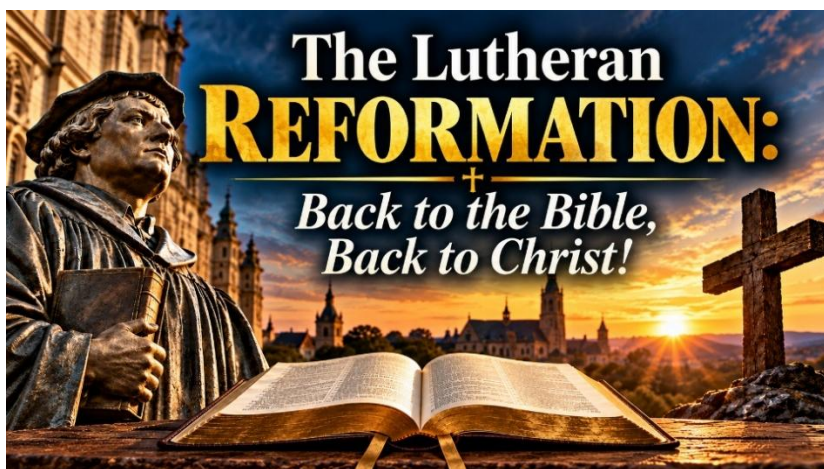


Reformation Day (Observed) – Part 1 – 2026

Saturday, 10/17 at 4:00 & Sunday, 10/18 at 9:00



Text: NAS 1995

Introduction:

- **Why do we celebrate the Reformation?** On October 31, 1517, an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther made public 95 statements for theological debate. Luther did not intend to establish a new church body. He wanted the Catholic Church to faithfully teach God's Word.
- As time passed, from 1517 to 1530, this became the central issue: **How are sinners made right with God – earned or gifted?**

The Key People and Events:

1. Martin Luther (1483–1546): Led the German Reformation, emphasized justification through faith, translated the Scriptures into German, and wrote the small and large catechisms.

2. Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560): Luther's colleague, principal author of the Augsburg Confession (1530), and a major organizer of Lutheran teaching.
3. Frederick the Wise (1463–1525): Protected Luther, especially after the Diet of Worms in 1521 (dead or alive).
4. Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1400–1468): His earlier development of the printing press made the rapid distribution of Reformation writings possible.
5. Johann Tetzel (c. 1465–1519): His preaching of indulgences helped provoke Luther's 95 Theses.

Key Events: 1517 — 95 Theses; 1521 — Diet of Worms; 1529 — Large and Small Catechisms; 1530 — Augsburg Confession.

What Does the Bible Say?

Romans 3:21-28 “But now apart from the Law [*what we do*] the righteousness of God has been manifested [*revealed*]...

²² ...**through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe...**

²³ for all have sinned and fall short [of God’s requirement],

²⁴ being **justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;** ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly [on Good Friday] as a propitiation [*means of forgiveness*] in His blood through faith.... ²⁷ Where then is boasting? It is excluded.... ²⁸ For we maintain that **a man is justified by faith** apart from works of the Law.”

What Needed to Be Reformed? What was believed BEFORE and AFTER the Reformation?

1. **Authority:**

- Before: Scripture was interpreted under the authority of church tradition and the pope.

- After: Scripture is the final authority for all Christian doctrine.

2. **Justification:**

- Before: The merits of Christ, with inward renewal and good works done through God's grace contributing to justification.
- After: The merits of Christ alone, received by grace alone through faith alone, apart from good works.

3. **Indulgences:**

- Before: Reduced temporal penalties due to sins already forgiven and were sometimes associated with financial contributions.
- After: Forgiveness and salvation are God's free gifts through faith in Christ and cannot be purchased.

4. **Purgatory:**

- Before: Purification after death for those who died in God's grace but were not yet fully purified.
- After: Christ's saving work is sufficient for complete forgiveness and salvation; Scripture does not teach purgatory.

5. **Good Works:**

- Before: Works performed in grace could help to merit eternal life.
- After: Works follow justification as the fruit of faith, but they do not merit justification.

6. **Assurance:**

- Before: Believers were discouraged from claiming certainty of salvation.

- After: Believers can be certain of God's promise of salvation through Christ as they continue in Christ.

What Biblical Truths Did Luther Rediscover and Defend?

1. **Scripture Alone:** **2 Timothy 3:16** — “All Scripture is inspired by God...” // Our beliefs must be tested by God’s Word.
2. **Grace Alone:** **Ephesians 2:8** — “...by grace you have been saved through faith... it is the gift of God...” // We cannot purchase, deserve, or earn God's forgiveness.
3. **Faith Alone:** **Romans 3:28** — “...a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.” // Saving faith receives Christ and the benefits of His saving work.
4. **Christ Alone:** **Acts 4:12** — “...there is no other name under heaven... by which we must be saved.” // Our confidence before God is in Jesus, our Savior.

Conclusion: We continually need God's Word to ♦expose our sins and ♦direct us to the forgiveness Christ won through His death and resurrection. Therefore, the Reformation is about rejoicing in the Savior whom Luther proclaimed.

Next Week: What Do Lutherans Believe, Teach, and Confess? Six Essential Teachings from the Augsburg Confession!

Let Us Pray: Dear Father in heaven, TYSM for working through Martin Luther and others to bring us back to the saving truth of Your Holy Word! Keep us, guide us, use us!

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