

## What is Reformation Day?

by Stephen Nichols

A single event on a single day changed the world. It was October 31, 1517. Brother Martin, a monk and a scholar, had struggled for years with his church, the church in Rome. He had been greatly disturbed by an unprecedented indulgence sale. The story has all the makings of a Hollywood blockbuster. Let's meet the cast.

First, there is the young bishop—too young by church laws—Albert of Mainz. Not only was he bishop over two bishoprics, he desired an additional archbishopric over Mainz. This too was against church laws. So Albert appealed to the Pope in Rome, Leo X. From the De Medici family, Leo X greedily allowed his tastes to exceed his financial resources. Enter the artists and sculptors, Raphael and Michelangelo.

When Albert of Mainz appealed for a papal dispensation, Leo X was ready to deal. Albert, with the papal blessing, would sell indulgences for past, present, and future sins. All of this sickened the monk, Martin Luther. Can we buy our way into heaven? Luther had to speak out.

But why October 31? November 1 held a special place in the church calendar as All Saints' Day. On November 1, 1517, a massive exhibit of newly acquired relics would be on display at Wittenberg, Luther's home city. Pilgrims would come from all over, genuflect before the relics, and take hundreds, if not thousands, of years off time in purgatory. Luther's soul grew even more vexed. None of this seemed right.

Martin Luther, a scholar, took quill in hand, dipped it in his inkwell and penned his 95 Theses on October 31, 1517. These were intended to spark a debate, to stir some soul-searching among his fellow brothers in the church. The 95 Theses sparked far more than a debate. The 95 Theses also revealed the church was far beyond rehabilitation. It needed a reformation. The church, and the world, would never be the same.

One of Luther's 95 Theses simply declares, "The Church's true treasure is the gospel of Jesus Christ." That alone is the meaning of Reformation Day. The church had lost sight of the gospel because it had long ago papered over the pages of God's Word with layer upon layer of tradition. Tradition always brings about systems of works, of earning your way back to God. It was true of the Pharisees, and it was true of medieval Roman Catholicism. Didn't Christ Himself say, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light?" Reformation Day celebrates the joyful beauty of the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ.

What is Reformation Day? It is the day the light of the gospel broke forth out of darkness. It was the day that began the Protestant Reformation. It was a day that led to Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, and many other Reformers helping the church find its way back to God's Word as the only authority for faith and life and leading the church back to the glorious doctrines of justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It kindled the fires of missionary endeavors, it led to hymn writing and congregational singing, and it led to the centrality of the sermon and preaching for the people of God. It is the celebration of a theological, ecclesiastical, and cultural transformation.

So we celebrate Reformation Day. This day reminds us to be thankful for our past and to the Monk turned Reformer. What's more, this day reminds us of our duty, our obligation, to keep the light of the gospel at the center of all we do.



October 30, 2022

10:30 A.M.

## Jesus Called His Disciples Friends



# Order of Service

## Announcements

### Welcome

### Preparation for Worship

-----God's Greatness-----

### Call To Worship

### Hymn of Praise

"A Mighty Fortress is Our God". . . . . Martin Luther

### Prayer of Invocation

**Affirmation of Faith:** \*The Westminster Shorter Catechism

### Song of Praise

"By Faith". . . . . Getty/Townend

### Children are dismissed to Sunday School.

----- God's Renewal-----

**Understanding Ourselves Rightly:** Matthew 5:3-10

### Silent Confession

**Assurance of Pardon and Comfort:** 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21

### Song of Renewal

"Amazing Grace". . . . . Newton/Rees/Excell

-----God's Grace-----

**Scripture Reading:** John 15:12-17 (ESV)

### Prayer

### The Sermon

"Jesus Called His Disciples, Friends"

### Song of Communion

"Oh the Deep, Deep Love". . . . . Francis/Kauflin

### Celebration of the Lord's Supper

### Prayer of Approach

**Scripture Reading:** Mark 14:22-25 (Optional)

### Holy Communion

-----God's Blessing-----

### Parting Hymn

"In Christ Alone Medley". . . . . Getty/Townend

### Benediction

*\*The Westminster Shorter Catechism, along with the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Larger Catechism, serve together as the statement of faith for the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Formulated in the 17th century England, they are a second level of authority under the Scriptures and serve to explain the system of doctrine revealed in the Bible.*

He intended to remind us of the grace he has had for us so that we will share it with others. The doctrine of election reminds our tender consciences that we are not saved by our works but by God's sovereign grace.

The fruitfulness of the followers of Jesus is rooted in Jesus' choosing them. It is not dependent upon a choice they make or on their effectiveness or attractiveness or anything else about them. It has been established in the fact that Jesus chose them and appointed them.<sup>5</sup>

***"go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide" (v. 16).***

**Is Christ at work in you? Or is it just you working?**

Here we should pause and ask what we are accomplishing in the light of eternity.

### Intercession

Jesus links our abiding in him and our bearing fruit to his promise to answer our prayers: ***"so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you" (John 15:16).***

What should be more natural for the one who along with others has been brought into this great brotherhood and sisterhood of Christianity than that he or she should pray earnestly for those others who are also Christ's friends?

### Love One Another

***"These things I command you, so that you will love one another" (John 15:17).***

**Everything to which Jesus calls his disciples is summed up in love. Our salvation originates in the love of God and manifests itself in love for God and others.**

*Prayer stirs up our love for one another, and especially our love for God, with whom we speak in prayer.*

### Conclusion

Love is giving and receiving friendship.

As we hold to Jesus and look to Him for ultimate friendship, we can extend love to others in imitation of how He first extended Himself to us. Biblical, Christian friendship not only starts with God and is modeled for us by Christ, but it ends with Him too. God is the object of our love toward others.

<sup>1</sup>J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: John*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999), 3:125.

<sup>2</sup>Boice, J. M. (2005). *The Gospel of John: an expositional commentary* (p. 1184). Baker Books.

<sup>3</sup>Boice, J. M. (2005). *The Gospel of John: an expositional commentary* (p. 1184). Baker Books.

<sup>4</sup>Phillips, R. D. (2014). *John* (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.; 1st ed., Vol. 2, p. 308). P&R Publishing.

<sup>5</sup>Hamilton, J. M., Jr., & Vickers, B. J. (2019). *John-Acts: Vol. IX* (I. M. Duguid, J. M. Hamilton Jr., & J. Sklar, Eds.; p. 242). Crossway.

Jesus will no longer call them “servants,” that is “slaves.”

*John 15:15 (ESV)*

*“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”*

Jesus did not intend to convey that Christians are no longer his servants, for in this very passage he speaks of the necessity of our obeying his commands. What he does mean is that our relationship with him is not merely one of hierarchical submission.

**“All that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15).**

Friends bare their souls, and Jesus has opened his mind to us in the Scriptures.

The characteristic of the slave that Jesus picks out is that he “does not know his master’s business.” The slave is no more than an instrument. It is not for him to enter intelligently into the purposes of his owner. His task is simply to do what he is told.

**Appointed for a Purpose**

*John 15:16 (ESV)*

*“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”*

**“But I chose You”**

Paul clearly taught this sovereign choosing, writing to the Ephesians that God “chose us in [Christ] before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). The Greek word for *chose* is *eklego*, from which we derive our word *election*.<sup>4</sup>

While it is true that to believe in Christ is to choose him, the greater reality is that he first elected or chose us, and we decided for him only as a response to his choosing of us and as the result of his own grace first working in our lives.

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9).*

**Why would Jesus at this point tell his disciples that they did not choose him but that he chose them?**

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday, November 5 6:00 PM Prayer Dinner**

At the home of Pastor Rick and Barb

**Saturday, November 12 11:00 AM-3:00 PM Ladies Luncheon**

Verna Bowman will be speaking on Overcoming the Storms of Life

Held at Mt. Carmel UMC 2203 Harmonyville Rd. Elverson, Pa 190520

**Sunday, November 13 12:15-1:00 P.M. Sunday School Reorganization**

Meeting in the Conference Room upstairs for current staff and anyone interested in being involved in our Sunday School as a teacher, assistant, care-giver, or prayer partner.

**Saturday, November 19 8:00 A.M. Men’s Breakfast**

At the home of Pastor Rick

**Sunday, November 20 4:00 P.M. Coventry-Warwick Community**

**Thanksgiving Service** held at Calvary Christian Center

426 Laurelwood Rd. Pottstown, PA 19465

**DiscipleMakers: Tim and Holly Howden**

- Pray for their baby who should be arriving soon.
- Pray for the college students they are discipling.



**CRU: Steve and Kristin Scholl**

- Pray as they being training and are being mentored for a marriage coaching program in November.

**Crossing Cultures International: David and Mindy Nelson  
INDONESIA**

Pray for the teachers in the Mamasa Region who hold monthly meetings to discuss the progress of their respective classes. Pray for them to share their lives and encourage each other in ministry.

Pray for the planned opening of a new class in the Mamasa area so that more and more ministers will benefit from this curriculum and be a blessing to the local church.

**Pro-Life Prayer**

**TEENS EXPERIENCING CRISIS PREGNANCIES**

Many teenagers who find out they are pregnant will feel intense fear and shame. They may be afraid to tell anyone and feel intense loneliness as a result. Pray that Christians and our churches would be places of welcome for these young women. Just as we value the lives in their wombs, ask God to help us value the mothers. Pray that many would come to a deep faith in Christ as a result of the love and care they receive from His church.

## Prayer/Praise. . . . . October 30, 2022

- Pray for Dionne and Jordan Mace as they care for their son Sam. Praise that Sam is now at home from the hospital.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins as she recovers from COVID.
- Pray for Fred and Lisa, friends of Donna Jenkins. Pray they have successful surgeries, and they would be able to have help caring for Ashley. Pray for God's healing strength for their family.
- Praise that Lorraine Blanski's nephew, Jason, had his shunt revised on Wednesday, October 12th. This surgery relieved some of the pressure behind his eyes. His blurry vision is starting to clear. Jason still has short-term memory loss. Pray for continued healing.
- Pray for Tim Li, from Taiwan, as he attends Conestoga Christian School.
- Pray for Ashley Adams and her friend, Hannah, who have the opportunity to go on a short-term mission trip to the Texas/Mexican border from November 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup>. Pray for God's strength for Ashley and Hannah as they build relationships, pray, and evangelize to these women and children.
- Pray for Macie and Cassie Frame, who are all settled in their apartment and working in California. Pray for their safety and that Cassie can find a church.
- Pray for Terri Yerk, friend of Donna Jenkins, who was admitted to Park House with a stroke. Pray for healing for him and God's comfort for his wife.
- Pray for Jill Aument, who needs to have an eye procedure done one time per month for three months, for bleeding and fluid behind her eye. Pray for continued healing for Jill following this procedure.
- Praise that Lorraine Blanski's sister-in-law, Beth, finished her radiation treatments on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Pray for God's continued healing for Beth.
- Pray for Austin, the stepson of Lorraine Blanski's niece. Austin is doing okay with school. Overall, he is doing well. Pray for continued healing and mental health and God's strength for Austin.
- Pray for Terry Cecchetelli's grandnephew, Liam, who is 1-year old and has a rare disease called PDHA-1. He will need a feeding tube. Pray for God's wisdom for Liam's doctors and strength and comfort for the families.
- Pray for Igor Parfeniuk, a North Coventry police officer with Matt Deichert. Pray for Igor's sister and her family, as they are still living in Ukraine.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins' nephew, Evan James, who has a very rare disease, CDA. Praise that Evan can be off the breathing machine for the hours he is awake. Pray for God's healing for Evan and for his family and wisdom for his doctors.
- Pray for Justine Schumaker for healing from cancer.

## Message

### Jesus Calls Us Friends If We Do What He Commands

*John 15:12–17*

#### Christ's Friendship for Us

*"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12*

Jesus loves his people so as to take us as his friends.

"For sinful men and women like ourselves to be called 'friends of Christ,' is something that our weak minds can hardly grasp and take in. The King of kings and Lord of lords not only pities and saves all them that believe in Him, but actually calls them His 'friends.'"<sup>1</sup>—J. C. Ryle

*"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).*

We are brought near to his heart, he says, by the greatest love imaginable.

Jesus died for us when we were not really his friends. He was our friend. *"God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).*

The friendship is established only when God acts in Christ to remove the barrier. It is only after he has spoken of laying down his life for us that the Lord Jesus speaks of his disciples as friends.<sup>2</sup>

#### Our Friendship with Christ

Recognizing Christ's love for us, we receive his friendship as the single greatest possession of our lives, and also as the great calling on our lives.

**We are God's friends—by grace.** But that does not mean that we can approach God as his equal or dictate the terms of the friendship. It means that we must approach him in gratitude always bearing in mind that the friendship exists because he has stooped to our estate.<sup>3</sup>

*"You are my friends if you do what I command you" (John 15:14).*

Obedience is the test of discipleship. The friends of Jesus are those who habitually obey him.

At the heart of our obedience to Christ, then, is our treatment of other people, especially our fellow believers.