



## Grain

“Part of what it means to be a follower of Christ is to re-language or paraphrase the biblical texts as lenses through which to make sense of the world.” Rev. Dr. Karoline Lewis

## Field

“<sup>21</sup>But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, <sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, <sup>23</sup>since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup>they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith.” Romans 3:21-25

## Thoughts

Have you ever watched a movie you saw a couple of years earlier or re-read a book only to have a new reaction to it? Your life is different. The world has changed a bit or a lot. You have a different lens.

The 16<sup>th</sup>-century Reformers paraphrased scripture to discern the contemporary barriers to being embraced by God’s love. Martin Luther experienced that it wasn’t his own perfection or obeisance to any human authority that saved him. His private transformation erupted into a public voice. Structures changed; attitudes toward supporting a religious/economic system that could idealize poverty and claim those who helped the poor were climbing a stairway to heaven were challenged; efforts to eradicate poverty in response to being saved by grace were launched, the scam of selling forgiveness via indulgences was exposed; marriage was on the table for the celibate; passively following authority over conscience was questioned; and people talked about grace, grace, and more grace.

At the same time, the Reformation was messy. For example, many Reformers tried throwing everything from their old tradition out the window without discernment. People made mistakes.

Last year, during the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, we had hopeful examples of how many old arguments have lost their edge or disappeared. However, none of us in any denomination can rest in the diminishment of past disagreements. Last year, we also were overwhelmed with frightening images from Charlottesville. White supremacy is not only more visible (for some), causing many of us to search our own hearts and institutions, but is emboldened and energized within certain Christian groups. The replacement of Christ with idols is with us in every generation, and it’s our task to interpret where they are within and around us. What keeps us from God’s love, and how does our relationship with Jesus erupt into a public voice? We ask these questions as we stumble around, sometimes being too impetuous or slow to act. We’ll make mistakes and are called back again by grace. Happy Monday!

## Prayer

Highly recommended.

## Share

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy