

Reformation Sunday (A)

October 25, 2026



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.

*That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth; The Spirit and the
gifts are ours through Him who with us sideth: Let goods
and kindred go, This mortal life also; The body
they may kill: God's truth abideth still,
His Kingdom is forever.*

– Martin Luther–

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

Revelation 14:6–7

In these two verses of the last book of the Bible we hear the words of the first of three angels with messages for John. In this vision, the first angel tells John of an “eternal gospel” that is to be proclaimed to all peoples of the earth. The time of judgment has come. It is time to worship the one God, creator of heaven and earth. The ultimate goal of God’s final judgment is that the whole creation would glorify him. The time for repentance is here.

- *How does this call to a final judgment apply to each moment of our present lives?*
- *Is this message something we are to fear? Or is this a comforting word for those who love the Lord and have suffered at the hands of the evil?*

Psalms 46

In the face of great hardships, the Psalmist proclaimed that the Lord God is our shelter and strength. He helps us in times of trouble. The trouble he mentions is trouble indeed: the earth giving way, mountains being moved and pushed into the sea, and nations raging in warfare. The Lord is with us in these major crises but also in our personal struggles. He shields us like a fortress, walling us off from pain and misery.

- *If the psalmist is indeed correct, why are there still so many trials and struggles in this life?*
- *How is Jesus the answer to all of life's crises? How will the Lord protect his holy church through his power and might?*

One of the most beloved of psalm verses to meditate on in prayer is found in verse 10. “Be still and know that I am God.” Notice how those words follow imagery of crashing waves, and the noise of destruction.

- *How easy or difficult is it for you to keep still and silent in the face of distressing events? How does God come to us in the silence of our prayers?*

Romans 3:19–28

As St. Paul described how the Law of God works, he explained that it only works on those who are “under the law.” Meaning, it only affects those who are working diligently to keep the law. When we live under the law we are accountable to God by the law. Unfortunately we cannot keep the law perfectly.

The good news that Paul sought to drill into their heads was that we are made right with God through Christ, and not

through the law. We all fall short of living up to the law, but we are tempted to work harder and harder to fulfill that which does not give life. Even though the law gives us an understanding of what sin is — no one can be justified by following the law.

In God’s perfect time, he revealed his righteousness in his Son, Jesus. The Gospel was shown apart from the law, precisely because the law cannot save.

- *Scripture is clear that it is only through faith in Christ that salvation is given. So, why do we try so hard to keep the law perfectly?*
- *How does Christ's love and forgiveness make us “right” with God? Is this something we can procure for ourselves?*
- *How do we have to be in touch with our sin in order to be able to understand the depths and meaning of God's grace for us in Jesus Christ?*

John 8:31–36

Shortly after Jesus told his disciples that he was going away, he told a group of Jews who had followed him that if they would abide in his Word, then they would truly be his disciples. Their response indicates their lack of understanding about what Jesus was offering them. Jesus’ point was that they were unaware of their blind-spots. They had no clue that they were slaves to sin or that they even needed to be freed by the mercy of Jesus.

- *Do you think the Jews who “believed” in Jesus really wanted what he was offering them or did they simply not understand?*

We can infer from Jesus’ words the negative of what he said: If you don’t abide in my Word, then you will not be a part of what I am doing. Further, you won’t be a part of what the God of Israel is doing — since Jesus is one with the Father.

- *Considering what Paul wrote in our second lesson, what do you think the Jews here assumed about the law? How would that kind of thinking impede their willingness to follow Jesus?*

The word for “abide” in the Greek is *meinete* (from the verb *meno* meaning “to stay or remain”). By remaining in Jesus’ Word, the disciples and all who would listen were promised the Truth which would set them free. They would be truly liberated from all that holds humanity captive: sin, death, and the devil.

- *How was Jesus not just the speaker of truth, but is the Truth from God himself?*
- *Pontius Pilate once asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:38) How would you answer that question if someone asked you?*