



Who's Who in Church History

Lesson Nine

Martin "The Wild Boar" Luther



Who Wants to Be a Martin Millionaire?



Who was born in Eisleben Germany on November 10, 1483?

- A. Martin Luther**
- B. Mickey Mouse**
- C. George Burns**
- D. Jack Kelly**

Martin Luther's Childhood and Youth

Martin Luther (born as Martin Luder, later he called himself Luther) was born on November 10, 1483. Luther's father, a farmer's son, moved from Eisleben, to Mansfeld shortly after Luther's birth in 1484 to try to better the family's financial situation by mining copper. He was successful and already in 1491 the Luder's were one of the most respected families in Mansfeld. Luther's mother, Margarete Luder, had many children to look after and was a harsh disciplinarian.



What school did Martin Luther attend?

- A. University of Erfurt**
- B. Hogworts**
- C. University of Notre Dame**
- D. Wheaton College**

Martin attended the Latin school (Lateinschule) in Mansfeld where barbaric teaching methods of the Middle Ages still reigned. Luther had been described as a quiet, reserved yet talented student who was intimidated by the strict

order. In 1497, Luther went to Magdeburg (only in German) where he attended the school 'Brother's for living together (a boarding school; Bruder fuer Gemeinsamen Leben)' and then in 1498 went to Eisenach and lived with relatives. He was educated at the town's parish school in Eisenach.

Financially it was possible for the Luther's to send their son Martin to the university in Erfurt in 1501. Hans Luther, Martin's father, hoped to help his son by sending him to law school so he could later be a lawyer and have a secure future. The University of Erfurt, founded in 1392 was one of the best German universities at this time. This is most likely the reason Luther's father chose this university for his son.



Luther's Student Life in Erfurt

During Luther's time, before one could study a specific field (Law, Medicine, Theology), you had to learn the 7 liberal arts. Luther did this, received his Baccalaureate (the first level at the university) in 1502 and then received his Master's degree in 1505. His father hoped that the law studies would go as well, and that his son would soon have a good position in a law practice somewhere.

What fraternal order did Martin Luther Join in 1506?

A. The Augustinian Monks

B. The Shriners

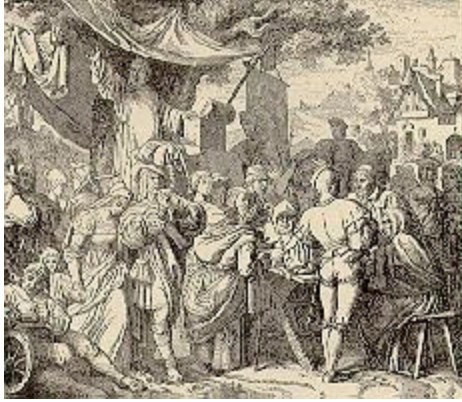
C. The Loyal Order of Water Buffalo

D. Skull and Bones

Luther's Life as a Monk

According to legend, it was during a terrible storm that Luther decided to become a monk. He did not change his mind when his friends and father tried to convince the successful student to continue his law studies. He entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt in 1505 and took his monk's vow in 1506. The life of a monk during Luther's time was hard, and consisted of fasting, prayer and work. A monk's day began at 3 am with the first hourly prayers. This time molded Luther; above all he found a close relationship to the Bible which characterized his later life and work.

In 1507, Luther was ordained as a priest in Erfurt and started studying Theology at the University of Erfurt. During his studies, he came into contact with the ideas of the Humanists and embraced their slogan 'Ad Fontes!' - Back to the Source! For Luther this meant the study of the Bible in its original Hebrew and Greek.



Martin Luther as Professor in Wittenberg

After receiving his doctorate in Theology in 1512, Luther took a position as Theology Professor at the Wittenberg University 'Leucorea'. He gave lectures over the Psalms (1514-15), Letter to the Romans (1515-16), Letter to the Galatians (1516-17), and Letter to the Hebrews (1517-18). This time is characterized by Luther's grappling with religious understanding. His decisive religious enlightenment is said to have come during his intensive study of the Letter to the Romans during which time he

realized that people receive justice through the grace of God, not through good works. In 1514 Luther became priest for Wittenberg's City Church.

On October 31 1517 what did Martin Luther nail to the door of the Castle Church?

- A. The 95 Theses**
- B. A Chinese restaurant menu**
- C. A note that they had tried to deliver a package**
- D. A door knocker**

Background

Luther observed that many people in Wittenberg were not coming to him for confession any more. They were going to towns in Brandenburg or Anhalt like Jüterbog or Zerbst to buy Indulgences. The practice of buying indulgences, which quasi replaced confession and allowed people to buy their salvation, was completely repulsive to Luther. He strongly believed that one lived a life of humility in order to receive God's grace.

After 1507, trade in Indulgences took a steep climb because both the Papal Court and Bishop Albrecht von Brandenburg Germany's representative for the sale of indulgence were in great financial trouble. In addition, the Dominican monk, Johann Tetzel, sold indulgences in the region around Wittenberg in a very ostentatious manner. Many stories started popping up about him such as, that Tetzel could redeem the sins of the deceased. Further sayings of Tetzel, such as, "When the money clangs in the box, the souls spring up to heaven", also brought protests from Luther.

October 31, 1517:

"Nailing the 95 Theses to the Door of the Castle Church"

Prior to October 31, 1517, Luther had preached against the indulgence trade. After reading an instruction manual for indulgence traders, he wrote a letter to his church superiors hoping to get rid of this abuse. In this letter he included 95 Theses that were to be used as the basis for a discussion on the topic.

Reactions to the 95 Theses

Luther sent his 95 Theses to a few bishops and some friends; therefore he did not expect or receive a prompt response. By the end of 1517, however, copies of the 95 Theses had been printed in Leipzig, Nuremberg and Basel. Some humanists and princes passionately approved of the theses, but parts of the Roman Church completely rejected them. The most vehement voice against the theses was the Indulgence Priest Tetzel, who supposedly categorized Luther as a follower of the heretic Jan Hus and threatened to have him burned at the stake.

At first the bishops reacted mildly, they informed the Pope of the 'rebel within the ranks' and instructed Luther's direct superior to take a moderate roll in calming him. A few bishops actually welcomed Luther's ideas for reform. Because of increasing pressure, Luther found it necessary to explain and clarify his theses in writing. In 1518, Luther himself said that he only wanted to take care of an abuse (indulgence) and was not striving to unhinge the papacy with his theses. The avalanche, however, was now unstoppable. The Papal Court reacted drastically to the alleged heretic and in 1518 an inquisition was begun in Rome. This quieted down in 1519 during the search for a successor to the deceased Emperor Maximilian. Once Karl the V was elected as emperor, the fight against Luther and his followers continued.

What did Martin Luther receive from the Pope in December of 1520?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| A. A papal bull of excommunication | B. A very nice Christmas card |
| C. A sincere complement | D. A nuggy |

Luther Distances Himself from the Papacy

Because of constant attacks from the Roman Church, Luther was forced to shape his ideology into an autonomous theology. During the years 1520-1521 he worked on the three great works *"Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation"*, *"The Babylonian Captivity"* and *"The Freedom of the Christian Man"*, thereby emotionally cutting himself off from Rome. The inquisition against Luther was taken up again in 1520, partly because of these works. The

Luther's Appearance at the Imperial Diet

Luther's appearance at the Imperial Diet was described as objective, clever and well thought out. He had to appear before the Emperor twice; each time he was clearly told to take back his teachings. Luther didn't see any proof against his theses or views that would move him to recant:



"Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of the popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other - my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen."

The infamous saying *"Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise."* does not come from Luther.

I am Finished!

After he left the negotiations room, he said, "I am finished." And he was for the time finished; Luther was dismissed, and not arrested because he had a letter of safe conduct (Schutzbrief) that guaranteed him 21 days of safe travel through the land. He headed home on April 25. When Luther and the princes who supported him left Worms, the emperor imposed an Imperial Act (Wormser Edikt): Luther is declared an outlaw (he may be killed by anyone without threat of punishment). On the trip home, Elector Friedrich the Wise allowed Luther to be kidnapped on May 4 (Luther knew about it beforehand). This took place on the one hand to guarantee Luther's safety and on the other hand to let him disappear from the scene for a short while; there were even rumors of Luther's death. This action also helped the Elector not to endanger himself because he could have been held liable for protecting an outlaw and heretic.

While in exile in Wartburg what did Martin translate into the common language in 11 weeks?

A. The New Testament.

B. His cell phone bill

C. A soufflé recipe.

D. His home owners associations covenants.

Luther as *Junker Jörg* at the Wartburg

On May 4, 1521 Elector Friedrich the Wise allowed Luther to be brought to the Wartburg near Eisenach. The powerful Elector hoped that taking Luther out of the limelight would weaken the constant attacks against the Reformation.

Luther lived incognito at the Wartburg; he called himself Junker Jörg (Knight George) and "grew his hair and a beard." Luther suffered from the exile "in the empire of outlaws" and complained of various physical ailments. In addition the many fights with Satan, recounted both by himself and friends, like the proverbial Throwing of the Inkwell must have been difficult times for him to work through...

Translation of the New Testament

Luther devoted himself to a new task. He translated the New Testament from its original Greek into German within eleven weeks; the work was later edited by Melanchthon and other specialists and printed in 1522. This so-called "September Testament" was tremendously popular in Protestant areas and as a result made a large contribution to the development of a standardized written German language. Later, parts of the Old Testament were also translated. In 1534, a complete German language Bible was printed and also had a large circulation.



Happenings in Wittenberg during Luther's Absence

Reformation theories were put into practice in Wittenberg, which had become the center of the Reformation. In protest, three priests married in 1521 and the worship service was also altered. Luther watched these changes favorably from a distance; however, he stayed in close contact with his supporters in Wittenberg through letters. It is important to emphasize the influence of Philipp Melanchthon and his work "Loci communes" (1521), which was the first formulation of Luther's teachings and was also a foundation for the theological works of the Reformation. In 1522, Luther returned to Wittenberg when the more radical functions of the Reformation appeared to have gained control (such as the iconoclastic movement under Andreas Bodenstein, aka Karlstadt).

In what war did Martin get involved with in 1525?

A. The peasant wars

B. The cola wars

C. Star Wars

D. World War II

Luther Returned to Wittenberg and Takes Over “The Scepter of the Reformation”

After the first iconoclastic movement in Wittenberg, Luther returned from exile. He even annulled some of the reformatory changes that he saw as dangerous because they would force people into a new belief, which he did not want to do. Luther returned to Wittenberg on March 6, 1521 and with his 'fasting sermons' brought the Reformation movement fwhich he thought had gotten too radical back to his moderate line. The outlaw's return was dangerous, but the reformers achieved partial success as far as Luther's safety was concerned: the Second Imperial Diet of Nuremburg declared the banishment of Luther as unenforceable. In 1524, however, at the Third Imperial Diet of Nuremburg the banishment was renewed, but the Reformation had rooted itself so deeply by then, that it seemed unlikely that Luther would be arrested. In the years that followed, Luther concentrated on spreading his beliefs through writings and sermons. In the work *Of the Worldly Authorities, and How Much Obedience one owes Them* Luther formulated the basis for his political ethics. Luther's moderate outlook comes to the foreground once again. From 1522-1524 Luther's preaching duties receive priority; he went on preaching trips throughout central Germany and during the fall of 1522 even preached in Erfurt and Weimar. Luther felt it was important to proclaim and illuminate the Gospel to the people.

With his writings *On the Order of Worship* and *Formula missae* Luther carried out his reforms in the worship service. A new order of social service was achieved with the use of a community moneybox: the social and educational responsibilities of the community were taken over by the income from the old church. The reform of the school system was one of the most important of Luther's duties. Some of the professors and students with their interpretations of Luther's teachings had and almost shut down schools completely. The Reformation, however, needed well-educated pastors, teachers and civil servants. In his work "To the Councilmen of all Cities within German Territories; Christian Schools Ought to be Kept Up" Luther stated that authorities are obligated to guarantee a good education for the youth.

Luther and the Peasants War

Once again the Reformation found new enemies, this time radicals within its own ranks, called Swarmers and Mobbing Spirits by Luther. Thomas Münzer, priest and former follower of Luther became a leader of peasant uprisings in Central Germany in 1525, which had already flared up in southwest Germany in 1524. The peasants, who called on the power of Luther's teachings, demanded more just (economical) conditions, even if that meant the downfall of the authorities. In his sermons, which he also held in the areas of unrest, Luther stood firm against using force; he only received refusals from the peasants who had hoped for his support. Luther nevertheless encouraged them to free

themselves from the spiritual despotism of the authorities not from their economic or political influence. From these experiences came the desolate work "*Against the Murderous and Thieving Hordes of Peasants*", which is still a controversial work. The peasants were defeated on May 15 at the battle of Frankenhausen.

What did Martin do in 1525 that shocked his friends?

A. Married Katharina Von Bora

B. Stopped supporting the Notre Dame Football team

C. Stopped drinking beer

D. Started dating Jennifer Lopez

On June 13, 1525 Luther married Katharina von Bora, a nun who had fled from a convent in Nimbsch, near Grimma, and had taken refuge in Wittenberg. Luther's marriage to Katharina (who was 16 years younger than Luther) was opposed by many of his friends who saw in it the downfall of the Reformation. Philipp Melanchthon spoke of it as an "unlucky deed". He did not know anything about Luther's plan and was not invited to the wedding. Katharina took over the household, particularly the household expenses; it is said that Dr. Luther did not have a clue how to run a household. She also proved herself to be a good housewife and gardener. Luther's household included not only his wife and six children, but also one of Katharina's relatives and after 1529 six of Luther's sister's children. Luther also housed students in his home to help the family's financial situation. Luther's *Table Talk* (Tischreden) are characteristic of Luther's family life, in which his language and his closeness to the people become very clear.



What song did Martin write?

A. A Mighty Fortress is our God

B. Stairway to Heaven

C. Revolution

D. Sister Christian

Luther's influences after 1525

In the following years Luther continued with his reforms of the church and community structure. Among other things, Luther was able to convince the Elector to establish some measures for the security of the Reformation like regulating the salaries of pastors.

In the reform of the worship service, one of the most important changes was allowing the parish to take both the wafer and the wine during Communion. Luther also took many trips during which he evaluated the work of pastors and the realization of the reforms he had made for the worship service. After one such trip in 1528, the work *Instruction of Visitations to Pastors in the Electorate of Saxon* by Philipp Melanchthon appeared. On top of the church reforms Luther wrote many books at this time including the *Baptismal Book* and *Wedding Book* and in 1529 the *Small and Large Catechism*. In addition Luther who had always been enthusiastic about singing ("*The one who sings, prays double*") published the *Smart Songbook* and the choral "*A Mighty Fortress is Our God*" in 1527. In 1534 Luther's complete Bible translation appeared. The translation of the New Testament appeared in 1522 and the work on the Old Testament was finished while he was at the fortress in Coburg in 1530.

The Development of the Reformation within Imperial Politics

The First Imperial Diet of Spires (Speyer; 1526) gave the Protestants the first opportunity to legally go ahead with their reforms. It was left up to the local



sovereigns as to what extent the reforms were carried through in their territories. Although the Imperial Diet of Augsburg in 1530 forbade all reforms, reformers could read the huge success of the reformation in the "Augsburg confession", written by Melanchthon. The reformers explained their beliefs in detail in this book. Luther was not at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg (He was in Coburg.); however, he was kept abreast of the proceedings by his representatives, especially Melanchthon. In response

to the anti-Reformation statements of the Imperial Diet of Augsburg, protestant estates of the Empire formed the *Smalkaldian Alliance* in 1530; a defensive alliance founded to protect against catholic attacks. Luther was in principle against all use of violent action. Luther could not stop the Smalkaldian War (1546-47) even though he had hindered an outbreak of war in 1528 by standing firm against violence.

"I am weak and cannot go on", was what Martin said at the end of what?

- A. His last lecture at Wittenburg University**
- B. A large schnitzel meal**
- C. Aerobics class**
- D. Another sermon with gardening as a theme**

Luther's Role in Religious Discussions and His Relationship to Reformers in Other Movements

Luther's moderate approach, his attitude towards the insurgent peasants and his compromises with sovereigns caused him to be accused by all sides. On the other hand, Luther was constantly under pressure to defend the Reformation politically and theologically against the Roman Catholic faction. Many of his ex-supporters did not want to help bear the burden of this thin line Luther was walking. Already in 1524-26 Luther had fought with the Dutch humanist Erasmus von Rotterdam that caused lots of stress to the reformation and ended in a split among humanists who had previously welcomed Luther's reforms. The difference of opinion between Luther and Karlstadt or between Luther and the Swiss reformer Zwingli about the role of communion in the worship service led to the Marburg Religious Discussions of 1529, where only one partial agreement was reached. Luther and Melanchthon were critically opposed to the Baptist movement; however, when the Baptist's empire in Münster was overthrown in 1534-1535, the two condemned the treatment of the Baptist. In 1537, a clash ensued between Luther and Johann Agricola, one of Luther's supporters in Wittenberg who ended up leaving Wittenberg in 1540.

"I am weak, I cannot go on."

During his last years of life Luther fought against many physical ailments. The death of his daughter Magdalena, in 1542, was also very difficult for him. Luther's relationship to people with different beliefs, especially the Jews, deteriorated drastically during these years. His 1523 work *Jesus was born a Jew* showed a conciliatory attitude; however, in later years the aging reformer sentenced all who did not want to convert to his beliefs. The strongly anti-semitic work *Jews and their Lies* (1543) came out during this period. Luther continued to lead the Reformation in its fight against its enemies even in the last years of his life. With his 1545 work *Against the Papacy at Rome Founded by the Devil!* he performed his last blow against the Roman Church. Luther continued his preaching duties despite his various disappointments and ailments. Luther continued to teach at Wittenberg University until the end of his life; his last lecture ended with the words: *"I am weak, I cannot go on."*



Luther's Death

Luther set off on his last trip on January 17, 1546, to his birthplace Eisleben. Although he was drawn with illness, he went to settle a dispute among the Mansfeld Counts. The negotiations ended successfully. Luther did not have the energy to return to Wittenberg. He died on February 18, 1546 in Eisleben. On his deathbed, he prayed, "Into your hands, I command my spirit. You have

saved me, Father, you faithful God." After the coffin was displayed for two days in Eisleben, Luther's body was transported through Halle and Bitterfeld back to Wittenberg. On February 22 Luther was laid to rest in the Castle Church in Wittenberg; Johannes Bugenhagen held the funeral oration.

*Congatulations! You have made it to the end.
You are now a Martin Millionaire!*

Most text and all images stolen from www.luther.de

“And Now, Hailing from Greater Cappadocia, Starting at Power Bishop It’s...”

There are several large movements within church history that will help us keep our bearings.

The Church of the Fathers

(90 AD to 500 AD)

90 AD

Irenaeus
c. 130-c. 200



Tertullian
c. 150- c. 212



Athanasius
296-373



Augustine
354-430



Council of Chalcedon
451



500 AD




Council of Nicea
325

The Medieval Church*


(500 AD to 1500 AD)

500 AD


Benedict
480-547




Gregory the Great
540-604




Anselm
1033-1109




Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274



John Wycliffe
c. 1380-1384



Jan Hus
1372-1415




1500 AD

Reformation and Reaction


(1500 AD to 1700)

1500 AD


Martin Luther
1483-1546




John Calvin
1509-1564



Westminster Assembly 1643-1649



Jonathan Edwards
1703-1758



1700 AD

* The “Medieval Church” for our purposes really refers to the church in Western Europe. In 1054 the tensions between church in the East (eastern Europe and the Middle East) and the church in the West came to a head prompting the “Great Schism.” Even though they remained a vibrant and growing church in the East, our tradition comes from these Western churches and so we focus on them.