

Tenth Sunday in Kingdomtide/Reformation Sunday

Continuing Transformation of the Church as a Kingdom Value

Old Testament: 2 Kings 22:11-20; 23:1-3 (NRSV)

¹¹When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. ¹²Then the king commanded the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary, and the king's servant Asaiah, saying, ¹³'Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our ancestors did not obey the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.'

¹⁴So the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; she resided in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter, where they consulted her. ¹⁵She declared to them, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell the man who sent you to me,

¹⁶Thus says the LORD, I will indeed bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷Because they have abandoned me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched. ¹⁸But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, ¹⁹because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place, and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the LORD.

²⁰Therefore, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place.' They took the message back to the king.

Josiah's Reformation

¹Then the king directed that all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem should be gathered to him. ²The king went up to the house of the LORD, and with him went all the people of Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. ³The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. All the people joined in the covenant.

New Testament: Romans 14:17 (NRSV)

¹⁷For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

General Concept: The UCCP as heir of the Reformation believes in the continuing transformation of the church.

N/K/YE: **The church teaches us our faith in God.**

ME/OE: **The church teaches us our faith in God.**

Y: **The church continues to teach us about our reformed faith.**

A: **The church continues the journey of reformed faith.**

Exegesis of the Biblical References

1 and 2 Kings were actually one literary book called in Hebrew simply as "Kings". There is no clear statement of purpose or theme. Although a reflection on its contents reveals that it seemed to have been arranged as a sequel to the history that we can read in 1 and 2 Samuel - a story of kingship regulated by covenant. Now, these books suggest that it was written to explain to a people in exile that the reason for their condition of humiliation was their stubborn persistence in breaking their covenant with God.

2 Kings 22:11-20, 22:1-3 would tell us of a narrative wherein the king (Josiah) took heed of the call to repent and be transformed from being sinful in breaking the covenant that their fathers before them have done. As a symbol of his remorse, he tore his kingly robe and gathered everyone to renew the covenant. The response of the Josiah by tearing off his robe as an expression of repentance was a step for them to be spared from the wrath of God that awaits his people. And God saw the repentant heart and allowed renewal in their covenant making between God and His people (Kings 23:1-3). This event was followed by a nationwide movement for reformation and renewal of the covenant faith in Yahweh alone. This is in reaction to the growing influence of foreign gods and idols that had proliferated all over the land of Judah. The faith of Israel had actually been quite compromised with the entry of other religious traditions coming in from more advanced nations and civilizations that had imposed colonial domination upon them for many years already including the current superpower then, Assyria.

In reality, the call to reform in the time of Josiah may be seen as a radical step towards a major renewal movement that has also a strong political implication. In reasserting their original covenant faith in Yahweh as the only God for Israel to worship and serve, the nation in effect, was launching a strong nationalist movement led by the king, a movement popularly participated in by the people intending to reclaim their freedom from colonial masters from any religious and even political control of any superpower. A new religion or religions representing foreign gods and deities with distinct and different religious traditions and assumptions have sprouted and have become popular with the people in Judah. Such religions may actually be serving as representatives of more powerful and dominant nations or civilizations giving and proclaiming very impressive messages that may actually be distorting the very message of the original faith of the people leading them to divert their attention away from the real issues of life and concrete issues about survival, justice and righteous and ethical living to a rather different focus and direction towards a more abstract, ritualistic, materialistic and personal understanding of religion. This has been called and denounced by the prophets as plain idolatry, the worship of or giving allegiance to deities other than Yahweh and adopting perspectives and values in life contrary to the original Yahweh or covenant ideals. This has always been a major threat to any society being dominated by more powerful and more advanced cultures and civilizations. This is what the prophets, priests and leaders of the faith always to guard always in leading their people towards real faith renewal even and especially in times like these.

The Letter of Paul to the Romans. Paul in this letter begins to survey the spiritual condition of all people. He sees the Jews and Gentiles alike are sinners and in need of salvation. But salvation from being condemned has been provided by God through Jesus Christ and his redemptive work on the cross. This, however can only be achieved and received through faith—a principle with which God has always dealt with humankind starting with Israel. And thus, receiving and experiencing salvation must be seen in practical ways, both in the church and in the world. As we have learned in the previous lesson, Paul in this letter aims for all the believers to know that restoration to God's graciousness and

reconciliation of this world with its creator God is achievable when Christians will open their doors to the real gospel, be immovable and unashamed bearers of that gospel proclaiming and not condemning others who also opened their doors to the reality and power of the righteousness of God.

Romans 14:17 gives us an idea of the kind of kingdom that Paul was talking about. This kingdom (which may now also be reinstated as "kingdom") of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, for to be concerned with those trivial matters is to miss completely the essence of Christian living - righteousness and justice in living one's life and in relating with others. Paul's concern for moral and ethical dimension of the Christian life stands out in all his letters: righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

These passages remind us as a church that the road to real transformation is the acceptance of our weaknesses and limitations as mere creatures and from there, to move on to the realization of our creator God's aim for real and holistic transformation. The Church, being God's representative here on earth then, has the responsibility to take the first step in the call for transformation having caught sight of this gospel of transformation and redemption through Jesus Christ and is now being given the opportunity to do better as it strives to be continuously reformed and live as a truly reforming and transforming church.

Companion Guide for the Teachers and other End-users

The Spirit renews life. The Spirit vivifies everything that suffers from corruption and decay. The Spirit is God's power to transform the church of Jesus Christ into a new creation. Although the church is a spiritual community, it is a human institution that's given to weaknesses and will remain so until Jesus' return in glory. Like everything earthly, the church is also subjected to corruption and decay. The Spirit's presence in the church is a given but it must constantly breathe in the power of the Spirit in order to constantly revitalize itself.

The Reformation motto, "The church reformed, always reforming" has both a historical and theological explanations. Underlying the medieval church's corrupt practices and moral bankruptcy was a grievous fundamental error in its doctrines of faith. The protest movement to cleanse the institutional church attacked the theological roots of its very existence. The reactionary church countered that the church does not err when it speaks from its chair as teacher of the faith, *ex cathedra*, because it is the holy body of Christ. The split became inevitable when the Reformers developed a doctrine that totally rejected the church's claim of infallibility and replaced it with the idea that the church, like an individual Christian, is both just and sinner, *simul justus et peccatur*. Hence, the church's journey in sanctification requires continuing reform and renewal.

This Protestant teaching has served as a perpetual critique to check the church from veering away from the norms set by Christ himself. Christ has sent his Spirit, the Paraclete, to the church to intercede for God's forgiveness and to guide it to truth. In response to the Spirit, the church should install practical mechanisms that would forestall the fossilization of its institutions and the subordination of freedom to hierarchical arbitrariness. If and when this happens, the Reformers' revolutionary and iconoclastic fervor should be released to set the church free from a self-imposed bondage.

Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. tell that the church teaches her members about the Christian faith;
2. state that the Holy Spirit, as taught by the church, makes life new; and
3. demonstrate the changes in one's new life in Christ.

II. Concept: The church teaches us our faith in God.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), offering plate, biblical verses with the pictures used in the past Sundays

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: As the learners enter the room, greet them with a BIG SMILE.
2. Opening prayer: Lead the prayer and tell your learners to follow after you: "Dear God, we thank you for this day. We thank you for our friends and teachers. We thank you for the church. Help us to know your word today. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "They'll Know We Are Christians" by Carolyn Arends (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugQwh-phnZY>)
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord (2x)
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
They will know we are Christians by our love.

B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare the class to play the game "Revival Tag". Choose a child who will play king, Instruct the king to tag a child and tells him or her to serve the Lord. The tagged child will say, "Yes, I will the Lord!" Then that child will tag another child and together they will say, "We will serve the Lord!" Continue this until they are able to tag the rest of the class. When everyone is part of the line, the king will ask them what they stand for and together, they will all say, "We will stand for what is right in the sight of the Lord!" Then the king will say, "We are now revived in the eyes of the Lord."
2. Ask the children how they felt when they were all together in one line and saying about their desire to serve God. Tell them that the feeling of being revived is to live again.

C. Learning Time

1. Tell the children to share their experience in doing house chores. When they mention cleaning the house, ask them if they have experienced finding something that they have been looking for.
2. Ask: "What did the King Josiah find from God regarding himself and his people?"
3. Tell the story.

Josiah's Commitment to Serve God

(Based on 2 Kings 22:11-20; 23:1-3)

Josiah was eight years when he became king of Judah. Although he was young, he was a good king. He did what is right in eyes of the Lord. He did not follow the

evil ways of his father and grandfather who were kings before him. And God was happy with him.

One day, King Josiah heard the Book of Law. He tore his robes and felt sad because the people who were before him did not obey the words of the Book of Law.

So, King Josiah commanded Hilkiah, the priest and some of his people in the palace to inquire from God what they will have to do. King Josiah knows that God is angry with him and his people.

Hilkiah and his companions went to the prophetess Huldah in Jerusalem. Huldah said, "I am going to bring disaster on this place and punish its people who have not obeyed me and worshipped other gods. Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord and you have heard my word, you will not see all the disaster that I am going to bring on this place."

They returned to the king and reported to him what the prophet of the Lord has told to them. So, King Josiah gathered all the people of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple. He informed them what God has told. He instructed the people to obey God and God's commands with all their hearts and souls.

The people promised themselves to be true to the covenant and live in accordance to God's will. King Josiah led his people well for 31 years and the people obeyed God.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

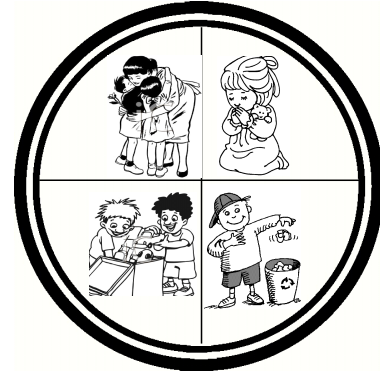
1. Discuss the lesson.
 - a. Who was King Josiah? (King of Judah)
 - b. How old was Josiah when he became king? (8 years old)
 - c. What did King Josiah hear? (He heard about the Book of Law.)
 - d. Although Josiah was young, what did he do after learning about the Book of Law? (He asked the priest and other officials to know more about the Book of Law.)
 - e. As a young member, what can you do when you hear the Word of God? (Obey the Word of God.)
 - f. Why do you think God became angry with the people of Judah? (The people did not obey God and worshipped other gods.)
 - f. How will God punish the people of Judah? (God will destroy the people of Judah.)
 - g. What did Josiah promise to do to soften the anger of God? (King Josiah promised to make him and his people obey God's commands and honor God's covenant to God's people with all their hearts and with all their souls.)
 - h. Did Josiah keep his promise to God? (Yes) Did God have a change of gear? (Yes. God did not punish the people of Judah.)
 - i. What will happen to us if we obey God's commands? (God will be pleased with us.)
2. Explain to the children that when they stand up for what is right God can use their lives to influence others to what is right also; just like Josiah.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church teach her members about our faith in God?

F. *Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the memory verse: "The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book." (2 Kings 23:3a)
2. **For N/K:** Ask the children to color the parts of the **wheel fan** that show a changed life in Christ.. Refer to the sample but make efforts to include situations in the local church. Then, cut the parts of the circle and paste them to a popsicle stick and have it as their fan. Request the children to stand and hold their fan. Let them say, "Jesus is changing me."
3. **For YE:** Ask: Do you believe Jesus can change your life? Let the children tell ways to show that their lives have been changed. (Expect answers like: They can obey God's commands. They can love and serve others.)



Tell the class to make a box of truth. Ask them to write on a strip of paper Christian ways we should do as Jesus has changed our lives. Put it inside the box. Ask a student to get one strip from the box. The teacher will read what it says and the student will do it. These are some samples.

- a. Hug someone to show your love for Jesus.
- b. Say kind words to other children.
- c. Say, "I can be honest."
- d. Share your food to someone.
- e. Extend your hand to others and say "I want to be your friend"

G. *Closing Worship*

1. Offering: Put a basket offering at the center and instruct the children to bring their offering as they sing together: "We're Giving Because We Love Jesus".
2. Closing song: "Little by Little Bit"
 Little by little bit everyday
 Little by little bit every way
 Yes, Jesus is changing me.
 Since I've made turn about that face
 I've been walking in His grace
 My Jesus is changing me.
3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for changing us to become better children. Continue to change our hearts that we may live like you. Teach to remember and obey Your word. Amen.

Middle and Older Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. describe how the faith teachings of the church help her members have a new life in Christ;
2. state the role of the Holy Spirit in make the believers' life new in Christ; and
3. demonstrate the changes in one's new life in Christ.

II. Concept: The church teaches us our faith in God.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: As the learners enter the room, greet them with a BIG SMILE.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we praise your name. We thank you for the new life you have given to all of us. We thank you for the church for teaching us Your truth. Help us now, as we learn from Your words through this Sunday school class. In Your name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "They'll Know We Are Christians" by Carolyn Arends (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugQwh-phnZY>)
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord (2x)
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
They will know we are Christians by our love.
We will work with each other, we will work side by side (2x)
And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
They will know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
They will know we are Christians by our love.
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand (2x)
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
They will know we are Christians by our love
By our love, by our love.
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
They will know we are Christians by our love

B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare the class to play a relay game. On one corner of the room, put some building blocks. Divide the class into two teams. Call the first team the building group. Tell the first team to stay on one side of the room. On your signal, tag the first pupil to get one block and put it on the table. As the child goes back to the line, let him or her tag another child who will get a block and put it on the table to start building a structure. Let the children continue doing this until they have built a structure. Give this group two minutes to do this.
2. Tell the second team to take turns in taking away one block at a time to take apart the structure. Give this group two minutes to do this.

3. Give the first team one minute to rebuild the structure followed by the second team who will remove the blocks one by one. Give each group one minute to do this.
4. Process the activity by asking each group about their feelings of accomplishment or disappointment when they were doing the activity.

C. Learning Time

1. Explain to the class that Josiah became a king at age 8 when his father Amon died. His grandfather king Manasseh was the father of Amon. The scriptures say that both Manasseh and Amon were corrupt rulers and God was not pleased with them when they built altars of other gods. When Josiah became king, the people celebrated the Passover and the Scripture was read. This is the background of the lesson.
2. Let the class to read in unison 2 Kings 22:11-20; 23:1-3.
3. Tell the class to study the highlights of Josiah's reformation to prevent the anger of God who declared punishment to Judah by discussing the following verses carefully.
 - a. 2 Kings 22:11-12. Hearing the word of God and personal grief of King Josiah
 - b. 2 Kings 22:13-14. Inquiring from God through a prophetess about what God desires
 - c. 2 Kings 22:15-19. Declaration of God to punish Judah because of the wicked ways of the people
 - d. 2 Kings 22:20. 23:1-3. Rekindling of God's love because of the humility demonstrated by King Josiah and his plan of reformation as an act of gratitude and a promise to God to keep the covenant by Josiah and his people
4. Finish the lesson by reading Romans 14:17. Explain that the kingdom of God is characterized with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time

1. Go back to the activity of building and taking apart of the structure. Compare this with idolatry of God's people and how Josiah destroyed these altars to please God. Emphasize to the class that this activity describes the cycle of sin committed by God's people and how God's people should make reforms for a continuing transformation. Remind the class that we are celebrating today Reformation Sunday.
2. Discuss the lesson to understand better the meaning of reformation.
 - a. The people of God did wrong in the eyes of God. They needed a light to reform them. How did Jesus use the **Word of God** to be the **Light** of the people? (Following what Jesus did as mentioned in the Scriptures will enlighten God's people. Josiah is an example of doing what was right in the eyes of God.)
 - b. When Josiah heard the Scriptures, he started the process of cleansing because **God's Word cleanses**. How does the Scripture cleanse God's people? (Tell the class to share their personal experience.)
 - c. What is the assurance of God's people of God's everlasting love and faithfulness to God's people? (The **Word of God is eternal**.)
 - d. As we read the Scriptures, what do we learn related to **our response to God's love and faithfulness**? (Discuss the responses made by the church through its programs and the individual and collective response of her members. Emphasize the continuing reforms made by the church to be able to do what is right in the eyes of God.)
3. Draw from the class the importance of studying God's Word by reading the Bible regularly.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church teach her members about our faith in God?

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Teach the memory verse: "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17)
2. Ask the children to list as many words as they can to describe a person who has a new life in Christ. Tell them to choose from the words in the metacards or those written on the board.
Obedient Prayerful Loving to others
Truthful Caring Submissive
3. **For ME:** Tell the class to play the game "Wheel of Life". Make a wheel and write sentences that characterize a new person in Christ. Ask a pupil to spin the wheel. If the wheel stops with pointed arrow, he or she will demonstrate what the sentence says before the class. After he or she does it, give something as a reward.
4. **For OE:** Tell the class to reiterate their covenant commitment to God by making a creative key holder. Provide the class with the needed materials: wire, scissors, key shaped board paper where the memory verse is written punched at the upper center of the board. Ask them to assemble the key holder and hang it on their bag to remind them of their covenant made to God. Remind the class with safety measures.

G. Closing Worship

1. Tell the class to recite the memory verse.
2. Offering: Tell the class to offer themselves as servants of God.
3. Closing song: "Wonderful Grace of Jesus" (HFJ # 212)
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for your unfailing love. You never stop loving us. Continue to change us for the better. Release your blessing upon us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Youth Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. define the words, transformation, renewal, and reformation
2. explain the meaning of the Reformation motto, "The church reformed, always reforming";
3. infer the changes that happen to a person when he or she has a new life in Christ; and
4. formulate a personal motto as having a renewed life in Christ in one's faith journey

II. Concept: The church continues to teach us about our reformed faith.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: As the learners enter the room, greet them.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we praise your name. We thank you for the new life you have given to all of us. We thank you for the church for teaching us Your truth. Help us now, as we learn from Your words through this Sunday school class. In Your name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: The Church's One Foundation (HFJ # 242) first two stanzas

B. Getting Ready

1. Divide the class into triads. Give each group jumbled letters and have them rearrange these letters to form the three words: TRANSFORMATION, RENEWAL, and REFORMATION. The first group to complete the work is the winner:
2. Process the activity and talk about how each group was able to decipher the words. Call each group randomly and ask them what they think about any of these words.
3. Remind the class that this Sunday is Reformation Sunday and the theme is the continuing transformation of the Church.

C. Learning Time

1. Tell the class to read the biblical references responsively.
2. After discussing Josiah's reformation program for Judah, present the high points of the Reformation movement using the following points of discussion.
 - a. The Protestant Reformation was initiated by Martin Luther and continued by John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, and other early Protestant Reformers in 16th century Europe. Before Luther, there were other attempts to reform the Catholic Church by the reformers Jan Hus, Peter Waldo, and John Wycliffe. However, it was in October 31, 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses at the Cathedral of Wittenburg, Saxony that started the Reformation Movement.
 - b. Among the notable issues were the selling of indulgences, the infallibility of the Pope wherein the Pope has no authority over purgatory, and that the Catholic doctrine of the merits of the saints had no foundation in the gospel.
 - c. The Protestant position is the incorporation of the following statements that sum up what lies at the heart of Protestant belief:
 - 1) By **Grace** alone (*Sola Gratia*). The salvation of human beings is a free gift from God, by God's grace alone and not through any merit done by a Christian (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- 2) Through **Faith** alone (*Sola Fide*). We are judged righteous in the sight of God purely on the basis of our faith. The atoning sacrifice of Christ leads to righteousness being imputed to us as sinners through a legal declaration by God (Galatians 3:11).
 - 3) In **Christ** alone (*Solus Christus*). Christ is the one Mediator between God and human beings and our salvation is accomplished only through His death and resurrection (1 Timothy 2:5). Every believer is a priest before God, with immediate access to him for the forgiveness of sins (1 Peter 2:9)
 - 4) According to **Scripture** alone (*Sola Scriptura*). Scripture alone is the only infallible source of divine revelation and the final authority for matters of faith and practice. This tenet does not mean that all truth is contained in the Bible but all people need to know about salvation planned by God for all believers that is found in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - 5) For **God's Glory** alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*). The Christian life is seen in accordance to God's will and for God's glory (1 Peter 4:11).
3. Tell the class to read Romans 14:17. Encourage the students to see its significance in the light of the continuing transformation of the church.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. Call on some students to share their thoughts on the following:
 - a. "The church reformed, always reforming"
 - b. "The Holy Spirit is God's power in transforming the church. Though the church is community of faith, but it is also subject of corruption and decay. The Spirit of God gives breath in the life of the church for continued transformation."
2. During Josiah's reformation of the people, he was guided in the significance of the Word of God found in the Scriptures. Tell the class to comment on how the church today reforms her members using the principles in the Josiah model.
 - a. God's Word is Light.
 - b. God's Word cleanses.
 - c. God's Word is Eternal.
 - d. God's Word requires a response.
3. Read Paul's description of the kingdom of God. What are the chief characteristics of the kingdom of God?

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church continue to teach her members about our reformed faith?

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Ask the class to formulate their personal motto related to the reformed tradition of the church specifically in the five solas. Let them talk about the effect of a renewed life in one's faith journey.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: The Church's One Foundation (HFJ # 242) last two stanzas
3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, whose spirit is among us, liberating and transforming us to become like Christ, we pray, to help us as a church not just as a reformed but as a reforming community. In Christ' name, this is our prayer. Amen."

Adult Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. study how the Reformation movement came about;
2. explain the meaning of the Reformation motto, "The church reformed, always reforming"
3. observe how a renewed life in Christ affects one's personal life and relations with others
4. formulate a personal motto as having a renewed life in Christ in one's faith journey

II. Concept: The church continues the journey of reformed faith.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: As the learners enter the room, greet them.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we praise your name. We thank you for the new life you have given to all of us. We thank you for the church for teaching us Your truth. Help us now, as we learn from Your words through this Sunday school class. In Your name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: The Church's One Foundation (HFJ # 242) first two stanzas

B. Getting Ready

1. Remind the class that this Sunday is Reformation Sunday and the theme is the continuing transformation of the Church.
2. The Protestant Reformation was initiated by Martin Luther and continued by John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, and other early Protestant Reformers in 16th century Europe. Before Luther, there were other attempts to reform the Catholic Church by the reformers Jan Hus, Peter Waldo, and John Wycliffe.
 - a. Martin Luther (1483-1546). Luther was a Catholic priest who devoted much time in the study of the Bible. While studying Romans 1:17 ("For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith."), Luther was led to the conclusion that our standing before God is dependent on our faith alone, and not through any works or goodness within us. So, on October 31, 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses at the Cathedral of Wittenburg, Saxony that started the Reformation Movement. Among the notable issues were the selling of indulgences, the infallibility of the Pope wherein the Pope has no authority over purgatory, and that the Catholic doctrine of the merits of the saints had no foundation in the gospel.
 - b. John Calvin (1509-1564): John Calvin studied the writings of Martin Luther and became convinced of the need for reform. In 1536, Calvin published (in Latin) the first edition of his *magnum opus* on Christian theology: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, with the final edition being published in 1559. With the aid of William Farel, another church reformer, Calvin sought to change the political and spiritual life of the city. Calvin's theology was his analysis of the doctrine of *Predestination*. Calvin argued that salvation was something not freely chosen, rather individuals were elected to it by God. These individuals (the *elect*) are known only to God. His influence led to the development of the reformed

churches. Calvin's wise words are: "Wherever we find the Word of God surely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there, it is not to be doubted, is a church of God."

- c. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531): Zwingli was born in the Swiss canton of St. Gallen in 1484. As with Luther, Zwingli came into contact with humanist influences (including the writings of Erasmus) and devoted himself to studying Hebrew and Greek. Zwingli began to oppose the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, having come into contact with the writings of Martin Luther. Wise words of Zwingli: "We cannot but admit that not even the least thing takes place unless it is ordered by God... Indeed, nothing is too small in us or in any other creature, not to be ordered by the all-knowing and all-powerful providence of God."
- d. Before Luther, there were other attempts to reform the Catholic Church by the reformers Jan Hus, Peter Waldo, and John Wycliffe.

C. Learning Time

1. Tell the class to read the biblical references responsively.
2. After discussing Josiah's reformation program for Judah, present the high points of the Reformation movement using the following points of discussion.
 - a. Among the notable issues in the Reformation were the selling of indulgences, the infallibility of the Pope wherein the Pope has no authority over purgatory, and that the Catholic doctrine of the merits of the saints had no foundation in the gospel.
 - b. The Protestant position is the incorporation of the following statements that sum up what lies at the heart of Protestant belief:
 - 1) By **Grace** alone (*Sola Gratia*). The salvation of human beings is a free gift from God, by God's grace alone and not through any merit done by a Christian (Ephesians 2:8-9).
 - 2) Through **Faith** alone (*Sola Fide*). We are judged righteous in the sight of God purely on the basis of our faith. The atoning sacrifice of Christ leads to righteousness being imputed to us as sinners through a legal declaration by God (Galatians 3:11).
 - 3) In **Christ** alone (*Solus Christus*). Christ is the one Mediator between God and human beings and our salvation is accomplished only through His death and resurrection (1 Timothy 2:5). Every believer is a priest before God, with immediate access to him for the forgiveness of sins (1 Peter 2:9)
 - 4) According to **Scripture** alone (*Sola Scriptura*). Scripture alone is the only infallible source of divine revelation and the final authority for matters of faith and practice. This tenet does not mean that all truth is contained in the Bible but all people need to know about salvation planned by God for all believers that is found in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - 5) For **God's Glory** alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*). The Christian life is seen in accordance to God's will and for God's glory (1 Peter 4:11).
3. Tell the class to read Romans 14:17. Encourage the students to see its significance in the light of the continuing transformation of the church.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. Call on some students to share their thoughts on the following:
 - a. "The church reformed, always reforming"

- b. "The Holy Spirit is God's power to transform the church. Though the church is community of faith, but it is also subject of corruption and decay. The Spirit of God gives breath in the life of the church for continued transformation."
 - c. We need to pray for the church today, "that she be called out of the darkness of ignorance and the lie into the light of the knowledge of God in truth." We need to pray for ourselves, "that God not plague us with the worst of all plagues—a famine of the Word, but that He fill us with the Spirit of Christ, who guides us into all truth, as the Son of God has promised."
2. During Josiah's reformation of the people, he was guided in the significance of the Word of God found in the Scriptures. Tell the class to comment on how the church today reforms her members using the principles in the Josiah model.
 - a. God's Word is Light.
 - b. God's Word cleanses.
 - c. God's Word is Eternal.
 - d. God's Word requires a response.
 3. Read Paul's description of the kingdom of God. What are the chief characteristics of the kingdom of God?

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church continue the journey of reformed faith among her members?

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Ask the class to formulate their personal motto related to the reformed tradition of the church specifically in the five solas.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: The Church's One Foundation (HFJ # 242) last two stanzas
3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, whose spirit is among us, liberating and transforming us to become like Christ, we pray, to help us as a church not just as a reformed but as a reforming community. In Christ' name, this is our prayer. Amen."