

Table of Contents

Why Celebrate Reformation Day? 1

What Is a Reformation Party? 3

Learn About the Reformation and the Reformer 5

Reformation Day Project Ideas 8

A Group Time 9

Printed Programs 10

Costumes 11

Decorations 12

Music, Pictures, and Food 15

General Information About Booths 17

How to Design Your Own Booths 20

Group Games 22

Design a Master Plan 23

General Resources About the Reformation 25

Plans for a Party Celebrating the Life of Martin Luther 27

Martin Luther: The Man 29

Martin Luther: Resources 30

Martin Luther Quiz 33

Suggested Program 37

A Papal Indulgence 38

A Reformation Play 39

Hymns of Martin Luther 45

Booths 53

Plans for a Second Party Celebrating the Life of Martin Luther 70

Suggested Program 71

Martin Luther's Definition of Faith 72

"The Nicene Creed" 73

Booths 75

Plans for a Party Celebrating the Life of John Calvin 99

John Calvin: Resources 100

John Calvin Quiz 102

Sample Schedule 104

The Genevan Psalter 105

Quotations 107

Booths 109

Organizational Helps 128

Plans for a Party Celebrating the Life of Martin Bucer 135

Martin Bucer: Resources 136

Quiz 137

Suggested Program 139

Booths 140

Resources on Other Reformers 160

Making Costumes 164

Other Products from Doorposts 167

Why Celebrate Reformation Day?

October 31, 1517, was one of the turning points in the history of the world. On that day Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenburg Church, and with that deed, the Protestant Reformation was born.

The Reformation Party at our church was born in the hearts of parents who wanted their children to understand and appreciate the story of the Protestant Reformation. How did the Reformation begin? Who was Martin Luther? How did God use the devoted lives of godly men and women to change the course of history?

Parents also wanted their children to have godly heroes – men and women who trusted God and obeyed Him, regardless of the cost. History continually shows us that God fulfills His plan for the world through the obedient actions of His children.

A simple play was written and performed, games were enjoyed, songs were sung, and of course, food was shared.

The first year we attended our church's Reformation Party our oldest, Daniel, was 6 years old. Joseph was 3, and Benjamin was a toddler. Their simple costumes were too-big pullover sweaters from the thrift store, "shower cap"-style hats made from cast-off clothing, colored tights and rubber boots.

We were led outside into the street where we followed "Martin Luther" to the front door of the church and watched him nail his 95 Theses to the door. When we came inside, we watched and listened as "Martin" sat at his candlelit table, writing his thoughts, which were narrated by another voice for us so we could hear what he was writing. I still have vivid memories of that evening.

12 years later the boys and several of their friends formed a troop of "pike men." They dressed in shirts and pants they had modified themselves, felt caps they had made, sashes, tights, and leather shoes. With their homemade long-handled pikes, they made an impressive escort as they marched everyone from the booths to the fellowship room for the singing and lecture time.

Reformation Day is one of the highlights of our year. With a house full of history-lovers, our family has helped organize several of the parties at our church. The bulk of what you will see in this book is what we have developed for those parties. But we also include ideas that other people have used.

Over the years the style of our Reformation parties has varied, depending upon who is organizing, how busy people are, what day of the week Reformation Day falls on, the location being used, and other factors. When most of the children in our church were young, we focused on carnival-type booths with prizes and

2 *Why Celebrate?*

refreshments. When Reformation Day fell on a Saturday, we shared a full medieval style potluck meal as part of the festivities. As children continue to grow, the older youth have produced their own dramas with a "dinner theater" atmosphere. Some years we have had men give talks about famous Reformers and their beliefs. Other years we have spent more time singing the Reformation hymns together.

The style varies from year to year, but some things remain the same -- we have always learned more about the men that God so powerfully used during the Reformation, and we have always come away challenged to be used by God to reform our own lives and the culture around us.

Our prayer is that this book will inspire you to learn, as we have, from the lives of God's great servants of the past. May His reformation continue on in our hearts, in our families, in our churches, and in our world.

What Is a Reformation Party?

During the Protestant Reformation the great grace of God brought together circumstances and obedient men, and used them to turn the course of history. To understand this period of history, and to learn from its courageous men, exposes our families to some of the great heroes of our faith. How did God prepare these men? What were the challenges they faced? How did they respond to danger and adversity? What motivated them?

This book is designed to help the members of church congregations, children's clubs, and homeschool support groups celebrate and learn about the lives of these great servants of God.

An individual family could also glean ideas to use for a unit study on the Reformation, consummating with a family party. A family could also serve neighbors and gain evangelistic opportunities by providing a fun and wholesome activity for neighborhood families.

A Reformation Party can take many forms:

- *A medieval-style banquet catered by the young people of your group and served to the adults and younger children*
- *A potluck of medieval foods brought by those coming to the party*
- *An informal time of group games and refreshments with a talk or two about a particular Reformer*
- *A carnival-like atmosphere with games and craft booths that revolve around a Reformer's life, with a group time of talks and singing and refreshments*
- *A well-rehearsed dramatic production presented by members of your group*
- *A costume party with medieval-style dancing and food*
- *An evening of talks, music, and refreshments*
- *An informal gathering to watch the movie, **Martin Luther**, with refreshments*
- *A party that simultaneously examines the lives of the major Reformers – Luther, Calvin, Knox, and Zwingli – reading prayers and writings of each, singing their songs, learning about how each influenced the others*
- *A family sharing in a medieval meal, followed by activities that focus on a Reformer that they have been studying together*

The character and size of your group, the goals you have, your budget, and the willingness of helpers will all contribute to the type of party you choose to have.

4 *What Is a Reformation Party?*

This book primarily focuses on providing details for organizing a variety of booths and activities. These booths are designed for fun and for teaching, and have appealed to children and adults of all ages. (Young people who think they are too old to have fun can participate by helping in the booths. In our experience, these kids have always had a good time working together to give others a good time.)

This book offers a sampling of many different ideas. You will be able to choose from the many ideas to design a party that suits your needs. Don't think that you have to do everything in this book to have a successful party. You will become overwhelmed and discouraged.

Read through the ideas, highlighting ones that you find particularly interesting. Then choose from those ideas for your first party. You may choose to use only one idea, or you may take the specific plans for one of the four parties outlined and follow them exactly as they are. Keep it simple or make it elaborate. The goal is to learn more about the Reformation and the men God used to accomplish it. Your group will be blessed by any effort you invest.