

DEFINING MOMENTS

MARTIN LUTHER – THE REFORMATION

1505 – Luther was struck by lightning

1507 - he began to study Roman Catholic theology and by age 26 he was already a senior lecturer at Erfurt University.

"I torment myself to death to procure peace with God for my troubled heart and my agitated conscience; but I was surrounded by horrible darkness, and could find peace nowhere."

1510 – Staupitz sent Luther to Rome to visit the Vatican

"Hail to thee, holy Rome! Thrice holy for the blood of martyrs shed here."

1512 – Luther received his Doctorate in Theology

"I swear to defend the gospel of truth with all my might."

Conversion:

Some – 1512-1516, BEFORE he pinned his 95 theses to the door

Others –1519, AFTER he pinned his 95 theses to the door.

"I laboured diligently and anxiously as to how to understand Paul's words in Romans 1:17 where he says, 'The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel.' I saw the difference, that law is one thing and gospel another. I broke through, and as I had formerly hated the expression 'the righteousness of God,' I now began to regard it as my dearest and most comforting word, so that this expression of Paul's became to me in very truth a gate to paradise."

Indulgences:

A Dominican monk, Johan Tetzel, began to sell indulgences in Germany to raise funds to renovate St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

"No sooner will the money clink in the box, than the soul of the departed will be free"

"Even if a man had committed a foul sexual assault upon the Virgin Mary that he could get an indulgence if he paid the appropriate fee."

"And if some persons cry out that I am a heretic (for the truth I preach is very injurious to their cash-box), I am not much disturbed by their yellings. They are men of diseased and clouded brains - men who have never felt the Bible, never read the Christian doctrine and who rot beneath the rags of their idle opinions . . . God grant them and us a true sense! Amen."

All Saints Day, October 31, 1517 - Luther nailed his ninety-five Theses (in Latin) to the church door at Wittenberg.

- (1) that an indulgence can never remit guilt - God has kept that in his own hand;
- (2) it cannot remit divine punishment for sin as that also is in God's hand alone;
- (3) it has no efficacy for souls in purgatory; and
- (4) the truly repentant Christian has already received pardon from God, and needs no indulgence.

"The Church has need of a Reformation. And this cannot be the work of a single man, such as the Pope, or of many men, such as the cardinals and the Fathers of the Councils, but it must be that of the whole world; or rather, it is a work which pertains to God alone. . . The dyke is broken, and it is no longer in our power to restrain the rushing and rolling floods."

"Are you athirst for murder? I assure you, you will not frighten me by the threatening din of your words. Though I be killed, Christ lives, Christ my Lord and the Lord of all, blessed forever more. Amen!"

"I would rather die than retract what I feel bound to teach."

June 15, 1520 – Pope Leo ratified and signed the bull excommunicating Luther and demanding all Luther's works be burned.

Luther responded

"My resolution is taken. I despise Rome's fury, and I despise her favour. No more reconciliation, no more communication with her forever! Let her condemn and burn my writings. I, in my turn, will condemn and publicly burn the Pontifical Law, that nest of all heresies. The moderation I have shown, to this hour, has been useless; I renounce it!"

"The pope's decretals are the devil's excretals!" When the bull was burning, they sang "We Praise Thee, O God."

1521 – Charles V called the Diet of Worms

Luther replied, "Though there were as many devils in Worms as tiles on its roofs, I would go."

Prayer:

"If the emperor desires a plain answer, I will give it to him. It is impossible for me to recant unless I am proved to be wrong by the testimony of Scripture. My conscience is bound to the Word of God. It is neither safe nor honest to act against one's conscience. Here I stand. So God help me. I cannot do otherwise."

25th June, 1530 – Emperor Charles V summoned the nobles and many theologians to Augsburg, Germany => The Augsburg Confession (28 articles)