

This is a true story of a very dark time in history, but it is not a Halloween story.

Long ago the church was characterized by false doctrines, superstition, and corruption. Since most ordinary Christians were illiterate and had little knowledge of the Bible, they relied on their clergy for religious instruction and guidance. Tragically however, monks, priests, bishops, and even the popes in Rome taught unbiblical doctrines like purgatory and salvation through good works. Spiritually hungry people tried their best to please God by doing charitable works, giving money, or taking pilgrimages, but they were left wondering if they had done enough to appease God's righteous anger and escape His punishment. The truth of the gospel—the good news that God is loving and merciful, that He offers each and every one of us forgiveness and salvation not because of what we do, but because of what Christ has already done for us—was largely forgotten by both clergy and laity.

An Augustinian monk and university professor named Martin Luther was deeply disturbed by these and other abuses in the church. He began a deep study of the Bible. Focusing on the letters in the New Testament that were written by Paul, (especially the letter to the Romans), he began to understand what Paul had taught the early Christians over a thousand years before—that our salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone.

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In his preaching and writing, Luther began to emphasize *justification by faith* which means that Christians can never earn God's love or forgiveness but that forgiveness of sin is available freely to anyone who will trust that Christ already paid the penalty for sin by His death on the cross.

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his findings on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. This act triggered the movement in world history known as the Reformation.

Today, many Christians celebrate October 31<sup>st</sup> as “Reformation Day” in honor of Martin Luther who helped remove false doctrine and destructive practices from the Christian church and restore the true gospel to its rightful place as the cornerstone of Christianity.

I am one of them.

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**See for yourself...**

Romans 3:10--"There is none righteous, no, not one."

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 6:23 --"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 5:8 --"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 10:9 --"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Romans 10:13 --"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Acknowledgement to...  
[sundayschoollessons.com/refday.htm](http://sundayschoollessons.com/refday.htm)  
[stpaulskingsville.org/reformation.htm](http://stpaulskingsville.org/reformation.htm)



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