

LUTHER EXHIBITION [from front cover contd.]

enjoyed in Belfast politically, educationally, scientifically, religiously, musically, socially and linguistically without recognising the influence of Luther upon our everyday life.” Alderman Haire said: “This is a truly fascinating exhibition which gives extraordinary insight into Martin Luther and the legacy of the Reformation – a legacy that is still felt today across many aspects of our everyday life.”

The exhibition launch included a talk on Martin Luther by Dr Ian Brown, a lecturer in Historical Theology. Later this month, Rev Johnstone will deliver a separate lecture on the relevance of Luther today. This talk at the library takes place on **Friday 27 October at 1pm**. The Linen Hall Library is open Mon. to Fri., 9.30am to 5.30pm, and on Saturday from 9.30am to 4pm.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

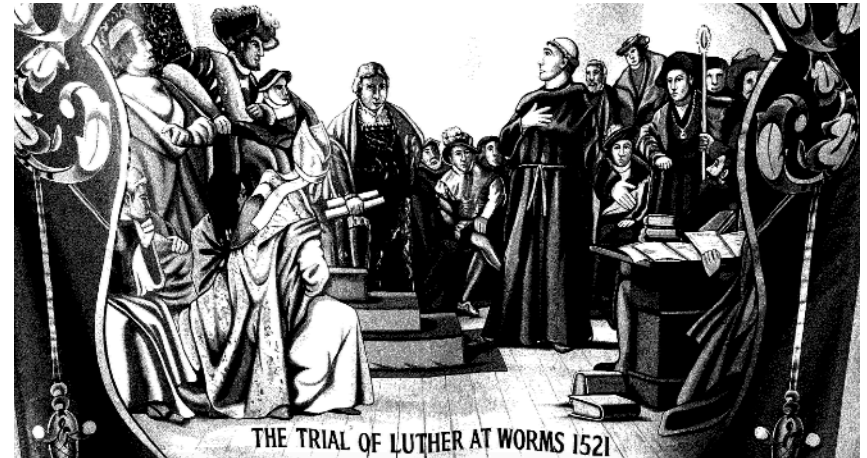
- 22-23 October: **Harvest Services** in Martyrs; Lord’s Day 11.30am (Rev. Colin Mercer) & 7.00pm (Rev. Stanley Barnes); Monday 8.00pm (Rev. Ian Harris).

MEETINGS TODAY

- Sunday School/Bible Class – 10.15am | Bible Class – 3.10pm | Sandy Row Sunday school – 3.10pm.
- Morning Worship – 11.30am: *Sixth Message in our Studies on the Book of Galatians* | Evening Service – 7.00pm.

INSPIRATION IN A SENTENCE

“We have enough arguments right here to conclude that justification is by faith alone. How can the Law effect our justification, when Paul so plainly states that we must be dead to the Law if we want to live unto God? If we are dead to the Law and the Law is dead to us, how can it possibly contribute anything to our justification? There is nothing left for us but to be **justified by faith alone.**” [Martin Luther]



LUTHER EXHIBITION AT THE LINEN HALL LIBRARY

Belfast’s Linen Hall library is hosting an “expansive and thought-provoking” exhibition marking **the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation**. The display of memorabilia and literature relating to Martin Luther is open throughout the month of October. The Orange Order said the display is the highlight of a programme of events it has organised in the city to commemorate the theological milestone. The free exhibition contains a number of historical pieces, including two extremely rare books provided by the library. They are Luther’s *Divine Discourses*, dated 1652, translated from German to English, and *Luther*, a play by John Osborne first performed in Paris in 1961.

The theological display was officially opened by Belfast’s High Sheriff, Alderman Tom Haire. Grand Chaplain, Rev Dr Ron Johnstone, said the purpose of the presentation was to aid a greater understanding of Luther and the legacy of the Reformation: “One cannot understand the modern benefits



KEEP IT IN RUINS!

Text: **Galatians 2:18-21.**

Some ruins are worth rebuilding, others are not. In Paul's case, he was determined that the old religious apparatus that had been dismantled after his conversion to Christ needed to remain as a pile of rubble; **2:18.**

[1] LIFE IN CHRIST IS FOUNDED UPON A CRUCIFIXION; **2:19-21.**

If men could only grasp that a holy God requires complete moral perfection, they would immediately realise the total futility of their own efforts to achieve salvation. Men need to understand (i) the fleshed-out implications of the demands of God's law (**Matthew 5:17-48**) and (ii) their failure to fully implement this law: breakage at even one point results in a broken law (**James 2:10**, cf. **1 Kings 8:46; Romans 3:23**). It is only when he recognises that it is humanly impossible to reach heaven by the works of the law that he will readily embrace the work of Christ.

Of course the law remains valid and important for the Christian; it is good, righteous and useful (**Romans 7:12,16; 1 Timothy 1:8**) – and while it has no power to save, it does have power to guide and help us know the mind of God. Concerning the law and the Christian's freedom the Bible teaches:

(a) I AM DELIVERED FROM THE LAW:

- (i) from the Law's Condemnation,
- (ii) from the Law as my Holiness,
- (iii) from the Law being the Measurement of my spirituality,
- (iv) from using the Law against others,
- (v) from the Pride of keeping the law.

(b) BUT I DELIGHT IN THE LAW:

- (i) as the Law reflects the mind of my Father,
- (ii) as the Law helps me to measure my progress,
- (iii) as the Law is a road map flagging up the minefields,

- (iv) as the Law teaches me of my need for Christ,
- (v) as the Law is intended to drive me to the Gospel.

The law is an X-ray that reveals sin but cannot remove it; that shows the malady but cannot provide the remedy; that condemns sin but cannot redeem from it.

[2] LIFE IN CHRIST FURNISHES A CONTRAST; **2:19-20.**

Paul's 'polestar of faith' is found in **Galatians 2:20**: the world has sympathy for me in my crucifixion because it incorrectly judges that this is a morbid experience – but has no notion of the expansiveness and enjoyment of the life I have in Christ.

What the world advertises as "life" results, not in satisfaction, but in death (cf. **1 John 2:16; Jeremiah 2:13; John 4**); what Christ advances as death ("crucified") issues in abundance satisfaction and eternal life (**Galatians 2:20; John 10:10**).

[3] LIFE IN CHRIST FLOURISHES THROUGH CONVICTION; **2:20.**

(a) THE SOURCE OF THIS LIFE. As with deep-sea divers who, while working on the ocean floor, live by the oxygen pumped down to them from above, so our life in this world is sustained by that higher life which we receive from Christ. Martin Luther described this as, "*My physical life 'in the flesh' is but the mask under which lives another, namely, Christ, my true life.*"

(b) THE STABILITY OF THIS LIFE. While many people today may profess faith, what that 'faith' is resting on is rarely obvious. The validity of faith depends upon the stability of its object / foundation.

(c) THE SENSITIVITY OF THIS LIFE. The tree on Calvary is a testament to our Saviour's love for us. To be able to say that Christ "*loved me, and gave Himself for me*" is refreshingly personal.