

For fifteen minutes a week, you hear a sermon. ~~Some of you hear all of it, some most of it, some let their minds wander and hear little or none.~~
For ten or fifteen minutes a week, God's word enters your ears and your heart to make you new. All the rest of the week, it is quite a different sermon you are hearing, the word of the world.

Consider that word being proclaimed in the presidential campaign. No word, no deed will be forgiven forgotten. Everything Bush and Dukakis have done comes under the glare of the camera lights. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Noriega, Willie Horton, the Aclu, arms for Iran, over and over the candidates are grilled. In response these Phrases are never spoken by them, I made a mistake, If I had to do it over I would do this differently, I'm sorry I did that. No, they defend, defend, defend. That is the word of the world. I was right. I am innocent, I am the best. Cover yourself, protect yourself, never leave yourself exposed, in politics, in business, in the world this is the word.

~~xxxxxxx what xxxxxxxx in the xxxxxxxx in xxxxxxxx
 this xxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxx
 xxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxx the xxxxxxxx
 they perform xxxxxxxx.~~

Then the eyes of both were opened; and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig ~~leaves~~ leaves together and made themselves aprons.

That is where all this covering and protecting and defending comes from, from sin. It is the world's way, fig leaves, and fine clothes, and right impressions.

But today you have retreated from the world, fled from the word of the world to hear the word of God. You have come here wearied and word by the world, weighed down by the world. To you Jesus says: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Now those to whom Jesus first spoke this promise objected, We are des-
cendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to anyone, How is it that
you say, You will be made free."

How hard to hear the word of God with that word of the world bugging in our ears, Depend yourself! Depend yourself!
~~First we must recognize that there is a problem.~~ Maybe you are on top
in the world. Maybe you are the best at defending yourself, being strong
and responsible and wise in the world. Maybe according to the word of the
world you are a winner. Then what need have you ~~max~~ of Jesus. Will not fine
clothes, healthy children, a beautiful home be sufficient? But you have
come here today. Maybe you heard the sound of ^{rustling} ~~crackling~~ leaves in the
garden.

Jesus answered his hearers: Truly truly I say to you, everyone who commits
sin is a slave to sin."

Jesus first hearers pointed to thier descent from Abraham, surely they ~~are~~ were free. And we, each in our own way would like to claim, I'm just fine the way I am, Jesus. Bless me, but don't try to change me. But the word of God ^{is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul's spirit, of joint and marrow, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart, and defense, to the heart.} ~~is sharper than any two-edged sword, cutting through every covering~~ ^{gestures of the heart}

Truly truly I say to you, says Jesus, everyone who commitss sin is a slave to sin.

That road of defending is a slavery. Sins, not acknowledge, not repented of become chains ^{linking} ~~links~~ holding us to yesterday. For Adam and Eve sin meant hiding from one another, hiding from God. So also for us. Anxiety fear, these come from come from living by the word of the world that binds me to my yesterdays ^{and that says in all your tomorrow you have only you to depend upon.}

But this is Jesus promise: If the son make you free, you shall be free indeed.

Our Lord, Jesus Christ ~~is~~ forgives our sin, thus making us free. No more defending, pretending, covering, hiding. We repent of our sins and we are giving what the world never gives, a clean slate, a new beginning, a fresh start.

This is all so very simple to understand. Confess your sins and through Jesus God will forgive every thought and word and deed. There is no yesterday held against you, you are free.

But we who have our ears tuned to the word of the world don't believe it for a minute, at least not after we walk out of that door. Back to defending, and pretending. Back to standing on our own tow feet, instead of on the word and promise of God.

As long as we are in this world, this battle will go on. Word of God, word of the world, our hearts.

Today is reformation Sunday. What Luther intanded to do so long ago when he nailed the 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg was to call

the church to repentance. A new beginning, a fresh start was what he wanted for Rome. But Rome defended, and would not repent. Luther only wanted the church to live what the church proclaimed, and she would not. The unity of the church was broken.

In years since, in ways great and small there has been both repenting and defending in every segment of the church of Christ. Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Baptists, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, each has sometimes listened to the word of the world, defending sin and failing, each has at times been granted ears to hear her Lord, repenting, beginning anew.

On this reformation Sunday we shall not begin by assuming the need for repentance is no longer ours. This day, each day the word of God cuts through ^{joint} ~~bone~~ and marrow to the heart, and we the church are found wanting in faith, in hope, in love. Reformation Day is not a day for pride, but for letting God's Word expose our sin, and letting that same Word, Jesus Christ wash us clean.

And what is true of the church is true for each of the members of the church. The word ~~is~~ in which we continue, the word that makes us free, is that word, you are forgiven. Each new morning Christ invites you to repent, to let him judge your yesterday, never defending, but trusting that whatever of your yesterday needs hanging onto, God will do that. Then, forgiven, God grants you today, a new day, a new you, that you might believe in God with all your being, loving him, trusting, him, fearing him above all else. A new day, that you might love your neighbor as yourself.

The fifteen minutes are nearly over for another week. But they need not be. People of God, fill your ears and your hearts with God's ~~word~~ word to you. Let the Word of God become a great ~~sum~~ chorus within you, drowng out the songs of the world. For you are not intended to belong to the world, but to God. Amen.