



October 31, 2016

We celebrate Reformation Sunday each year on or near October 31, the date in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Martin Luther's stand set off the final spark to the movement that men like John Wycliffe and John Huss initiated years before, helping to bring the light of God's pure Word to His people. An event that continued to lay groundwork for the Reformation was the invention of the printing press in 1450. With this, the Scriptures began to be printed and circulated. Two legacies of the Reformation that benefit our lives today are (1) the availability of the Bible in the language of the people, and (2) the teaching of the authority of the Bible.

God's will is for His people to have access to His Word, to read it, as these verses show:

Ephesians 3:3,4:

How that by revelation he made known unto me [the Apostle Paul] the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).

I Timothy 4:13:

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

The Word of God is the will of God. So in order for people to know God's will, they need to have access to God's Word in their own languages. At one time it was forbidden to translate the Bible into the common language of the people. Only ordained priests could read the Bible or do any preaching or teaching. With the Bible locked up in a foreign language (Latin), the majority of the people couldn't read the Bible for themselves, so they didn't know that certain practices common in the Church of Rome were contrary to the Word. The printing press brought the Scriptures into common use and led to their translation and circulation in all the

languages of Europe. The people who read the New Testament soon realized that the Roman church was far from the truth. Being able to read the Word in their own languages allowed them to search the Scriptures daily.

Acts 17:11,12:

These [Judeans at Berea] were more noble than those [unbelieving Judeans] in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Therefore many of them believed....

The Judeans at Berea provide a good example for us today. They received the Word with all readiness or eagerness of mind, and they searched the Scriptures daily. The result was that many of them believed.

Searching the Scriptures daily helps us build our believing. In order for us to do this, we need access to the Scriptures in our language. Thanks to the work of the reformers and many others, in our day the Bible is available in many languages. This allows people to open the Book and read God's pure Word for themselves.

Psalms 19:8:

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psalms 119:140:

Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

Reading and studying God's Word brings rejoicing to our heart. It enlightens our eyes. We love His Word because it is very pure.

In addition to translating the Bible into the common languages, the reformers also taught people about the authority of the Bible. "Sola Scriptura"—the Word alone. This was Luther's clarion call for the Reformation. The sole authority for truth is God's Word. Today we in The Way Ministry continue to recognize and teach the authority and integrity of God's Word.

II Timothy 3:16:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

The words “given by inspiration of God” are translated from one Greek word—*theopneustos*, a figurative expression which literally means “God-breathed,” emphasizing that God is the Source. God is the Author of His Word. It did not come by the will of man (II Peter 1:21; Galatians 1:11). The entire Word of God has authority and integrity, and it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for correction. It teaches us how to believe rightly, it reproves us at the places where we are believing wrongly, and it corrects us so that we can again believe rightly.

True reformation happens when we obey God and His Word and walk in His statutes. This can be accomplished individually as we receive the Word with eagerness and search the Scriptures daily. And it can be accomplished collectively as we can reach out with the light of God’s pure Word. We can teach others about its authority and its integrity, giving them the opportunity to open the Book and read it for themselves. As we boldly live God’s Word and hold it forth to the world, we bring reformation in our day and time.

In The Way Ministry, the teaching of God’s Word is the focal point of our Sunday services and home fellowship meetings. We also offer classes on how to read and understand the Bible. If you want to know more, visit our Contact Us page to request more information.

For more information, visit www.theway.org

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