

*The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart... (Hebrews 4:12)*

October 31 will mark the 505 years since Martin Luther nailed 95 theses to the wall of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. This event is largely seen as the beginning of what is called the Reformation, when Luther (and others) helped point us to the Word of God to correct abuses both inside and outside of the Church.

As we mark this occasion each year, it would be easy to think, “That was 500 years ago! What does the Reformation have to do with me today?” In other words, something that happened so long ago doesn’t hold the attention of someone who is looking for something more modern and immediate. After all, 500 years ago was when the “New World” still was the “New World” to Europeans. 500 years ago, the printing press was still gaining steam as an important technology. 500 years ago, the United States was well over 250 years away from being declared an independent nation!

But, it couldn’t be any less helpful to think that what happened 500 years ago has little to nothing to do with us today. We should remember the Reformation specifically for any number of reasons. One important reason is that the Reformation reveals to us something about the Church—the very Body of Christ. This Church believes, confesses, and lives based on what God himself has revealed to us, which he has done through his Word. In other words, it is this Word that is the norm for everything we teach and believe. Another reason it is important to commemorate the Reformation is that it says something to us as individual Christians. We should always be examining our own minds and hearts by the same Word that guides the Church. When we do that, we’ll find that we’re still battling against the forces of sin and evil—*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Rom 3:23). And, if that is true (it is!), our lives should continue to be lives of “reformation.” They should be reformed in God’s Word, because God’s Word is truth (John 17:17) and life (John 6:63). Our lives should reflect God’s Word because in it we find blessing (Psalm 1). It is only by God’s Word that we receive the grace and mercy given to us through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24). Only by the Word of God can we know this wonderful good news!

While it is true that 500 years is a long time, such a period in history is like a day to the Lord (2 Peter 3:8). While nations come and go, God remains our Lord and King. *All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of Yahweh blows on it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God will stand forever* (Isaiah 40:6–8). May God’s Word, then, be and remain not only our source of doctrine, but our guide in every part of our lives!

-Pastor Squire

“Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; curb those who by deceit or sword would wrest the kingdom from Your Son and bring to naught all He has done.”

(“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word,” *LSB 655*, v. 1)