many holy, religious texts and there's no more reason to believe the Bible than the Muslim's Qur'an or the Hindu's Vedas?

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