

Thus we have seen God's answer to the questions: Why is reformation necessary? and, Why is more than one Reformation necessary? The same passage that answered these general questions also indicates the main reasons why a Reformation was necessary in the sixteenth century, and also why one is necessary in the twentieth century.

We noticed Jesus' strong rebuke when Peter wished to substitute his human wisdom for the Word of God, as revealed by Christ Himself. This is the first great reason for need of reformation: neglect or contradiction of the Word of God.

Christianity is the religion of a book. Fundamentalists are often called Bible-worshippers, but this charge is false. We do not worship the Bible, but the God who reveals Himself through the Bible. The only way we can truly worship God is by finding out from the Bible who and what He is and what He wants us to do. There is no other way to learn more than the barest of essentials about the nature and character of God. In ancient times God spoke directly to holy men, giving them specific messages for their own times. Once the Bible was completed God ceased this method of direct communication with people. Instead, He wants us to study His Word and to learn from it the principles that are vital in directing our lives.

There are many today who think that this concept of the Bible as a revelation is an outworn superstition of the Middle Ages. Actually, however, the idea of revelation is one of the very commonest things in life. We would know very little about each other if it were not for the communications, or revelations, that we are constantly giving one another. The greatest scientist on earth would know very little, were it not for the communications that he had received from other scientists about the facts that they had learned. If a man had never been in China and wanted to learn something about it, it would be absolutely impossible for him to do so unless he either went there or received a communication from someone who had been there. I fear that many philosophical discussions of today are valueless, because they attempt to solve questions for which they do not have access to the necessary data. Let us suppose that a number of very intelligent men, none of whom had ever been in China, or had ever heard or read a communication from anyone who had been in the Orient, were to go to the top of a hill on the edge of the Pacific ocean. Standing at this vantage point, they might be able to see as far as fifty miles across that expanse of water. It would be utterly impossible however, for them to see whether there was a continent beyond the water or not. They might discuss the question, whether there was a land across the sea or not. They might argue as to what kind of people were there, what sort of language these people spoke, what were their customs and manners. They might seek to determine the geography of the country: is it flat or hilly? Do its rivers run from north to south like the Mississippi, or from south to north like the Nile, or from west to east like the Amazon, or from east to west like the Columbia?