



The Reformation

Context, Characters,
Controversies, and Consequences

Welcome!

*Please help yourself to coffee and snacks
and fill in a name tag.*

**Take some time to read our
primary source document for the
morning.**

Opening Group Discussion

- What does it take or what is needed for “one person to make a difference”?

Martin Luther

- Born in 1483 in Eisleben in Northern Germany, son of a copper smelter
- Tumultuous relationship with parents
- Young relationship with the Church
 - Altar boy, church choir
- Educated at University of Erfurt
 - “Rome” of Germany/Contrast town life
 - Musician
 - BA and Masters toward Law degree

Martin Luther



Significant Events in His Life

- 1505
 - Black Plague
 - Death of closest and other friends
 - Thunderstorm experience
 - “Faced death”
 - Vows to become a monk (St. Anna)
 - Choice between earthly and heavenly Father
 - *“How was he to know that one monk in the family would bring him more fame and shame than a thousand advocates.”*

His Monastic Life

- **Augustinian Monk**
 - Ascetic, austere life
 - Did it to a Luther-an fullest
 - “...if ever a monk got to heaven by his sheer monkery, it was I.”
 - Believe he would never “live up”
 - Confession
- **Business/Worldly Ambassador**
 - Monastery “businesses”
 - 1510 visit to Rome
 - Buy “time out” of purgatory (tour of saints)

Turning Points

- 1511 Sent to Wittenburg
 - Johann von Staupitz intervention
 - Engaging in Luther-an fullest
 - Romans 1:17
 - *“At last... I gave heed to the context of the words, namely... ‘He who through faith is righteous shall live.’ Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself....”*
- 1517 Pope Leo X’s drains papal funds
 - Paper indulgences (printing press; sins)
 - Congregation: no sermons, just money

Indulgences



Luther's 95 Theses

- Reading primary sources:
 - Author:
 - Place and Time:
 - Prior Knowledge:
 - Audience:
 - Reason:
 - The Main Idea:
 - Significance:

Luther's 95 Theses

- What repetition do you note in the content of Luther's "propositions"?
 - What theology is Luther endorsing?
 - What is Luther ultimately challenging?

Luther's 95 Theses

- Important Note:
 - Sent to Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz
 - Rome-ward trip



The German Reformation

- Religion, Politics, and Money
 - Pope's concern: Money
 - Completing St. Peter's Basilica
 - Dominican concern: Religious rivalry
 - Dominican curial jurisdiction
 - Prierias, *Dialogue*: Pope "Head" and "can't err"
 - German concern: Political power
 - Frederick of Saxony supporting Luther
 - Pope "meddling"
 - Elector of Brandenburg (rival) Albrecht's brother

Frederick of Saxony



Luther's Shift

- From Indulgences to Papacy
 - *“I am quite sure that the Church will never be reformed unless we remove... scholastic theology, philosophy and logic as they are studied today, and put something else in their place.”*
 - Realizes can't reform indulgences without addressing church's self-understanding and theology first
 - Prolific writing between 1517 and 1521
 - Theology of grace; pope as anti-Christ

1521 Diet of Worms

- *“It is through living, indeed through dying and being damned that one becomes a theologian, not through understanding, reading or speculation.”*
 - Not a hearing; a demand to recant
 - Excommunicated from the church
 - Outlawed by the state
- **Outcome**
 - Year at Frederick’s Wartburg Castle disguised as a knight
 - Translated New Testament into German
 - Printed in 1522; Readable and accessible
 - From Hebrew and Greek texts, not Latin Vulgate
 - Not word for word; sense for sense
 - Universal education: everyone able to read God’s word

Contagion

- The New “Lutheran” Church
 - No Office of Bishop: Pastors instead
 - No celibacy requirement
 - No Latin liturgy: German instead
 - Communion includes bread and wine to laity
 - Preaching and teaching more important than the mass
- Multiple “Reformations”
 - Karlstadt: All images remove from churches and emphasized “transformed life”
 - Zwingli: Only the Bible is truth
 - Anabaptists: Only believer baptism is valid
 - Calvin: Adherence to predestination

Full Circle

- What does it take or what is needed for “one person to make a difference”?
 - Luther’s experiences affected his religious “shifts” in thinking
 - Political powers furthered Luther’s ability to act
 - Religious climate enabled his thoughts to be accepted



*"Unless I am convinced
by proofs from Scriptures
or by plain and clear
reasons and arguments,
I can and will not retract,
for it is neither safe nor
wise to do anything against
conscience. Here I stand.
I can do no other. God
help me. Amen!"*

*Martin Luther
(1483-1547)*

So where is God in all this?

- Was Luther humble and being led by God's Spirit or was he arrogant and unyielding?
 - Religious "wars": Catholic and Judaic division drawn
- How do we know if we're standing for God's truth or simply furthering our own thinking?