Samuel Rutherford

1. Born in 1600, while Elizabeth the 1ST is on the throne of England, and James the 6TH is on the throne of Scotland. He was born during a dark hour in Church history. He ends up picking up the torch that John Knox had carried earlier is 2ND only to John Knox amongst Scottish Puritans in terms of his impact/influence.
2. **Edinburgh professor, 1600 (1623) – 1625**. He was a man of brilliant intellect, well read, well studied, and gifted by God with powers and mental focus in the study of the Word of God. Born in the Nesbit, Middletown, Scotland on the border of England. Went to the University of Edinburgh where Rutherford excelled in Latin and Greek. Earned a Bachelor’s Degree, then a Masters Degree in 1621. Upon his graduation, he was made a professor of Latin and humanity, and he is still unconverted at this point.
3. In 1625, he was found in an inappropriate relationship with another (another?, but he wasn’t married yet). woman. He immediately married her. God used this to devastate, humble, crush, and expose his own heart to himself. He was painfully aware of his own guilt before God. God used this to bring him down to his knees to finally look up to God. He was brought to the end of himself.  His sins were brought into heaven. He repented, turned to Christ, and received forgiveness through the grace of God.
4. **Husband and Pastor, 1625–1630**. He pastors a church In less than a year of his conversion. He had demonstrated how broken he now was. Church was located in Southwest, Scotland. Small rural area [Anworth, Old Kirk]. This is the only church He ever pastored in a out of the way place, a smaller Bible church. He could shepherd his whole flock just by walking.
5. He was very disciplined. “Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Woke up every morning at 3 AM. Gave several hours every morning to diligent Bible study, prayer, and meditation. No wonder he was used so greatly. Because he did not cut corners as he began his ministry as a young man. Because he did not cut corners as he began his ministry as a young man, it is no wonder he was used so greatly. (the orange is what you put, the green is my suggested change). Out of this deepening well, he preached and ministered for the rest of his life. He was so given to this work that one pastor said, “He seemed to be always praying, always preaching, always visiting the sick, always catechizing, always rising in studying.” His whole life was devotedly given to this flock. A passionate preacher [and the Scots were very passionate in their preaching, fiery preachers of the word of God]. He was never in his right element but when he was commending Christ. He preached on the loveliness of Christ.
6. Before God uses a preacher greatly he must break him greatly. These are men who walk with a limp. They have faced adversity in their own life. It is part of their humility. It is part of their lowliness of mind because that is the man whom God raises up in a mighty way. He who exalts himself will be humbled, and vice versa. His wife died after a year of immense suffering. Then all of his daughters except one died at a very early age. Devastating blow. (A devastating blow.) He himself was a frail man who suffered greatly with a high fever. But it was a part of God’s molding and shaping of Samuel Rutherford. The partnership (transformation) into the very image of Jesus Christ.
7. He became politically active in response to the demands of the Anglican church, under James the 6TH, and he resisted. Charles the 1ST was placed on the throne of Scotland and England. Rutherford resisted this. He knew that the people of God could not rely on the formality of empty ritual. He was called before the court of High Commission in Edinburgh because he was not in conformity with the Articles of Perth. He was found to be in treason against the King because he would not conform to the standard that has been set. He believed that a communion resembling the Roman Catholic mass was unacceptable. He refused to believe that baptism was necessary for salvation. He opposed infant baptism as a saving grace. He resisted the placing of Catholic Bishops over the church of Scotland. He believed that the only day that was wholly sacred was not Christmas and not Easter, but was every Sabbath Sunday. This was the only day holy under the Lord. Rooted and grounded in Reformed truth which in reality is just Biblical truth.
8. He was a very powerful influence on the side of the Reformed faith. This was the key emphasis in his ministry, the overarching dominance of Divine sovereignty. It is the continental divide, the spine of the sovereignty of God and His overruling purposes in salvation and all of providence. That becomes the defining mark in a (this) man’s ministry. And this was true in his own life in so many ways. It was true in his opposition to Arminianism. He radically exalts the sovereignty of God. His high theology led to high a doxology [worshipfully high view of God].
9. Now he finds himself in conflict with the English Episcopacy and is called before the High Court. After a three-day trial, he’s charged and convicted of treason. He was forbidden to preach anywhere in the entire nation of Scotland. He is banished to Aberdeen, Scotland out on the tip on the coast.
10. We do not have a dead orthodoxy - that is never the destination. Knowing the truth is the highway that takes us to the destination, and you cannot arrive at the destination apart from the highway of the truth. But the destination is that you would love the Lord your God with all your heart etc.
11. **Rutherford’s letters** cultivate a thirst for God, and this increases your desire to read these letters which are so devotional and so influential in our personal relationship with the Lord. A few examples:

*“Give Christ your virgin love, (undefiled, your purest affections should go to Christ) you cannot put your love and heart into a better hand. O if you knew Him, and saw His beauty, your love, your heart, your desires would be close with him, and you would cling/cleave to him.”*

*“Sweet, sweet have His comforts been to my soul, my pen, my tongue, my words and my heart. I have no words to describe the kindness, the love, and the mercy of my well beloved to me in the in the (in the) house of my pilgrimage.”*

*“I would desire no more for my heaven beneath the moon while I am staying in this house of clay, than the daily renewed love feasts with Christ.”*

[Some people in the area of theology today have become like “the frozen chosen” neutered in their personality, stoical, and their brains have been fried. We don’t want that. We want reformed truth and biblical doctrine to be like gas poured on a fire that causes our heart’s passion to be ignited with fervent love for the Lord Jesus Christ.]

*“Only my loathsome wretchedness and my wants have qualified me for Christ. My sorrow is that I cannot get Christ lifted above the dust of Scotland. I’d love to sit him high above the skies in the heaven of heavens. Our crosses are like puffs, a lent to blow our ship home. They can convey us to Heaven’s Gate, but they cannot follow it into heaven.”*

1. **Saint Andrews processor (professor), 1638–1642**: The National Covenant was signed in 1638 - that we have no head but Christ and Scotland is united in their bold stand even against the King that we will worship Christ and be under His headship, not the headship of the human king over the church. Rutherford now is a freeman in 1638. With all this political tension in the background, he is made a professor of theology at Saint Mary’s College in Scotland which is at the University of Saint Andrews on par with Oxford and Cambridge in England. He had a brilliant mind to match his glowing heart.
2. He preached every Sunday at the University’s church, and he filled other pulpits at Saint Andrews. One student said God has so singularly blessed his pain that in his teaching and preaching the University became a “Lebanon” [place of large trees] out of which were taken the seeds to build houses all over the various parts of Scotland. Rutherford was used by God to build up the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. So great and wide was the influence of Samuel Rutherford as he taught in what would be synonymous of today’s seminaries. He sent out waves of red hot preachers of the Word of God that passionately loved Christ.
3. He remarried a woman named Jean, and they had six children who joined His one daughter from his previous marriage yet all seven of these children preceded him in death along with his 2ND wife. But like Job, God used one trial after another to make him useable in the Master’s hand.
4. **Westminster Divine: 1643–1647**: The long parliament calls for the leading theologians to come together at Westminster in order to produce a longer and shorter catechism. They would have to have (ask) Samuel Rutherford to be a part of this. They were only five men who were sent from all of Scotland and two from London to this Assembly. And he had more to say and made more contribution than any others. He was the only Scott to be there for the whole time. Rutherford was all in on shaping the theological understanding of the next generation, so he became a chief architect in the Westminster confession of faith. It was during this time in 1644 while he’s in London that in his spare time he writes Lex Rex plus five other books. He was so industrious. I.e.. In the Westminster Confession ‘What is the chief end of man, To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.” This was one of many Rutherford contributions.
5. A brilliant mind, a political thinker, a reformed theologian, a passionate heart, almost a romantic letter writer, a gifted author - if you take all of his work, it would amount to something like 3000 pages which is like an entire shelf of books brought out of his towering mine (mind). The greatest theologians of this day we’re not in the academic hall, but they pastored churches and Rutherford is really a key example of such a man, like John Calvin. He was a local pastor, but given the profundity of his theological grasp, he is a theologian.
6. **At university Rector, 1647–1661** Of St. Mary’s College, and then appointed Rector of Saint Andrews University which is beyond Edinburgh University at this time. Do you remember what happened in 1661? The previous year was the restoration of the monarchy at the beginning of when all of these laws were passed, and so Rutherford has a massive target on his forehead. He is the man that Charles the 2ND comes after as he wants to uproot all the enemies of Catholicism which is what he wants to put into place. So Rutherford becomes convicted of treason in 1660–1661. He is charged with treason against the Kingdom of England. He’s removed from the church and stripped of his university chair and salary, Rex Lex (Lex Rex) is condemned and ordered to be burned publicly. He’s put under house arrest. He is summoned to appear before the High Council, but he appealed to a higher council, and, as they take him to testify, he tell (tells) the Council that he has a superior summons from a superior judge, and that he must answer them per his first summons. “The day will arrive when there will be few kings that will go to where I am headed.” He dies in 1661 as Charles the 2ND put all these things into place. He is buried in Saint Andrews at the old Saint Andrews’ Cathedral. When the people finally understood this, they rose up in righteous anger and tore down the entire massive Cathedral. At the end of his tombstone, it testifies of the vision that he had of the glory of Christ.
7. What we learn from Rutherford, in the midst of a complexity of our lives, living in the vexing complexity of LA, we cannot lose what is the very center of our Christian life - the One who is the alpha and the omega, the Lord Jesus Christ.