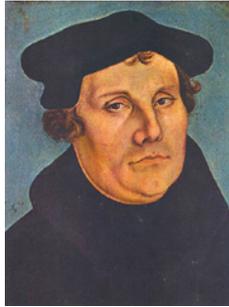


Martin Luther, Reformer

His Life
His Work
His Legacy



Lesson One: Luther Searches for Peace

Timeline

- November 10, 1483 – Luther born in Eisleben, Germany, to Hans and Margarethe Luther
- May 1501 – Luther enrolls at the University of Erfurt
- September 1502 – Luther earns his Bachelor of Arts degree
- January 1505 – Luther earns his Master of Arts degree
- May 1505 – Luther begins studying law at University of Erfurt
- July 2, 1505 – Luther, after taking some “time off” from studies at home, is caught in a thunderstorm on his way back to Erfurt and vows to become a monk
- July 17, 1505 – Luther enters the Augustinian order in Erfurt
- May 1507 – Luther ordained as a priest and celebrates his first Mass (Communion Service)
- 1508 – Luther teaches philosophy and studies theology at the University of Wittenberg
- October 1509 – Luther returns to Erfurt
- November 1510 – Luther sent to Rome on Augustinian business
- April 1511 – Luther returns from Rome and is “exiled” to Wittenberg

- October 1512 – Luther promoted to Doctor of Theology in Wittenberg

People, Places and Things

- Erfurt: Home of University of Erfurt and the Black Cloister monastery of St. Augustine.
- Augustinian Order of Hermits: The order of monks that Luther joined.
- John Staupitz: Leader of the Augustinian order in Germany.
- Wittenberg: A town northeast of Erfurt. Home of the new University of Wittenberg.
- Frederick the Wise: Prince of Saxony, the territory where Wittenberg is located.
- Rome: Center of the Catholic Church.
- Julius II: Pope from 1503-1513.
- Relics: Supposed physical remnants from the Church’s past.

Discussion (00:00 – 21:53)

1. Luther naturally looks to heaven and talks to God during a thunderstorm. Why?
2. Why couldn’t Luther administer the sacrament correctly?
3. Put into your own words what Luther believed about God at this point in his life.

4. Stand in his shoes and imagine you believe as he did. List ways that would change your life.
5. What was Luther arguing with the devil about?
6. Why did Luther climb the steps in Rome? How did he feel afterwards?
7. Romans 3:20 says, **No one will be declared righteous in [God's] sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.** Illustrate this truth with an example from Luther's early life.
8. Many people try to live a "good" life because they imagine that by obeying the right rules they will become better people. But laws can't make us better. At best, they can only make us act better. Use **Romans 8:1-4** to describe God's plan to make us better people.
9. What was missing from Luther's "biblical" studies?
10. Why was Luther initially unwelcome when he arrived in Wittenberg?
11. Finish: Luther realized that salvation may be found outside of an earthly church, but he knew that salvation could not be found outside of _____.
12. In Professor Karlstadt's classroom, Luther challenges the claim that Matthew 16:15-19 implies there is no salvation outside of the Roman Church. How do **John 14:6** and **Acts 4:8-12** show that salvation is found only in Christ?
13. In **Matthew 16:18**, what is the rock upon which Jesus promises to build his Church?
14. In this first segment, Luther's changing view of, and relationship with, God is explored. Two distinct images of God are depicted: an angry God and a merciful God. How do you think society generally views God? How do we view God? What challenges or opportunities does this create?

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Lesson Two: Luther Seeks Reform

Timeline

- 1513-1517 – Luther lectures successively on the Psalms, Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews in Wittenberg
- 1514 – Luther’s “Tower Experience” – when Romans 1:16-17 hit home for him
- October 31, 1517 – Luther posts the 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg
- April 1518 – Heidelberg Disputation – triennial meeting of the Augustinian order, where Luther was given the chance to publicly defend his theology. Rather than addressing indulgences, he spoke against salvation by works and for salvation by grace.
- September 1518 – Luther ordered to come to Augsburg to appear before Cardinal Cajetan and retract his errors

People, Places and Things

- Joachim and Albert: Brothers who bought the position of Archbishop of Mainz (Head of the Church in Germany) for Albert.
- Leo X: Pope from 1513-1521
- Letter of Indulgence: Piece of paper that reduced time in purgatory, often sold.
- John Tetzel: Dominican monk from Leipzig. Expert at selling indulgences.

- Jueterberg: Town where Tetzel set up shop, just outside Luther’s home territory of Saxony.
- Dominicans: Like the Augustinians, and order of monks. Very powerful in Rome.
- 95 Theses: Luther’s protest, primarily against the use of indulgences. Intended for scholarly debate.
- John Eck: Theologian from the University of Ingolstadt. Luther’s opponent at Heidelberg, accused Luther of heresy, disturbing the good order of the church, discouraging good works, and inciting rebelling among the common people.

Discussion (21:53 – 46:35)

1. Explain how Luther’s view of God changed (as described in his sermon in the opening scene of this section).
2. Luther had re-discovered Romans 1:17, “**For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’**” What word in the quote “The righteous will live by faith” held Luther’s attention early in his life? What word held his attention now?
3. What motivated people to buy indulgences from John Tetzel?

4. "If you lay a stone for St. Peter's Basilica, you lay a stone for your foundation of happiness in heaven." What false doctrines are found in this statement?
5. How might people today try to buy their way with God?
6. In Romans 1:17, Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, which is quoted twice more in Scripture (Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). Salvation by grace alone (*sola gratia*) through faith alone (*sola fide*) is the central theme running throughout the Bible (see Psalm 130; Isaiah 43:25; Isaiah 53; Luke 1:76-79; John 1:16-17; John 5:39; Acts 10:34-43; Galatians 1:8-9; Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 3:14-15). Luther said, "*This doctrine [justification by grace through faith] is the head and cornerstone. It alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and defends the church of God; and without it the church of God cannot exist for one hour...*" Why is this the most important teaching of the Christian Church?
7. Paul calls the Gospel of Jesus Christ the power of God for both Jews and Gentiles. Faith in the Messiah has always been the sole basis for a right relationship with God (see Genesis 15:6; Mark 16:17; John 3:16; John 20:31; Romans 3:21-24; Romans 4:1-3; Romans 10:8-17; Galatians 3:6-9; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 4:2; Hebrews 11; 1 Peter 1:3-9). Why should we remember this when reading the Bible? Read **Romans 8:1-4**. What do we need to distinguish carefully when reading Scripture?
8. Luther tried to earn God's favor by following the traditions and regulations of the church. In the end, as Staupitz reminds him in one early scene, Luther was "angry with God." Read **Hebrews 11:6**. How are good works done apart from faith worthless?
9. What was the point of Luther's attack on relics?
10. Luther dedicated his *Resolutions Concerning the 95 Theses* (which explained the theses in more detail), to Pope Leo X. He insisted that he would "*set forth nothing except what is found and can be found in the Holy Scriptures in the first place but also in the church Fathers as received by the Church of Rome and in the papal canons and decretals*" of church law. What motivated Luther to put up his 95 Theses? What was his goal?

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Lesson Three:
"Here I Stand"

Timeline

- October 12-14, 1518 – Luther appears before Cardinal Cajetan in Augsburg
- January 12, 1519 – Death of Maximilian I, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire
- June 28, 1519 – Election of Charles I of Spain as Emperor Charles V
- July 4-14, 1519 – Luther debates John Eck in Leipzig
- 1520 – Luther writes "On the Papacy at Rome," "Address to the Christian Nobility," "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," and "On the Freedom of a Christian"
- June 15, 1520 – *Exsurge Domine* – papal bull (decree) in which Luther is compared to a wild boar in the vineyard of the church and given 60 days to recant
- December 10, 1520 – Luther officially declared a heretic; Luther burned the decree
- January 27, 1521 – Diet (Assembly) begins in Worms, Germany
- April 16-18, 1521 – Luther's hearing at the Diet of Worms

People, Places and Things

- John Staupitz: Leader of the Augustinian order in Germany, Luther's spiritual "father."

- Frederick the Wise: Prince of Saxony, the territory where Wittenberg is located.
- Cardinal Cajetan: General of the Dominican order of monks
- Karl von Miltitz: Representative sent by Pope Leo X to get Frederick to give up Luther
- Golden Rose: Annual award from pope, offered to Frederick in an effort to get Luther
- Andreas Karlstadt: Luther's Fellow Professor in Wittenberg, also debated Eck in Leipzig
- Jerome Aleander: Italian Cardinal who represented the pope at Worms
- George Spalatin: Secretary to Prince Frederick of Saxony

Discussion (46:35-1:20:30)

1. Before he met with Cardinal Cajetan, Luther assumed that the church leaders would be happy to discuss his concerns. He *assumed* they believed the Word would be their guide, but this was not the case. The pope's representative says, "It is the pope who shall decide what is or is not beneficial to Christendom." Read **Isaiah 8:20** and **Galatians 1:6-9**. What's wrong with that statement?
2. Read **John 20:31** and **2 Timothy 3:14-15**. Why did Luther want so badly for people to read Scripture?
3. What was the church's claim about people's use of Scripture?

4. "I am interested in the truth." For what truth was Luther willing to risk everything?
5. What "truth" was weighing heavily on the mind of the church?
6. What issues does "truth" create for the church in a multicultural and multi-religious society?
7. Why was Luther hesitant to answer, when he initially appeared at the Diet of Worms?
8. People before Luther (like John Hus) had been burned alive for doing what he was doing, and Luther knew it. At Worms, Luther asked the Emperor for an extra day to think before he gave the Emperor a final answer about his writings. Imagine you are Luther during those final 24 hours. What doubts and fears and questions might have gone through your mind?
9. The night before Luther's moment in front of the emperor, the devil was tempting him. What may the devil have been tempting Luther to do?
10. Upon what basis did the church determine that Luther was a heretic?
11. Luther loved Psalm 118:8, "**It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.**" Paraphrase that verse for modern ears.

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Lesson Four:
Luther as Father

Timeline

- May 1521 – March 1522 – Luther in “Exile” at the Wartburg Castle, where he publishes a dozen books and translates the New Testament into German
- December 1, 1521 – Death of Pope Leo X
- December 3-4, 1521 – Luther visits Wittenberg as “Sir George”
- May 5, 1525 – Death of Prince Frederick the Wise
- June 13, 1525 – Luther marries Katharina von Bora
- 1526 – Diet (Assembly) of Speyer in which the German states agree upon “*cuius region, eius, religio*” (the legal religion of a state is that of its prince)
- October 1-4, 1529 – Luther debates the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper with Ulrich Zwingli at the Marburg Colloquy
- Summer 1530 – Luther at Coburg Castle during the Diet of Augsburg
- June 25, 1530 – Lutheran princes submit the “Augsburg Confession,” written by Philip Melanchthon
- 1534 – Complete Bible published in German
- February 1537 – Luther writes the Smalcald Articles, a summary of the faith for the Smalcaldic League, an alliance of Lutheran princes

- February 18, 1546 – Luther dies

People, Places and Things

- Edict of Worms: Decree issued by Emperor Charles V after Luther left Worms, declaring him an outlaw whom anyone could legally kill
- Andreas Karlstadt: Luther’s fellow professor in Wittenberg, preached unnecessary changes and destruction of church symbols in Luther’s absence
- Peasants’ Revolt (1524-1525): Uprising partly due to misunderstanding; nearly 100,000 died
- John the Steadfast: Brother of Frederick the Wise; Prince of Saxony 1525-1532
- John Frederick: Son of John the Steadfast; Prince of Saxony 1532-1547; Head of the Smalcaldic League
- Ulrich Zwingli: Former Swiss priest and reformer, who disagreed with Luther on the Lord’s Supper
- Torgau Articles: Document written by Luther and others in preparation for the Diet of Augsburg, formed the basis for the Augsburg Confession
- Augsburg Confession: Formal confession of what Lutherans believe; presented to Emperor Charles V in 1530
- Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560): Luther’s fellow professor in Wittenberg; Reformation leader, author of the Apology (Defense) of the Augsburg Confession; later prone to compromise

Discussion (1:20:30-end)

1. Why did Luther’s friends “kidnap” him?

2. Why was Karlstadt encouraging violence and tearing down churches? How did Luther respond?

3. React: "The Lutheran Reformation was just disagreements among scholars about doctrine."

4. Luther once said, "'Music is an outstanding gift of God and next to theology'" (*What Luther Says*, Vol. II, p. 979). One author wrote, "Music should never seek to be master over the text, but serve it by making it more memorable, and by helping to communicate its intellectual, but also its emotional, message. Music should make the liturgy of the church accessible to everyone. Any music that accomplishes these purposes, whether a folk tune, a chant, or a medieval chorale, Luther found to be suitable and of value in the worship of the reformation church." (Charles P. St-Onge, "Music, Worship and Martin Luther," 4-5)

The church attempted to outlaw the Bible in the common language. How would the gospel have continued to spread, even if the German Bible had been successfully outlawed?

5. Why did the emperor summon the princes to Augsburg? Recall what the Lutheran princes were willing to do for the sake of what they believed.

6. Read **Matthew 10:32-33** and **Ephesians 6:13-17**. What might we have to give up for the sake of the gospel in our day?

7. Luther found peace in knowing that God loved him unconditionally in Christ. God's love in Jesus moved Luther to acknowledge his Savior even when—literally—his life was on the line. This was the same motivation for St. Paul (see 2 Timothy 1:8-12). Read **Romans 8:28-39**. What gives us strength to acknowledge Christ in tough times?

8. 1 Corinthians 15:58, "**Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.**" Verses like this, no doubt, brought comfort to Luther and the other reformers. How can this verse comfort us as heirs of the Reformation today?

9. Take a moment and consider all that Martin Luther and all his fellow Lutherans went through in this film. Imagine they are standing in front of you right now. You ask them, "What are some things you don't want us to forget as Lutherans?" What would they tell you?

10. Name some of the ways Katharina was a blessing for Luther.