

Romans 3:21-28 / 1 Timothy 4:7-10
“Christ, Your Medicine!”
Reformation Day

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Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God, our Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Dear Christian Friends:

[Introduction]

We are celebrating the Reformation and Martin Luther and all of that this weekend.

Breaking News! Well from 10 years ago...From Wittenberg, German ...
Archaeologists have discovered the lavatory on which Martin Luther wrote the 95 theses that started the Protestant Reformation.

Maybe you know, Luther frequently alluded to the fact that he suffered from chronic constipation and spent much of his time in contemplation on the lavatory.

Chronic constipation! Can you imagine?
No Miralax or Ex-Lax.

No stool softener or Pepto-Bismol
Back in the 16th-century it was rhubarb – Chinese Rhubarb to be specific.
Rhubarb was the medicine!

Now, experts say they have been certain for years that the 16th-century religious leader wrote the groundbreaking theses while on das Klo, as the Germans call it.

Throughout his life, Luther was pained with chronic constipation.

[Sin Pains]

What is it that pains you? Ails you? Won't let you sleep at night?
Bothers you so much that you can hardly function?

I'll tell you what it is! It is sin! “There is no distinction.
For all have sinned and fall short of God's glory!”

You are not excluded from this “all have sinned.” You have the aching pain of sin!

Of things undone which you should have done!
Of things you did that you shouldn't have!

You ache and you pain! And your sin has you impacted or stuck — in, with and under the judgment of God's wrath!

You crave for deliverance!
You pine for some kind of purification!
You've tried everything to find relief!
To provide a fix! To hit upon an escape! To cut a deal!
You try to run! You try to hide! You play the blame game!
You go in to full frontal denial!

But you sin!

On the one hand, some of it is deep. Some of it is dark. The hurt. The harm. To yourself and others. Very destructive! So ashamed you don't want anyone to know!	On the other hand, much of it looks quite good! Some of it looks quite religious. You brag! You strut! But it is all sin nonetheless!
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But be of good cheer poor sinners!
For those of you troubled by your sin —
for those of who wonder if God could ever love sinners like you —
whose consciences are constipated, all stopped up, by your sin — there is a rhubarb!
Not from China! But from heaven itself! From the Holy Trinity Himself!

And that rhubarb is none other than Christ the Lord!
He is our medicine — Christ the Lord!
Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven!
Inserted smack dab into this world full of sin and sinners!
Christ who dares to do the unthinkable! The unimaginable!

He justifies or declares sinners to be innocent! He sets them free! Redeems them!

By His Blood that stained the cross and dripped on the earth!
His very divine Blood that cleanses, purifies, and holies sinners!

Take hold of Him by faith and you will live!
In Christ there is relief! He is your Rhubarb!
In Christ the wrath of God is turned to mercy! He is your Rhubarb!
Instead of damnation, in Christ, there is forgiveness! He is your Rhubarb!
Christ is the Rhubarb FOR YOU! FOR ME!

“This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance... that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially those who believe” (1 Timothy 4:9-10)

Christ is the Rhubarb FOR YOU! FOR ME!

[Apart from the Law]

“But now, apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested!”

That’s Jesus! He is God’s gift to sinners! God gives Jesus to sinners!

For salvation! Jesus is the rhubarb! To use against your sin!

To use against God’s wrath against your sin!

Everything has changed! Between you and God! For Christ’s sake!

“God set forth Jesus as the Mercy Seat [propitiator] by faith in His blood. This was to declare His righteousness through the passing over of former sins in the forbearance of God, to declare in the present time the righteousness that stands before Him that He alone might be righteous BY MAKING HIM RIGHTEOUS WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS, A MERCY SEAT for the forgiveness of sins by His blood!”

Boy! That was a mouthful! Let’s shorten it up. Let’s take a little dose of Christ as the Rhubarb! ***“Jesus, a Mercy Seat for the forgiveness of sins by His blood.”***

The Old Testament promised: “He is coming!”

But now – in this text St. Paul categorically declares: “He is here! He has come!”

Let me be blunt and to the point so that there are no misunderstandings.

Jesus as Mercy Seat means this: His blood atones for all your sin!

And all by taking all your sin and answering for it in His crucified, bled out, dead Body!

This is huge!

For if Christ did not take your sin in His Body on the cross, then all your sin remains on you – and you die with them! And God’s wrath remains forever on you!	But Jesus is the rhubarb for what ails you! All your sin is His! All of it! He refused to leave any of your sin outside of His Good Friday death!
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“But now!” Paul declares!

“But now” Jesus the crucified and risen Savior gives you what belongs to Him: forgiveness, life and salvation!

What is His is yours! For free!
He doesn't count any of your sin against you!
For He's covered all your sin and cleansed every last bit of it through His Blood
shed on the cross!

[Good Works]

When sin ails you?

Then use Jesus as the Rhubarb against your sin!

For Jesus has taken all your sin! He's died with it! All of it!

So.....You are forgiven!

And in response you do good works!

We're all for good works! A good tree bears good fruit!

A good rhubarb makes a great pie, even better yet, a great coffee cake.

When you believe in Christ as the Rhubarb

then the Holy Spirit rolls up His sleeves and goes to work in your life!

And with the Spirit's help and the Spirit's gifts or fruit

you do not want to stay in your old sinful habits!

You want to change! You want to live as a Christian!

You will live,

NOT FOR YOURSELF, not for your pleasure, not for your selfish desires,
BUT FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS!

[Conclusion]

All this is because of Jesus!

— Who promises:

“The person who believes and is baptized will be saved,” (Mark 16:16)!

— Who pledges

with the giving of His Body and Blood in the Sacrament

that it is for the forgiveness of your sins (Matthew 26:28)!

— Jesus does not deceive or lie! This is most certainly true!

Yeah, all of this because Jesus is your Rhubarb, Jesus is your medicine. Amen!

Now, let us make a joyful noise unto the Lord

AS WE LIVE THIS REFORMATION SUNDAY,

EVEN THIS REFORMATION LIFE! Amen!