

MIND THE GAP: CELEBRATION OF THE REFORMATION, Oct 27, 2024

TITLE SLIDE Good morning, church.

1. Introduce myself
2. Pray for me, standing up for the Lord

Message

- ❖ Hallowe'en is upon us. Call me a grouch, but...
 - But I really like Reformation Day, also on Oct 31st—talk about an upgrade!
 - My message: topical, a celebration of the Reformation (31 October 1517)
 - Probably the most important event in western history since Columbus
 - Let's set the stage with scripture. Please stand in honor of God's Word.
- ❖ Scripture SLIDE 2
 - Gen 3:6 "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."
 - Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery."
 - Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. SLIDE 3
 - 1 Cor 6:9-11a "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you." SLIDE 4
 - Rev 4:2b,5b, 6b,8b; 5:6b "...behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne... ^{5b} and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God... ^{6b} And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, ..., ^{8b} and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" ^{5:6b} And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb..." SLIDE 5
- ❖ "Mind the gap"
 - Precise, concise, very British warning about dangerous 2-3 inch space between point A (subway platform) and point B (car)
 - Our scripture passages suggest a gap larger than inches; self-evident, but let's quickly review
 - The Fall: Adam our federal representative; his original sin imputed to us (and all creation), leading to depravity, physical death and spiritual death/separation from God
 - **The Law:** guidelines for blessing; precis of God's character; ironically stimulates law-breaking; a diagnostic tool to assess righteousness

- **The Heart:** Jesus (Sermon on the Mount) raises the bar; not just acts, but heart attitudes
 - **The Crime:** Paul lists some sins of which some Corinthians were guilty; of course all were guilty of something!
 - WSC: sin as “any lack of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God” — commission or omission
 - ◆ Law’s “thou shalt not” focuses on sins of commission
 - ◆ Honor parents; Love neighbor and God with your all: sins of omission
 - BTW, I chose sexual sin as an example...
 - **The Judge:** As if that’s not bad enough, look at holy God before whom we must stand, the one who cannot look on evil (HaBAkkuk 1:13 “You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong,”)
 - The Gap: how bridge infinite gap between a holy God and sinful Man?
 - **THE Question:** What must I do to be saved?
- ❖ Late medieval church **SLIDE 6**
- Cortes, Balboa, Magellan, Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Henry VIII
 - Gentleness & humility
 - “Sleeping Beauty’s castle”—the NT church overgrown and choked with thorny vines of bureaucracy, power centers, new doctrines
 - Authority: bible, tradition, magisterium (teaching authority)
 - Bible: Latin and not much read (literacy ~10%)
 - Sacerdotalism
 - Salvation: faith & works
 - 7 Sacraments to earn Gods favor: infant baptism; confirmation as youth; marriage as adult; extreme unction on death; mass; penance upon confession of sin; ordination
 - Indulgence: a way to reduce the amount of punishment one has to undergo for (forgiven) sin in this life or the world to come, e.g., prayer, pilgrimage, donation
 - Purgatory; veneration of Mary, saints, relics **SLIDE 7**
- ❖ Martin Luther (1483-1546)
- If you find names, dates, places, events (i.e., history) boring,
 - Enjoy the hand of God and the illuminating spirit of truth
 - Watch for Luther’s: intellect, skepticism, keen sense of guilt vs. holiness of God (= the gap), courage
 - Remember crises (thunder, blunder, wonder, sunder) **SLIDE 8**
 - **1505 THUNDER**, age 21 **smart**, studying **law** at U at Erfurt (appetites)
 - Lightning struck near him while crossing a field
 - “Saint Anne [not God], help me. I will become a monk!”
 - Entered Augustinian monastery in Erfurt the following week
 - “If ever a monk reached heaven by monkery, it was I.”
 - Punished his body, fasted, confessed daily for hours => **no relief**

- "I lost touch with Christ the Savior and Comforter, and made of him the jailer and hangman of my poor soul."—**mind the gap**
- 1507, ordained a priest at Erfurt Cathedral: **froze speechless** when giving first communion, holding consecrated bread, the BODY of Christ—**mind the gap** **SLIDE 9**
- **1510 BLUNDER**, while teaching at U. Wittenburg, selected for pilgrimage to Rome (878 miles; light traffic, 13 hr)
 - Public immorality of priests
 - Racing through mass
 - Lateran Church's steps (Scala Sancta), pilgrims on knees Our Father/Hail Mary on each step: "Who knows if it's true?"—**legal skeptical mind** (real problem, ? solution—**the gap**) **SLIDE 10**
- **1515 WONDER**. As Doctor of Theology, appointed Prof of Bible at Wittenburg, teaching Romans
 - Ro 1:16-17 ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." **SLIDE 11**
 - God spoke to Luther through a "hard" verse (17).
 - "Righteousness of God" = bad, not good, news (gospel)!
 - "from faith for faith": from OT to NT faith → 100% by faith
 - Or "The one who by faith is righteous, shall live."
 - Pastor Paul: "The righteous person finds life through faith. He or she is made righteous through faith. Then by faith we live in that righteousness." **SLIDE 12**
 - Luther: "Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience, and I could not believe that God was placated... Thus, I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience...I beat importunately upon Paul at that place... and [HS unfurls] I began to understand that the righteousness of God is ...a gift of God... a passive righteousness by which the merciful God justifies us by faith. Here I felt, I was altogether born again." "The gate to Paradise opened, and I walked through joyfully..."
 - Whole of scripture new meaning, incredibly sweet. **SLIDE 13**
- In 1516, pope authorized sale of indulgences (document with papal seal; revenue stream for presses) to build St. Peter's Basilica
 - Grass-roots piety short-circuited prescribed penitence from priest
 - Scoundrels
- **Oct 31, 1517**, Martin Luther nailed 95 theses (against abuse of indulgences) to door of Wittenburg castle All Saints Church
 - Intended as discussion points for a faculty debate
 - Mild compared to September 97 theses: "We do not become righteous by doing righteous deeds, rather having been made righteous we do righteous deeds."
 - God creates a firestorm: **SLIDE 14**
 - Students translated and distributed in Germany on new printing press
 - Luther had directly opposed the Pope

➤ Rome reacts

- 1518, Pope's Cardinal Cajetan examined Luther at an assembly of the HRE (Imperial Diet) at Augsburg with authority to arrest him if he didn't recant
 - Luther: "His Holiness abuses Scripture...I deny that he is above Scripture".
 - With help from a friar, Luther slipped out of the city at night.
- 1519, Rome's theologian Johann Eck aimed to publicly expose Luther at Leipzig.
 - Luther denied infallibility of pope/councils to interpret scripture: Matthew 16:18 (And I tell you, you are Peter, & on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.)
 - Eck branded Luther a "new Jan Hus," the Czech reformer burned at the stake in 1415 as a heretic. **SLIDE 15**
- **1520-21 SUNDER**, Pope Leo X issued bull demanding Luther recant and burn writings (<60 days) or face excommunication
 - Luther burned the bull, saying "This bull condemns Christ. The Pope be condemned!"
 - Wrote *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* attacked sacerdotalism; No, look to Christ alone, not to man, priest, church, Pope, sacraments, Mary **SLIDE 16**
- 1521, HRE, Charles V, summoned him (under safe passage) to assembly of the German nation, the Diet of Worms
 - "Do you or do you not repudiate your books and the errors they contain?"
 - "My conscience is captive to the word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand I can do no other. God help me. Amen."
 - Edict of Worms: outlaw Luther excommunicated, literature banned, arrest/death warrant issued; crime to feed/shelter him
 - Sunder/split apart: excommunication in force today; an estimated 30 million followed him by 1600 **SLIDE 17**
 - Elector Frederick III had him intercepted on his way home in the forest near Wittenberg by masked horsemen impersonating highway robbers. They escorted Luther to the security of the Wartburg Castle at Eisenach for 10 months. "my Patmos"
 - ◆ Translated the New Testament from Greek into German
 - ◆ Wrote *On the Abrogation of the Private Mass*, which condemned as idolatry mass as a sacrifice, asserting it is a gift, to be received with thanksgiving
 - ◆ Wrote *On Confession, Whether the Pope has the Power to Require It*, which rejected compulsory confession and encouraged private confession **SLIDE 18**
- 1524, Theologian Erasmus (powerful reformer WITHIN church), attacked with *Discussion Concerning Free Will*
 - Luther complimented his rival for identifying the heart of the matter "rather than trifles of indulgences, papacy, purgatory...You alone have seen the hinge on which all turns and aimed for the vital spot."
 - ◆ If our will is FREE, just cowboy up to merit
 - Luther's reply: *Bondage of the Will*.

- ◆ Justification by God's grace alone and not by man's works. Our fallen will is not free apart from God's grace to guide it. => sovereignty of God, predestination
- ◆ Ephesians 2:8-9 ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- Lived another 22 years: married, wrote hymns, catechisms
 - Omitted Luther's name-calling, rigidity, bluster, barnyard language
 - Omitted many other Reformation heroes/threads (Zwingli/Calvin, Simons, Cranmer)
 - Omitted the disunity of 35,000 denominations and counting (schism begets schism)

SLIDE 19

❖ Summary: "five solas"

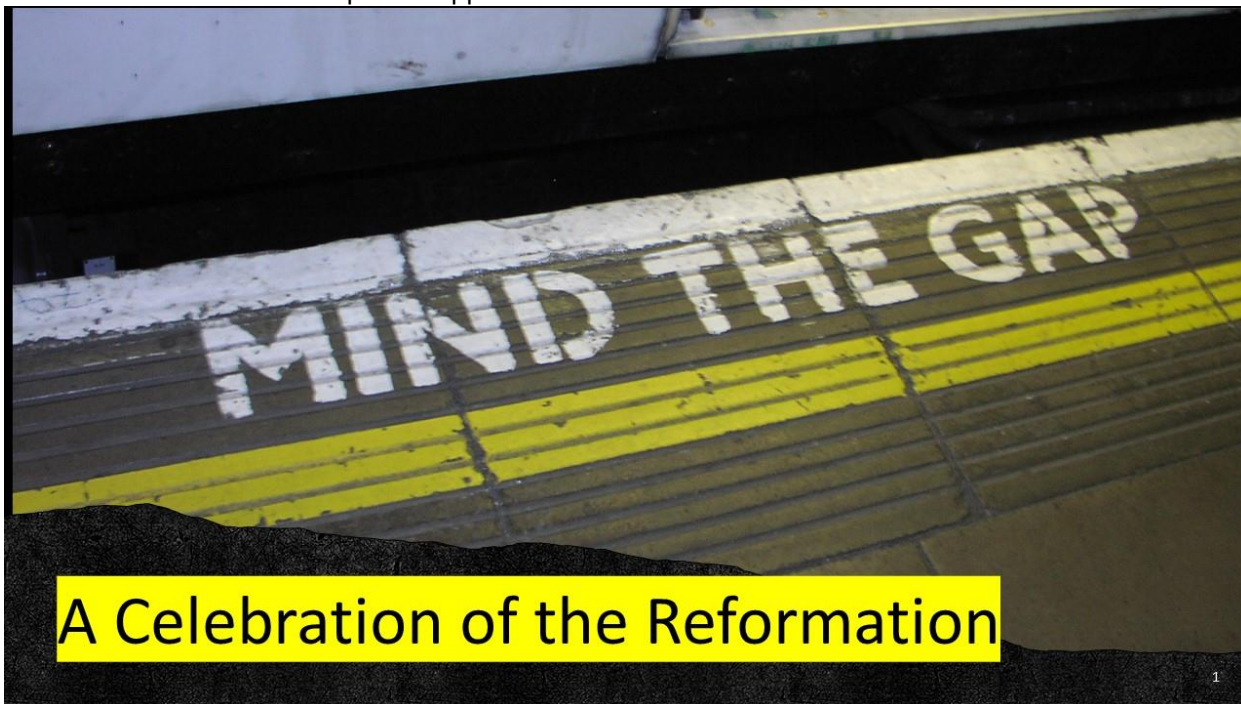
- Theological principles underlying doctrine of justification and salvation taught by Lutheran, Reformed and Evangelical Protestantism, and more.
- Each distinguishes between Protestant and Catholic doctrine
- Emerged from Reformation, but not codified till 20th c.
- They are
 - Scripture Alone (Sola scriptura): Scripture is the only infallible authority for faith and practice (not tradition or magisterium)
 - Christ Alone (Solus Christus): Christ in His person and work is the only Savior (not priestly class, sacraments)
 - Grace Alone (Sola gratia): Only the sovereign grace of God accomplishes salvation (not merit)
 - Faith Alone (Sola fide): Faith is the only instrument by which we are united to Christ and receive His benefits (not faith + works)
 - Only for God's Glory (Soli Deo gloria): The purpose of salvation is to give all glory to God alone (not to Mary, saints, angels)
 - WSC: Chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.
- Good to ponder these
 - Pruning: Major on the majors
 - Mind the Gap: our desperate condition and our rescue
 - String together and personalize: "As revealed in God's word alone, I am saved by faith alone in Christ alone, only by God's grace and only for His glory."
 - Honor courage of those who came before
 - Coming full circle, back to the darkness that impinges on Hallowe'en, many reformers were burned to death
 - Foxe's Book of Martyrs (1570) 5 years after death of Bloody Mary who burned 285 men and women
 - Praise God for truth-seekers, the reformers and those who followed them! Amen

Benediction (Romans 16:25-27)

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Questions

1. What is sin?
2. What is “the gap”?
3. What is the most important question of one’s life?
4. Homework: What is the “Romans Road” and how does it relate to #1-3?
5. Describe the medieval Roman Catholic church.
6. Describe Martin Luther’s “preparation.”
7. What were his crises in 1505, 1510, 1515, and 1520?
8. Specify exactly how Luther threatened the medieval church?
9. What are the “five solas”? How do they relate to #8?
10. Homework: Give scriptural support for each “sola.”



- Gen 3:6 "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."
- Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery."
- Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

2

- 1 Cor 6:9-11a "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you."

3

- Rev 4:2b,5b, 6b,8b; 5:6b “...behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne... ^{5b} and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God... ^{6b} And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, ..., ^{8b} and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come! ^{5:6b} And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb...”

4

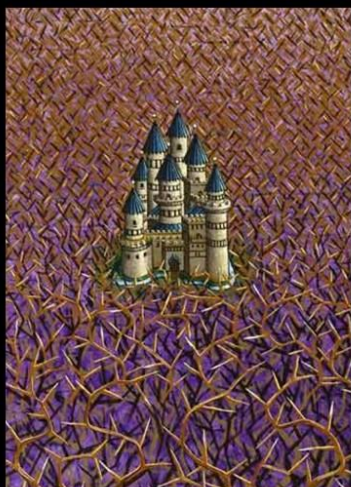
Uh Oh...



- The Fall
- The Law
- The Heart
- The Crime
- The Judge
- The Question

5

Late Medieval Western Church



- Authority: bible AND tradition AND magisterium
- Sacerdotalism
- Salvation: faith AND works
+ Sacraments (7)
+ Indulgences
- Purgatory
- Veneration of Mary, saints, relics

6

Martin Luther (1483-1546)



- Enjoy the hand of God on Luther's life and the illuminating spirit of truth on his mind
- Watch for Luther's intellect, skepticism, keen sense of guilt vs. holiness of God, courage
- Remember his 4 crises (1505, 1510, 1515, 1520)

7

1505—Thunder!

- Smart, studied law a University at Erfurt, appetites...
- Lightning: “St. Anne, help me! I will become a monk!”
- Augustinian monastery at Erfurt
 - + “If ever a monk reached heaven by monkery, it was I.”
 - + Self-flagellation, fasting, prayer, lengthy daily confession
 - + “I lost touch with Christ the Savior and Comforter, and made of him the jailer and hangman of my poor soul.”
 - + First mass upon ordination (1507): speechless

8

1510—Blunder!

- Loaned to teach at U. Wittenburg
- Selected for and made pilgrimage to Rome
 - + Public immorality of priests
 - + Priests racing through masses
 - + Ascended Lateran Church’s steps on his knees
- “Who knows if it’s true?”

9

1515

- Doctor of Theology, professor at U. Wittenburg
- Teaching Romans
- Ro 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

10

1515

- Verse 17 is not easy for Luther
 - + “righteousness of God”: bad news, not good news (gospel)!
 - + “righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith”
 - From OT to NT faith => 100% by faith through and through
 - + “The righteous shall live by faith”
 - The one who by faith is righteous, shall live.
- Pastor Paul: “The righteous person finds life through faith. He or she is made righteous through faith. Then by faith we live in that righteousness.”

11

1515—Wonder!

- “Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience, and I could not believe that God was placated... Thus, I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience...I beat importunately upon Paul at that place... and I began to understand that the righteousness of God is ...a gift of God... a passive righteousness by which the merciful God justifies us by faith. Here I felt, I was altogether born again.”
- “The gate to Paradise opened, and I walked through joyfully...”

12

1517—Reformation Day

- Indulgences sold to raise money to build St. Peter's
- 1517, Luther's 95 theses on church door (Oct 31)
 - + Intended to stimulate discussion
 - + Mild compared to September 97 theses: “We do not become righteous by doing righteous deeds, rather having been made righteous we do righteous deeds.”
- God's firestorm: students, RC church, Luther

13

Rome Reacts

- 1518, Pope's Cardinal Cajetan examined Luther at an assembly of the Holy Roman Empire (Imperial Diet) at Augsburg with authority to arrest him
 - + Luther: "His Holiness abuses Scripture...I deny he is above Scripture".
- 1519, Rome's theologian Johann Eck examined him at Leipzig.
 - + Luther denied infallibility of pope/councils to interpret scripture
 - + Eck branded Luther a "new Jan Hus," the Czech reformer burned at the stake in 1415 as a heretic.

14

1520-21—Sunder!

- 1520, Pope Leo X issued papal bull demanding Luther recant and burn writings
 - + Luther burned bull—"This bull condemns Christ. The Pope be condemned!"
 - + Wrote *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* attacking sacerdotalism, i.e., Look to Christ alone, not to priest, church, Pope, sacraments, Mary, saints

15

1521—God help me!

- 1521, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V summoned him to assembly of the German nation, the Diet of Worms
 - + “Do you or do you not repudiate your books and the errors they contain?”
 - + Luther: My conscience is captive to the word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”
- Edict of Worms: outlaw Luther excommunicated, literature banned, arrest/death warrant issued; crime to feed/shelter him

16

Luther’s “Patmos”

- “Highway robbers” rescued and hid him in Wartburg Castle in Eisenach for 10 months (“my Patmos”)
 - + Translated the NT from Greek into German
 - + Wrote *On the Abrogation of the Private Mass*, which condemned as idolatry mass as a sacrifice, asserting it is a gift to be received with thanksgiving
 - + Wrote *On Confession, Whether the Pope has the Power to Require It*, which rejected compulsory and encouraged private confession

17

Erasmus of Rotterdam

- 1524, Erasmus attacked with *Discussion Concerning Free Will*
- Luther's reply
 - + Complimented his rival for identifying the heart of the matter
"rather than trifles of indulgences, papacy, purgatory...You alone have seen the hinge on which all turns and aimed for the vital spot."
 - + *Bondage of the Will*.
 - Justification by God's grace alone and not by man's works. Our fallen will is not free apart from God's grace to guide it.

18

5 Solas (alone, only)

- Scripture Alone (Sola scriptura)
- Christ Alone (Solus Christus)
- Grace Alone (Sola gratia)
- Faith Alone (Sola fide)
- Only for God's Glory (Soli Deo gloria)

19

