The Harvest is Plentiful – Does the Bible Apply to My Life Today?

Yesterday was not just Halloween, it was also Reformation Day! It has been over 500 yrs since the Reformation, but its impact is still very relevant today!

The Reformation was about 2 things:

1) It was about who could say what is true…
2) It was about how we can reconcile who we are with who God is…

The Reformation declared that God's Word is the ultimate authority in this world… & that the perfect life & sacrificial death of Jesus Christ are the only answer for evil, & the only basis by which sinners can stand before a holy God!

"Reformed" churches emphasize these two fundamental truths of our faith! The question is are they as important today as they were then? And are they as life changing & earth shattering in the 21st cent. as they were in the 16th cent.?

Back then a reformation was needed because the Bible wasn't accessible! And when the Bible is not accessible, truth gets compromised & replaced!

Luther, and the other reformers, worked hard to get the Bible translated into the common language & in the hands of the common people… They believed that God's Word was the key to unlocking the door to the gospel…

If only more people could read Scripture, then there'd be more Christians! The Catholic Church disagreed… they believed that Scripture in the common language would cause confusion, misunderstanding, & division in the church

If you look at the 500 years since the Reformation, both perspectives were proven right! The gospel is now accessible to all… and there are 50,000 different denominations of churches, that hold differing views of the Bible!

Luther, & the Reformers, believed that even with this outcome, it would be worth it, because souls would be saved, & the gospel would be unleashed!

When the Bible is held up as the greatest source of truth, then the greatest form of unity is possible… But this "Truth" in the hands of sinners can/does still bring about division & separation, both inside & outside of the Church!

This is why many have walked away from church & refuse to pick up this book!

A valid question they ask is, *"Why do I need the Bible today, if the people who believe it can't agree on what it says or even get along with each other"*

This raises some big faith questions, *"Is the Bible needed today? "Is it really applicable to our lives?" "Can it still do today what the reformers believed it could?"*

- *"Is the Bible needed today?* Our answer…

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man* (or woman) ***of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."***

This truth transcends time! For if God is infinite, then His Word is timeless! And if it truly is a Word from God, then it is profitable no matter the context!

But the context still matters… The human writer, the genre of writing, the specific audience, the era of time, the purpose for which it was written… All these details matter and impact how we answer the second question…

- *"Is it really applicable to our lives today?"* Our answer…

We should take the Bible literally in the sense of understanding what God intended to communicate thru the writer, but that does not mean every passage should be interpreted literally or applied identically in every situation.

Examples:

- Commands given to specific individuals for a particular purpose/mission (Timothy, Moses, Abraham, Hosea, Philemon, Rich young ruler, disciples).
- Old Testament Laws that no longer apply to Christians in the same way (dietary restrictions, animal sacrifices, circumcision as covenant sign).
- Commands that depend on cultural or historical circumstances (greeting with a holy kiss, head coverings, Israel's civil penalties, men-only elders).

Taking the Bible as authoritative doesn't mean treating every sentence as literal prose. It means interpreting each passage according to its literary form (law/history/poetry/eyewitness/letter/apocalyptic) & its intended meaning (context).

A helpful framework: How do we determine what applies to our lives today?

1) Who is the original audience?
2) What was the historical and cultural setting?
3) What kind of biblical literature is it?
4) Does the Bible itself explain how it applies under the new covenant?
5) What principles carry forward into our lives today?

- *"Can it still do today what the reformers believed it could do?"* Our answer…
  2 Timothy 3:15 – *"acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation thru faith in Christ Jesus."* The Bible is still transforming lives today… & grace is still needed in pursuing biblical truth!

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