

The History of Protestantism

1. What does it mean to be Reformers?

It should ever be manifest that **we are reformers**, but not bigots. When our laborers enter a new field, they should **seek to become acquainted with the pastors of the several churches in the place**. Much has been lost by neglecting to do this. If our ministers show themselves friendly and sociable, and do not act as if they were ashamed of the message they bear, it will have an excellent effect, and may give these pastors and their congregations favorable impressions of the truth. Ev 143.4

- A reformer reaches out to those in the community.

We are reformers; we are not to accept a human standard, but to be governed by the **principles of heaven**. It does not become reformers to confine the work of reform to some special points which they may choose, to the neglect of others. PH066 9.1

- A reformer is governed by the principles of heaven.

Now I do pray that God will help us as **teachers** to be faithful in our work. **We are reformers**. God has called us out of the world. And I believe that Christian education is just as truly a part of the message as any other part of the work. And I want to be faithful in the part I have to do. I want to encourage young men and young women to give themselves to God, to be mustered into this **great army of God**. GCB June 2, 1913

- A reformer is called out from the world to train up the great army of God.

We are reformers. We are supposed to be pursuing a course that will represent the character of perfect humanity, **the pure, elevated character of Christ**. A well-established purpose of strictest integrity in things that are least will be carried with us into the larger responsibilities. Sanctified hearts will always reveal sanctified principles. A clear spiritual eyesight will materially change your practice and Dr. Rand's in regard to charges. You both need to learn precious lessons in regard to what is comprehended in **genuine missionary work**. 15LtMs, Lt 115, 1900, par. 4

- A reformer is supposed to represent the character of Christ fully and understands genuine missionary work.

2. How did the Reformation begin?

One of the noblest testimonies ever uttered for the Reformation was the **Protest** offered by the Christian princes of Germany at the Diet of Spire in 1529. The courage, faith, and firmness of those men of God gained for succeeding ages liberty of thought and of conscience. Their **Protest** gave to the reformed **church the name of Protestant**; its principles are "the very essence of **Protestantism**."— D'Aubigne, b. 13, ch. 6. GC 197.1

3. What was the message that started True Protestantism?

As King Ferdinand had refused to regard their conscientious convictions, the princes decided not to heed his absence, but to bring their **Protest** before the national council without delay. A solemn declaration was therefore drawn up and presented to the Diet:

“We **protest** by these presents, before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour, and who will one day be our Judge, as well as before all men and all creatures, that we, for us and for our people, neither **consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree, in anything that is contrary to God, to His holy word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls.**” GC 202.4

- That no man has to consent to a man made decree that is contrary to God, His Word, that violates our right conscience, or hinders the salvation of our souls.

4. What does it mean to be truly Protestant?

The principles contained in this celebrated **Protest** constitute the very essence of **Protestantism**. Now this **Protest** opposes two abuses of man in matters of faith: **the first is the intrusion of the civil magistrate, and the second the arbitrary authority of the church**. Instead of these abuses, **Protestantism** sets the power of conscience above the magistrate, and the authority of the word of God above the visible church. In the first place, it rejects the civil power in divine things, and says with the prophets and apostles, ‘We must obey God rather than man.’ In presence of the crown of Charles the Fifth, it uplifts the crown of Jesus Christ. But it goes farther: it lays down the principle that all human teaching should be subordinate to the oracles of God.”—Ibid., b. 13, ch. 6

The **Protest** of Spire was a solemn witness against religious intolerance, and an assertion of the right of all men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. GC 203.4

- To be truly Protestant means to be free from state craft and church craft, that no man, either king or pope, may tell you how AND when to worship Almighty God.

5. What was achieved by the Protestant Reformers?

The appointed time came for the Protestant princes to appear before the emperor. Charles V, seated upon his throne, surrounded by the electors and the princes, gave audience to the **Protestant Reformers**. The confession of their faith was read. In that august assembly the truths of the gospel were clearly set forth, and **the errors of the papal church were pointed out**. Well has that day been pronounced “**the greatest day of the Reformation**, and one of the most glorious in the history of Christianity and of mankind.”—Ibid., b. 14, ch. 7. GC 207.1

In the days of Paul the gospel for which he was imprisoned was thus brought before the princes and nobles of the imperial city. So on this occasion, that which the emperor had forbidden to be preached from the pulpit was proclaimed from the palace; what many had regarded as unfit even for servants to listen to was heard with wonder by the masters and lords of the empire. Kings and great men were the auditory, crowned princes were the preachers, and the sermon was the royal truth of God. “Since the apostolic age,” says a writer, “**there has never been a greater work or a more magnificent confession.**”—D'Aubigne, b. 14, ch. 7. GC 208.1

Some of the princes of Germany were won to the reformed faith. **The emperor himself declared that the Protestant articles were but the truth**. The Confession was translated into many languages and circulated through all Europe, and it has been accepted by millions in succeeding generations as the expression of their faith. GC 208.3

The declaration had been made. Their testimony was written in the memory of thousands and registered in the books of heaven, where no effort of man could erase it. **All evangelical Germany adopted the Protest as the expression of its faith**. Everywhere men beheld in this declaration the promise of a new and better era. Said one of the princes to the **Protestants** of Spire: “May the

Almighty, who has given you grace to confess energetically, freely, and fearlessly, preserve you in that Christian firmness until the day of eternity.”—Ibid., b. 13, ch. 6. GC 204.1

- The Protest of the princes converted an entire country and laid the foundation for all of Protestantism until the time of the Second Coming.

6. What is the great Protestant principle?

In our time there is a wide departure from their doctrines and precepts, and there is need of a return to the **great Protestant principle—the Bible, and the Bible only**, as the rule of faith and duty. GC 204.1

- Sola Scriptura is the foundation of Protestantism, unmixed without traditions of man.

7. What is Satan trying to do to the religious liberty that Protestantism brought us?

Satan is still working through every means which he can control to **destroy religious liberty**. The **antichrist power** which the protesters of Spire rejected is **now with renewed** vigor seeking to re-establish its lost supremacy. GC 204.2

- Satan is seeking to destroy religious liberty and is breathing power into the seat of the antichrist power to destroy the work of the Reformation.

8. Is a revival of True Protestantism needed today?

The same unswerving adherence to the word of God manifested at that crisis of the **Reformation** is the **only hope** of reform **today**. GC 204.2

- The only way we can, by any means, retain our religious liberty which Satan seeks to destroy, is to adhere to the Word of God.

9. How will the True Protestant Reformation go forward?

From the secret place of prayer came the **power that shook the world** in the **Great Reformation**. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises. During the struggle at Augsburg, **Luther “did not pass a day without devoting three hours at least to prayer, and they were hours selected from those the most favorable to study.”** In the privacy of his chamber he was heard to pour out his soul before God in words “full of adoration, fear, and hope, as when one speaks to a friend.” “I know that Thou art our Father and our God,” he said, “and that Thou wilt scatter the persecutors of Thy children; for Thou art Thyself endangered with us. All this matter is Thine, and it is only by Thy constraint that we have put our hands to it. Defend us, then, O Father!”—Ibid., b. 14, ch. 6. – GC 210.1

10. What will happen if a remnant stands up and upholds the principles of true Protestantism and bring about the final Revival and Reformation?

God's faithful servants were not toiling alone. While principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high places were leagued against them, the Lord did not forsake His people. **Could their eyes have been opened, they would have seen as marked evidence of divine presence** and aid as was granted to a prophet of old. When Elisha's servant pointed his master to the hostile army surrounding them and cutting off all opportunity for escape, the prophet prayed: “Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see.” 2 Kings 6:17. And, lo, the mountain was filled with chariots and horses of fire, the army of heaven stationed to protect the man of God. **Thus did angels guard the workers in the cause of the Reformation.** GC 208.4

God did listen to the cries of His servants. He gave to princes and ministers grace and courage to maintain the truth against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Saith the Lord: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded." 1 Peter 2:6. **The Protestant Reformers had built on Christ, and the gates of hell could not prevail against them.** – GC 210.3

11. Is there need for revival and reformation today in our time?

God calls for a **spiritual revival** and a **spiritual reformation**. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children. – 1SM 128.

A **revival and a reformation must take place** under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. **Revival** signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. **Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices.** **Reformation** will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the **revival** of the Spirit. Revival and reformation...must blend." – 1SM 128.

In **visions** of the night representations passed before me of a **great reformatory movement among God's people**. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great day of Pentecost. **Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families, and opening before them the word of God.** Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a **spirit of genuine conversion was manifest**. On **every side doors were thrown open** to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence and there seemed to be a **reformation** such as we witnessed in 1844. – 9T 126

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