

Sovereign Grace Church

“Reformation” outline

October 30, 2016

II Chronicles 7: 14

This Sunday marks the anniversary of the Protestant Reformation which is recognized as beginning with Martin Luther's posting of his 95 Theses for debate with the church of his day. The church of his day had grown lax, materialistic and downright immoral. The teaching hierarchy in particular were increasingly poor witnesses to the truth of the gospel of Christ. This slippage of the church's testimony had been recognized by a large number of people within the church but only a few were willing to stand up to the authoritative power of the church to voice their concerns. Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Luther and John Calvin were three who spoke and taught powerfully against the flagrant abuses occurring within the church. The church tried to silent them and Zwingli was killed in battle protecting his city against a group of Catholic cantons. Luther was imprisoned for a time and had a sentence of death over him from the Pope. Calvin came a bit later but was kicked from one city to another and back again. We live on the basis of their testimony today.

But time goes on and what is accepted as true in one generation is often not so accepted in the next. Many Christians today consider the times right for another Reformation.. We have gone from a recognizable Christian republic to a very secular and materialistic democracy. Instead of the rule of law we have the rule of the opinion of the 51%, As Christianity in particular (along with Islam) is viewed as an impediment to the advance to this new World Order we may have the onset of real persecution in our near future. What is to be done? There are many ideas but whatever they are they must be under-girded by God's favor. For that we must have a real Reformation and Revival of interest in pursuing Christ in every area of life. We shall look at a passage in the Old Testament which seems to give us some conditions for Reformation....and then we will assess its applicability to our own day.

1. The Church must take Responsibility.
I Cor. 6: 1-3; Matt. 5: 13-16; 16:18; Jn 17:21

2. The Church must humble herself before God.
II Kings 22: 8-13; Psm 51:17; Lk 18:13

3. The Church must pray.
I Thess. 5:17

4. **The Church must seek the Face of Christ.**
Matt 6:33; Jn 14:15; Rom. 12:14; Psm 27: 4-10,14

5. **The Church must Repent.**
Jer. 15:19; Lk 9:24

Zech. 8: 20-22

Questions for Conversation and Discussion

1. **Why do you think the people in authoritative positions in the church tend to not want to see real Reformation? Do you want to see it? How would your life change if we were to experience a legitimate God generated revival or reformation in our day? What affect would such a revival have on the broader society?**
2. **Do you believe that God is obligated to grant reformation if the church fulfills the conditions of II Chron..7? Why or why not? If you believe He is not....what good are they?**
3. **Who is your favorite Reformer? What is it about this person that you find admirable? Is there anything about him that you find problematic? Would you like to be a member in a church that he pastored? Why or why not? If not, why is he your favorite Reformer?**
4. **What are the differences today as opposed to the time of the Reformation? How might these differences, especially in media, affect a modern day Reformation? How would a Reformation today be expressed in a country like the US? How do you think the secular media would seek to “tame” any real move toward a Christian Reformation? How could this effort be circumvented?**
5. **Does the church really want Reformation today? Did she in 1517? What follows!**