

**Reformation Sunday**  
**500th Anniversary**  
**October 29, 2017**



On October 31, 1517, a little-known Monk named Martin Luther took a hammer and nailed his 95 Theses (Truth Propositions) to the wooden doors of the Wittenberg Chapel.

Martin Luther's act produced a spiritual earthquake that literally changed the world. At the heart of Luther's concern was the Church's departure from the Gospel and its recovery. God revealed the truth of his Word to a miserable monk, setting him free and so it is for us. Right standing with God comes not by works of righteousness, not by purchasing indulgences, not by praying to the saints. It comes by God's grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

Luther poured over the Scriptures, particularly Paul's letter to the Romans, and one section, became Luther's key verse about his life, Romans 1:16-17; *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. <sup>17</sup> For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

Martin Luther ignited a flame for the gospel. Five hundred years later, it is our turn, our generation to nurture and guard this flame. It is our time and turn to share the gospel.

Here are four common hurdles to overcome in sharing Christ. Work on them so that they don't become barriers to sharing the gospel: Conviction, Commonality, Courage, and Criticalness.

Let's look at the Apostles Paul and understand how he overcame his hurdles; from 1 Corinthians 9:16-27.

**#1. Conviction;** true evangelist is one who understands that daily they must die to themselves, so that they can be in harmony to God's will.

- Paul shares that the salvation of others was more important than claiming, possessing and preserving his own rights.
- Paul's ministry was founded on a healthy view of God and His purposes and not a healthy self-esteem.
- Paul modeled how he denied self by adapting his personal behavior and methods of evangelizing to save some.

**#2. Commonality;** humanity has common ground; we were all created by God, we are all sinners, we all need saved, and we all need a Savior.

- Paul's strategy for winning and saving others is he sought common ground with everyone which means ignoring barriers. Paul's strategy was to use his Christian freedom to become the slave of all.

**#3. Courage;** the secret to a joy-filled life is dying to self and embracing God's will and that takes courage.

- Three ingredients that will keep us nourished with God and build up our courage: prayer, fasting, and studying the Word of God.

**#4. Criticalness;** nothing is more worthy of our time and effort than helping people get right with God before it is too late for them.

- Ponder the wrath of God that is coming. Meditate and reflect on it. Dwell on it until the reality of the wrath of God becomes a fire within us to share.

Notes: