

Re-Formation

Sermon - October 30, 2022

Scriptures: Psalm 51:1-12

Golden Verse: *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”* Psalm 51:10

Dear beloved,

Today, the Protestant Christian world gives thanks to God for those reformers who helped the church to discover the joyous and righteous God, who sent to us His son Jesus Christ to bring us real joy and happiness.

For many centuries, in most people’s minds, there was a non-Biblical image of God. Based on their imagination, God was a severe God, with a strong, gloomy face who was there to punish those who did something wrong. They pictured a God who pushed the sinners away from Him, who did not show any mercy, and who was absolutely fearful. They thought that God punished the sinners and praised those who did something good.

One of the Reformation’s victorious discoveries is that our God is a HAPPY GOD, a joyful God, a loving and smiling Father, who loves all of us greatly with unconditional love. God wants to make you and me HAPPY. His main goal with you and with me is to enjoy what He gives us and to rejoice. He wants us to discover His love and to live an endless joyful life. This is why He gave us Jesus Christ, our Lord; this is why Jesus Christ died for us. This is why the Lord Jesus was resurrected: to give us endless joy. This is why God sent to us His Holy Spirit: to give us comfort and joy. This is why God gave us this church, as a place where we can soak in the message of His endless joy. This is why He gave us the songs to sing with a joyful heart, even on difficult and cloudy days. This is why He gathered us today to tell us that He loves us, and He wants to

TODAY, we have to work on our happy life. TODAY, we have to enjoy our lives, and the opportunities God gives us. TODAY and not ONE DAY.

Now, I will use this expression ONE DAY, as we often use it when we plan something in the future. Let us see what we should change in order to live a happy life TODAY.

We often say: one day, I will have the life I want. One day I will ask you out for a nice supper to chat, which I am postponing for so long. One day I will go travel. One day I will work for my old plans, which will make me happy. Often, we live

around a dream of ONE DAY, instead of looking at what IS AVAILABLE HERE AND NOW.

Think about this: probably, you, too, often think that you are using the ONE DAY dilemma because you are avoiding what is happening now. You are afraid to see what is happening within your life here and now so you take the focus from what is happening here to ONE DAY.

“One day” takes your power away. What I mean is quite simple. We think that ONE DAY we will have the life we want. We live the life of “one day, I will one day”, instead to living our lives right now. When we say ONE DAY, we give our power away because we are afraid to be happy today.

The Lord is here to talk to you and to make you happy, so you enjoy your life TODAY.

God’s words, God’s love, and the message of His everlasting and unconditional love can have such a good effect on our mood. God’s words revive a person even in bitterness.

We all get new spiritual strength from really good news. The good news you have to hear today is: GOD LOVES YOU. This is the gospel, the good news. GOD LOVES YOU AS YOU ARE. Can you hear this here and now and can you accept it?

To be happy is a good thing. Everyone loves or wants to be happy. And joy is not only a good thing, but it is necessary.

Thank God that, for us who trust in Jesus Christ with our whole mind, soul, and spirit, there is such joy. This joy is offered to us in the gospel, in the Bible. Only the Gospel of Christ proclaims this kind of endless joy. This is why the apostle Paul encourages us to grab Christ, as the fountain of joy, when he said: *Rejoice in the Lord at all times, I say again, rejoice!* Philippians 4:4

Last Sunday, we already heard about the secret of everlasting joy: “in the Lord.” *“Rejoice in the Lord at all times.”* Rejoice in the arms of God, in the loving arms of our heavenly Father.

Some of you are aware of my story. I already experienced the reality of this five years ago, when I was seriously ill having throat and swallowing problems. As you know, I was told that during the surgery, they might have to cut my vocal cords and I would lose my voice for good. No matter how severe my problem was, God

still gave me enough strength to pray and to praise Him. My only prayer was: Lord, I want YOU to glorify Yourself in my illness. Being very ill and losing weight quickly, it was enough for me to know that I belonged to God. I was His saved child. That was perfectly enough. It was such a pleasant protection, such a happy certainty for me, that I put myself sweetly in the arms of the Lord, as sweetly a child can fall asleep in his parent's arms. This is what Paul meant to be in the Lord, in God's arms. We all are in Christ's arms. For us, this is definite and realistic. This is not only a nice theory or a religious proposition but a reality.

Jesus is an amazing person. And the longer we believe in Him, the more we can be amazed at His love.

Today please come closer to Jesus, and you will experience Him again as a living reality. Come closer and embrace Jesus. Through the Holy Spirit, you will be filled with this amazing joy, feeling that Jesus is here for YOU. You can put your whole life in His hands, and you will be filled with the joy of realizing again that you will live with Him in His eternal home.

Jesus says to you now: *“But now thus says the LORD, He who created you: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.’”* Isaiah 43:1

Do not be afraid, for *“I am with you every day until the end of the world!”* Matthew 28:20 And that's perfectly enough.

Let us experience what Paul wrote to the Romans: *“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord”* Romans 8:38-39. Amen