

Reformation Day October 27, 2019

Or 20th Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 25(30) or 19th Sunday after Trinity

Year C – the Gospel of Luke

Lutheran

Living the ^ Lectionary

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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https://www.reddit.com/r/dankchristianmemes/comments/9syggs/happy_reformation_day_my_dudes/

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 555 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 377

“Salvation unto us has come”

An alternative to singing "A Mighty Fortress"

"Paulus Spertus, 1484-1554, ...was the author of various works, but was best known as the Reformer of Prussia. Feeling that for the working of ordinary parishes it was necessary to have pastors who had been brought up in Prussia, and could preach, if need be, in Polish or Lettish, he gladly welcomed the foundation at Königsberg (1544) of the first Prussian university...

As a hymn writer Speratus is principally known by the three hymns published in the *Etlich cristlich lider*, 1524. He also published (no place or date but Königsberg, 1527), in 1527, a version of Ps. xxvii., beginning, "Erzurn dich nicht, sei nicht neidisch;" and a Hymn of Thanksgiving, to be used after the sermon, beginning, "Gelobet sei Gott, unser Gott." These five are all that can be confidently ascribed to him. Of the five hymns mentioned above two have passed into English, viz.:—

Es ist das Heil uns kommen her. *Law and Gospel*. This, his most famous hymn, is founded on Rom. iii. 28. It was probably written in the autumn of 1523, either during his imprisonment at Olmütz, or else during his stay at Wittenberg. Included as one of the 8 hymns in the *Etlich cristlich lider* 1524, dated 1523, and entitled, "A hymn of Law and Faith, powerfully furnished with God's Word. Doctor Paul Speratus."

Lauxmann, in *Koch*, viii. 236, calls it "the true confessional hymn of the Reformation, or, as Albert Knapp puts it, 'the poetical counterpart of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans.'" He relates many instances of the effects it produced. It is a Scriptural ballad, setting forth, in what was, for the time, excellent verse, the characteristic teachings of the German Reformers; and is indeed of considerable historical importance. But for present day use it is too long, somewhat harsh in style, and too much a compend of doctrinal theology.

The only version we have found in English common use is:—

To us salvation now is come. In full by Dr. H. Mills, in his *Horae Germanicae*, 1845, p. 44. Other translations are:— (1) "Now is our health come from above." By Bishop Coverdale, 1539 (*Remains*). (2) "Our whole Salvation doth depend." By J. C. Jacobi, 1725, p. 23. (3) "Now comes salvation from above." By Dr. G. Walker, 1860, p. 79. (4) "Salva-tion hath come down to us." By Miss Winkworth, 1869, p. 123."

- https://hymnary.org/person/Speratus_P
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_u0PdEhp80
Piano from TLH [Andrew Remillard](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBXooSlKmB8>
Contemporary version The Vine © 2011 Koiné

And if you miss it –

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yk8U58vfOoc>
[Glad Collector's Series](#) by Glad

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

O.T.– “I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel...”

Psalm – “God is our refuge and strength... **Be still, and know that I am God.**”

Epistle – “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and are justified by his grace...”

Gospel – “***So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.***”

Reformation Day, Revelation 14:6-7; RCL, 20th Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 25(30), Joel 2:23-32 or Sirach 35:12-17 or Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22 (Next week: All Saints Day, Revelation 7(2-8) 9-17; RCL, Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18 or observed as 21st Sunday, after Pentecost, Proper 26(31), since date of All Saints is November 1)

“This year our Reformation celebration... marks the (502nd) anniversary of Luther’s birth. For an appropriate sermon study we look to the historic epistle lesson for the Festival of the Reformation, Revelation 14:6,7. May it remind us of the extraordinary gift which the Lord gave to his Christian Church on earth centuries ago in the person of Martin Luther. At a time when much Reformation celebration fosters unionism and false ecumenism, may this sermon study keep alive in us all that for which Luther stood firm and fearlessly contended. In choosing Revelation 14:6, 7 to observe Luther’s birth we do not mean to identify the angel mentioned with Luther or any particular person. Among the various interpretations of the 14th chapter of Revelation, especially by older Protestant theologians, the three angels referred to in the chapter are identified as John Wycliffe (v 6), John Huss (v 8), and Martin Luther (v 9). Such interpretation is more specific than the context allows. The context speaks of the proclamation of the gospel throughout the New Testament age. We prefer to think of these angels as the sum total of God’s messengers sent to proclaim the gospel until the end of the New Testament era, until the day of judgment...”

<https://essays.wls.wels.net/bitstream/handle/123456789/1206/DobbersteinRevelation.pdf?sequence=1> Leroy A. Dobberstein

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

“The book of Revelation is meant to increase understanding. It reveals. It **show[s] what must soon take place**. It was Jesus Christ revealing things to His Church. The book is a series of visions depicting the time between Jesus’ earthly ministry and His Judgment Day return. Each vision looks at the same events from different perspectives. Think of them as vivid portraits painted in graphic color and detail, each growing in intensity. Our text comes halfway through a vision spanning chapters 12 through 15...

Things look grim. But then John’s eyes are turned from earth to heaven with a vision of the Lamb, Jesus, standing on Mt. Zion with those who have His name and His Father’s name on their foreheads. They stand above and outside the fray, victorious, having come out of the tribulation. This introduces our part of the vision. “Then I saw another angel flying in midair...

Our angel is the first of three messengers. He proclaims the eternal gospel. The second announces the fall of the great enemy of the Church, called Babylon. The third assures all those who follow the beasts that God's fury will be poured out on them. Then John sees the great harvest of those who had rejected God and served the beasts, depicting the final separation of believers and unbelievers on Judgment Day when the Jesus comes in all His glory.

You see the connection to Reformation, don't you? It's not only that despite all onslaughts of the Devil, Christ is victorious, and those who are His are His. He stands on Mt. Zion with them into life everlasting. It's also comfort for us today. Not only the Church Triumphant in heaven, but the Church so nearly destroyed on such a regular basis, cannot and will not be destroyed. This day on which we commemorate those events (over) 500 years past, the day on which we celebrate the Lutheran Reformation, is a day for us to hear, **THE GOSPEL CANNOT BE DESTROYED! Because GOD LIFTS IT UP ABOVE ALL DANGER, SO THAT THE WORLD MIGHT KNOW.**

- <https://stmarklutheran.wordpress.com/2009/11/01/sermon-on-revelation-146-7/> St. Mark Lutheran Church, Duncanville, Texas' current shepherd is the Rev. Benjamin Tomczak

Psalm 46; RCL, Psalm 65 or Psalm 84:1-7 (Psalm 149; RCL, the same reading)

"A Mighty Fortress is Our God" -- the hymn, which according to Ulrich Leupold, "more than any other epitomizes Luther's thought and personal experience" -- is a rather free paraphrase of Psalm 46.

For that reason, the psalm is assigned for Reformation Sunday. But as Leupold notes, Luther "did not write [the hymn] to express his own feelings, but to interpret and apply the 46th Psalm to the church of his own time and its struggles."¹ This is a fine summary of the preaching task -- to interpret and apply the biblical text to our own time and struggles. So why not preach this Reformation Day on Psalm 46?

The Text of the Psalm

The psalm is tightly composed, with three, three-verse-long stanzas and two refrains:

Stanza 1 (verses 1-3)

Stanza 2 (verses 4-6)

Refrain: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (verse 7)

Stanza 3 (verses 8-10)

Refrain: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (verse 11)

An important note about the text of the psalm is necessary, because some recent modern editions of the Book of Psalm "restored" (a fancy scholarly term meaning "fussed with") the text of the psalm to include the psalm's refrain after the first stanza, too. The Lutheran Book of Worship of 1978 and The Book of Common Prayer of 1977 both used a version of this psalm with the refrain so restored.²

More recently, however, postmodern sensibilities have rightfully undermined scholarly confidence in the ability to fuss with the biblical text in these ways. So here is the point: Just be aware of which text your congregation is using. The commentary here does not supply the supposed missing verse. If you are still using a version that "restores" the refrain after the first stanza, adjust your interpretation accordingly..." (continued after the reading)

God Is Our Fortress

To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamoth.^{1a} A Song.

46 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present^{1a} help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,

³though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. *Selah*

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

⁵God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.

⁶The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.

⁷The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

⁸Come, behold the works of the LORD,
how he has brought desolations on the earth.

⁹He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the chariots with fire.

¹⁰**“Be still, and know that I am God.**
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!”

¹¹The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

- a. Psalm 46:1 Probably a musical or liturgical term
- b. Psalm 46:1 Or *well proved*

Stanza One -- The Roaring of Creation and God "Our Refuge"

In the first stanza, the hymn juxtaposes the steady and secure image of God as "refuge" with the image of the earth and seas in uproar. (For more on the key Hebrew term "refuge," see the [commentary on Psalm 91:9-16](#).) The image of "earth" shaking and "sea" roaring is an image of creation itself in rebellion against God's creative order. This image is a reminder that the fallen condition of creation goes beyond mere human disobedience. The fallen condition encompasses all of creation, all

of nature. Thus, the "law" that the psalm names is the reality that creation itself is broken and in rebellion against the Creator...

Stanza Two -- The Roaring of the Nations and the River of God

The second stanza of the poem intensifies both the threat that is named and the promise that is proffered. The first stanza remained at the more universal level, naming the universal threat of creation in rebellion and offering the general promise of God (using the generic term *elohim*) as refuge. The second stanza focuses in more specifically on the national identity of God's chosen people. It refers to the nations (Hebrew: *goyim*) that threaten "the city of God" (also known as Jerusalem) and the refrain employs both the personal name of "the Lord" as well as the epithet "God of Jacob" -- a reference to the nation's ancestral patriarch...

All of which is to say that in the second stanza the poem intensifies the sense of threat... This intensification of the naming of the threat also balances the first stanza by naming a second, more particular and more direct way in which the fallen condition of sin affects human -- through human sin...

The corresponding promise that the second stanza offers is the presence of God with the people. Here, God's presence is metaphorically described as "a river whose streams make glad the city of God." There was and is no river in Jerusalem, of course, but that is not the point of the poetic flourish. The point is rather the powerful promise resident in the stark image of the refreshing and life-sustaining river to a city and people in an arid climate under siege by an invading army...

Stanza Three -- Be Still and Know that I am God

The psalm's final stanza culminates with a statement of trust that is cloaked as an invitation and then with a promise. The invitation is the imperative cry, "Come!" which occurs in Psalms 95 and 66 in calls to come, see what God has done, and therefore to praise God. Here, the call is not so much to praise God, but to come and be silent -- to witness God's powerful ability to crush rebellion and then to be silent.

In the end, God even speaks the promise: "**Be still, and know that I am God.**" To know, in Hebrew, does not mean just to acknowledge something intellectually, but to internalize or to embody the truth fully. And then God's voice closes the psalm by asserting God's exaltation over both spheres of creation that have been in rebellion against God in stanzas 1 and 2 of the poem: "I am exalted among the nations" (stanza 2) and "I am exalted in the earth" (stanza 1).

That is the promise of both the psalm, and in a larger sense, of the entire Bible. That the God of Jacob and the Lord of Israel will, in the end of all things, prove a faithful refuge for those who are caught in the fallen condition of creation and humanity...

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1110 [Rolf Jacobson](#) Professor of Old Testament and Alvin N. Rogness Chair in Scripture, Theology, and Ministry, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

Romans 3:19-28; RCL, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18 (1 John 3:1-3; RCL, Ephesians 1:11-23)

The opening verses in our passage summarize what Paul has been saying up to this point in chapters two and three. Paul stresses that humanity has no claim whatsoever on God. Both Greeks and Jews stand accused by the law. The former know the law as it is "written on their hearts" (2:15) while the latter fall short of the law revealed to the people of Israel. Note carefully that the law is not the problem. Paul underlines that the law itself is good (7:12). But it is our tendency (sin) to use what is good to promote our own agenda that is the problem. In doing this we reveal the depth of our rebellion.

Paul is basically reminding us that even our best works can be the occasion for sin... Though we know the goal of our efforts on behalf of others is to build up the community, we also understand the temptation to take these good acts and set ourselves apart as special in the eyes of God. Odd as it may sound, doing good works can be spiritually dangerous. It is important for Christians to keep Paul's stern declaration forever in front of our eyes: "For 'no human being will be justified in his sight' by deeds prescribed by the law..." (3:20)..." (continued after the reading)

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being^[a] will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

The Righteousness of God Through Faith

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

- a. [Romans 3:20](#) Greek *flesh*

But Now

It is easy to pass over the small words of Scripture and count them as having little value. We prefer to unpack the big terms that are loaded with theological freight, like "justification" and "righteousness". However, Paul is making a big shift in our passage as he transitions from futility of the human situation to what God is doing to address the problem.

BUT NOW (3:21) says Paul, God is doing something new. That little word "now" deserves some attention. Paul is directing our attention to the present tense. This is echoed latter in the section when he says "...they are *now* justified by his grace" (3:24) and "it was to prove at the *present* time that he himself is righteous" (3:26, underlining mine).

In other words, we are not dealing merely with something that God has done in the past. This is not a glance back to a "once upon a time." It is certainly not merely a history lesson. Paul's point is that right now, this very moment, God is declaring something to us that we need to hear. In

other words, this is a message that connects with peoples' lives as they live today. Preachers and teachers would do well to address their hearers in the here and now and avoid the past tense!

Now What?

This brings us to the final and most important part of the comments on these verses. Just what does Paul say that God is now doing? Basically, he is making clear what kind of God he really is. If God's righteousness is only a standard for us to attain, then we are out of luck. As has been shown, we lack the power (our wills are bound to self-love) to follow the law and make ourselves righteous or whole.

But the picture changes completely if God's righteousness is something that is given to us. And this is the key point that must be grasped. Paul is saying that, in Christ, God **shares** (3:24) his righteousness with those who do not deserve it -- we "Greeks and Jews" who are so bent on doing things our way on our own terms..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1350 [Mark Tranvik](#) Professor of Religion, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN

John 8:31-36 or Matthew 11:12-19; RCL, Luke 18:9-14 (Matthew 5:1-12; RCL, Luke 6:20-31)

"These verses promise good news to those who desire to be Jesus' disciples: He and only he brings true freedom.

At the same time, these verses take us into the teeth of the Gospel according to John's pointed polemic against the people represented by the characters called "the Jews." It is imperative that congregations come away from their encounter with this text understanding that "the Jews" mentioned in 8:31 do not stand for all Jews (neither all Jews of Jesus' time nor all Jews of any time) or for an abstract notion of Judaism. To make this passage imply that Judaism is an enslaving religion or that Jesus somehow stood outside of Judaism is to misunderstand the passage, the historical setting in which it was written, and its enduring theological implications. Consulting a reputable commentary on John will re-acquaint preachers with this Gospel's polemical bent and help them guard against perpetuating old forms of anti-Judaism and creating new ones.

These six verses are cut from a tightly-constructed dialog (8:21-59) that resembles a courtroom deliberation over Jesus' identity. In the larger episode, Jesus takes the divine name as his own and tells his interlocutors that they are estranged from God and their Abrahamic ancestry. While the lectionary's sharp knife keeps the core dispute of 8:21-59 hidden, in doing so it also carves out space for preachers to consider the six verses on their own terms. That is, congregations will hear 8:31-36 as a mini-dialog more or less dislocated from...the wider narrative context. This allows a sermon to direct focus toward the rich language Jesus uses..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=436 [Matt Skinner](#) Professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 8th Chapter”

The Truth Will Set You Free

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, *“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”* ³³ They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave^[a] to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

- a. [John 8:34](#) For the contextual rendering of the Greek word *doulos*, see Preface; also verse [35](#)

“It is hard to miss the theme of freedom in our text from John.

And since this is Reformation Sunday, it useful to remember that freedom was a key concern for many of the Reformers. One of Martin Luther’s most famous writings is “The Freedom of a Christian,” which he wrote in 1520 just before he was excommunicated by the church.¹ Preachers might find their proclamation well-served by reviewing this classic work. Freedom is also a slippery word. It can mean a multitude of different things and proclaimers who focus on freedom need to clear a path if the biblical word of liberation is to be clearly heard.

Confused by Freedom

Probably the first task is to help listeners understand the difference between commonly held views of freedom and how the word is being used in the gospel of John. In fact, our text from today indicates that Jesus’ original hearers were also perplexed by his stress on freedom. When Jesus tells “the Jews who had believed in him” that the truth will make them free (John 8:31-32), they are confused and puzzled because as “descendants of Abraham” they had never been enslaved to anyone and therefore his talk of needing to be freed was nonsensical (John 8:33)...

Of Human Bondage

But these are preliminary comments. Because of confusion about “freedom” the association with politics and economics should probably be mentioned. However, preaching on this text needs to be clear regarding Christian freedom. Jesus makes a contrast between slavery and freedom. The former indicates our bondage to sin: “everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin” (John 8:34). Here we must be careful to avoid the notion that sin is only an *action* and not the reflection of an underlying *condition*. Our acts of sin are a reflection of a prior state of alienation from God. An addict may steal or lie in the name of his habit but the real problem is not the theft or deception. The main issue is the enslavement or bondage to the craving for the drug.

And what is our underlying problem? We reject the truth about ourselves: “If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). In other words, we

convince ourselves that there is nothing really wrong with us... We stubbornly persist in the idea that we are fundamentally in control...

In this way of thinking responsibility for our freedom rests with us. But this makes hash out of John 8:36 for there we are told “if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” Apparently we are not able to liberate ourselves. The text clearly claims we need a liberator.

Of Christian Freedom

The key to freedom is Christ: for freedom Christ has set us free (Galatians 5:1). And the best preaching does not offer liberation or make it conditional upon the response of the listener. It is not held up as a doctrine that needs to be “believed” or a story that needs to be “applied.” It does not move quickly and nervously to all the things freedom is “for”: the work for justice, the care for the poor, the need to tend to creation. All such activity is laudable and such things can be stressed in other parts of worship or in future sermons.

But, above all, be sure to announce loudly and clearly that the day of liberation has come! Now! Declare unmistakably that the captives have been delivered... Preach with urgency so that your listeners hear the most important news they can possibly hear: the foes of sin and death have been routed by Christ crucified and risen. The Son has made them free and they are free indeed (John 8:36).”

➤ https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1632 Mark Tranvik Professor of Religion, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN

+++++ Or +++++

“...We can better understand what Jesus is talking about if we look back a few verses. The few brief verses of Gospel read earlier are part of a larger section in the Gospel of Matthew in which John the Baptist, then sitting in jail, has sent to Christ two of his disciples, with a question, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” (Matthew 11:3) When the messengers had gone back, Christ begins to teach the crowds concerning John...” (continued after the reading)

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th Chapter”

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,^[a] and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear,^[b] let him hear.

¹⁶ “But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates,

¹⁷ “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’

¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A

glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”^[c]

- a. [Matthew 11:12](#) Or *has been coming violently*
- b. [Matthew 11:15](#) Some manuscripts omit *to hear*
- c. [Matthew 11:19](#) Some manuscripts *children* (compare [Luke 7:35](#))

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“...But Jesus isn’t talking about games around the marketplace. He’s talking about how his hearers regard salvation. They want a Savior; they just don’t want a savior like he is. They don’t want the message he proclaims, in fact, they would like him to change the message to suit them...

Both John and Jesus were preaching repentance for the forgiveness of sins. In the terms of the children in the market place there were two games in town from which you could choose. If you didn’t like the ‘funeral dirge’ lifestyle of John, then chances are you would like the happier, freer lifestyle of Jesus. Yet while many did believe Jesus, the same people who rejected John rejected Jesus. The same ones who would say “don’t listen to John because he is so austere he must be demon possessed,” were the ones who said, “don’t listen to Jesus because he eats and drinks wine, so he must be a glutton and a drunk, and he eats with sinners and tax collectors; and we think he’s demon possessed too.”...

How could they reject both John and Jesus for the opposite ways of life? If you are pleased with poverty, why did John displease you? If wealth pleases you, why did the Jesus displease you? They could reject both, because both preached the same message. Both preached repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Both proclaimed that man couldn’t save himself by his own works. Both proclaimed that Jesus was the Lamb of God, the Savior, foretold by prophets, who would sacrifice himself for the sins of the world. That is a message that the enemies of the Gospel cannot take, because it is a message that requires them to deny themselves, confess their sins, and trust in Christ.

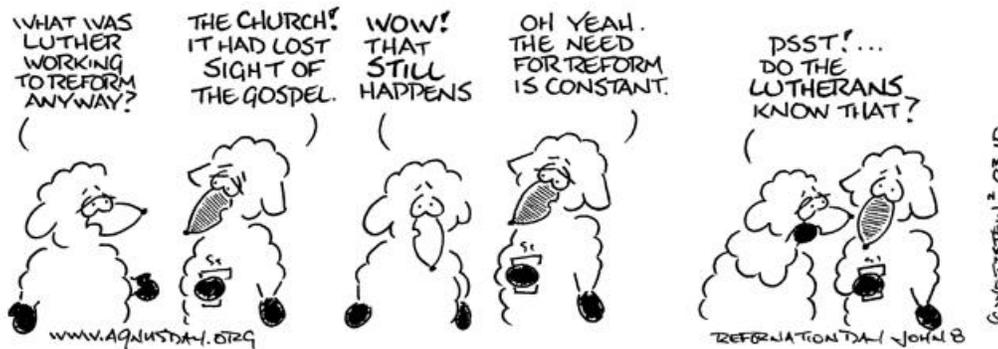
So the strategy is clear, if you can’t impeach the message, impeach the messenger. Jesus came as the savior of all, and those who opposed him attacked his character by branding him a glutton and a drunk. And then they went on to say that, just as John had a demon, so too Jesus has a demon. In Mark 3 we hear how the Jewish scribes, declared that Jesus “*‘is possessed by Beelzebub’ and ‘by the prince of demons he casts out demons’*” (Mark 3:22). And later in this Gospel, Matthew records how the Pharisees announced that “*It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that he casts out demons*” (Matthew 12:24)...

Let’s get back to our Lord’s teaching about the children. Those children who are sitting in the marketplace are the ones of whom the prophet Isaiah speaks: “*Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.*” (Isaiah 8:18). And also the psalm: “*the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple*” (Psalm 19:7). And elsewhere: “*Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger*” (Psalm 8:2).

So those children who are signs to Israel sat in the marketplace, and because the Jews did not want to listen, the children not only spoke but shouted to them, at the top of their voices: “*we played the flute for you, but you did not dance.*” That is, we challenged you to do good deeds at the sound of our song and to dance to our flute, just as David danced before the ark of the Lord, and you did not want to. The children go on to say, “*We sang a lament, but you did not mourn.*” that is we challenged you to seek repentance, and the Jews did not want to do even this...

Many today do not want to be called sinners, do not want to be called out as being in need of repentance. Many today want to party on their own terms rather than to rejoice on the terms of grace set out by Jesus. Christ’s unconditional grace strips us of all our own supposed righteousness, all our claims, and declares us instead to be needy beggars who have nothing to offer but can only receive...”

- <https://scotkinnaman.com/2011/10/31/sermon-for-reformation/> Scot Kinnaman, General editor of Lutheranism 101



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“You know the advice concerning festival preaching as well as I do: preach the texts, not the day.

More often than not, however, that advice is difficult, if not impossible to follow. First, the texts are chosen precisely because of the day and so we naturally think of how they support the liturgical celebration at hand. Second, all the other liturgical elements of the day are so pervasive they provide a nearly inescapable interpretive framework through which we read, hear, and preach the biblical passages.

So perhaps better and more realistic advice might be to *preach the texts in light of the day*. That is, our task remains to preach the texts -- to do anything else would be to offend the heart of the Reformation we celebrate. At the same time, we will do well to acknowledge the festival that shapes the particular occasion on which we hear these passages and honor the potential hermeneutic it offers...”

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=827 David Lose Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.