

# Reformation- What is it ?

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## 1. LUTHER'S DISCOVERY

Last year, 1983 we celebrated the 500 year anniversary of Martin Luther's birth (he was born in 1483, died in 1546). Here in Korea this event received little attention. This is unfortunate, because the figure of Luther is one of the most important in all of human history. In a time of great darkness and degradation, within the Church of Christ, Luther rediscovered the Bible's chief message: we receive salvation from eternal judgment by faith alone in Jesus Christ. We are justified by faith alone, that is, we are accounted righteous, before God, only by the merit of Christ, through His life and crucifixion. Not by good works, but only by faith. God accepts us as being perfectly righteous, when we believe in Christ and His atoning death on the cross.<sup>1)</sup>

1) On Luther: see R. Seeberg, *The History of Doctrines*, 2 Vols., trans. C. E. Hay (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977). Vol. 2, p. 221 f. Original German: R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, Vierter Band, erste Abteilung, Die Lehre Luthers* (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung D. Werner Scholl, 1933). Further: *Introduction to Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, ed. J. Dillen-

This message of the Bible, along with the message salvation by grace alone, through Scripture alone (*Sola Fide*, *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Scriptura*) set Europe on fire. In many countries, the Church was reformed, according to the Bible. Germany, Switzerland, parts of France, The Netherlands, Scotland, England, even Hungary and Poland were deeply affected by the Protestant Reformation. Not just churches, but whole societies, were filled with the light of the Gospel. With the emigration, in the 17th century, to America, Protestant truth was upheld in this English colony. Particularly in New England, the Puritans attempted to continue the Reformation begun by Luther and Calvin (the Reformer of Geneva, 1509~1564).<sup>2)</sup> Society was to be ruled by

berger (Garden City: Doubleday, 1961). and G. Ebeling, *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972 (Orig. German 1964)).

In the Augsburg Confession (1530). Luther's co-worker Melancthon wrote about justification in part 1, article 4: "Also they (the evangelical churches, J. M. B.) teach that men can not be justified before God by their own powers, merits or works; but are justified freely for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by his death hath satisfied for our sins." Original Latin: "Item docent, quod homines non possunt justificari coram Deo propriis viribus, meritis aut operibus, sed gratis justificentur propter Christum per fidem, cum credunt se in gratiam recipi, et peccata remitti propter Christum, qui sua morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit." From *The Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. 3, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds*, ed. P. Schaff, rev. D. S. Schaff (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983 (Orig. ed. 1931)), p. 10.

For Luther's repudiation of the Pope and call for Reformation, see "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate" (1520), in *Luther's Works*, Vol. 44, *The Christian in Society*, I, ed. J. Atkinson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 123 f. Original German: "An den Christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, von des christlichen Standes Besserung," in M. Luther, *Sammtliche Schriften*, Vol. 10 (St. Louis: Lutherischer Concordia-Verlag, 1885), Col. 266 f.

2) On Calvin: see J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 Vols., ed. J. T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960); J. Calvin, *Theological Treatises*, ed. J. K. S. Reid (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954); J. Calvin, *Letters of John Calvin* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1980); F. Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought* (London: Collins, 1965 (Orig. French 1950)); *Exploring the Heritage of John Calvin*, ed. D. E. Holwerda (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1876).

On Calvinism: J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1954); On the Reformers: William Cunningham, *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1967 (Orig. ed. 1962)).

God's Word, and transformed by it. America has a heritage of Reformation life at its beginning period.<sup>3</sup>

The doctrines of the Reformation-- the authority and power of the Scripture, the sovereignty of God's grace, salvation by faith in Christ alone-- these doctrines were spread to the ends of the earth by Protestant missionaries in the 19th and 20th centuries. Protestant Churches were established in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.<sup>4</sup> So the work of Luther and Calvin continues all around the world. Day by day thousands of people make the discovery the Reformers themselves made:

God reveals Himself in Scripture as the loving God who sent His only Son that all who believe in Him may not perish but have eternal life (John 3. 16).

So: "Reformation" is first of all a listening and a believing response to God's revelation in Christ, in God's written Word, the Bible.

## 2. TODAY'S STRUGGLE

Sadly, this message of grace is muffled by other sounds in our world today. Various forms of Marxism, a newly militant Islam, the powerful Western institutions propagating secular humanism, all are active in opposing the Gospel. We see in this opposition the truth of the apostle Paul's words: "...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him."

(1 Cor. 2:14) Through the media of newspapers, radio, and television, through the teaching at universities and schools, through the control of governments, Satan tries to strangle the voice of God's Word.<sup>5</sup>

Yes, today we are living at a time of warfare. On the one side is

3) On the New England Puritans: C. Mather, *The Great Works of Christ in America; Magnalia Christi Americana*, 2 Vols. (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1979 (Orig. ed. 1702)).

4) For the Puritan missionary theology: I. Murray, *The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*, (London: The Banner of Truth, 1971).

5) For Francis and Franky Schaeffer's protest against American secular humanism: see Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1981) and Franky Schaeffer, *A Time for Anger: The Myth of Neutrality* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1982). To see the spiritual struggle in the light of the Book of Revelation, see K. Schilder, *De Openbaring van Johannes en Het Sociale Leven* (Amsterdam: Ton Bolland, 1978 (Orig. 3rd ed. 1951; 1st ed. 1924)).

God and His truth, and on the other side is the devil and his lies. On the one side is the Bible and its message of liberation, and on the other side is the false wisdom of men, with its imitation of salvation. As Paul said in Ephesians 6. 10~12 :

Finally, my brothers, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places...

In the midst of this spiritual struggle, we are called by the Lord to fight for His truth. This is a warfare which we can fight only with spiritual weapons: truth, righteousness, the Gospel, faith, the salvation message, the Spirit's power, the Word of God, and prayer (Eph. 6:14~18). To be a Christian is to be a soldier in God's army.

Sadly, many church groups in the world today have given up this struggle. They have instead joined Satan in his attack on God's Word. For example, most of the church groups which are members of the World Council of Churches no longer hold to the Bible as God's inspired Word. People in these groups doubt the most important facts of Scripture: the creation, Christ being God and man, even the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The theology of the World Council of Churches is really a form of humanism.<sup>6</sup> Supposedly, whatever "reason" cannot accept, cannot be believed. Christ's Second Coming, the existence of heaven and hell, the existence of angels and demons, this is all called mythology which modern man can no longer accept.

6) On the World Council of Churches: see P. Beyerhaus, *Missions: Which Way?*, Humanization or Redemption (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971). Original German: P. Beyerhaus, *Humanisierung: Einzige Hoffnung Der Welt?* (Bad Zalsuflen: MBK-Verlag, 1970). For a documentation of liberal theology in Germany, see W. Harenberg, *Der Spiegel on the New Testament; A Guide to the Struggle Between Radical and Conservative in European University and Parish* (London: Macmillan, 1970 (Orig. German 1966)). Further on contemporary ideologies: *Ideologien Herausforderung und den Glauben*, ed. P. Beyerhaus, (Bad Liebenzell; Verlag der Liedenzeller Mission, 1979); and Young-ho Park, *A Criticism of the World Council of Churches* (in Korean) (Seoul: Christian Literature Crusade, 1984).

Instead, we should believe in a "God" who suffers with us in an im-  
personal universe, in a "Jesus" who was merely a man and whose  
body disintegrated in the tomb in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago, in the  
"heaven" of a future socialist utopia, where there will no longer be  
hunger or exploitation.

In this context, we are called to fight for God's truth. God wants  
His Church to be a place where His Word is preeminent, where Sa-  
tan's lies are exposed, and Jesus Christ preached. The Church must  
experience continual Reformation to remain the Church. When false  
teaching arises, it must be rejected and thrown out.<sup>7</sup> Satan tries  
especially to come into the Church and to overturn the truth of the  
Bible. Even people claiming to be ministers can be in fact false apostles,  
ambassadors of Satan. As Paul said in 2 Cor: 11, 13, 14:

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming  
themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Sa-  
tan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

So "Reformation" means in the second place to fight for the truth  
in God's Church, and not allow Satan to come in and subvert the  
Gospel. This means that we must separate from all church groups  
which tolerate false doctrine. We who are members of the Presby-  
terian Church in Korea (Kosin) cannot cooperate with Christians who  
tolerate false teaching. For cooperating with false teaching means  
that we are abandoning our struggle for God and the Gospel.

### 3. CALVINISM WITHOUT DILUTION

As we struggle for God's Kingdom, we are sad to see that many  
Christians not only stay in false churches but even oppose the doc-  
trines of the Bible at key points.

This of course has been true ever since the Reformation in the 16th  
century. Luther had to fight against so-called "spiritualists," who  
thought that the Bible was not so important. They relied instead on

7) For Cornelius Van Til's criticism of Karl Barth's "neo-orthodoxy" see C. Van Til, *Christianity and Barthianism* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1962). For Van Til's criticism of recent Dutch liberal theology, see his *The New Synthesis Theology of the Netherlands*, (n. p.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1976).

the "inner Word" of the Spirit. They believed that the Bible was a  
mere book of dead letters, without any spiritual power in it. Against  
such people Luther fought vigorously.

Then we see Calvin, in Geneva, opposing false doctrines such as  
anti-trinitarianism and libertinism (the idea that since we are "no  
longer under the law" we don't have to obey the 10 Commandments).

Luther and Calvin, together, opposed the Roman Catholic and  
Renaissance ideas about the "freedom of the will." The famous Erasmus  
of Rotterdam, a Renaissance scholar who remained within the Roman  
Catholic Church, wrote a work defending the idea of "free will," i. e.  
that all men can choose to believe or not believe by free choice.  
Over against this Luther wrote the work "The Bondage of the Will,"  
maintaining that we are not spiritually free at all. Instead, he said,  
the Bible teaches that we are slaves of sin, that the unconverted man  
does not want to serve God (Rom 3:11), so that without the sover-  
eign work of God in our hearts we cannot choose for God. Instead,  
God chooses us the elect, and by His Spirit enables us to turn to  
Him in repentance and faith.

Calvin was just as strong on this issue as Luther. Man's will is  
not free, but bound by sin and Satan. Through the preaching of the  
Word, accompanied by the work of the Holy Spirit, God destroys the  
rebellion in the hearts of His elect and draws them to faith in Christ.

Luther and Calvin quoted Scripture in abundance, and also  
appealed to the great church father, Augustine (354-430 A. D.), to  
prove their points.<sup>8</sup> According to the Bible, man is not "free to choose  
for God," but is rather a fighting rebel, hating God and serving Satan  
as master (Rom. 3:10-19; 8:7; 1 Cor: 2:10; Eph. 2:1-3, 12) Only  
God's sovereign mercy and grace, only the irresistible work of the

8) On the "bondage of the will": M. Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*, trans. and ed.  
E. G. Rupp (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969); Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.2.2-9;  
Augustine, *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, ed. W. J. Oates (Grand Rapids: Baker  
Book House, 1980 (Orig. ed. 1948); see especially "On Grace and Free Will" (426/7),  
p. 733 f., and "On the Predestination of the Saints" (428 or 429), p. 777 ff.  
Also on this subject: J. Edwards, *Freedom of the Will* (New Haven: Yale U. Press,  
1957).

Holy Spirit, can change us from being enemies into being God's children, "who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13).

This is the great message of sovereign grace of the Reformation. We cannot and do not cooperate with God to save ourselves. Rather, God Himself saves us by Himself! By His Word and Spirit God saves a people to serve and worship Him for all eternity!

Unfortunately, in our day this message of "sovereign grace" is opposed, not just by the World Council of Churches, but by "Biblical" Christians, believers who want to honor Christ and uphold the Bible. "Evangelicals" and "fundamentalists" stand with us in opposing the theologies of the W. C. C., but then they begin to criticize Luther and Calvin! "Evangelicals" and "fundamentalists" believe in "man's free will." Most of them, in any case. They invite people to believe in Jesus "of your own free will." They tell people that that they have a "free will," and that we can choose to accept Christ as our Savior by our "own free will." For example, not long ago, Billy Graham came to Korea. He spoke at a big rally on Yoido island. This rally was supported by the major Presbyterian denominations of Korea, including the Kosin church. These churches are supposed to hold to the Westminster Confession of Faith, composed in the period 1643-47 in London, England.<sup>9</sup> Chapter 9 of this Confession is called "Of Free Will" and section 3 goes as follows:

Man, by his fall into a state of sin, has wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereto.

Then section 4:

When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he frees him from from his natural bondage under

9) See the Westminster Confession of Faith, in *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. 3, p. 623. Further, J. Murray, "Inability," in *Collected Writings of John Murray*, Vol. 2 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1977), p. 83f.

sin, and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good...

This is the clear message of the Westminster Confession on the subject of "free will." But what did Billy Graham say at Yoido? Just the opposite! He said that the "only thing God cannot touch is your will," that we all have "free will" to choose for God. Billy Graham claims to be a Protestant (he is a Southern Baptist), yet here we hear him echoing Erasmus instead of Luther and Calvin! And there were many Kosin church members present, apparently agreeing with this unbiblical message!

So: once again we are called to have a Reformation in the Church. Once again the doctrines of the bondage of the will and the sovereignty of God's electing grace must sound through the Church. The pure doctrines of Calvinism: the total depravity of man (T), God's unconditional election (U), Christ's atonement limited in its design to the elect (L), the irresistible work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the elect (I), and the sure perseverance of the saints in faith (P) (so: TULIP)<sup>10</sup> must once again be proclaimed and upheld by the true Church of Christ in Korea. And no more compromise with followers of Erasmus, Roman Catholics, Baptists, and other "free will" preachers!

#### 4. IN ALL OF LIFE

Reformation is a matter of faith in God's Word, of the struggle for Church purity, but it doesn't stop there. As we have mentioned, the 16th century Reformation affected not only the Church institute but the whole of society. The Church, is, indeed, the motor for all true Reformation, but we are called to live out in our daily lives that which we hear proclaimed from the pulpit. For the Bible gives light on all of life, not just on some narrow aspect of our

10) See the Canons of the Synod of Dort, in *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. 3, p. 550f. On the significance of the Canons of Dort for to day, see *Crisis in the Reformed Churches: Essays in commemoration of the great synod of Dort, 1618-1619*, ed. P. Y. De Jong (Grand Rapids: Reformed Fellowship, 1968).

life. Wherever there has been true Reformation of the Church there has always followed Reformation in education, in politics, and in the rest of culture. We see this most clearly in Europe in the 16th century, in New England in the 17th century, in Holland in the 19th and early 20th century. Will God grant such a broad-scale Reformation in Korea at the end of the 20th century? We pray that He will!

Let us think of education, and what Reformation ought to mean for it. Luther, Calvin, the American Puritans, and the Dutch theologians Abraham Kuyper and Klaas Schilder all gave great attention to the matter of education.<sup>11</sup> First of all they wanted a trained ministry, prepared to preach and teach the Gospel to their congregations. To this end they established (or reformed) seminaries for theological training. The cities of Wittenberg, Geneva, Amsterdam, and Kampen became renowned (at different times) for their theological seminaries. Here, the study of the Bible in the original languages (Hebrew and Greek) and Church history (in Latin) were central.

But these leaders also were concerned for education for all the youth of the Church. Each in their own way tried to establish (or reform) schools to train the youth of the Church for their roles in society. Today, in The Netherlands, the Reformed Churches maintain schools from kindergarten to High School where the Bible is central, where children learn from a distinctly Christian point of view. Christian education flows out of a covenantal consciousness, the idea that God makes a covenant with believers and their children (Gen. 17: 7 - covenant with Abraham and his seed; Deut. 6: 7 - Israel must teach their children diligently; Acts 2: 39 - God's promise to believers and their children; Eph. 6: 4 - parents to bring

11) For Luther's views on education: see F. V. N. Painter, *Luther on Education* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1889). "Though it is not generally recognized, yet Luther brought about as important a reformation in education as in religion." (p. iv)

For a critique of American humanistic education: R. J. Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education* (Nutley, N. J.: Craig, 1979 (Orig. ed. 1963))

up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord)<sup>12</sup>.

Today, in Korea, many schools are not under parental control, as the covenant demands, but under government control. Textbooks teaching Darwinian evolution are the only ones allowed in biology. History textbooks are sometimes dangerously nationalistic, exalting the Korean people instead of Jesus Christ. We must reform these schools, according to God's Word, or else start new schools where Jesus Christ is at the heart of the curriculum and school policy (hiring teachers, admitting students).

Then, we think of politics. At the moment, in Korea, the only church groups actively involved in politics are the extreme liberals, such as the presbyterian Kijang group. Conservative Christians in Korea prefer to go to prayer mountains than to struggle in a Biblical way in the area of politics. Yet, from such leaders as Han Sang-dong, one of the founders of Kosin Seminary, we learn what resistance to an unchristian government may mean: jail and even death. Yet, how can we participate in political life, when we never think or talk or pray about it? True Calvinism means a concern for government, that Christian principles be applied, that the Lordship of Christ be brought to bear in the political arena.<sup>13</sup> Think of Calvin in Geneva, the American Puritans in New England, Abraham Kuyper in The Netherlands (he was prime minister from 1901 to 1905). These men were not content to pray only. They wanted to take concrete action, for the sake of their country, for the sake of the Gospel. If Christ is the light of the world, He wants His

12) For a Dutch Reformed description of the significance of covenant and church for marriage, family, and youth (including education), see B. Holwerda, *De betekenis van verbond en kerk voor huwelijk, gezin en jeugd* (Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1974 (Orig. ed. 1958)).

See also J. Murray, "Christian Education," in *Collected Writings*, Vol. 1.

13) For discussions concerning Reformation and politics, see H. Dooyeweerd, *Roots of Western Culture: Pagan, Secular, and Christian Options* (Toronto: Wedge, 1979 (Orig. Dutch articles 1945-1948)); F. L. Hebdon Taylor, *Reformation or Revolution* A study of modern society in the light of a reformational and scriptural pluralism (Nutley, N. J. Craig, 1970); and especially the following two works: G. L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics*, (Nutley, N. J.: Craig, 1979); and R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (n.p.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1973).

light to shine in politics, even in Korea!

One real possibility might be: a Reformed Christian political party. This has precedents in Korean political history. And it offers the possibilities of channelling Christian energy and thought into the upbuilding of the nation for the good of all.

For we must realize that all political parties, whether they are in America, Holland, or Korea, must be based on some kind of ideological foundation. Now, either we are going to build on a Christian base or a non-Christian base. There is no third alternative! All of life, including political life, should be brought under the Lordship of Christ. Not capitalism, not socialism, but a self-conscious Christian philosophy of existence (including economics) must be at the basis of true Christian political activity.

We have mentioned education and politics. We could go on. For the richness of life, reflecting the original richness of God's creation and fullness of redemption which is in Jesus Christ, is the terrain of the Spirit, where He seeks to transform us into the image of Christ.<sup>14</sup> Too often in the past Korean Christians have imitated the West, rather than seeking to transform their own cultural materials for the glory of God. Music, painting, poetry, architecture, these too are areas which are in need of Biblical Reformation. Christ is Lord! He is the Alpha and Omega of all creation. His Kingdom rules over all. He calls us to a life of devotion, in His service, a life of Reformation, which is never satisfied or complacent, but which restlessly seeks to bring the light of the Gospel to all the areas of life. That is why we are semper reformandi (always Reforming), always seeking to do God's will to the utmost of our ability with the whole of our being. For not our own happiness or fulfillment, but God's glory is the true aim of all we do or think.

14) Introducing Dooyeweerd's comprehensive philosophy, see L. Kalsbeek, *Contours of a Christian Philosophy* (Toronto: Wedge, 1975) (Korean trans. 1981); more consistently Calvinistic is: *Foundations of Christian Scholarship: Essays in the Van Til Perspective*, ed. G. North (Vallecito, Ca.: Ross House, 1976). See further: H. Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, 3 Vols. (n. p.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1969); *The Idea of a Christian Philosophy: Essays in Honor of D. H. Th. Vollenhoven* (Toronto: Wedge, 1973).

## 病든 者를 爲한 牧會

姜 勇 元  
〈專講 · 基督教教育〉

病든 者에 對한 關心을 갖고 그들을 돌보는 일은 모든 基督信者의 의무이며 또 특권이다. 마태복음 25:36은 이것을 잘 보여준다. 또한 하나님께서는 教會의 長老들이 이 일을 公的으로 遂行하기를 기대하고 계신다(약5:13-15). 특히 牧會者는 가르치는 長老로서 필요할 때마다 羊들을 도와줄 責任을 지니고 있는 것이다.

우리 주님께서 3년의 公事役 기간중에 하신 중요한 일은 傳道와 가르침과 病 고치심이었다. 우리는 예수께서 얼마나 病든 자에 대해서 關心을 가지셨는지를 福音書의 곳곳에서 볼 수 있게 된다. 그는 구약의 先知者 이사야의 예언을 따라 우리의 軟弱한 것을 親히 擔當하시고 우리의 病을 짊어 지셨다(사53:4). 오늘날 牧會者의 임무중에서 이 病든 자에 對한 배려와 關心에 對한 중요성이 더욱 고조되고 있는 듯 하다. 筆者는 이 작은 論考에서 이 問題의 重要性을 밝히고, 이와 관련하여 病床心理, 病의 本質, 그리고 환자 牧會의 根本精神은 어디에 있는 것인가를 간단하게 서술하고자 한다.

### I. 病者牧會의 重要性

먼저 病者牧會의 重要性을 몇가지로 정리해 보기로 하자. 첫째로, 人間의 고뇌 문제를 解決하는 길은 宗教的인 世界가 아니면 不可能하다는 확신을 들 수 있다. 둘째로, 사람의 精神的인 요인이 身體的인 病을 惡化시키며, 장기화 시킨다는 것이 증명되었다. 셋째로, 病든 상태는 他人의 도움이 必要한 상태이다. 그