

# Starter Kit 2017: QUARTER 1 WEEK 1

*This quarter we will study Luther and other reformers, but most importantly we will study all the varying meanings of this word, what it meant to many people throughout the Bible, and what it means to us.*



**CONFERENCE OF SDA YOUTH MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT**

[www.gcyouthministries.org](http://www.gcyouthministries.org)

[youth@gcyouthministries.org](mailto:youth@gcyouthministries.org)

[fb.com/GCYouthMinistries](https://fb.com/GCYouthMinistries)

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**Editorial Credits:**

Writer: Debbonnaire Kovacs

Project Director: Pako Mokgwane

Project Coordinator: Maria Manderson

Copy Editor: Sophia Boswell

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## INTRODUCTION: Understanding the starter kit

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Five hundred years ago, on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses (disagreeing fundamentally with the Catholicism of the time) to the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany. This act is generally seen as the real start to the Protestant Reformation. In honor of that brave act, General Conference Youth Ministries has chosen Reformation as the theme for the whole year of 2017.

The root of reformation is the Latin word *reformare*, which means to form again or to change.

Read EGW's book, *The Great Controversy*, Chapter 7

We will study Luther and other reformers, but most importantly, we will study all the varying meanings of this word, what it meant to many people throughout the Bible, and what it means to us. If what we study at church, in Sabbath school, and in youth meetings does not change our lives, then it is useless.

So what does "reformation" really mean? Looking more closely, we see that the word is based on "form," which just means to make. God formed Adam from dirt. You can form things from clay or pipe cleaners.

Re-form takes another step. It takes something that has been formed and forms it differently. It is usually necessary to take apart the original thing to make something new of it.

When we use "reformed" about a person, we usually mean someone who was "bad" is now "good." A drug addict becomes a loving mother. A murderer becomes a Christian and shares the Good News of the gospel with other prisoners.

But reformed doesn't necessarily mean from bad to good. It can just mean re-formed. My mother used to make dresses for me out of my father's old shirts. She cut up the shirts into pieces of cloth and cut new pieces to be put together into a little girl's dress.

All this year, we will be examining different kinds of reformation in people of the Bible, and seeking to apply what we learn to our own lives.

#### What did Martin Luther reform?

First of all, it is very important to understand that there are millions of Catholics, both priests and laypeople, who are godly, loving Christians. It is the system, also called the papacy, which has a lot to answer to God for.

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Luther had no intention of starting a whole new church or church movement. He hoped the church he loved could be reformed. And though he worried that he was not the right one to do something, he also knew God calls each of us to stand for truth wherever we are.

For several hundred years, the Catholic Church, or rather, the highest authorities in that church, including popes, the highest priests called cardinals, and local archbishops and bishops, had most of Europe in a choke hold. They claimed that the pope stood in the place of Christ on earth, and that he had the power to determine not just if you lived or died, but whether you went to heaven or hell. (Or purgatory, which was an in-between place where supposedly a person was tortured until he or she had paid for all the sins of his or her life and could then go to heaven.)

In Luther's time, a decree had been made that people could be forgiven for all their sins and get to go straight to heaven when they died, if they bought an "indulgence." The pope was literally saying, "Give me money, and I will indulge your sinfulness. You don't have to actually change."

For centuries, people had been so heavily trained to obey the church in all things that they gave up, in some cases, their entire life savings. You could buy indulgences for people who had already died, getting them out of purgatory early. Can you imagine? If your mother had died, and you believed her spirit was spending years, or even centuries, in purgatory being tortured for everything she had ever done wrong (as determined by a strict, authoritarian church) wouldn't you give or do anything to get her out? People did—and they grew poorer and poorer while the pope, cardinals, priests, and churches grew richer and richer.

Martin Luther had been trained to obey the church too. In fact, he became a monk—a man who gave up all possessions to the church and gave over his entire life to live only for God—no wife, no family, no job except whatever the abbot (the leader of the monks) told him to do. He loved his church.

But Luther was educated, able to read Latin, and could read God's word for himself. And he didn't see a God who indulged sin in that Bible. He also didn't see a God who tortured people to make them pay for their sins. He preached about the God he found in the Bible—a God who loved people so much He gave Himself up for them. A God who sent His Son to die so that people wouldn't have to. People loved to listen to Dr. Luther. But as time went on, he started to say some shocking things. The church leaders started to try to make him back down.

Then he posted those 95 theses.

The first four said that repentance should be from the heart and should lead to real change. If there was no change, then there was no repentance.



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In theses # 5 and 6, Luther said the pope didn't have the power to forgive anything except the breaking of rules he made himself. He said the pope could "declare and show" to the people that God had forgiven their sins, but he couldn't do it himself. Only God could.

In # 27 and 28, Luther said that when people preach "as soon as the money clinks into the money chest, the soul flies out of purgatory" were only preaching human doctrines, not God's. Instead, he added, "It is certain that when the money clinks in the money chest, greed and avarice can be increased; but when the church intercedes, the result is in the hands of God alone."

You can imagine what the church authorities thought. Luther was arrested more than once, and they did their utmost to make him "recant," that is, give up his beliefs.

Luther was tempted. What if he was wrong? He had always been taught to love and obey his church. He wrote that he was almost in despair as he thought of himself in opposition to this powerful organization. What if God had not sent him to try to change things?

But he kept falling back on what had become his favorite Bible verse: "The just shall live by faith" Romans 1:17. God alone was to be obeyed, above all earthly powers. Luther would stand on the Word of God alone.

His story is a long and dramatic one. If you want to read the whole story, there are many, many resources online, but a good telling of the whole story can be found in *The Great Controversy*, chapter 7.

In the end, Luther was excommunicated and so were thousands of those who believed he was telling the truth. People in those days believed excommunication meant one would burn in hell forever. It was a scary time. But Luther found peace, satisfaction, joy in the Lord, and even a family! Luther later married a woman who had been a nun. He had to break his monk's vows, and she her nun's vows in order to marry. We can only imagine how difficult that was—and how joyful it made them once they realized it was God's will. Luther later wrote, "There is no more lovely, friendly, and charming relationship, communion, or company than a good marriage."

His whole life had been taken apart and re-formed.

A whole new church movement began and hasn't ended yet. The Seventh-day Adventist denomination, formed officially in 1863, is one of those who are still protesting church leaders (and not just Catholic ones) who insist on taking to themselves powers that belong to God alone. No one—not your teacher or pastor, not even your parents—is to be your conscience for you, once you have reached an age where you can read and understand the Bible for yourself.

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All of these persons are meant to be leaders and mentors and good sources of education and faith for you, but your conscience is between you and God.

### Using these Starter Kits

We have provided 25 sessions that can be used for youth meetings or for whatever you need them for. Besides that, there are five group Bible studies. We recommend you use the Habakkuk Bible study very early in your series.

You may create whatever programs you wish for those weeks. Or you could choose to make these starter kits last for two sessions, choosing certain parts for the first week and the rest for the second week.

Twelve of the Starter Kits are based on twelve principles of Luther's reformation, delineated by Thomas F. Fischer, M.Div., M.S.A., found here:

[http://www.ministryhealth.net/mh\\_articles/263\\_luther\\_principles\\_reformation.html](http://www.ministryhealth.net/mh_articles/263_luther_principles_reformation.html)  
[http://www.ministryhealth.net/mh\\_articles/263\\_luther\\_principles\\_reformation.html](http://www.ministryhealth.net/mh_articles/263_luther_principles_reformation.html)

In between these twelve principles you will find kits based on Bible characters whose lives exemplify the principles.

Here is what we provide in each session:

1. **A brief reading on the topic.** This can be read, but of course should be shared instead in the leader's own words, adding or subtracting details that fit your group. Usually, there are Bible readings and questions worked into the text.
2. **A short devotion** that brings home the principles of the topic of the week. This is intended to be shared with the whole group.
3. **An activity suggestion.** These are simple, requiring few, if any, materials, but we all learn and retain better if we do something physical with what we've heard and seen.
4. **A short skit.** If you have time to rehearse and learn, these can be done on different weeks, or even for other meetings such as church services. But they can also be and done in impromptu fashion, each person reading his/her part expressively. Always allow time to discuss people's reactions after skits.
5. Very important: Each week's starter kit includes a page called "**7 Days of Soul Food.**" Print these out and give copies to each person, or give each person the link if they have online access. These are personal applications that will carry the devotion



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through the whole week. It is highly recommended that each person begin some sort of prayer journal and use it all year. We generally think of journals as being full of writing, but if you don't like to write, you can draw, doodle, paste in pictures that bring the lessons of the week to mind—anything that helps you draw closer to God.

### The Whole Soul

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 is one of the foundational texts of faith. It reads, "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." Jesus enlarges slightly on this text in Matthew 22:37 (capitals show that He is quoting from the Old Testament). And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." Mark 12:29-30 reports Him as saying, "HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH."

Luke 10:27 tells a slightly different story: Jesus asks a lawyer how he reads the Law, and the lawyer says, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND."

From all this, we can learn that there are four ways we can express our love for God: heart, mind, soul, and strength, which we can apply to physical strength, or using our bodies to love God.

Each page of the "**7 Days of Soul Food**" includes suggestions for showing love to God and others in all these ways.



## BIBLE STUDY: Habakkuk, prophet of total trust

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Habakkuk is an amazing little book. We know almost nothing about the prophet himself, but his name alone is worthy of interest. In Hebrew it is Chabaquq (in which the ch is pronounced with a throaty h, as in Chanukkah or Hanukkah). It is derived from the verb chabaq, “to embrace.” Isn’t that a great name? The one who embraces God, and whom God embraces! We can learn a lot from this little book.

#### 1. First: Prayer

Always begin with prayer. Ask God to bless your study and discussion, and to help you to learn to trust as Habakkuk does.

#### 2. Preparation

It would be of interest, if you have time, for at least the leader to read the two-page introduction to Habakkuk found in the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Vol. 4*, p. 1047-8. This can be found online if you don’t have access to the book.

Some brief highlights: we know little about the man, and don’t know if he was officially trained as a prophet or not, but he is one of only three of the twelve minor prophets who actually calls himself a prophet. He may have been a temple singer. We believe his prophecy was probably soon after that of Nahum, somewhere around 630 B. C. He knew the Babylonian captivity was coming, and that people deserved it, but had some serious questions for God. Because of his “emphasis upon holiness and faith Habakkuk takes his place with Isaiah as a gospel prophet” (BC 1048).

**Note:** This book will be far more easily comprehended, and the blessings it contains will be more useful in life, if the Bibles used are versions that use a common, uncomplicated language everyone will understand.

#### 3. Reading One

The book of Habakkuk is very short, and you will easily be able to read the whole thing as a group. Depending on your time constraints, you can spend 10-15 minutes reading and discussing each chapter. Be sure to leave a few minutes at the end for a wrap-up and prayer. Assign a time keeper to let the group know when the allotted time for each chapter is nearly up, so that you can study the whole book. Remind everyone that they are strongly encouraged to study more deeply and at length at home or with a study partner.

## **BIBLE STUDY: Habakkuk, prophet of total trust**

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Begin by reading chapter 1, going around the circle and each reading a few verses if the group is small, assigning one or several readers if the group is large. Or divide a large group into smaller groups of 8 to 10 people who can study and discuss together.

The book is a conversation between God and the prophet. Use your own words to answer the following questions:

Which verses are Habakkuk speaking, and which ones are God's reply? (Opinions may vary, and that's okay. Each should explain his or her answer.)

What are Habakkuk's major questions in this beginning chapter?

Have you ever had similar questions?

What does God reply?

Does Habakkuk seem to find this answer satisfying or reassuring?

Do you? Why or why not?

With what questions does Habakkuk end this chapter?

How do you feel about these questions?

How do you feel about the conversation as a whole? Is it okay to question God like this? Why or why not?

Write down the verses that mean the most to you today.

### **4. Reading Two**

Read through chapter 2 in the same way as before.

Again, determine who is speaking and when.

Verses 1-3 stand out from Habakkuk's writing. If you have ever heard a sermon on Habakkuk, you may have heard these verses. Why are they different? What do you think they mean?

What is your personal reaction to them?

How can a thing "tarry" and "not delay" at the same time?

What are some of the difficulties humans have with God's viewpoint on time?

Take special note of verse 4. This is the one Paul quotes in Romans 1:17, and which Martin Luther later read and upon which he hung his whole theology. The Protestant Reformation, already underway, took flight upon this verse. What does it mean to you?

## BIBLE STUDY: Habakkuk, prophet of total trust

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Make a list of some of the many sins this chapter lists. Which do you think are the worst? Are there any you struggle with? Do you think Habakkuk is talking to individuals, groups, or whole nations? Can a whole nation change, or is it up to individuals?

Has your opinion about this conversation with God changed at all?

Write down the verses that mean the most to you today.

### 5. Reading Three

Read through chapter 3.

This whole chapter is a beautiful prayer by Habakkuk, apparently intended to be sung. The opening words “according to Shigionoth” seem to refer to a poetic style. “Shigionoth are thought to be impassioned songs of rapid emotional changes, expressed by rapid changes in rhythm” (BC 1056). The closing words, “for the choir director, on my stringed instruments,” show that it was intended to be sung. These are also the words which imply that Habakkuk was a singer and may have been a temple singer. In the original Hebrew sanctuary system, the only “offices” seem to have been priests who led the sacrifices, Levites who took care of the physical structure, and singers and musicians. (See 1 Chronicles 15 and 2 Chronicles 5 for some of the lists of people, as well as of musical instruments.)

Try dividing this song into something we might call stanzas. Where do you think rhythm might have changed, and which emotions do those parts portray?

Does Habakkuk still have questions?

Have his questions all been answered, or has he made peace with some unanswered ones?

What role do faith and trust play?

What is your reaction to this conversation now?

What have we learned about asking God our questions?

How do you feel when you ask God things and He doesn't seem to answer?

How can you hold onto faith and trust when this happens?

Make a list of the promises God has made in the book of Habakkuk.



## **BIBLE STUDY: Habakkuk, prophet of total trust**

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### **6. Conclusion**

Note: If you have divided into smaller groups, bring everyone back together.

In closing, take special note of verses 17 through 19. Have these read again. Then have someone read Deuteronomy 28:2-6. How do these verses compare?

It is almost shocking to realize that Habakkuk's statement of faith is actually saying, "Even if the covenant promises of God seem to fail, I will trust!"

How can we encourage that attitude in ourselves and others?

### **7. Activity Suggestion**

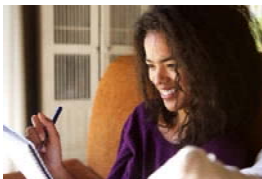
Choose one short passage and try collaborating on making it into a song in just a few minutes. Sing it for your closing song.

### **8. Closing Prayer**

Be specific in asking God to bless each person with faith and trust that they can live by every day of their lives. Ask Him to help everyone feel Him embracing them as in Habakkuk's name.

## JOURNAL TIME: 7 days of soul food

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Click below to  
access the book of  
Habakkuk online:

[The Message](#)

[Amplified Bible](#)

[English Standard](#)

[NIV](#)

## JOURNAL TIME: 7 days of soul food

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1. **Day 1:** During your personal devotions, read over the whole book of Habakkuk. Write in your prayer journal your initial thoughts and reactions. What are the ways this prophet's words resonate with your life right now? Choose one verse to pray over and claim for the day.
2. **Day 2:** Heart: Look through the book again, finding the verses that you think particularly speak to the heart and emotion of human beings. Prayerfully connect with these emotional themes and consider how God wants to work in your heart this week.
3. **Day 3:** Mind: Look through the book a third time, finding the verses that appeal to your mind, the logical, thinking part of you. Do you perhaps have questions about the historic context or the original language of some of the words? You can look these up in concordances, commentaries, or online. How does God want to work in your mind this week?
4. **Day 4:** Strength/body: Look through the book a fourth time, finding the verses that speak of the body, its actions, or perhaps its treatment. Are there ways in which mistreatment of others is part of the reason God is judging Judah? What are the ways God wants to strengthen your body this week?
5. **Day 5:** Soul/spirit: Soul or spirit, of course, is not a part of you. It's your whole self. But it's your whole self with a spiritual twist. It's your whole self choosing to be godly. Look through the book a fifth time, finding the verses that appeal to your spirit, that encourage your faith and trust and make you want to follow God more closely. Can you find a promise or promises that will help you stick close to God?
6. **Days 6 and 7:** This, if you choose to do it, will take more time! Try rewriting the book of Habakkuk (or some part or parts of it) in your own language as a poem, or better yet, as a song. Perhaps you have friends that would like to help. If you come up with something you like, you might perform it for church. What would you like your readers to understand? Add notes on key takeaways here.

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## FEATURE: The Protestant Reformation

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Five hundred years ago, on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther rocked the world by nailing 95 theses, or statements of belief, to the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany. All of them were criticisms of the medieval Catholic Church which had Europe in a choke hold at the time. In honor of this anniversary, General Conference Youth Ministries has declared the theme of this year to be reformation. We will be studying many, many facets of this word all year. During the next two weeks we are going to learn about a huge reformation that changed the whole world, called the Protestant Reformation. But we'll see that, as all true reformation does, it all began with individuals. They weren't trying to change the world; they were trying to change their own lives to conform to what they learned from the Bible. In the process, they realized they needed to share what they learned with others, and that all together, they would, indeed, change the world.

Here are some of the most well-known Protestant reformers.

**John Wycliffe:** an English seminary professor at Oxford University in the 1300s. Wycliffe criticized the arrogance and high position of clergy. Local parishes and priests were wealthy and magnificent, and held ceremonies of great pomp and splendor...but their parishioners were mostly poor, even starving. Wycliffe didn't think this pleased God at all. He knew this because he was one of the highly educated people who could read the Latin Bible. He believed that all people should be able to read it for themselves, so he translated it into English. He was not martyred; he died of a stroke. However, he was declared a heretic by the church he condemned, and all his works condemned to be burned. Some were saved by people who agreed with him. You can't really burn away something the Holy Spirit wants to happen!

**Jan Hus (also known as John Huss):** a Czech priest in the 13-1400s who denounced the moral failings of priests, clergy, and even the pope from his pulpit. At first he didn't get in much trouble, but then he was told to denounce Wycliffe's writings, and he wouldn't do it. He also spoke against the sale of "indulgences," basically a paper you could buy that would declare all your sins forgiven. Ultimately, Hus was burned at the stake, praying aloud until he died.

**Ulrich Zwingli:** a Swiss pastor and reformer in the late 14 and early 1500s who called out corruption among church leaders, said that clergy should marry, and attacked the use of images in churches. He also introduced a new ceremony to replace the Catholic mass. He had strong political opinions as well, and died fighting as a soldier for a cause in which he believed.

**Jean Calvin (usually known as John Calvin):** a French theologian in the 1500s who said only God had authority over souls and their salvation. He broke from the Catholic Church and wrote many pamphlets and other writings, communicating freely with other reformers, who

## FEATURE: The Protestant Reformation

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were quite active by that time. Unfortunately, this widespread movement also led to disputes and arguments among the reformers themselves, and Calvin, who died of a fever, argued with both Luther and Zwingli on some doctrines.

And of course, the most famous of all, **Martin Luther**. It is Luther's work we will learn the most about in the next couple of weeks, but you are encouraged to look up all you can, in books or online, about the Protestant Reformation, which took apart and re-formed a whole belief system.

Luther didn't expect this. He was trying to reform the church, not leave it or start a new one. However, he knew that something had to change. He had read some of the works of the reformers before him, but most importantly, he had read the Bible. Like Wycliffe, he believed people should be able to read the Bible in their own tongue, so he translated it into German. More and more people were reading for themselves, or listening to friends if they couldn't read, and they were finding out they could be free of oppressive church authority and live, instead, in the freedom of God's loving, merciful authority.

In the end, Luther was excommunicated and so were thousands of those who believed he was telling the truth. People in those days believed excommunication meant Luther would burn in hell forever. It was a scary time.

A whole new church movement began and hasn't ended yet. The Seventh-day Adventist denomination, formed officially in 1863, is one of those who are still protesting church leaders (and not just Catholic ones) who insist on taking to themselves powers that belong to God alone. No one—not your teacher or pastor, not even your parents—is to be your conscience for you, once you have reached an age where you can read and understand the Bible for yourself. All of these persons are meant to be leaders and mentors and good sources of education and faith for you, but your conscience is between you and God.

**Important note:** As we study, it is essential that we understand that there are millions of Catholics, both priests and laypeople, who are godly, loving Christians. It is the system, also called the papacy, which has a lot to answer to God for.

## **DEVOTION: What does reformation mean to me?**

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Reformation. What is it? It's our theme for the whole year, so we need to understand it.

In its simplest form, reformation simply means taking something that has been formed and re-forming it. This usually necessitates the partial or complete destruction of the original thing. A potter smashes down her clay and makes a different vessel. A builder takes a building apart and uses the materials to make a different building, or something else completely. You write an essay for school, you don't like it, you either rewrite it by changing some things, or throw it all away and start over. These are all reformation, in a sense.

When we use the word in reference to a person, of course we don't mean destruction of the person. But there is a sense of complete change. Has your life ever been turned upside-down and re-formed into something different? This could be by your choice—leaving home and going to a university, for instance, or it could have nothing to do with you—a natural disaster, war, or famine that changes your life and those of people all around you.

The Bible is full of examples of people whose lives were reformed in these ways, beginning with Adam and Eve, whose lives changed more than any other lives in the history of the world, all because of a wrong choice. Noah and his family saw a whole new world, too. Abraham's life changed drastically when God called him to leave Ur and head out—only God knew where! Joseph's life went from spoiled rich boy to slave to prisoner to prime minister. And we can't even begin to imagine the change Jesus went through from Creator of the universe to baby on earth.

But generally, when we use the word, we mean a change from bad—from not following God—to good—deciding to commit yourself to Him. The Bible is full of examples of that, too. Some even received new names because of the great change—Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, Simon to Peter (though Jesus gave him that name in faith, long before Simon changed), Saul to Paul.

We will be learning about many of the “reformed characters” (good and bad) of the Bible this year.

A good illustration of the general principle of reformation is found in Jeremiah 18. Read or have someone read verses 1 through 4. What is being reformed? Who is doing the reforming? Does the clay have any say at all?

Now read verses 5 through 10. What is God saying needs reformed? Who will do the reforming? Not such an easy question to answer, is it? In verses 5 and 6, God says He has the



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power to make any changes He wants to. But then in verses 8 and 10 God shows that people's choices can have an influence on the shape of their destiny.

Read verse 11. Who has God been speaking to through Jeremiah? The whole nation, right? Notice that here, the language changes—"each one of you". And God specifically commands, "Reform your ways and your actions" (NASB).

Yet we cannot reform ourselves. It's a paradox. We can't act without God, and God won't act without us. We must have a partnership. It's the most crucial partnership you could ever form in your life. This year as we study, seek to grow ever deeper in your partnership with God.

### **Activity Suggestion**

Have the group stand in an open area and cooperate to form themselves into a letter A (or first letter of other alphabet) as seen from above. (It would be great, if practical, to have someone photograph from a height.) Once you have an A you are happy with, reform into a B, then a C, and so on. Do several letters—as many as you are happy with.

Then sit in a circle or group and discuss the experience. Share the photos if any.

- Did you enjoy the exercise? Why or why not? Was there chaos between letters? Were some letters easier or harder to move between?
- Did a leader appear, and if so, did others follow willingly, or was there argument and debate about how best to continue or several people trying to lead?
- What analogies and ideas can you draw from this exercise that illustrate transformation in real life?
- Is chaos always bad?
- How much can we or can we not help each other in personal transformation?
- What is the role of the individual in group transformation?
- And any other questions or ideas you think of.

## 7 DAYS OF SOUL FOOD

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# 7 DAYS OF SOUL FOOD

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### GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SDA YOUTH MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

Write about each of the following in your prayer journal this week. Strive to use language of emotion, thought, physical health and strength, or spirit on the given days.

1. **Day 1:** Reread the story of the potter in Jer. 18:1-11. You can read on if you wish, to find out what happened in the story of Judah at that time. Consider the mystery of the divine-human partnership that brings reformation. God could just make us be good, couldn't He? Or would that be truly good? Why does God need us? Why do we need God? Have you ever tried to change yourself? How did that go?
2. **Day 2:** Heart: Reformation begins here. Fortunately for us, God has already promised us that He will do the changing. Unlike clay, we have a say. All we have to do is stay pliant in his hands. Potters keep their clay wet constantly. If it dries out, it will no longer be form-able, let alone reform-able. One of the images for the Holy Spirit in the Bible is living water. How can you cooperate to keep your heart flowing with the Holy Spirit's power and love? The good news is, even if our hearts have grown hard, God can fix that. Read Ezekiel 36:26. Write God's promise to you and your answer to Him.
3. **Day 3:** Mind: The story of the Protestant Reformation is largely one of mind. It hinged on things like being able to read Latin or not, being able to translate from Latin to another language, and being able to explain doctrines and define clergy abuses. Read and compare Romans 12:2 and Ephesians 4:23. Write your thoughts. How does God want to transform your mind this week?
4. **Day 4:** Strength/body: A healthy body makes things of the spirit far easier to understand and implement. Read 3 John, verse 2. Are there physical reforms you need to make so that your whole self will be in better health? How will you and God cooperate to strengthen your body this week?
5. **Day 5:** Soul/spirit: Read Psalm 51, from verse 10 onward. (If you are feeling a need to repent from anything, read the whole psalm.) This part of the psalm is universal, for all souls in need of God. As you prayerfully ponder the heart/mind/body insights God has given you so far this week, how do you see your whole spirit being reformed and renewed?



## 7 DAYS OF SOUL FOOD

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6. **Day 6:** As we learned this week, all large reforms begin with individuals. But they don't end there. Do you see a need for reform within your family, friends, school, workplace, or church? Pray (before you do or say anything, pray hard!) about what God might need you to do or say (or not do or not say) to help share with others close to you the blessed reformation principles you are discovering.
7. **Day 7:** Use day 7 to create something beautiful that reflects what you have learned.
  - Write a poem or song or story.
  - Create a poster.
  - Sing or play an instrument.
  - Write a letter.
  - Paint or draw a picture. Make a sign.
  - Do some sidewalk chalk art or writings.
  - Build something.
  - Create a podcast or blog post or Twitter post(s).
  - Make food and give it to someone in need.

Use whatever creativity God has given you. We all have something. Share the love!

## DRAMA/SKIT

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Note: Most of the skits in this series will be largely fictional, in the sense that even though they are from a true Bible story, we may not have the actual words the characters said and will have to create them from the context.

However, in this case, we have records of just what was said and done by whom, when. Very little of this skit is created or embellished, except that I have simplified and modernized the language.

It will be easiest to print out multiple copies and have people read their lines unless you have a lot of time for rehearsal.

**Important note:** Quote from the Wikipedia article referenced below. According to tradition, Luther is said to have declared, "Here I stand, I can do no other, and "before concluding with" God help me. Amen." However, there is no indication in the transcripts of the Diet or in eyewitness accounts that he ever said this, and most scholars now doubt these words were spoken.

Therefore, I have left them out of this play.

### **Sources used for this lesson:**

1. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-28/1521-diet-of-worms.html> (The most interesting details are in this one.)
2. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Diet-of-Worms-Germany-1521>
3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diet\\_of\\_Worms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diet_of_Worms)

## DRAMA/SKIT: Luther at the Diet of Worm

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### DRAMA/SKIT: Luther at the Diet of Worm

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A SHORT SKIT (ABOUT 15 MINUTES)

#### CHARACTERS

1. Narrator
2. Martin Luther, reformer and theologian
3. Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, only 19 years old
4. Johann Eck, assistant to Archbishop of Trier, spokesman for emperor
5. Jerome Meander, official papal representative
6. Dr. Jerome Schurff, Wittenberg professor in Canon Law, Luther's lawyer
7. Imperial marshal, Ulrich von Pappenheim
8. Herald, Caspar Sturm

#### PROPS

1. A chair, preferably large and fancy or draped with fancy cloth, in the front center for the emperor.
2. A stack of 25 small books on a small table or stand to one side near the chair.
3. A crown of some kind for the emperor would be nice.

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BEGIN:

**NARRATOR**

"A complex constellation of events and circumstances dominated Europe in the first two decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The rediscovery and study of Christian and Roman culture, known as 'renaissance' and 'humanism,' called into question much of the contemporary Christian culture. Discovery and exploration of a new, non-European world expanded trade and led to what was later called 'capitalism.' The Holy Roman Empire, a symbiotic relationship between spiritual and temporal rulers – pope and emperor – were being threatened by a massive invasion of Muslims led by Turkish sultans. Moreover, the unity of Christendom was being imperiled by the fast-growing reform movement started by Martin Luther. In this turbulent era, the diet (assembly) held at Worms in 1521 was one attempt to preserve that unity."

**NOTE TO NARRATOR:** (THIS IS A QUOTE FROM AN ARTICLE ON CHRISTIANITY TODAY'S WEBSITE. YOU CAN TELL YOUR AUDIENCE THAT THE ONLINE REFERENCE IS AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO READ MORE.)

**SLIGHT PAUSE AND THEN NARRATOR CONTINUES**

October 31, 1517. Martin Luther nails his 95 theses criticizing papal teachings and actions to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral.

**SLIGHT PAUSE AND THEN NARRATOR CONTINUES**

June, 1520. Luther's teachings and writings are raising an increasing storm of protest

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and praise in Europe. In June of this year, Pope Leo X puts out a document condemning 41 of Luther's propositions, including some of the 95 theses, and insisting that he recant.

SLIGHT PAUSE AND THEN NARRATOR CONTINUES

January, 1521.

Luther has refused to recant. On January 3, he is excommunicated. The Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, now only nineteen years of age, should arrest and execute Luther, but Luther lives in the district ruled by Elector Frederick III the Wise, and the Elector intervenes. He has recently formed the University of Wittenberg, and Luther is a very popular professor there. Frederick declares that Luther will instead appear for a hearing at the Diet of Worms. The emperor guarantees Luther's safe-conduct to the hearing, which is held from January 28 through May 25, 1521. Emperor Charles V presides.

(PAUSE WHILE EMPEROR CHARLES GOES TO HIS SEAT, WALKING WITH GREAT POMP AND MAJESTY. ECK AND MEANDER FOLLOW. THEY STAND BEHIND HIS CHAIR SLIGHTLY BEHIND AND TO EACH SIDE OF HIM.)

**April 16, 1521.** Luther is summoned to appear before the emperor.

**April 17.** The imperial marshal, Ulrich von Pappenheim, and the herald, Caspar Sturm, come for Luther. Almost all Germany is cheering for Luther. (Signal for audience to cheer.)

NARRATOR SITS DOWN AS PAPPENHEIM AND STURM GO TO GET LUTHER, TAKING THEIR TIME.

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WHILE THEY ARE WALKING...

### LEANDER

(Acts horrified at the cheering. Turning away from the emperor as if doing something in secret, pretending to write, he says as if to himself--) I'd better send a secret message to Rome. "Your holiness, this is terrible! Nine-tenths of the people are shouting 'Luther!' and the other tenth are crying 'Death to the Roman Court!' "

(Pappenheim and Sturm, with Schurff walking beside Luther, escort Luther to stand before the emperor. Have them face each other across the center, Pappenheim and Sturm on one side, Luther and Schurff on the other, so that the audience can see them but they still seem to be somewhat facing the emperor.)

### STURM

Hear ye, hear ye! The Diet now stands in session to consider indictments against Dr. Martin Luther, enemy of the church! His Majesty, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V presiding!

### PAPPENHEIM

Remember, Dr. Luther, you should speak only in answer to direct questions from the presiding officer, Johann Eck.

### ECK

(Sternly, gesturing to the stack of books) Dr. Luther, are these your books, and are you ready to revoke their heresies?

### SCHURFF

Please have the titles read.



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**ECK**

(Tips head and pretends to read spines of books, letting his voice die away as if there are more.) The 95 Theses, Resolutions Concerning the 95 Theses, On the Papacy at Rome, Address to the Christian Nobility, The Babylonian Captivity of the Church, On the Freedom of a Christian...etc., etc., etc.

**LUTHER**

(Pauses) I need to have time to pray and consider my answer.

**ECK**

(Confers in whispers with the emperor)  
You may have until tomorrow at 4 pm. No later!

(All participants freeze in place.)

**NARRATOR**

April 18, 1521. Four o'clock in the afternoon.

**ECK**

Well, Herr Luther, do you have an answer yet? Are these your books, and do you stand ready to revoke their heresies?

**LUTHER**

(bows) My lords, your serene majesty, I apologize that I lack the etiquette of the court. I have prayed for long hours, consulted with friends and mediators, and I do have my answer. They are all my books, but as for the second question, they are not all of one sort. I place my writings in three categories:

- (1) Works which are well received by even my enemies: those I will not reject.



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- (2) Books which attack the abuses, lies and desolation of the Christian world and the papacy: those, I believe, cannot safely be rejected without encouraging abuses to continue. To retract them would be to open the door to further oppression. If I now recant these, then, I would be doing nothing but strengthening tyranny.

(Emperor half rises from his seat, others look as if they wish to harm Luther. Luther raises his voice and continues, and they subside, but still look angry.)

- (3) Attacks on individuals. (Luther bows his head humbly, then raises his head and says) I apologize for the harsh tone of these writings. However, I do not reject the substance of what I taught in them. If anyone can show me from the Scriptures that I am in error, then I will reject them. (Takes a deep breath, looks up to heaven for a moment, and concludes.) Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen.

**ECK**

(Angrily) You are acting like a heretic! Martin, there is no one of the heresies which have torn the bosom of the church, which has

## DRAMA/SKIT: Luther at the Diet of Worm

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not derived its origin from the varying interpretation of the Scripture. The Bible itself is the arsenal whence each innovator has drawn his deceptive arguments. Anyone can make it say what he wishes it to say!

**LUTHER**

I stand on what I have said.

**ECK**

Eck (turns away) on your head be it, then.

**EMPEROR**

We will withdraw to consider sentence.

(Luther, Pappenheim, Sturm, and schurff leave. The Emperor, Eck, and Leander huddle to confer silently, though they may use gestures during the narrator's speech.)

**NARRATOR**

Private conferences are held to determine Luther's fate. Before a decision is reached, Luther is persuaded to flee. During his return to Wittenberg, he disappears.

**May 26, 1521.** The emperor decrees the Edict of Worms, condemning Luther.

(Narrator remains at post while emperor reads.)

**EMPEROR**

(Reading from scroll or from script)  
Martin Luther is hereby declared to be an obstinate heretic. His writings are banned and anyone who reads or possesses any of the said writings will be punished. For this reason we forbid anyone from this time forward to dare, either by words or by deeds, to receive, defend, sustain, or favor the said Martin



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Luther. On the contrary, we want him to be apprehended and punished as a notorious heretic, as he deserves, to be brought personally before us, or to be securely guarded until those who have captured him inform us, whereupon we will order the appropriate manner of proceeding against the said Luther. Those who will help in his capture will be rewarded generously for their good work.

### NARRATOR

In short, Luther was condemned to death, though in absentia. It was later discovered how he had disappeared. Elector Frederick arranged a "kidnapping" of the homeward-bound Luther and hid him at Wartburg, his castle in Thuringia. Luther stayed there until March 1522, when unrest drove him to return to Wittenberg. The edict was never actually enforced, but it inhibited Luther's travels throughout his lifetime and made him dependent on his prince for protection.

In conclusion, let us hear what Ellen White had to say about the man Martin Luther. "Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. Zealous, ardent, and devoted, knowing no fear but the fear of God, and acknowledging no foundation for religious faith but the Holy Scriptures, Luther was the man for his time; through him God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world". *The Great Controversy*, p. 121.

The End