

## Reformation Sunday

October 26, 2025



### PROCLAMATION POINTS

*The following are some thoughts and questions to be used for a text study on the weekly lessons, or for jump-starting the imagination of the preacher and hearer in preparing for the proclamation event.*

*If you want to abolish sin, you not only wrong sin, but you also want to trespass on the office of Christ and say: I want to be Christ. ... This is the sin supreme! Let Christ be Christ; let Him keep His office. We have enough other sins to answer for.*

*– Martin Luther –*

*Easter Sermon, April 17, 1530*

### Revelation 14:6-7

In a world where everything is temporary and passing into decay, John sees a vision and hears a message of something eternal. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not temporary. It is not passing into decay. It endures.

- *What does it mean for mere mortals to try to imagine eternity?*

The message the angel delivers, which John describes as an eternal gospel, is actually a word of judgment. The people of the earth are called upon to fear God because his judgment is going to come upon the earth. God's righteousness is about to be revealed.

- *What is the judgment God has brought upon the earth and its inhabitants?*
- *What is the relationship between this judgment and the Gospel of Jesus Christ?*

### Psalms 46

Psalms 46 does not shy away from the realities of life in this world. The earth changes. The mountains shake. The waters roar. There is real danger in the world. But even in the face of these dangers, those who belong to God have the assurance of God's presence and aid. The Lord of Hosts, the God of Jacob is our refuge and strength in the midst of adversity.

- *Why doesn't God just remove adversity from the world? Would that help us to feel closer to God somehow? Or would it have the opposite effect?*
- *Where do we find assurance of God's presence with us in the midst of difficulties?*

### Romans 3:19-28

Despite our general state of rebellion, the law holds great appeal for us. We like to have a standard to measure ourselves against. If you put a group of children together on a playground, they will, inevitably come up with a game that has rules that must be followed. We like structure and order. We like to know what is expected of us. The problem with the role of the law in righteousness is that all it can do is condemn us. When we understand the actual demands of the law, all it does is show us our sin. It shows us how far we are from measuring up to the standard. As long as we remain under the law, we remain utterly condemned..

- *How does the law give us knowledge of sin?*

- *What are some of the non-religious laws that have authority over us? Do we pay greater attention to those laws than we do to God's laws?*

Paul reaches the inevitable conclusion that if righteousness is to be based on the law, then everyone stands condemned. Even God's chosen people, Israel, have failed to uphold the law. In response to this, rather than condemn the whole creation, God has revealed his righteousness in a new way, apart from the law. This new way is through faith in Jesus Christ. Trusting in Christ for salvation is the basis of our righteousness.

- *What are some ways we try to hold on to the law, rather than finding our righteousness in Christ?*
- *Is there something "safe" for us when it comes to the law, as opposed to relying on grace?*

Part of what bothers us about righteousness being separated from the law is that it removes our grounds for boasting. We can't claim any right to the gift we've been given. We can't claim any merit. Boasting is excluded, Paul says, by the law of faith. Recognition that we are entirely dependent on Christ for our salvation means recognizing that we have nothing to brag about before God or our neighbors.

### John 8:31-36

Sin is a tricky thing. It tricks us into desiring the very things that are destroying us. It convinces us that a lie is the truth. As Jesus spoke to a group of believers, this reality was evident. God's people had lived in bondage countless times. Even as they spoke with Jesus they were under the authority of the Romans. But they were offended when Jesus told them that the truth will make them free. Their sin convinced them that they were free already.

Jesus pointed out to them the enslaving power of sin. What starts out feeling like an act of freedom soon comes to be all consuming. All who commit sin become slaves to sin. Like an addiction, sin takes control of a person's life.

- *What are some examples of how sin enslaves us?*

Jesus went on to point out the difference in standing between a son and a slave. As long as we are caught in sin, we will never be anything but slaves. We will never have a place in the household of God. But because Christ Jesus has set us free from the power of sin, we have been made heirs with him.

- *What makes it difficult for us to believe Jesus has set us free from sin? As heirs, will we still sin?*