

The Lakeside



Message in a bottle

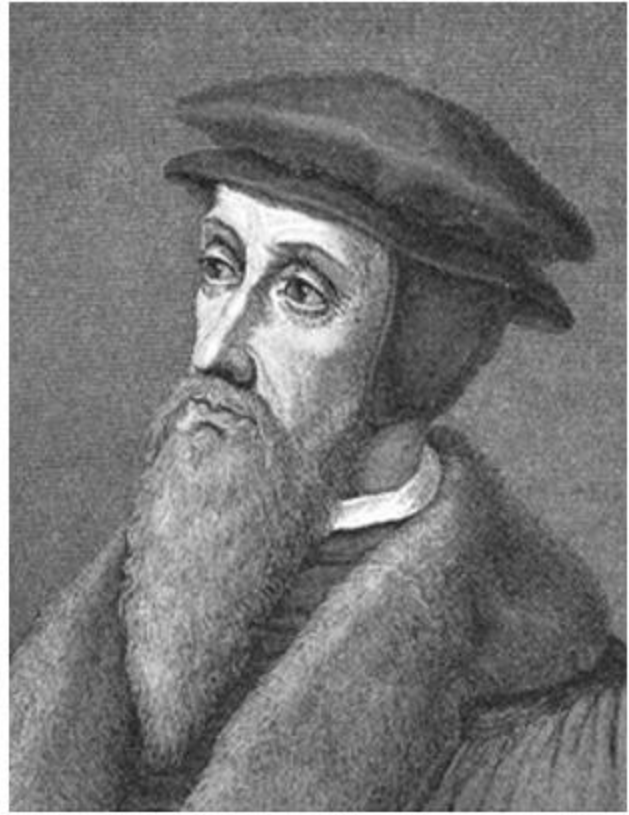
Verse of the day for Monday October 23, 2023 - Romans 5:8

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners,
Christ died for us.

Read Romans 5 for meditation and inspiration.



MARTIN LUTHER



JOHN CALVIN

REFORMATION DAY -- Tuesday, October 31, 2023

ALL SAINTS DAY -- Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Lakeside Presbyterian Church will Celebrate

Reformation Day on October 29, 2023

All Saints' Day on November 5, 2023

Dear Lakesiders and friends,

On October 31, many Americans decorate their homes for Halloween with ghouls, goblins, cobwebs, and pumpkins. Many Protestant Christians, however, celebrate something far more significant: Reformation Day.

By historical consensus, October 31, 1517, is the day Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of All Saints' Church in the German town now known as Lutherstadt-Wittenberg. The sound of his hammer would soon be heard throughout Germany and the rest of the world.

Of course, Catholics lament that the Reformation broke the unity of the Western institutional church centered in Rome. Everyone who studies this event and the history that surrounded it agrees that the Reformation was one of the most significant transformations of Western society since the life and ministry of our Lord. Reformation Day is especially significant for Lutherans and Calvinists. Presbyterians fall within the Calvinist family known as the Reformed Tradition.

Luther's problems came as he read and studied the Psalms, Romans, and Ephesians. Can a person be saved by the obligations and rituals of the Church? He was besieged by the knowledge of his own shortcomings and sins. How could a God of perfection accept him solely on the functions found in the church? He felt that a different explanation must be understood. He later wrote:

I had certainly wanted to understand Paul in Romans. Although I lived a blameless life as a monk, I felt that I was a sinner . . . and I could not believe that I had pleased [God] with my works. Far from loving that righteous God who punished sinners, I actually hated him. . . I was in desperation to know what Paul meant.

Luther ultimately experienced a breakthrough. He centered upon:

Ephesians 2:4-6 *"But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,"*

No longer did he believe sinful human beings must perform works in order to earn God's forgiveness. Instead, he became convinced, "that God provides everything necessary for justification," including the gifts of repentance and faith," so that all the sinner needs to do is receive it. God is active, and humans are passive, in justification. . . . God offers and gives; men and women receive and rejoice." Luther summarized this insight in his teaching that sinners are justified, or saved, by grace through faith.

Happy Reformation Day,



Roger



