

**October 25, 2015 REFORMATION “Can We Hear the ‘Truth’ Today?” based on John 8:31-36**

Political candidates claim to speak the truth, but no action follows.

Jesus spoke, and things happened – deaf man healed, paralytic’s sins were forgiven, Lazarus was raised from the dead.

When Jesus speaks, we are never the same again

- End to old way of life. Self is exposed, God is revealed. We are sinners who are saved by a caring and loving God.
- People who followed Jesus claimed heritage as ‘chosen people’. Never were in bondage. Yet in reality, they were – to Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and now, the Romans, not to mention the burden of poverty, hunger, abuse, fear, and weariness. Jesus’ message resonated.
- Reformation message of Luther’s 95 theses has same effect. People were imprisoned by the pronouncements of the Church, could only be saved by ‘buying’ indulgences, but this was a perversion of the ‘truth’. These only bought bricks for a building in Rome.
- Message was always to ‘repent of your sins’ and ‘believe in God’s forgiveness through Jesus Christ’. Christ is our truth and salvation. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”, hence we need God’s mercy and grace, which we have received through Jesus.

Great piece of art is found in the town church in Wittenberg, created by Lucas Cranach. It’s a depiction of Martin Luther preaching to the people. One finger is pointed to the Scriptures, the other hand is pointed to Christ crucified and raised for us. The figure of Christ crucified is found in the midst of the people, on their level, which shows him among God’s people where he heals and makes whole, where he feeds, brings peace, comforts and strengthens them, and brings life. Because Jesus has set us free, we are lord of all, completely free of everything, and we are servant, completely attentive to the needs of all. This is the marvelous balance of the Christian life. May it be so for us!