

WITTENBERG 2017

RECEIVING AND REFUSING THE
TREASURES OF THE REFORMATION

Key Role of Holy Spirit

1. To recognize the real treasures

To know what to grieve over

2. To receive the real treasures, “reaping what the Spirit has sown“ in the others
(Pope Francis, EG, 246)

To be able to grieve - weeping and inner groanings
(Rom. 8: 26)

Holy Spirit forms into rich harmony

“In the Church, variety, which is itself a great treasure, is always grounded in the harmony of unity, like a great mosaic in which every small piece joins with others as part of God’s one great plan. This should inspire us to work always to overcome every conflict which wounds the body of the Church.” (Francis, Pentecost 2013)

For Wittenberg 2017:

- To celebrate 500th anniversary in “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4: 3)

FIRST ELEMENT: THE HEART CRY

- What was most certainly from the Holy Spirit in Luther's Reformation?
- A first answer:

THE CRY OF PAIN AND INDIGNATION

“HOW LONG, O LORD, HOW LONG?”

“An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their power; and My people love to have it so.” (Jer. 5: 30 - 31)

“Because of the sins of her prophets
And the iniquities of her priests,
Who shed in her midst
The blood of the just.” (Lam. 4: 13)

Heart Cry (Primal Scream?)

- For the Gospel of salvation
- For liberation from “religious works“
- For liberation of the Church from its
Babylonian Captivity
 - from the Constantinian concubinage
 - from the canonical-sacramental system

New Quote from Pope Francis

- “Prophecy, memory and hope”: these three characteristics free a person; they free people and the Church, preventing it from ending up as a “closed system” of rules that puts the Holy Spirit in a cage.

May 30, 2016

DIVISION OF CHRISTENDOM A DISASTER?

1. Was the division of Judah and Israel after Solomon a disaster?
2. Was the Babylonian exile a disaster?

“Behold, I have put *My* words in your mouth. See I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.” (Jer. 1: 10).

SECOND ELEMENT: CRITERIA FOR REFORM

- Christus Solus
- Fides Sola (in sense of fiducia)
- Scriptura Sola

THESE CRITERIA COME FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Inability of Catholic Church to reform linked with resistance to these criteria for reform.
- Absolute uniqueness of Jesus Christ
- Absolute uniqueness of trusting faith in reception of God's saving Word
- Absolute uniqueness of the Scriptures as the Word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit

Permanent Criteria for Renewal

- Modern Renewal of the Catholic Church has come as these three criteria have begun to be accepted
 - Phase 1: Second Vatican Council
 - Phase 2: Pope Francis
- A deep reason for profound gratitude to Martin Luther and the other Protestant Reformers

HUMPTY DUMPTY

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the king's horses and all the king's
men
Couldn't put Humpty together again.

RECONCILIATION

IS

NOT

RECONSTRUCTION

A NEW WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Holy Spirit is Creator Spirit
- Infinite unlimited creativity
- Always new, never old
- Never just repeats

RECONCILED BODY IN UNITY WILL BE A
CREATIVE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Not just a cleansing from late medieval abuses.

Not just a restoration of the Catholic - Orthodox Church of the first millennium.

These would leave no place for the free church witness or the place of the Jewish people.

Not even a reduplication of the “one new man” of the 1st century CE.

WITTENBERG 2017 as an INITIATIVE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- This feature is what will distinguish this initiative from all the other events taking place in Wittenberg next year.
- As a charismatic initiative, we can follow God's order, the order of the Holy Spirit

GOD'S ORDER

- First the creative work of the Holy Spirit- the charismatic
- After, the ordering of the Holy Spirit - the bringing into harmony - the structural
- Also after, the formulation of doctrine and the development of theology
- Does one of last two come first or at same time?

MEMORY, PROMISE & GOAL

Any Christian activity without the Holy Spirit becomes focused on the past. True also with ecumenism.

Holy Spirit Renewal, allied to return to Jewish roots, highlights both

 originating event(s) - in Israel, in
Incarnation

 the divine promises

 the hope for God's future: eschatology

WITTENBERG 2017

- Through Holy Spirit's work in us (especially through repentance) we can celebrate the 500th anniversary in unity
 - * thanking the Lord in unity
 - * grieving before the Lord in unity
 - * with a shared vision and a common hope

NOT US AND THEM

- As Lutherans, Catholics, free churches, other Christians, and Messianic Jews in our own identities
- All in need of more healing
- but together - we/us united under Jesus our one Head and Lord, in faith, under the one Word of God