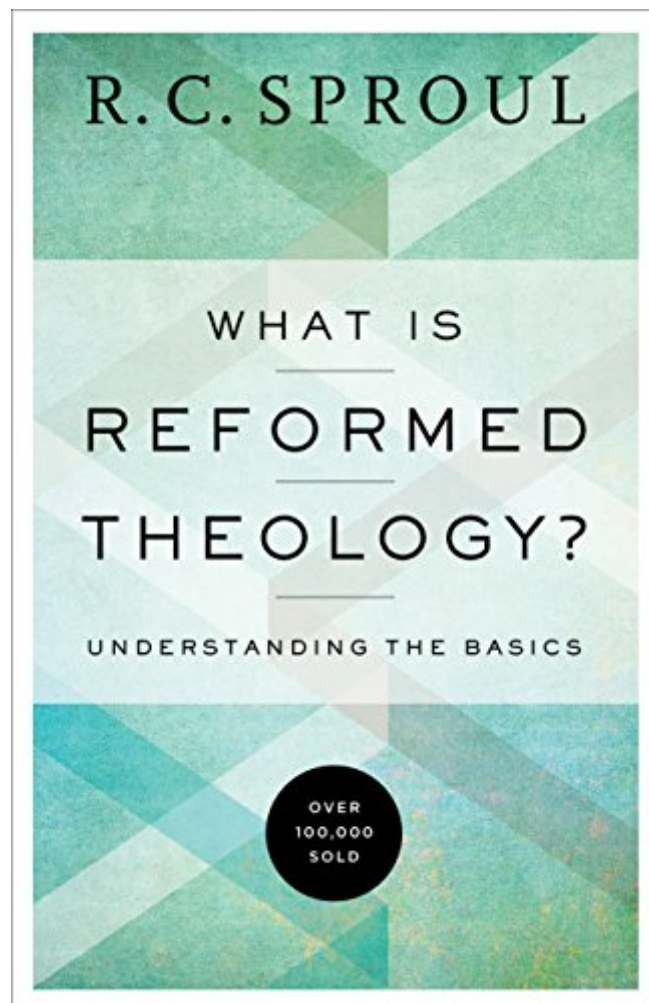




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# What Is Reformed Theology?: Understanding The Basics



## Synopsis

What Do the Five Points of Calvinism Really Mean? Many have heard of Reformed theology, but may not be certain what it is. Some references to it have been positive, some negative. It appears to be important, and they'd like to know more about it. But they want a full, understandable explanation, not a simplistic one. *What Is Reformed Theology?* is an accessible introduction to beliefs that have been immensely influential in the evangelical church. In this insightful book, R. C. Sproul walks readers through the foundations of the Reformed doctrine and explains how the Reformed belief is centered on God, based on God's Word, and committed to faith in Jesus Christ. Sproul explains the five points of Reformed theology and makes plain the reality of God's amazing grace.

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## Customer Reviews

Whether you're a new Christian, or have been one for decades, this short book will help you

understand the particulars of the faith. Martin Luther was used by God to usher in an age of recovery of Biblical truths that had been obscured, and he was followed by other men of God. Dr. Sproul is able to take these recovered truths and explain them in a simple, but not "simplistic" manner! Work your way slowly through the text. Stop and think about what you've read. Enjoy the short Latin phrases sprinkled throughout the book--they'll help you remember key concepts. The book draws heavily on the Westminster Confession (a statement of faith) to point the student to Scriptural ideas. Some language may seem a bit dated, but Sproul does a great job "deciphering" any confusing phrases, etc. Finally and most importantly, be a Berean. Look at the Word of God and let His truth penetrate your heart.

Finally finished this. I think I need some Motrin. A lot of Motrin. OK, a wheelbarrow full of Motrin. I have read many of Francis Schaeffer's books that were much easier reads than this and dealt with no less complex ideas. Pro's : Concise, short (relatively), designed to be read as a stand-alone introduction. Sproul does use a gentle sense of humor at times to make the reading a bit more easy. Cons: Dense. Oh my COW this is dense. It could have stood to be a tad less dense to make the reading easier. A glossary. This needs a glossary like I need coffee in the morning. Tossing out terminology like "infralapsarianism, supralapsarianism and sublapsarianism" and then trying to explain them in the text just creates confusion. A glossary would have made the reading much easier without feeling like one is constantly running down rabbit trails. Coming away from this I do feel like I understand the very basic fundamentals of Reformed Theology a bit better. There was no real "Light bulb" or "Aha!" moment and I'm not sure that it is even possible given the subject matter at hand. After reading this though, I do wonder a bit if in some cases the things he was discussing aren't a "Distinction without a difference" so to speak. I do understand that when discussing theology, minutiae can work out to be a huge difference; but still....I will probably re-read this to simply digest it more. Would I recommend it? Yes, with the caveat that you should first buy stock in Motrin and be aware that it is not for the literary faint of heart. As an aside, it might be easier to read, digest and understand in book form as opposed to reading on the Kindle as I did.

Was a difficult book to understand for a novice. I will read it again as there was so much to it I wasn't able to retain enough of it. It is an excellent book on Reformed Theology. The words in the book can be difficult to understand and the formula of the books writing is obvious the writer was well educated. It is a book I recommend be read a couple of times and then placed in your library for future reading

I remember listening to a recent conference where Dr. Alistair Begg said something that resonated with me. He didn't start out as part of Reformed Christianity; rather he read his Bible and found that's where it led him. Finding myself in much the same boat, I appreciate Dr. Sproul's attempt in this book to function as an introduction to what Reformed Theology truly is, and not what it is perceived to be. Few things in our church are poorly understood or misrepresented as the ideas generically filed under "Calvinism". In this relatively short (240 p.) but informative volume, R.C. Sproul works to explain the core tenets of the larger body of Reformed Theology in straightforward terms. Those who have read some of Sproul's other works will know his witty, warm style is usually excellent for teaching, and it serves him well here. In the first part of this book, Sproul examines the foundations of Reformed Theology, and explains why it is indeed centered on God and God's Word. Part two, which I think will be of supreme importance and interest to those who have only heard of Calvinism secondhand, goes through the familiar "TULIP" acrostic (Total Deprivation, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, Perseverance of the Saints). Sproul explains and works through what each of these mean, clearing up some misconceptions along the way. Sproul also frequently points out through the work the differences between Reform Theology and Arminians, Pelagians, and other varying views. He does this without much in the way of vitriol or harshness. Some of these opposing views probably could have been explored and compared/contrasted a bit more fully in a longer book, but given the length of the book, I can't fault this too much. After all, it's an introduction to Reformed thought, not an all-out debate among major positions. If you have a friend who thinks because you're a Calvinist, you see everyone as a robot, human responsibility as a joke, or denying the need for a holy life, this would be an excellent starter book to have them read. Sproul explains why Reform Theology is powerfully rooted in the Bible. If you're starting to attend or considering attending a church that adheres to Reform Theology, this would be a very helpful read. There are only a few illustrations and charts, but they are very helpful for relaying some of the content in a memorable way. Don't expect this to be a full-on, in-depth of Calvinism; there are some elements of that here, but it functions much better as an introductory or overview text. In this, I think Sproul exceeds admirably.

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