



Reformation: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

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Dr. Trueman examines the origins of contemporary Reformed theology in the Reformation world of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. After tracing how this heritage shaped and transformed the intervening period, he then describes some of the major challenges being faced by the evangelical church at the present time and suggests ways of responding which remain faithful to the Scriptures and the theology of the Reformers drawn from it and points towards a future that embraces and disseminates these wonderful doctrines of grace.

Reformation: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow Details

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From Reader Review Reformation: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow for online ebook

Ben Simmons says

Fantastic book which lays out the heart of what the Reformation has to offer us today. Along the way contains some incisive critiques of modern evangelicalism, which translates nicely outside the British context in which it was originally written. Some good argument here for the ongoing relevance of the Protestant Reformation to the global ecumenical community as well.

Richard Minor says

This is an excellent little book. It applies the principles of the Reformation to today's church life.

Calvin says

Good solid case made here that Reformation is still relevant and necessary for today's church. Trueman highlights the centrality of Christ and the message of the cross, the importance of the written and preached word, and the misunderstood concept of assurance of salvation. Great wee book. Get it, read it and recommend it.

Noel Adams says

This was an EXCELLENT book. It's a call to apply the truths of the Reformation to today, a call to semper reformanda--to always be reforming. Trueman exposes the tendency of today's Church to make man the center of all spiritual things. He issues important challenges and reminders that God, not man, is the driving force behind our salvation, and that God, not man, is at the center of the Bible and the Gospel. Short book. Dense read.

Pete Williamson says

Another solid offering from Trueman, focusing on a handful of the major themes of the Reformation and its application today with a specific eye toward helping pastors.

Todd Miles says

This is an excellent little book. Beautifully crafted with profound cultural exegesis, Trueman brings the wisdom of the past to bear upon the circumstances faced by the church today. I thoroughly enjoyed it and

heartily recommend it. It will take little time to read but much time to digest. It is provocative.

Josh says

Particularly appreciated part 2 focusing on Luther's theology of the cross and application for Christian living

Nate says

A helpful introduction

Jimmy says

The author Carl Trueman is the professor of historical theology at Westminster Theological Seminary although he authored this work originally back in 1999 before he was a professor at Westminster. At that time Trueman was the Senior Lecturer in Church History at University of Aberdeen in which he acknowledged this book was written in haste so that it can be delivered at a conference in Wales for the Evangelical Theological College. In the book's forward Trueman tells us that he is delighted to find that he agrees with the book even though he originally wrote the book before his 40s and now he is older and mature. This book is not a history book per se about the reformation as it is about the heritage of the Reformation having its impact and importance for today and the future.

The book is divided into four chapters. The first chapter argues for the relevance of the Reformation today. The second focuses on Christ since the Reformation puts Christ at the center of theology. The third chapter is on the Scriptures while the fourth is on the importance of Christian assurance of salvation which Trueman argues is an important motif and theme for Protestants from the time of the Reformation onwards.

I personally found the first two chapters to have been the most delightful:

- Chapter one was incredibly nuanced. For instance Trueman makes it clear that he thinks the Reformation is important but that doesn't mean he's trying to make contemporary Christians and the church today go back to the sixteenth century. Nor is Trueman cultish in his esteem of the Reformation in which he argues like some would do in an unbiblical fashion that just because the Reformers did something therefore it means it must be right, true, etc. Here Trueman talks about "unhelpful friends" who have good intention in defending the Reformation but which the Reformation must also be rescued from as well.
- Before I began reading the book I was also curious as to how Trueman would define the Reformation especially since the title suggests it isn't used to described only the movement in the sixteenth century. I know today there can be some debate as to what constitute Reformed theology. I like Trueman's working definition given in the first chapter of the book: "the Reformation represents a move to place God as he has revealed himself in Christ at the center of the church's life and thought" (17). I thought this was a very good definition because it transcends the sixteenth century and it definitely is something that is relevant for today and tomorrow.
- Chapter one profoundly reminded me that the Reformation primarily was a theological movement and not merely a campaign for moral reforms of the Catholic church which no doubt some of the counter-Reformation Catholics would agree needs some kind of moral fixes. Trueman articulates in chapter one how the issue for the Reformers was one of theology. If one gets the theology right, then the moral problem will be fixed as a result of the implication of right theology. The opposite is also true: bad theology produces bad fruits.

- I enjoyed Trueman's discussion in chapter two about Martin Luther's "theology of the Cross" as opposed to theology of glory. Here Trueman gives the historical understanding of what Trueman has meant. While I have read and heard in the past about Luther's theology of the Cross it wasn't until I read this book did I truly understood what Martin Luther was trying to say and saw how earth shaking it is as theological paradigm. The implication of Luther's theology of the Cross is very relevant for today though it is counter-cultural in that it tells us of how to be comforted with hardship and trials.

The following is my constructive criticism:

- Trueman is doctrinally sound when it comes to the Gospel. However it wished Trueman would have quoted and interacted more from the Bible. For instance I believe we do not see any Bible verses quoted or cited until on page 100. This is quite amazing considering that the book is only 127 pages and that it is a book that also acknowledges Sola Scriptura. If the book is adapted from Trueman's message for a conference I wonder how the people fared in the conference to sit through that long without Scriptural reference.
- I wished Trueman could have talked more about the theme of Christian assurance. Specifically I thought that the book could have benefited from more practical questions to diagnose one's spiritual identity and whether one is truly saved, etc. He is right though that Reformed or Protestants can have assurance of their salvation because of what God has done and has promised. This is contrary to Catholic theology.

I do recommend this book and believe this would be edifying for the readers.

Ryan says

A short yet quite insightful book from Dr. Carl R. Trueman: "We have a gracious and trustworthy God; the Reformers reminded the world of that fact; let us place him once again at the centre of our lives and worship."

Brian The Furnace Man says

If you are looking for a detailed study on the history of the Reformation. This book probably isn't it. Due to the authors credentials I believe he could write such a book. However, that clearly wasn't his intent. You should approach reading this book with some sort of understanding of the Reformation. Also as the author points out from time to time this was written as a lecture. So be prepared to be lectured to.

The reason the author wrote this book is to address a problem within the evangelical church. That problem being the drift taking place away from reformed theology. It's a trend none of us are immune to. While the book contains some information about the history and proponents of the reformation. It is based more on the viewpoint of the author concerning this problem. It contains some degree of personal opinion (not unlike this review.) It also is lacking scriptural reference to back his position. Although I have no doubt he could provide such backing if called to do so. The author did an excellent job articulating his position and I found very little I disagreed with.

There was one difficulty I found while reading this book. It was the perceived angry tone throughout a portion of it. It became very tiring after a while. Now I understand it is extremely difficult to determine ones disposition through the written word. So I can be way off base with my conclusions in that regard. While it should anger us when Christ's work on the cross is trivialized. We need to remember that we are totally incapable of having a righteous anger. Even if anger seems to be for good cause it almost always becomes self focused at some point.

I found this to be an excellent read. I believe every professed Christian should have this on their shelf. This book is exactly the kick in the pants we need from time to time to keep us on track.

Nathan says

This is a very heady book. He writes in a highly technical manner which forced me to spend a lot of time thinking. Thinking is not a strength of mine.

Still had some helpful truths throughout.

Hopson says

I picked up this little book to finish it after a brief hiatus over the winter. Great little book that serves as both a brief introduction to staples of Reformation thought and a clarion call for the church to return to its Gospel roots.

Evan says

A very practical, smart and accessible little rundown of the value of the Reformation for today's evangelical church.

Phil says

This book is based on some conference messages that Trueman gave. As such, it is a distilled look at some of the major themes of the Reformation. It has no footnotes and few citations, but Trueman clearly knows the material and does an admirable job of not only presenting the Reformers' thinking but also guarding against the tendency to only look at the Reformers in terms of the questions and issues of our day. Trueman tries to get the reader to see how the Reformers were actually answering the questions and issues of their day. He does however spend a fair amount of time applying reformation insights to our present day, and succeeds in coming across as an old fashioned curmudgeon. I happen to be one also so I liked that part. He had some very useful things to say about preaching and how a grounding in reformation thought (and biblical teaching) guards against some of the confusion of progressive and postmodern evangelical types, especially with regards to preaching and approaches to church.

I enjoyed the writing but not as much as I expected to. My expectations were high due to his excellent pieces for First Things and my reading of The Creedal Imperative. Perhaps that is due to the fact that the content for this book dates to the early 2000's and that he has refined his style since then. Nevertheless, it was informative and helped clarify and structure my own thinking about some of the major themes of the reformation. I recommend it to anyone wanting to learn more about the reformation from an able guide, with minimal investment (the thing is only 127 pages!).

Oh and I don't remember who I borrowed this book from. If it was you, let me know.
