

Conversations for a Modern Reformation
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September 2011

The reformation really was a movement of Christians, not of one man or even a circle of reformers, it was a movement of Christians and churches that were convinced that there needed to be a serious reformation in the church of doctrine, worship, and life and that is exactly what a lot of people today also think needs to happen.

There are a lot of Christians out there, lay people as well as pastors, who are very concerned about what they're getting, what their diet is in church. Whether their children are being brought up in the fear and knowledge of the Lord. And whether they have the tools as parents that they need in order to contribute to that.

There seems to be chaos in the Christian church today, on all fronts, in all denominations, in all traditions. And so we hope that there will be a new reformation. And that can't come from the top down. It has to be the Spirit working through His word primarily in churches but then also opportunities where people from all sorts of different churches can get together and say "Hey, we share a lot of the same concerns."

Everything comes out of the gospel. If we understand the gospel and everything that we do, in our ministry, our outreach, our lives, our families, everything is oriented around the gospel, then a whole lot of other things that are corruptions, just sort of take care of themselves.

How we are called as Christians, and especially as shepherds of the church, to bear with one another, in a sense put up with each others lag time and yet at the same time to keep things moving along a reformation track. And what does it mean to reform a church and not just to divide a church? That's easy. To not do anything is easy and to divide a church is easy but to reform a church is very difficult.

In various periods of church history the church begins to take the gospel for granted and it needs a wide scale reformation. It begins to trust in its own righteousness and its own opinions and that's how you also get the idolatry which always comes with periods of corruption in the church. Well, that was rife in the 16th century. That's why the reformation was needed and I think that the church always needs a reformation.

There are no golden ages including the reformation. If we had a reformation today, which I hope we will have, it will be a mess too. The church is always a mess but it's the mess for which Christ died. And so we have to give our all to its peace and purity. We have to do everything that we can to ensure that the gospel is being faithfully delivered and passed down from generation to generation and that the word of God has the last word, the first word, the middle word, on all that we believe, all that we practice in our worship, in our outreach, in our mission.

We need this perhaps even more in our day than it was in the 16th century because we have so many distractions, so many idolatries, and so many attractive idols that don't even look like idols that seem like perfectly good spiritual godly things. So we desperately need to be drawn back to the point of the

gospel, back to Jesus, back to the glory of the cross, back to the whole teaching of scripture, the whole counsel of God, away from the pragmatism, and consumerism, and therapeutic narcissism of our age.

What we want to do is foster conversations about reformation. To bring people together from really widely divergent backgrounds, from different generations, from different ethnic backgrounds, and talk about issues that concern all of us, but with a slightly different nuance, varying from person to person, because of our backgrounds. And then stir that all in a pot and see what comes out.

The best things throughout church history have not happened because of one person or even a group of people but have arisen out of a consensus that the Holy Spirit produces out of a renewed sense of what His word teaches. And again, we believe that reformation happens in the churches, but groups like these can be catalysts for people caring that little fire back to their churches.

That's what we want to do. Start the conversation, get fires going.