

March 15, 2023

Scripture in the Reformation Era

What do we believe about Scripture? What is *Sola Scriptura*?

2 Timothy 3:16 – “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Heiko Oberman’s Tradition 1, 2, and 0

1. Tradition 1 (T1) – is the belief that tradition is a maidservant to Scripture, which alone is inspired by God and therefore the church’s final authority in faith and practice.
2. Tradition (T2) – is the belief that tradition is another source of inspired authority, which includes the ecclesiastical tradition, ecumenical councils, the pope, and the magisterium.
3. Tradition (T0) – is the belief that tradition has no place at all when determining authority.

What tradition would *sola scriptura* fall under?

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Conflict with Cajetan in Augsburg and Eck in Leipzig in 1518 and 1519

Diet of Worms (1521)

“Since then your serene majesty and your lordships seek a simple answer, I will give it in this manner, neither horned nor toothed: Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, my God help me, Amen.” – Martin Luther, *Works*, 32:112-13

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Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531)

Lectio Continua – _____

Why do you think the *lectio continua* methodology proved instrumental to Zwingli's recovery of *sola scriptura*?

John Calvin (1509-1564)

“If Luther defended biblical authority in his disputations and Zwingli reintegrated *sola scriptura* through the sermon, then John Calvin was a master practitioner at both.” – Matthew Barrett

“I wittingly pass over what they teach on the power to approve Scripture. For to subject the oracles of God in this way to men's judgment, making their validity depend upon human whim, is a blasphemy unfit to be mentioned... I shall ask this one question: If the authority of Scripture is grounded in the approval of the church, the degree of which Council will they cite on this point? They have none, I believe. Why, then, did Arius allow himself to be overcome at the Council of Nicaea by testimonies drawn from the Gospel of John? For he was – according to these men – free to reject them, since no approval of a general council had proceeded. They bring forward as evidence an ancient list, called 'canon,' which they say came from the judgment of the church. But I ask once more, in what council was that canon promulgated? Here they must remain mute.” – John Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:10.

How does John Calvin appeal to church history to make an argument for *sola scriptura*?

How can our understanding between T1, T2, and T0 help us not make a self-defeating argument for *sola scriptura* by appealing to history as evidence?

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Preparation For Next Week:

Read – <https://jgduesing.com/theology-in-the-reformation-era-stephen-brett-eccher-on-salvation/> (Attached to this document.)

Further Resources:

Duesing, Jason and Nathan Finn. *Historical Theology For The Church*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2021.

Duesing, Jason. *Seven Summits in Church History*. Nashville, TN: Rainer Publishing, 2016.

Ferguson, Everett. *Church History, Volume One: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.

Litfin, Bryan. *Getting to Know The Church Fathers: An Evangelical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.