

Reformation – Then and Now

In 2017, Christians across Europe and the world commemorated the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. That landmark provided an excellent opportunity to reflect on the impact of Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses and of the theological, political, and cultural upheaval which followed their publication. But the consequences of the Reformation are no less vital in 2018, and as the 21st century unfolds they are sure to remain a focus of lively dialogue and debate within and beyond the church. This session will set the Reformation in its wider historical context and will examine the key legacies from it that still bear on our life and witness as Christians today. From ministry and mission to Christian education and Bible translation; from denominationalism and ecumenism to Protestant-Catholic relations; from capitalism and democracy to secularism and religious liberty; from Henry VIII to Brexit. All this and more will be addressed and discussed.

David Hilborn is Principal of St John's College, Nottingham. Prior to taking up this role in 2012, he was Assistant Dean of St Mellitus College, Head of Theology at the Evangelical Alliance, and an Associate Research Fellow at the London School of Theology. David trained for ordained ministry in the United Reformed Church at Mansfield College, Oxford and completed his doctorate on the language of worship at Nottingham University. He joined the Church of England in 2002 and was an assistant minister in two London parishes before returning to Nottingham to lead St John's. In addition to his duties at the college, he currently serves on the ministry team of St Luke's, Gamston. He is also a member of the Society for Pentecostal Studies and has chaired the Evangelical Alliance's Theological Advisory Group since 2016. David has written and edited several books, including *Picking up the Pieces* (Hodder), *The Nature of Hell, God and the Generations* (with Matt Bird), *Movement for Change* (all Paternoster) and *The Atonement Debate* (with Derek Tidball and Justin Thacker - Zondervan). David is married to Mia and they have two children: Matthew and Alice.

I. Taking Stock: Reflecting on the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 Theses (1517)

- A. Ecumenical commemorations (UK and worldwide)
- B. Evangelical Alliance UK Statement (January 2017) & *idea* magazine coverage
- C. Tristram Hunt – *The Protestant Revolution* (BBC 4)
- D. Debate on historical legacy:
 - 1. Hunt – seedbed of capitalism, democracy, secularization
 - 2. Rodney Stark – continuities with modern world overplayed/'mythic'
 - 3. Brad Gregory – 'unintended' consequences of Reformation
 - 4. Alec Ryrie – Protestants as 'the radicals who made the modern world'

II. Theological Legacies: Reformation *Solas/Solae* (Johann Baptise Metz; Jodocus von Lodenstein)

- A. *Solus Christus*

1. Recovery of the *evangel* (good news of Jesus Christ) at heart of Christian life
2. Reform as ‘evangelical’ and ‘Protestant’: relationship between the two
3. Protestants as primarily ‘Jesus-centred’/‘Jesus-followers’
4. Luther’s changing faith (1483-1546):
 - a. Call from law to Augustinian monasticism
 - b. ‘I made of Christ the jailer and hangman of my poor soul’
 - c. Personal recovery of the *evangel*
 - d. Recollections of conversion

B. *Sola Scriptura*

1. Biblical scholarship and teaching at Wittenberg from 1508
2. Lectures on Galatians and Romans
3. Erasmus’s Greek NT from 1516
4. Impact of Romans 1:17 (‘The righteous one shall live by faith’)
5. Repentance v. penance
6. Diet of Worms (1521), ‘My conscience is captive to the Word of God’

C. *Sola gratia, sola fide, and justification*

1. Indulgences as a provocation to reform
2. Pope Leo X, Johann Tetzel and St Peter’s, Rome
3. The 95 Theses as a response to indulgences
4. Justification (*On the Bondage of the Will*, 1525, Smalcald Articles, 1537)
5. *Theologia crucis*
6. ‘Thereupon I felt myself to be *reborn*’ (cf. Evangelical ‘new birth’)
7. Grace, freedom, and redemption

III. Socio-Political Legacies

A. *From justification to justice – then*

1. Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, Salvation Army
2. Martin Luther King and civil rights

B. *From justification to justice – now*

1. Lutheran World Federation campaign: ‘Not for Sale’ (Salvation; Humans; Creation)
2. Evangelical Alliance Public Policy and Advocacy: *Speak Up; What Kind of Society*

C. *Religious toleration and liberty*

1. A Radical Reformation legacy (Anabaptists; Independents; Separatists. E.g. Dirk Willems)

2. The lessons of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648)
3. Glorious Revolution (1688-89)
4. US Constitution (1st Amendment, 1789)
5. The long shadow of sectarian enmity (N. Ireland; Glasgow)
6. Luther and anti-Semitism (*On the Jews and their Lies* 1543)

D. *Democracy, capitalism and secularization?*

1. Stark v. Gregory and Sarah Williams
2. Gregory: Reformation pluralism warped into 'moral constructivism [with] nowhere to stand'

IV. Semper Reformanda

A. Pietism

B. Revivalism

C. Evangelicalism

D. Pentecostal & Charismatic movements

E. New Churches

F. Global north decline v. global south growth...

G. The globalization of Protestantism

1. S. Korea – Yoido Full Gospel Church
2. S. America – Pentecostalism: a 'New Reformation' (Philip Jenkins)

H. Unity in diversity

1. Marburg Colloquy (1529)
2. Wesley and Whitefield
3. Evangelical Alliance (1846)
4. Edinburgh (1910)
5. WEF/WEA (1951)

V. Evangelicals and Roman Catholicism

A. Dialogues and bilateral reports and initiatives:

1. Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission (1977-1984)

2. Evangelicals and Catholics Together (1994, 1998)
3. WEA: *Church, Evangelization and the Bonds of Koinonia* (1999)
4. Manhattan Declaration (2009)

B. Continuing divergence:

1. Church
2. Papacy
3. Sacraments
4. Mary

C. Cooperation and commonality

1. Creeds
2. Evangelism
3. Charismatic movement
4. Social ethics incl. abortion, euthanasia
5. Marriage and same sex relationships
6. Justification (1999 Joint Declaration)?

VI. Summing Up

A. *Soli Deo Gloria*

1. J.S. Bach
2. Westminster Shorter Catechism – glory and joy
3. The legacy of glory and joy: liberty and human flourishing (Michael Reeves and Tim Chester)

B. The *solas* revisited

Suggested Further Reading:

- Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 2012.
- Eric Landry & Michael S. Horton (eds), *The Reformation Then and Now*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2017.
- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700*. London: Penguin, 2003.
- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New: Writings on the Reformation*. London: Allen Lane, 2016.
- Michael Reeves & Tim Chester, *Why the Reformation Still Matters*. London: IVP, 2016.
- Lyndal Roper, *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet*. London: The Bodley Head, 2016.
- Alec Ryrie, *Protestants: The Radicals Who Made the Modern World*. London: William Collins, 2017.
- Rodney Stark, *Reformation Myths*. London: SPCK, 2017.

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