

The effect of the reformation on human society

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[0 : 00] On the 31st of October 1517, Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the door of the chapel in Wittenberg.! And this has ever since been identified as the trigger point for a cultural, political, economic and spiritual revolution for Europe and for English-speaking countries such as America into Africa and the benefits of what he did are still felt today.

He said that he had found, or better still, rediscovered a better way, revolutionary, a way to be right with God, which was by grace alone.

We would say the gospel had been rediscovered. And I'd like us to think about these benefits, which I've mentioned each time, but I'd like us this morning to think about those.

It's a little bit different, a little bit different. But what are the benefits, the cultural, political, economic, spiritual benefits? And in what way do we still enjoy them?

And how should we be excited by those things? That's what I'd like us to look at this morning. So here's Martin Luther, sort of this summing up what he, the revolution that happened in his personal life.

[1 : 25] I was a devout monk and wanted to force God to justify me because of my works and the severity of my life. I was a good monk and kept the rule of my order so strictly that I may say if ever a monk got to heaven by his monkery, I would have gotten there as well.

All my brothers in the monastery who knew me will bear me out. If I'd kept on any longer, I would have killed myself with vigils and prayers and readings and other works until he realized it's not by our human endeavors, but by the blood of the lamb.

And he came to the point of seeing the righteousness, which I am trying so hard to work up, is actually something that Jesus gives me from outside.

And I receive it by faith as a gift. And that's how I'm right with God. How does that affect anything else?

How does that thinking, how does that revolutionary understanding of relationship with God, how does that spill out to anything else? How does it trigger cultural, political, economic, spiritual revolution?

[2 : 35] Well, let's just get what the idea is that we're talking about. Here is the text, or a text that summarizes this so well. I put it on the side there.

It's from Ephesians. Let me get my Bible and read it to you. We looked at it last time, and it is this revolutionary understanding which says, Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ, even when we were dead in transgressions.

It is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

For it is by grace you have been saved through faith. And this not from yourselves. It is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

[3 : 52] This idea that we are brought into saving relationship with God as our heavenly father, we are justified, meaning that God puts us in the box that says righteous, congratulations, blessed.

I am on your side, you are with me, I am with you. He puts us into that box by his grace. He adopts us as his family, not by works that we have done.

Because of God's grace given to us in and through Jesus Christ, who died on the cross and rose again. Isn't that wonderful? That's how we come to God.

God, he lavishes his kindness on us. He pours out his love on us who don't deserve it.

He just does it. And we receive that by faith through the Lord Jesus Christ. And if we were to explore this grace, we'd find it extends right back to God's own mysterious eternal plan.
[5 : 03] Right back. Before we were born, God planned this. Before the world was made, he was thinking about us to bring us into his heavenly kingdom.

So this is this colossal thought, this amazing thought. And it gets, if you can put it in little slogans, Sola Scriptura, this is by scripture alone.

That's where we get it from. Sola Fide, by faith alone. Sola Gratia, by grace alone. Sola Christo, through Christ alone.

Sola Deo Gloria, to God alone be the glory. Sola Christo, through Christ alone.

Now if you take those thoughts, scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone, through Christ alone, to God alone be the glory, they're actually big enough and strong enough to frame a total approach to life.

[6 : 13] They're so comprehensive, they cover every department of life. And you could call it a life system.

If you wanted to call it that, you'd call it a life system. So Abraham Kuypers, who was a Dutch, well he was all sorts of things. He was a theologian, he was a church minister, I believe he was prime minister, he ran a newspaper, he just did everything.

Amazing man. He gave lectures in America, I've forgotten the dates, I'm not very good at remembering dates, I think early 1900s. He went over to America. And he gave a series of lectures on the way that his faith affected everything.

And he thought about it very carefully. The lectures are called Lectures on Calvinism. It's not really just Calvinism, but it's about how the gospel affects the whole of our lives.

And he called it a life system. You can get Kuypers' lectures on Calvinism on, I've got Moncobo, £1.98.

[7 : 24] And if you've got the tenacity to read through text from that part of the, it's written in that style, but it's very, very well worth reading.

Lectures on Calvinism by Abraham Kuypers. He called it a life system. Nowadays we might call it a world view. That is to say, an understanding of how the world is, which marries up with a commitment of the heart, a world view.

This is how I see the world, and this is how I engage with the world. This is how I see the purpose of the world. This is how I understand the world. This is how I understand my place in the world. And that's really what I want to try and have a little nibble at this morning.

What sort of qualities will this life system or this view of the world have? Well, it'll say this about God, that he's holier than we ever thought.

He is holier. What he expects, what he is like in his brilliant majesty is more than we could have ever thought.

[8 : 36] And his plans and purposes are deeper than we ever thought. He's a bigger, greater, grander God than we had thought before we learned all this.

And he is kinder than we thought. His grace is deeper than we could ever have imagined. And thus we say, how great is our God.

To him alone be the glory. You can see why, when this gets put into slogans, it's totally appropriate to say, when we've seen his grace alone, faith alone, to God be the glory alone.

You can see how that fits, can't you? It's just so grand a view of God's work of salvation and who he is. And then in this system, if you want to call it that way, or this worldview, what do we think about human beings?

They're more sinful than we'd thought. We thought sin was just, we might have thought, we might have thought before reformation ideas, we might have thought, well, sin is just oddities, just one or two sins that a few very evil people commit, but most of us are quite good.

[9 : 49] But this understanding shows actually we're all terribly, terribly sinful. We're more sinful than we thought. Sin is worse than we thought. But as Christians, we're more blessed than we thought.

We hadn't quite realized how great a blessing God had given us until we grasped it's by grace and what that grace includes and involves. And I could add to that, human beings are more valuable than we'd thought, made in the image of God, how God must love sinners to go to such lengths to win them back.

And about Jesus Christ, we think how great he is. He is the complete and adequate saviour. I use the word adequate, I think that's a very small word for how great Jesus is, but it's a right word in this sense.

He does what I need. He brings me to the Father. I am brought to the Father through him. I don't need a priest. I don't need icons and idols.

I don't need to reenact the mass every week. Jesus does everything. There's no room for anything else to save me than just him.

[11:08] He's a totally sufficient and adequate saviour. And this great saviour sets me free to live my whole life for him in love.

Because what he's done so captivates my heart. Am I right? What he's done, we can only just be so grateful to him and love him and say my whole life, Lord, is at your disposal.

What else could we say when he's done this all for us, all through grace? So you see, in the way we now approach the world, we've got some vast and powerful thoughts in our hearts and minds.

It would be wrong to think that salvation in this world, anything that really counts in this world, is by cleverness or willpower or beauty or strength or wisdom or riches or high birth.

The things that really count are by grace. So kind and wonderful that I give my life to him willingly and completely. It's great to be clever.

[12:28] It's a good gift of God that I'm not going to worship cleverness. I'm going to worship Jesus. It's a great gift to be beautiful, but I'm not going to give my life trying to make myself beautiful.

All the beauty I need comes from my Lord Jesus Christ. Some people are high born. Some people are humbly born. And I'm not going to be too bothered about that because even the high born king or Lord or lady or baron or whatever they might be, they're sinners.

They need the Savior just as me. And if I'm saved and they're saved, they're no more saved than I am and I'm no more saved than they are. So I'd like to take those ideas and try to show how in five ways this now spills out into the whole of life and can affect the politics, economic, culture, just everything in a very profound way.

So I'll give you some health warnings first, just to be fair. This talk is not brought to you by a specialist historian, sociologist, or philosopher.

I'm going to touch on some of those matters, but the person who's speaking to you is an amateur in these and you need to check them up properly. If you want to check them, please do check them.

[13:51] Not all the things I'm going to talk about work through with equal speed. Some of these things work through over centuries.

I can think of one particular example. Please, I am not saying that only Reformation Christians get these ideas or do these things, but I'm saying that Reformation Christians have got a much better handle on them.

Actually, Christians can live better or worse than their doctrinal understanding. You can have some Christians who know very little theology but live beautiful, holy lives and you get some Christians who have masses of theology but really put very little of it into practice.

I am not saying that the true work of God is the right ideas. The work of God is that we should be born again. Jesus said that. That's what you need.

You need to be born again. If you're not born again, that's what you need. You need to ask the Savior, give me that in my life.

[15:01] Make me yours. Forgive my sins. Change my heart. Take my life. And I'm not saying that all Reformed Christians do all these things as they should.

But I am saying that the five principles we will look at have great power to change people and change cultures and change nations. Okay, those are the health warnings.

Here's number one. Reformation Christianity has a powerful tendency towards equality in society. So you find the Apostle Paul saying things like this. This isn't really about Jew and Gentile. He says there's no difference between Jew and Gentile. They've all sinned.

And they've fallen short of the glory of God. So Jew and Gentile are on a level footing. They're both sinning. And they are both justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ, by Christ Jesus.

And they've fallen short of the glory of God. So Jew and Gentile are on a level footing. They're both sinning. And they are both justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ, by Christ Jesus.

[16:07] The word freely there you could translate gratuitously. It's the same word that you'd say about that man who hit my dad's friend on the mouth for no reason. Yes?

He just did it for no reason. And God justifies freely for no reason other than the grace of God which is in Christ Jesus, the redemption in Christ Jesus.

So follow the thought of this. If salvation is by grace, it's entirely possible for a king to be kneeling in prayer equally accepted next to a plowboy.

Just think of that thought in medieval society when Martin Luther and people like that were grasping that. The king is no closer to God than the road sweeper if they come by grace.

Now imagine that that's a dynamite thought isn't it? No wonder kings trembled and would prefer to have this shut up in many cases.

[17:12] The last thing they wanted was people reading this sort of revolutionary stuff in the Bible. So a cardinal can be as close to God as a car mechanic or an ex-prostitute can be as close to God as a government head or a judge is as close to God as a mother struggling with six small children or an Ethiopian is as close to God as an Italian and they could sit next to each other and pray together on an equal basis.

Isn't that remarkable? And you could see what effect this will have on culture. Compare it if you would to a Hindu culture where we might be told the story that at some time in the past the body of God was divided into three parts the head, the chest, the thighs and the feet and each part of society is linked to one of those.

So the Brahmins are the head and the untouchables are the feet and if you're a Brahmin you're always superior and if your family is untouchable you're always inferior.

Just think of what effect that has on society if that's the story in the back of your mind. Now come back to Reformation society. If the thing in the back of your mind is that the king is actually no closer to God than the plowboy doesn't this mean that the culture that is produced is one of humility and service.

So hierarchies you know where I bow down to him and he bows down to them and he bows down to them and we all bow down to him that sort of thing is I mean it may well happen it may well be some sort of place for it but that's not the fundamental truth about our society.

[19:15] Do you get that point? So in church life it's no accident that Roman Catholicism tends to have a huge number of hierarchies doesn't it? Bishops archbishops cardinals you know I don't know boom boom boom boom boom layer upon layer with one chap at the top.

And the effect of reformation thinking is to really question that. Why cardinal? Are you wearing these remarkable you've seen cardinals you see them in pictures and pictures of the Vatican so purple I don't know what do cardinals wear purple gowns and funny hats and things like that.

On this understanding of grace surely the question would cross your mind why are you wearing different clothes to us? Are you rather more special than us?

No the Bible tells you you're no different. We're all sinners saved by grace. Things like that you would begin to question in a society that had really got the hang of grace.

And in politics the great government leader the government head what would you call him? His excellency my lord or would you actually give him the title minister because minister means servant.

[20:46] It's interesting politically you might start thinking of a democratic system in which the people who lead you are actually serving you and you might even start putting that into the vocabulary that you use and call the government leaders servants.

Well strangely enough we do have something like that in our own system here don't we? And I would suggest that that's because of reformation thinking that's permeated through our society and wouldn't you also say in political responsibility would it not be appropriate for the king and the plowboy and the ex-prostitute and the mother of six small children and the Ethiopian who lives there and the Italian who lives there all have one vote each?

I mean they all approach God the same don't they? So wouldn't it be natural for them to have one vote each? So it isn't just the kings who say what's happening or the nobles but everybody gets involved wouldn't you say that there's a tendency for reformation thinking to produce democratic societies?

Well I think that makes sense and you'll see why I said it takes hundreds of years for these things to work through because in fact votes for women in the UK only came in if you watch Mary Poppins which is a very good source of historical information of course isn't the woman is she going out votes for women?

Yes she is so next time you see Mary Poppins you can try and work out what period it was in anyway so there's number one a powerful tendency to do something about equality in society

number two a tendency to produce fruitful work and honest trade so I'll give you a bible verse we had read in Ephesians something about slaves and masters and we get a similar thing in Colossians and the Colossians version says this it says slaves obey your earthly masters in everything and do it not only when their eye is on you and to win their favour but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord whatever you do work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord not for men since you know you will receive an inheritance from the

[23 : 31] Lord as a reward it is the Lord Christ you are serving now that was written in the Bible that was written there long before the Reformation people could have taken notice of it before that and maybe they did but after the Reformation they certainly did it is the Lord you are serving to God alone be the glory with all my life all human life can be worship that is a revolutionary thought work becomes meaningful rather than just drudgery to get as much money as I can for as little effort as possible did you get that work becomes worship to the Colossians he says whatever you do to the slaves okay here is a slave cleaning out the toilets and he says that slave you're doing it for the

Lord do it with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord it is the Lord Christ you are serving that's quite amazing isn't it who is watching me do this well nobody the boss has gone off for a cigarette break well actually the Lord Jesus is watching me and who cares that I do it well the boss doesn't care that much but the Lord Jesus does I do it for him I've offered this to him it makes it worth something and it says he'll reward me on the last day he'll say I noticed what you did well done sin is bad and matters even when no one sees but God that's what we've learned from the gospel and therefore we can't cheat and lie and buy our way out of it with indulgences that's a very sloppy view of sin sin is much worse than that so when we make a product and we put the safety information on it for reformation

Christians we won't say to the client well what would you like this to say what would you like to say 120 kilograms per square meter yeah okay we can easily write that have you tested it no we're just going to write this on the outside that's fine isn't that's all they're going to look at we're not going to do that are we if we're reformation Christians we'll see that cheating is not just something we do if we can get away with it cheating matters to God and if we've got some product that is supposed to be safe in a certain way we will test it and we will only write on the outside of it what it actually is that's rather a revolutionary thought isn't it but in a reformation society that would be the thought that people would think of course we'll do that God's watching us we're doing this for the Lord righteousness is beautiful and attractive even if it has financial or other penalties do it with all your heart you might be a bit late home you'll still do it with all your heart people might make you still do it with all your heart you might get into trouble because you haven't cheated the way the rest of the people in your firm do well you still do it for the

Lord righteousness is beautiful and attractive even if it has financial or other penalties and we serve the Lord Christ even for a reformation plumber even when plumbing under the bath that no one will ever see because the cover goes over it isn't that right Enid so a reformation plumber wouldn't say I won't actually do all the work under the bath here because nobody is only going to see it they'll do it because the Lord sees it and there's a name for this the name was invented by a sociologist an economist I believe he was Max Weber in 1904 and he called it the Protestant work ethic and his idea was that this way of thinking is suggested to be the secret of why Europe developed as it did post-reformation economically commercially industrially and it's certainly true isn't it

Europe by and large this is a sociological comment there is particularly the German economy the vitality the industry the quality it comes from something and the suggestion is you can trace it back to the effect of the reformation just imagine if you had a workforce of people who had been converted and they all said I'm going to do my work for the Lord what a what a what an economic difference that would make so that my second point here is that reformation thinking tends to produce fruitful work and honest trade number three priests and clerics are not high and between us and God as superior my text here is that we don't have we don't need any other priest than Jesus said of him such a high priest meets our need one who is holy blameless pure set apart from sinners exalted above the heavens the son of

[29 : 21] God that's right isn't it we don't the only person who stands between us and God is the Lord Jesus who holds the father's hand if you like and holds our hand and brings us together we don't need anybody!

else in the way this is an anecdote from Dick Lucas who says he went to a funeral and when he was at the crematorium there were three sets of toilets and they were labelled as follows men

women clergy strikes me as funny why do clergy have their own toilet are they not men are they not women they must be they not human the idea that the priests or the clergy or the clerics are a different sort of breed and stand between the ordinary people and God the reformation tends to flatten that thought doesn't always succeed but it tends to flatten that thought pastors and ministers are not higher level Christians what we have is the priesthood in the

Bible the priesthood of all believers all believers have access to God through the Lord Jesus Christ in a non-reformed Greek Orthodox church I've been to a Greek Orthodox church I don't know whether any of you have you be Orthodox would be somewhat similar to what I'm about to describe so this is how worship operates in a Greek Orthodox church very over simply you're the punters you turn up you sit and you talk to one another you every now and again stand up and sit down I think most of the time you stand up actually but what really happens is there's a wall here and the priest who has a long beard does all the worship stuff behind the wall like that swinging something around and smells and doing stuff and the worship is done here and you just watch because you're not priests you don't have access to

God the priest will do that for you but you just watch you can chat I mean it still goes on you can talk to one another clinch a few deals see how the kids are doing all that sort of thing but the worship goes on over here and you can't get to that it's a very different thought isn't it to the priesthood! of all believers you don't need someone else to stand between you and God because we all have access to God and God is served by the plumber when he does his plumbing and the baker when he does his baking and the carpenter and the mother when she changes nappies on her children no less than by the cardinal the pope the evangelist and the pastor they're all serving God it's all worship slightly like the thought I had before but I think I'm just trying to spell this out in this case my whole life can be worship and just to think of the effect on people who are shelf stacking or car washing or studying that was number three number four sexuality in the service of God so let's add to the picture of Luther oh sorry let's let's do the text here's the text this text existed before but I think it came with a particular poignancy and particular power post reformation wives submit to your own husbands as to the

[33 : 17] Lord for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church his body of which he is the savior now as the church submits to Christ so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her two remarkably difficult but remarkably beautiful commands for the wife to submit to her husband as to the Lord and for the husband to love his wife the way Christ loves the church just remarkable things to plonk into human society that's how it meant to be it's a Christian insight and in the reformation let me introduce you to

Katharina von Bure when Luther was 41 an ex monk Katharina von Bure was 26 she was a nun she escaped from her convent wishing to embrace reformation ideas she was arranged for her to escape by her and her some of her friends hiding in fish barrels!

I presume the barrels must have been of a reasonable size otherwise she would have been very very squashed she arrived in Wittenberg she must have been quite a woman because she said now I'm here I want to get married there's only two men I'm prepared to marry one is Mr Ansdorf who was high up alternatively I'll marry Luther but I'm not going to marry anybody else apart from these two guys that's it must have been quite a woman mustn't she and Luther thought carefully about this because some of his friends said I'll just mess you about if you get married and he thought no I will get married actually and this is his reasoning he believed that his marriage would please his father b rile the pope c cause the angels to laugh and the devils to weep so lo and behold they got married and they loved each other very deeply he refers I don't know whether this is in writing or in conversation to her as my lord

Katie and she in public always referred to him as Sir Doctor isn't that charming Sir Doctor would you like some corn flakes yes my lord Katie but they had I think had seven children or quite a lot of children and he took this as being part of his Christian liberty and indeed the Christian richness of life to get married when I wished to take my Katie I prayed to God earnestly and he says I'm quoting this from his table talk and somebody is asking him and he says you should also pray that God will give you a good wife so he's bringing back sexuality into the service of God and and!

and and and and ministers not to be married it was thought to be more holy to be unmarried in some way now God calls people differently and there is a usefulness in being single so don't hear me to say different to that there is a usefulness and a blessedness to being single but there is also

a usefulness and a blessedness to being married and that's the one that Luther went for and he did this under the word of God to the glory of God with the help of God that's sexuality brought into the service of God so the idea that celibacy was superior was torpedoed God calls some people to singleness but he calls some people to being married and there's a blessing in both nowadays reformational thinking isn't quite set up against the same target is it but reformational thinking is now against a different target the human definition the human idea that you can self-define sexuality you can make it up for yourself you can decide this human idea you don't have to ask

[38 : 22] God what gender he's given you you can make that up for yourself and reformation ideas are pushing against that pushing against the idea that sex is for my self fulfillment rather than for the glory of God pressing against the idea that the total goal is to be free and if I can be free that's the thing whereas God is saying what I want you to be is for my glory I want you to live for my glory whether you are single live for my glory if you are married live for my glory if you are deciding which to be think what is most going to glorify God rather than what is most going to fulfill me that's quite a powerful thought isn't it don't you agree sexuality in the service of God as a reformation Christianity number five the whole earth is the

Lord well everybody knew that but I think it it begins to take a new purchase after the reformation what does salvation do it makes us human interesting salvation doesn't make us into angels it makes us into the human beings God wanted us to be the Lord Jesus Christ as our ideal and model is human he comes it's not like Superman that can fly through the air he walks he does the things that human beings do he talks in human language salvation the aim of salvation is to make us truly human and Ephesians 4 23 says to be made new in the spirit of your minds and put on the new man created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness and this reformation thinking seems to me to have all sorts of implications so for example music now

Luther was a musician and in the praise the praise explanation of the songs you can look that up online it says this about Martin Luther he was a skilled musician and although his use of congregational singing was not new because Huss and his followers sang hymns he developed vernacular!

hymnody with doctrinal and intelligible words sung to user friendly tunes as none had done before him and no major reformation figure did afterwards that's what it says in praise so music we can use music in the service of God music is a human activity and he he said well let's use that so he would take German folk melodies and he would put Christian words so we can use that he developed vernacular!

which means ordinary people can sing it you don't have to be a trained singer it doesn't go so high and so weird and it's doctrinal and intelligible so everybody can understand it and it teaches you something you go away thinking I've learned something I can remember that when I sing it to myself I can remind myself of true things now not all the reformation followed through in the same way but here's Lutheran music now reformation art oh we'd love to have Ellis Potter here from Labrie talking about art but anyway let me not get on to that when we went to Venice anybody here been to Venice hands up been to Venice seen the art galleries Roman Catholic art this pre reformation art has a certain beauty to it content and a certain approach and here is a picture it's up there of what now I'm not an art historian

[42 : 29] I got this from a book this is from Hans Ruckmarker's book on modern art and the death of a culture and he says so I'm just quoting him that reformation affected art so rather than having the holy family with Mary in a what colour blue she always dressed blue does she and they're all sort of looking rather rather holy and different to ordinary life he says take a look at this picture by Jan Jan Steen Dutch Steen that sound about right 1663 here's the picture it's called St Nicholas's Feast I invite you to look at the picture St Nicholas's Feast is like I think Christmas morning so everybody's got a present and just take a look at that is this like an otherworldly holy family where they're dressed rather differently and a bit wooden because if you look at it it's a fascinating picture

Mary and I were looking at it last night so can we have a couple of lights out please so we could just see it a little bit better if we possibly can now then Christmas morning this chap hasn't got the present that he thought he was going to get he's very upset and she is holding out a shoe now is she holding that out to say to him see what you've got or see what you haven't got but he's either upset or by her or she's trying to console him this little chap is saying look what he's got this boy has got his little sister and is holding her and these two guys are singing something so they're over in the corner singing here's grandad who's just quietly sitting there watching it all going on not

actually helping but he's just sitting there doing that and this lady is saying to this little girl come on show me show me what you've got and the little girl saying no I'm not going to here and so she's got some sort of little doll or something here I think but it's full of life isn't it it is like Christmas morning you know you could imagine Christmas morning a family situation like this and notice what's in the foreground which is a discarded shoe isn't you can't imagine anybody painting Mary and Joseph and the discarded shoe this is real life if you've got kids you'll know that when it comes to school they will be saying I can't go I can't find my shoes well you lift it in the middle of the floor on Christmas morning and it just seems to me to be a remarkably human picture and the Ruchmacher the Christian art historian says this is sort of reformation thinking it's come from an idea that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it family life belongs to the Lord it's the way it is God is with us as ordinary people and there it is so I offer that to you as a thought about reformation art not saintly people floating in midair with curious coloured robes but real people in real life and I could say reformation science science was propelled by the reformation you can find there's a book by I can't remember his name no it is published by the open university and it's saying that science was propelled by the thinking of the reformation the reformation says that God is not the world so we're not like pantheists who believe that God is trees and mountains we believe God made trees and mountains so we can observe trees and mountains it's not an irreverent thing we can sample them we can test them we can do experiments it's not irreverent and what we're actually doing is studying God's glory in the things he has made oh Lord our God how majestic is your name in all the earth you made the mountains let's study them and see your glory you made the stars let's study them and see your glory you made and Abraham Kuyper who I mentioned right at the beginning said yeah we can have reformation journalism we can have a reformation web design except it hadn't been thought of when he said it we can have reformation trade unionism we can have reformation relief of suffering if we take this idea of God's glory and what he's done for us and this world in which he's put us it just opens everything up in this most exciting and wonderful way and when [47 : 52] I said we experience the fruits of it it's true isn't it the cultures that most of us are from have been influenced to one degree or another by the reformation of course the sad thing is that as our culture now more gets distant from the reformation and doesn't like the ideas of the reformation you fear really what sort of culture what sort of society will have in the future anyway there we are 1517 Martin Luther triggered this whole revolution culturally politically economically spiritually and we reap the benefits today most of us won't be put in the position of nailing anything to any church doors please don't nail anything to our church door because it's made of glass none of us will be put in the position of translating the Bible into our own native language for the first time because that's already been done and most of us probably won't in our lives be kidnapped by a friendly politician for our own good and kept in a castle all those things happen to Luther but we are people who've experienced the same grace of God as Martin Luther experienced we have been touched by the same God in our lives the same God who touched him and in whatever scope God has given to us we can say let my life be for the glory of God alone in our day would you do that is that what you would like to say let that be me amen let's close by singing 850 ending Thank you.