

The Reformation at 500 years: A Fourth-annual Symposium in Kilgore

2017 October 29—Rev. Dr. Jayson S. Galler

Introduction

- What was the Reformation, why do I care
- Previous symposia, including first, thinking about this year, 500th anniversary of the “start”
- Not rehash history but ongoing relevance for us today (about the Gospel, which is always relevant: Who, what, and how)
- Three major points: Past, Present, Future

Past

- Forerunners: Biblical (Old Testament, Jesus), Early Church (Augustine’s maxim: *Ecclesia semper reformanda est*), and Medieval (conciliar, curial, new orders), remnant (Staupitz)
- Right time and place (Galatians 4? Gutenberg’s refinement of printing [internet of its day] but not media manipulator, political and religious alignment)
- Ninety-five Theses *et alia*: “rediscovery” (lecturing 1513-1519, best fathers), 97/95 Theses (mailed, nailed [pasted or waxed]) for restoration, Worms, 1520/1521 Excommunication, Bible (statue, Erik M. Lunsford photo), Word (drinking beer 1522), Speyer and Marburg (1529, *Protestatio*, 14 of 15), Augsburg (two fronts, 21 restating the “catholic” faith and 7 correcting abuses)
- Heirs: names (Christ’s teaching, AE 36:265), Vatican II (liturgy, two kinds), JDDJ

Present

- Various impacts asserted (German language, Education, U.S. Declaration, church/state, women’s rights, civil rights, Nazism), but about the Gospel and Sacraments (religious should lead to social/governmental)
- Relevance of centrality of Christ (Who, what, how): earner of grace, object of faith, content of Scripture (sole ultimate authority)
- Measure (definition [e.g., continuity or rupture]), numbers (remnant), faithfulness (distinctiveness)
- Passing shower (AE 45:352), First Thesis

Future

- Declining here but growing elsewhere
- Ro 16:17; 1 Co 11:19; believe in “one, holy, catholic [that is universal, Christian], apostolic” church
- Remnant

Conclusion

- Not about Luther (or any other sinful human beings [peasants, Jews, divorce], desire for books to lie in dust [AE 34:283]) but about the Gospel and Christ’s Church: past (even before Luther), present, and future
- Gates of hell do not prevail against the Church (Mt 16:18) but the opposite