

Nurturing Faith... Every Day in Every Way

October 29, 2017

Reformation Sunday

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalms 46

Romans 3:19-28

John 8:31-36



Reformation Sunday-Saved by Grace! Ephesians 2:8-9

If you were on a big ship in the middle of the ocean, and you fell overboard, what might the captain of that ship do when she or he saw that you had fallen into the sea? What would the captain do? Would she tell you to start swimming and point in the direction of land?

Do you think the captain, seeing that you were drowning in the ocean, might say something to you like: "I'll throw you the life ring but only if you can prove to me that you're really worth saving. What have you done with your life so far? Have you created any useful inventions? Have you won the Nobel Peace Prize or any other important awards?" Would the captain ask that of you while you were drowning?

Do you think that the captain would say, "If you can climb halfway up the side of the ship, then I'll pull you the rest of the way up." Would the captain make you try to work your way up the side of the ship when she can see that you're almost drowning?

Of course not! She would rescue you, right? The captain, or one of the crew, would probably throw you a life preserver or something that you could hang onto to keep you afloat. Once you had a good hold on that flotation device, they would pull you back onto the ship and thus save you from drowning.

Let me read you a verse from the Bible that is found in the book of Ephesians: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God— not because of works, lest any man should boast." We are like that person drowning in the ocean and God rescues us, not because of anything that we do, but simply because he loves us.

Today is Reformation Sunday. On this day, we remember how Martin Luther and other Christians of his time, wanted to change the way the church taught people about God's love. At that time, the church was telling people that they had to work their way into heaven. Some people even thought they could pay their way into heaven! Luther knew that this was not what the Bible said. He

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. Alleluia. (John 8:31-32)

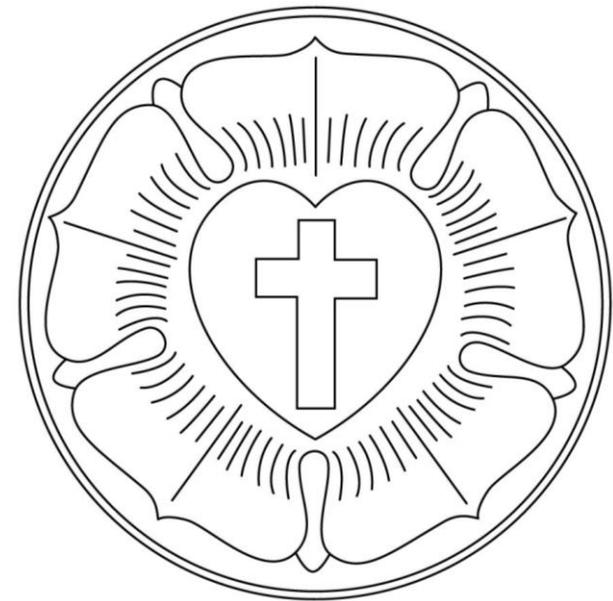
knew that all of us are sinners and we need to be saved by Jesus. So Luther reformed, or changed the church for the better, by telling people what the Bible said. The printing press was invented around the same time, so lots of Bibles could be printed and people could read for themselves what the Bible said.

We are saved by grace, just because God loves us. It's nothing that we can brag about. It is simply a wonderful gift.

Let's bow our heads and thank God for this gift.

Prayer: Thank you God, for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. Thank you for throwing us the life preserver and saving our eternal lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

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- The black cross reminds us we are saved from sin because Jesus died on the cross.
- The red heart reminds us we live because Jesus shed his blood for us, our faith in him has saved us.
- The white rose reminds us that our faith gives us joy, comfort, and peace, white is to remind us this is peace like the angels enjoy.
- The blue background reminds us of the sky and the hope that we will one day meet Jesus in heaven.
- The gold circle is precious, it reminds us of heaven's endless joy. A circle is an endless shape.