

# Reformed Faith and Life

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“ Keep preaching the word, in season and out of season ”

## Opposite reactions witness a sharpe divide

What is the surest way to know that the message of the Gospel faithfully preached is an offence to the world, at the same time foolish and scandalous? You know it when you start receiving hate speech on the Facebook page where you post articles or meditations presenting the self-revealed God of Scripture, the eternal Father of Jesus-Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of mankind ([www.facebook.com/foietviereformees](http://www.facebook.com/foietviereformees)). There you see how fierce defenders of “freedom of speech” would have you banned from the web if they only could, perhaps even sending you to some sort of reeducation camp to teach you the proper use of “freedom” – that is, alienation from your Creator and Redeemer...Do you on the other hand post on that same Facebook page a video of a beautiful concert featuring J.S Bach’s magnificent *Magnificat* (based on Mary’s song in Luke 1:46-55), inviting viewers to take time to listen to it during this Christmas season and giving them a translation of the words of the Gospel? You receive a host of words of praise and thanks for this unique artistic experience which brings joy and light in their lives... J.S. Bach’s compositions are indeed wonderfully crafted, and provide us with an overwhelming sense of perfection and exaltation; however they cannot be dissociated from his deeply rooted faith in the Triune God. One viewer commented thus: *Yes, listening to Bach brings me back to my innermost where lies hidden, sometimes forgotten, the one who animates and comforts us.*

These two apparently contradictory experiences, taking place within the scope of two or three days only, reminded me of Paul’s words in 2 Cor. 2:14-16: *But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.* Whether your ministry will be a fragrance of life or of death to this one or that one (ultimately only God knows that) you must never doubt that through your ministry, God will always lead you in triumphal procession in Christ. The exhortation is thus to keep preaching the word, in season and out of season (2 Tim. 4:2).



J.S. Bach (1685-1750) composer of the famous “Magnificat” in D Major BWV 243 (1728)

# “ There will be a host of celebrations of the Reformation in France too ”

## Celebrating the reformation

In a few days we will enter in AD 2017, celebrating the 500th anniversary of what is considered to be the beginning of the Reformation. No doubt, there will be a host of celebrations in France too. No doubt too, most of these will come from people, groups and communities which have long abandoned (not to say betrayed) the true spirit of the Reformation, that is, a return to the unbreakable bond between the Holy Spirit and Scripture bringing us to the incarnate Word, Jesus-Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Lord and Savior of mankind, to the glory of the Father. We can be sure that there will be all kinds of attempts to make of the Reformation a movement of emancipation of the autonomous reason, of free will, of systematic doubting, in short exactly the opposite of what it purported to be. Attempts from Rome to absorb or hijack this unique heritage can be expected too. That is why it is so important to continue proclaiming boldly and without faltering the Gospel of light and truth, using all the media which are at our disposal. We should remember the decisive role which the newly invented printing press played during the Reformation, with extremely learned, dedicated and courageous printers who put all their resources and energy to spread the Good News, whether it be through bibles translated and printed in different languages, or via exegetical works or treatises defending the faith. They often put their own lives in danger in a time when confessing the sole lordship of Jesus-Christ against false claims of human institutions and hierarchies could easily bring you to the stake.

## New Soundcloud channel

Our newly opened Soundcloud channel offers an opportunity to reach out to those people who do not easily read but will listen to a short message on their tablet or smartphone. Those of you who are into listening to some French might want to tune to this channel where a number of short podcasts are already available:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-924274426>

As we enter the Christmas season, which sheds light over the whole year and our whole lives, let us not forget about those in the world for whom the confession of Christ as Lord and Savior does not just bring hate speech on their Facebook page, but signifies literally their physical persecution, even a death sentence... May we all grow closer to our Lord, united in the same unshakable hope: *Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, he will surely do it* (1 Thess. 5:23-24).

In his name  
Rev Eric Kayayan



A printing press in the time  
of the Reformation

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