CELEBRATION OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY, JUSTICE AND PEACE

October 27, 2019

Reformation Sunday

Old Testament	**Exodus 7: 1-7**
Psalm	**89: 1 - 18**
Epistle	**Romans 13: 1-7**
Gospel	**John 18: 33 - 38**

Peace with justice is a way of thinking and acting which promotes non-violent solutions to everyday problems and thereby contributes to a healthy society. Peace with justice: sets standards for the security of children, women, men, poor, displaced and marginalized for any primary reasons and care. These two divine values promote an end to the violence of injustice, corruption, poverty, etc.

'The reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me', these were the words that **Jesus** said to Pilate during His trial. **The Reformation Sunday** reminds us of justice, peace and truth-the basic characteristics of God. Today, God's sovereignty, justice and peace should be celebrated.

Martin Luther (the father of the Protestant Reformation), a 16th-century German theologian, was one of the most significant figures in Church history. His 95 Theses, which he nailed on the main door of the Church of Wittenberg in Saxony on 31st October 1517 and his other writings were responsible for fractionalizing the Catholic Church and sparking the Protestant **Reformation**. The Bible is the central source of religious authority and that salvation is reached through faith and not deeds is his central teachings. He included in this many topics like repentance, the forgiveness of sins, purgatory, God's will, God's grace, giving of alms, gospel and faith. Following this, reformation gained strength. **Thus the 'Five Solas' of Reformation namely *Sola Gratia, Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide, Solus Christus and Sola Deo Gloria*** came into being. These arguments reformed the people to believe in the sovereignty of God and to submit to the authority that comes from God alone.

Reformation has an important place in the history of the Church.



Moses and Aaron, channels of Reformation in God's Work (Exodus 7: 1-7)

Moses and Aaron are best known from the story in the biblical Book of Exodus to leading the people, the Hebrews, out of bondage in Egypt and to the 'promised land' of Canaan. They did just as the LORD had commanded (Ex: 7.20). Moses raised his staff of Justice and Liberation in the presence of Pharaoh and his officials. He **is known as the lawgiver who met God face-to-face on Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments.** Aaron

became the prophet of Moses (Ex. 7: 1). Both were used by God. God will use us also to establish the kingdom of God's sovereignty through justice, peace and truth.



Reformation by kingdom values (John 18: 33-38)

Jesus testified that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18: 36). His kingdom is filled with justice, peace and joy (Romans 14: 17). What we are saying is that justice, righteousness, truth and peace are fundamental aspects of God's kingdom. These are Godly characteristics. Let us read a few verses related to this. 'The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love' (Psalm 33:5). 'You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy' (Psalm 45: 7). 'Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you' (Psalm 89: 14). 'Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.' (Psalm 97: 2).



Reformation: Sphere Sovereignty - Relationship between Sovereignty-Authorities-Civilians (Romans 13: 1-7)

God has created in society a number of different institutions or spheres, each with their own respective roles and responsibilities.

The Sovereignty of God is the Christian teaching that God is the supreme authority and all things are under His control. 'Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established' (Romans 13: 1). There are many small and big authorities over us. These authorities are also God's servants (Romans 13: 6). 'Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same...it is necessary to be in subjection...for conscience' sake. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due;* custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.'

KEY THOUGHT: When our church, family, society and culture recognizes God's Sovereignty as high above everything else, then we certainly will enjoy freedom. Justice and Peace will be established. The blocks of unrighteousness will be overturned. Dharma-fair and impartial system-will prevail.