

# **Here I Stand: a Life of Martin Luther Study Guide**

**Here I Stand: a Life of Martin Luther by Roland  
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# Plot Summary

This book is about the life of Martin Luther and his continuing impact on the world. Luther is raised in a conservative and disciplined home and goes on to become a monk without his father's initial blessing. Luther does everything a monk should do. He is committed to prayer, fasting, vigils, preaching, and teaching to the point of exhaustion. He continues his education and goes on to become a leader in the Catholic Church. Martin Luther studies the Bible intently. He struggles with how to earn his salvation. He never feels he can do enough to pay for the sins he commits. Over time he changes his belief that man can earn salvation to the belief that Christ pays the price for salvation for all who believe.

Luther understands good works are not a requirement for heaven, but an act of obedience to God. Luther starts to change the way he views many spiritual matters. He begins to feel convicted that some of the practices of the Catholic Church are not right. He disagrees with the practice of the Pope in granting indulgences. He believes in the priesthood of all believers. He does not think that clergy alone can interpret Scripture or pray directly to God. Luther thinks that any believer can interpret Scripture and pray to God. Luther does not believe in the necessity of sacraments such as confirmation, penance, and extreme unction. Luther thinks the laity should be able to partake of the wine in Communion.

Luther's challenge of the Pope's authority as completely divinely inspired and without error, sends shock waves through the Catholic Church. Luther's opposition comes out in force, urging him to recant his position. Luther stands by his ninety-five theses and believes he is teaching what the Bible instructs. Luther faces trials, the need to hide, and the fear of martyrdom. Luther does go back into the public eye and actually starts a family of his own. Luther never gives up on writing books, even when he knows some people are burning them. Luther spends his time preaching, speaking, teaching, reading, writing, studying, counseling, and serving God's people. It is not uncommon for Luther to preach every day of the week, even three times on Sunday. The author argues that Luther's greatest influence on the people is in how he views the home and the responsibilities of husband and wife. One of Luther's greatest accomplishments is that of translating the entire Bible into the German language, which affects the translation of the English version. Luther starts the Reformation and is responsible for the formation of the Protestant Church. He has a large following in the United States. Luther inspires boldness in other Protestants to form different denominations. Without the influence of Martin Luther, it is hard to imagine how Christianity might be practiced today.



# The Vow

## The Vow Summary and Analysis

In 1505, when Martin Luther is struck by a bolt of lightning and knocked to the ground, he calls out to St. Anne and decides to become a monk. It takes him two weeks to arrange his affairs and choose a monastery. He chooses a strict reformed congregation of Augustinians. How ironic that the same man will later renounce monasticism and repudiate the cult of saints. At this time in Germany, nationalism has been breaking political unities. Luther helps bring religion to the forefront, even in politics. Luther inspires controversy. Some hail him a prophet while others look down on him as a destroyer of Christendom.

Luther attributes strict discipline as what drives him to the monastery. Luther is from a loving family and he is deeply devoted to his father. He is greatly disturbed over his parents' disapproval of him entering the monastery. Later when his father dies, he is too upset to do anything for several days. Luther is looked upon as extraordinarily sensitive and prone to periods of great excitement and other periods of severe depression. His moods continue to oscillate through his life.

Luther learns Latin in school. He is fond of music and loves the beauty of the German landscape. He is from a religiously conservative peasant family. His father, Hans Luther, works in the mines and owns six foundries. His father and mother, Margareta, diligently pray.

Each town Luther goes to school is full of churches and monasteries. The university, home, and school instill fear of God and reverence for the Church. Luther is raised in a society that believes monasticism is an excellent way to heaven. At this time youth are fasting, working, and even begging. Luther has been told this life is only a short period of time and that saved people will enjoy an eternity of bliss while the damned will suffer everlasting torment.

Luther agrees to the rigors of monastery life, including: renunciation of self-will, a scant diet, rough clothing, vigils by night, labors by day, the mortification of the flesh, the reproach of poverty, the shame of begging, and the distastefulness of cloistered existence. Luther is admitted to the monastery with a year of probation.



# The Cloister

## The Cloister Summary and Analysis

Luther says that during the first year of his monastery life, the Devil is very quiet. At the end of that first year he is allowed to make his profession of faith. The author assumes no one sees reason to believe Luther will not be well suited for monastery life. Luther prays seven times daily. At one or two in the morning he is awakened by a bell, makes the sign of the cross, and pulls on a white robe and scapular. At the second bell, each monk comes reverently to the church, sprinkles himself with holy water, and kneels before the altar to pray. Each of the seven periods of the day end with chanting praise to Mary, the mother of God.

Luther takes his solemn vow and is officially a monk. Luther is extremely committed to living the life of a monk with the expectation that this will lead to his salvation. He is satisfied to spend his time praying, singing, and meditating.

The mass is the main focus of the Church's means of grace. On the altar the bread and wine are believed to become the flesh and blood of God. The sacrifice of Calvary is re-enacted. Luther, at the time a young priest, is to perform a rite by which God will appear in human form. The ceremony is delayed so his father can attend. Luther has not seen his father since his university days. His father appears to have overcome any resentment towards Martin for entering the monastery.

Luther asks his father why he is so against Luther becoming a monk. Hans, his father, says that he should honor his mother and father and look after them in their old age. Luther tells his father that he can do more by praying for him than he ever could do by staying in the world. Luther tells him that he has been called by a voice from heaven out of a thunder cloud. His father says he hopes the voice he heard was not that of the Devil.

Luther is a monk for nineteen years. He executes whatever duties he is assigned. He resumes university studies to qualify for the position of lector. Luther is devoted to the pursuit of holiness and becoming the best monk he can be. Luther is resolved to do whatever good works he needs to do in order to save himself. Sometimes he fasts three days on end. Apparently, Luther is proud of his sanctity. Sometimes Luther declares he has done nothing wrong for the day. Luther later reflects upon his service as a monk and believes that if being a monk gets someone into heaven he would surely would have achieved it. However, Luther knows that if he had kept on any longer, he may have killed himself with vigils, prayers, reading, and other work.

Yet Luther has no inner peace and never feels like his striving compensates for his sins. He feels he cannot satisfy God at any point. He wonders how anyone can live the life prescribed in the Bible. Later Luther changes his view of sin and grace and good works.



For nineteen years Luther serves as a monk and does whatever is asked of him. He even goes further in his university studies to qualify for the lector post. He is devoted to being the best monk he can be. Luther is to do whatever good works he can in order to save himself. This drive will lead him to fast sometimes three days on end. Yet Luther knows it is taking a toll on his body, both physically and mentally. Despite his spiritual rituals, he is not at peace with himself. He never feels like what he does is good enough to compensate for his sins.

While Luther begins to doubt in his ability to attain salvation, he also begins to question the Pope and Catholic Church. The pope declares the usefulness of indulgences to purgatory for the living and for the dead. Evidently, the Church can tell to the year and day how long a term in purgatory can be reduced by the granting of indulgences. Indulgences are bestowed upon individuals who give money to the Catholic Church.

At about the same time Luther starts to internally disagree with the practice of indulgences, he spends a month in Rome doing devotions, confession, mass, and visiting the catacombs and basilicas and shrines and every holy relic. This is the first time Luther hears stories of immorality among Roman clergy.



# The Gospel

## The Gospel Summary and Analysis

Luther is transferred from Erfurt to Wittenberg, a town with a population of 2,000 to 2,500 people, covering an area of only nine-tenths of a mile. It is at Wittenberg that he passes through a variety of crises to achieve stability. Luther discovers he can never do enough to save himself. Salvation does not rest entirely on human achievement, but also with God's help and favor.

Catholics practice confession, a time to confess all wrongdoing and seek absolution. Luther confesses often for as long as six hours at one time. Luther wants to be sure that he remembers and confesses every one of his sins. He knows the nature of man is corrupt and that the entire man is in need of forgiveness. Luther thinks that if sins are not confessed, they cannot be forgiven. This concerns him deeply. Luther's focus is on Christ as the avenger while he needs to think of Christ as the redeemer.

Luther believes the answers to the secrets of Christianity are found in the Bible. From 1513 to 1517, he lectures on Psalms, Romans, and Galatians. Luther finally understands that when Christ suffers on the cross, he takes the iniquity of us all. God desires not that a sinner should die, but that he should turn from sin and live. Luther realizes that God is not malicious and it is through grace and mercy that God justifies us through faith. Luther is assured that anyone who makes Christ their Savior has a gracious God.





# The Onslaught

## The Onslaught Summary and Analysis

Luther affirms the forgiveness of sins through the unmerited grace made possible by the cross of Christ. In 1516, Luther's activities include: conventual preacher, reader at meals, parochial preacher, director of studies, overseer of eleven monasteries, lecturer on Paul, and writer of many letters.

The first day of November for Roman Catholics is the day of All Saints. Any contributions made to the church might mean indulgences from the pope for the reduction of time in purgatory. Luther now openly disagrees with this practice. Luther declares that complete remission of sins is granted only to those who show worthy confession. Luther argues that it is audacious for the pope to claim he can deliver souls from purgatory. The practice of indulgences is lucrative for the church and covers the cost of projects like construction. The author claims that the Church readily admits today that the indulgence traffic was a scam. However, Luther's attacks on indulgences strikes at the revenue of his own institution. Yet Luther feels he must warn his parishioners against spiritual pitfalls. Parishioners respond by traveling to get pardons elsewhere.

On the eve of All Saints, Luther puts 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church. He denies that parishioners are getting anything for their expenditure, he denies the powers of the pope over purgatory, and he declares that indulgences from the pope do not remove guilt. Luther goes on to write that God determines the eternal penalties he wants to impose upon man and that the pope can remove only those penalties which he himself has imposed on earth. Luther thinks that indulgences are actually harmful to those receiving them because they distract one from charity and give a false sense of security.

Luther's theses are translated into German and given to the press. They became the talk of Germany.



# The Son of Iniquity

## The Son of Iniquity Summary and Analysis

Luther's enemies boast that he will be burned at the stake within a month for his heresy. Instead he is received at Heidelberg as a guest of honor. Luther is not shunned by his brothers. While the ninety-five theses are given to the printer for all Germany, it is only intended for professional theologians. Because Luther denies the pope's power to release from or consign people to purgatory, he is under the ban, but he preaches anyway. Luther claims his excommunication only affects the external fellowship of the Church on earth and has nothing to do with the grace of God. Luther goes on to say that no man can separate another from the love of Christ.

The Catholic Church declares anyone who does not accept the doctrine of the Roman Church and of the Roman pontiff as the infallible rule of faith to be a heretic. Luther outrages the Church when he says the pope can err, a council can err and that only Scripture is the final authority.

Luther's trial is transferred from Rome to Germany. With the emperor, the pope, and the cardinal against him, Luther does not have much hope of escaping the stake. On the road, Luther experiences intestinal infection and recurring doubt. Luther is asked, "Are you alone wise and all the ages in error?" Still Luther denies that the pope is above Scripture.

Luther points out that since the doctrine of indulgences has never been declared officially, a debate on undecided questions should not be considered heresy, especially about matters unessential for salvation. Luther defends himself by saying he does not teach anything except for what can be found in the Bible. Frederick the Wise writes to Cardinal Cajetan that Luther should be shown in what way he is a heretic and should not be condemned in advance.

# The Saxon Hus

## The Saxon Hus Summary and Analysis

Heresy involves a rejection of the established dogma of the Church and the doctrine of indulgences has not been given an official definition from the pope. On November 9, 1518, the bull "Cum Postquam" is written with three main points. First, indulgences apply only to penalty and not to guilt. Second, it is not the eternal pains of hell, but only the temporal penalties of earth and purgatory that might be diminished through indulgences. Lastly, the pope has complete jurisdiction to impose penalties on earth.

The pope goes so far as to call Luther a son of iniquity. Luther prepares to debate with John Eck, a professor from the University of Ingolstadt. Luther is so bold as to assert that every pope, even though personally exemplary, is Antichrist because Antichrist is collective: a institution, the papacy, a system. The debate is held in Leipzig. Before the debate starts, there are arguments about the logistics. In the end, stenographers are allowed, judges are allowed, but notes are not to be published until after the judges submit their verdict. Luther and Eck go back and forth about the depravity of man. Eck argues that the pope is divinely instituted. Luther argues that even though he is denying the divine origin of the papacy, he is not recommending anyone disobey. Then Eck insists that the claim of the pope to unquestioning obedience rests on the belief that his office is divinely instituted. The author argues that even if Luther's views are subversive, that does not make them false.

Luther claims that articles of faith must only come from Scripture. Luther rejects the authority of the Old Testament Apocrypha. Eck reportedly keeps asking Luther how he can be the only one not in error while the whole Catholic Church is wrong. Luther responds that he is bound to defend the truth with his blood and death. The debate itself lasts eighteen days. The agreement to wait for the judgment of the universities before publishing the notes is not observed. The author does not tell us who won the debate.

# The German Hercules

## The German Hercules Summary and Analysis

Luther becomes a national figure after his debate in Leipzig. Moreover, when Luther's writings are disseminated, he is made an international figure. The Reformation is happening at the same time as the Renaissance and emerging nationalism. The central idea of the Renaissance is Humanism, the belief that the proper interest of mankind is man. For different reasons, Humanism and the Reformation attack indulgences. While Reformists call indulgences blasphemy, Humanists ridicule it as silly superstition. Apparently, the Renaissance man has no deep religion of his own.

Erasmus passes from discriminating support of Luther to a whiny opposition. Erasmus wants to revive the Christian consciousness of Europe through the dissemination of sacred writings. Erasmus is the first to make available in print the New Testament in the original Greek. Luther and Erasmus both think the Church has become too legalistic. During the years after the attack on indulgences and before the assault on the sacraments, Erasmus and Luther seem to be peers preaching almost the same gospel. However, when Erasmus endorses an idea, he does not say he is agreeing with Luther. However, the threat of division and war implied in the Reformation frightens Erasmus.

According to the author, Melanchthon becomes the most devoted and most disruptive of colleagues. Melanchthon, a Humanist, is convinced Luther correctly interprets the apostle Paul. After Luther's death, Melanchthon translates the Augsburg Confession into Greek and changes Luther's teaching of justification by faith into the Greek concept of the deification of man through union with Christ.

The second great movement to relate itself to the Reformation is German nationalism. Germany has no centralized government. Rather, it is segmented into small and overlapping jurisdictions of princes and bishops. The first enemy to be repelled by nationalism is the Church.



# The Wild Boar in the Vineyard

## The Wild Boar in the Vineyard Summary and Analysis

There is a delay in Luther's trial for a year and a half. In the summer of 1520, his "primary works" are delivered to the printer: The Papacy at Rome, The Sermon on Good Works, The Address to the German Nobility, The Babylonian Captivity, and The Freedom of the Christian Man. It is The Babylonian Captivity that is the most radical and asserts that the Church is enslaved by sacraments. Luther says a sacrament must have been directly instituted by Christ and be distinctively Christian in order to count. He wants to see eliminated the rituals associated with confirmation, marriage, ordination, penance, and extreme unction. Luther endorses only two sacraments: the Lord's supper and baptism. Luther does look at Confession as useful as long as it is not institutionalized.

Luther also believes that without faith, a sacrament like Communion is useless. This insistence for the need of faith actually diminishes the role of the priests because the priests cannot put that faith into the heart of their parishioners. Furthermore, Luther does not believe that the bread and wine transforms into the body and blood of God, as the Catholic Church holds. Christ is not sacrificed again in communion because His sacrifice is made once and for all upon the cross. As Luther believes in the priesthood of all believers, he does not think the wine should be withheld from the laity. The Catholic Church fears that the laity might spill the wine and therefore spill the blood of Jesus. Since Luther does not believe the wine turns to blood, he does not see why only the clergy partakes in the drinking of the wine in Communion.

Luther also believes in individualism. Not the individualism of the Renaissance, which is about seeking the fulfillment of an individual's capacities. Rather, he believes no one can die in place of another. Everyone must answer for himself. A person is only saved if they have a faith all their own.

Luther does stand with the Catholic church on infant baptism because he believes that children should be removed at birth from the grip of Satan. Luther's position toward infant baptism is hard to reconcile with his belief that the efficacy of a sacrament depends on the faith of the recipient. Obviously, a baby does not understand faith. However, Luther thinks that one person can be in a sense initiated for another into a Christian community.

In response to the fact that some burn his books, Luther says he will continue to repeat himself even if it means his death. A cardinal approaches Frederick the Wise and asks him to get Luther to reject his heresy.

In May there are four meetings with three great monastic orders represented: the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and the Augustinians. They all wonder what they should do with Luther's opinions, his books, and his person. The theologians boldly condemn

Luther. The canonists think he should be given a hearing. A compromise is made so that there is no hearing, but Luther is given sixty days to make his submission.

Luther's views on the mass are only condemned in regards to giving the cup to the laity. Nothing is said of his belief in the priesthood of all believers. The attack centers on his belittling the power of the pope to bind and lose penalties and sins, the power of the pope and councils to declare doctrine, and the primacy of the pope and of the Roman Church. Eck publishes a bull against Luther giving him sixty days in which to change his statements and warning anyone who interferes with their excommunication and anathema of having to face the wrath of God. Then the pope writes to Frederick the Wise to take Luther captive if he continues in this madness.



# The Appeal to Caesar

## The Appeal to Caesar Summary and Analysis

Luther responds to the bull saying he is not worried because nothing can happen except for what God above allows to happen. Luther appeals in vain to the pope and to a council. It should be noted, however, that he does not neglect to come to his own defense.

Luther believes that God can speak through any righteous man—not just the pope. The pope is not the only one who can interpret Scripture. Furthermore, Luther thinks that the income of the Church should be curtailed so spiritual concerns are focused upon, not temporal possessions.

The pope is shamed by a comparison with Christ. There is an illustrated work in the library of Frederick the Wise in which Christ washes the disciples' feet while the pope has his feet kissed.

The bull *Exsurge Domine* is executed in Rome. Luther's books are burned in the Piazza Narona. The two men in charge of publishing the bull are John Eck and Jerome Aleander. Eck includes the condemnation of more names. Both men risk their lives for this assignment. Aleander is confronted with many Luther sympathizers in the Netherlands. Luther's books are burned as the bull is circulated.

On October 10, the bull reaches Luther. Luther does not know if it is true or false. Luther argues that the writer of the bull is the Antichrist. He adds that he dissents from the damnation of the bull. He goes on to write that the bull condemns him with its own words without showing any proof of his errors from Scripture. Luther argues that he supports all his assertions with the Bible. Obviously angry, Luther responds by saying he excommunicates them for the sake of the sacred truth of God.

While Luther blasts the papacy as Antichrist, he has no problem addressing the pope with deference. To the Pope he writes, "Do not listen to those who say that none can be Christian without your authority, who make you the Lord of heaven, hell, and purgatory. They err who put you above a Council and the universal Church. They err who make you the sole interpreter of Scripture."

Luther, in an reaction of disgust to their burning his books, decides to invite people to a book burning of his own. He decides to burn their books since they are burning his books.



# Here I Stand

## Here I Stand Summary and Analysis

Luther cannot do anything but teach, preach, and wait for others to determine what will be made of his case. Public opinion is divided about Luther. Luther does have supporters who are powerful and vocal. Aleander is the representative of Rome who believes the laity should implement the Church's decision to condemn Luther. Erasmus is somewhere in the middle, wanting an impartial tribunal for Luther.

Charles the Roman Emperor and Catholic King of Spain has to decide when, how, and by whom his case should be handled. Frederick the Wise secures a promise that Luther will not be condemned without a hearing. Frederick asks to bring Luther to the diet at the city of Worms. Luther appears in April of the next year. Controversy arises as people question whether Luther should be permitted to appear before a secular tribunal to be examined on matters of faith. Luther says he will come if called by the emperor. Charles promises to assume responsibility for Luther's case. Aleander makes a very good case against Luther. An edict is issued that Luther be brought to the diet for examination. Luther says he will not come if the only purpose is for him to recant. Luther adds that he will come even if he is being invited to his own death.

Before Charles, heir of a long line of Catholic sovereigns, stands a simple monk, a miner's son, with nothing but faith in the Word of God. Luther and the emperor are called upon to answer before Almighty God. Luther is confronted with a stack of books and asked to answer if they are his. Luther responds that the books are all his, and that he has written more. Charles asks him if he defends them all or cares to reject any parts of the books. Luther asks for time to think it over. Then he carefully states that they are all his, but they are not all of the same kind. The author claims that when Luther differentiates his works, it wins him the opportunity to make a speech instead of simply answering yes or no. Some books deal with faith and life in a simple way. Other books ridicule the papists.

Luther replies that he will not recant anything or go against his conscience unless he is convicted by the Word of God and plain reason. Luther does not accept the authority of popes and councils since they have contradicted each other.

Aleander hears the report that all six electors are ready to pronounce Luther a heretic, including Frederick the Wise who is troubled to know if Luther has convicted from the Scriptures. The emperor states, "A single friar who goes counter to all Christianity for one thousand years must be wrong. I will proceed against him as a notorious heretic."

The electors declare themselves fully in accord with the emperor, but only four of the six actually sign. The dissenters are Ludwig of Palatinate and Frederick of Saxony. Then a poster is nailed to the town hall door that implies if Luther is condemned, the peasants will rise.



On May 6, the final draft of the Edict of the Worms, prepared by Aleander, reads that Luther is to be regarded as a convicted heretic, his followers condemned, and his books erased from the memory of man.

# My Patmos

## My Patmos Summary and Analysis

Luther's books and picture are burned. They even write on the top of Luther's picture, "This is Martin Luther, Doctor of the Gospel." Frederick the Wise decides to hide Luther at Wartburg Castle. Luther suffers from inactivity, constipation, and insomnia. He translates the entire New Testament into German.

A Reformation is happening at Wittenberg in which priests, monks, and nuns are married. Wine is given to laity. Priests dress in plain clothes. No more masses are conducted for the dead. Vigils cease to occur. There is even violence over disagreements.

# The Return of the Exile

## The Return of the Exile Summary and Analysis

Luther resolves to make a trip to Wittenberg, concealing his identity. He arrives on December 4, 1521. He is pleased with the reform taking place. However, he is irate that his recent tracts have not been published.

Frederick the Wise issues an order that discussion can go on, but there cannot be any changes in the mass until a unanimous verdict is reached. Mass, for the first time, is said in German, their own tongue.

The town council invites Luther to come home. Luther has been in hiding for a year. To return to Wittenberg is very brave. Luther is told that he cannot count on protection in case of extradition by the diet or the emperor. Luther's first concern is to restore confidence and order. Luther firmly believes no man can believe for or answer for another man.



# No Other Foundation

## No Other Foundation Summary and Analysis

For Luther, the ultimate problem is that of man's relationship to God. Luther is a man of deep religious conviction. He believes politics and all else are peripheral. Luther states that it is in God that "we live, and move, and have our being." Some feel his preoccupation with religion is alarming. He insists that good words do not constitute any claim on God. He says things which sound contrary to moral thinking. For example, "God can forgive only a lusty sinner." What he means is that a big failure can bring upon humility.

Luther's critics ask if man in the end has no standing with God, why should man make the effort to be good? To which Luther replies that God has to destroy in each person any illusion of righteousness before he can make a man righteous. We are to relinquish any claim to goodness. Luther adds that it is great news to believe that salvation comes from outside ourselves. The author tells us earlier in the book that Luther agonizes over whether his good works can earn him salvation. This revelation that salvation is from God and cannot be earned is actually quite freeing to Luther. Luther states that good works do not make a man good, but that a good man will do good works.

Luther writes or says a good many things for theologians and laity alike to think about. For example, Luther says that the Christian lives not for himself, but for God and others with the love of Christ. Luther learns, as a monk, to be selfless and do everything for God.

# Rebuilding the Walls

## Rebuilding the Walls Summary and Analysis

Just as Luther extends the priesthood of all believers, he also extends the concept of divine calling to all worthy occupations. Luther never tires of supporting those callings criticized by others. Luther likes to reach men where they are in their station in life. Luther is agrarian in his thinking and believes that man should work. Being the son of a coal miner likely instills in him a great work ethic. Luther is opposed to the spirit of capitalism. While different callings require different behaviors, Luther believes all should have the attitude of Christian love.

Luther believes that the sword is necessary for maintaining peace and that war should be looked upon as a small misfortune designed to prevent a greater one. However Luther himself does not fight any physical battles. He spends most of his life fighting spiritual battles.

Luther talks about two entities not congruent with church and state. Luther regards the kingdom of Christ as completely opposite from the kingdom of the world. The kingdom of Christ is the way men act when they are led by the Holy Spirit, so there is no need for laws and swords. A society like this is nowhere to be found on earth. The kingdom of the world is the way men behave when not restrained by law and government.

The Church and State are neither the kingdom of Christ nor the kingdom of the world. Luther views the State as an instrument of God's wrath while the Church is an instrument of God's mercy. Crime is outward and belongs to the State while sin is inward and belongs to the Church. Goods are outward and belong to the State while faith is inward and belongs to the Church. The State is administered by natural man while administering the Church is only attained by those endowed with grace. Although he differentiates Church and State, he declines to separate them.

Luther believes each man must serve God according to the office in which he is placed. One calling is not better than another. One is not easier than another. Temptations are common to each.



# The Middle Way

## The Middle Way Summary and Analysis

When Luther goes back to Wittenberg, he is under the ban of both the Church and the State. The flippant popes of the Renaissance are succeeded by a serious pope of the Counter Reformation, who is concerned as much as Luther for the correction of moral and financial corruption.

By the beginning of 1525, the mass is at an end in Wittenberg. Pope Hadrian tells Frederick the Wise to separate himself from Martin Luther and muffle his blasphemous tongue. What will happen to Luther is not decided by the pope, emperor, or the elector alone, but with the German diet at the meeting in Nurnberg.

Duke George writes Luther saying God is merciful and will forgive him if he returns. George says he will try to obtain a pardon from the emperor for him. Erasmus still believes Luther has done a lot of good and does not deserve to be labeled a heretic. However, Erasmus does disagree with Luther's doctrine of man.

Luther's fundamental chasm with the Church is over the nature and destiny of man. Erasmus is interested mainly in morals. Those who have broken with Rome are not themselves united. Luther considers himself closer to Rome than the radicals. He states, "I take the middle road."

Carlstadt rejects infant baptism on the grounds that outward water does not provide any gain. Carlstadt attacks images and church music. Luther thinks Carlstadt is being legalistic.

Thomas Muntzer rejects all baptism. Muntzer does not struggle like Luther about how to get right with God because he is not sure there is any God to get right with. Muntzer believes the Bible is inadequate without a divinely inspired interpreter. Muntzer uses the gift of the Spirit as the foundation for building a church. In 1523, Muntzer is elected Minister in the Saxton town of Alstedt. Muntzer believes in slaughtering the ungodly. Carlstadt does not want anything to do with bloodshed. Muntzer flees from Saxony. It is commented to Luther that instead of him becoming a martyr, he is making martyrs.



# Behemoth, Leviathan, and the Great Waters

## Behemoth, Leviathan, and the Great Waters Summary and Analysis

The Peasants' War results in increased levies on the land, imperiled commons, and a deflated economy. Even though the peasants present petitions to their rulers, they never are able to forestall the reoccurrence of their mistreatment. Ironically, the initiative for the retaliation of grievances comes not from the oppressed, but from the more wealthy and enterprising. The goals have more to do with politics than economics. They want all government to be abolished except the pope and emperor. The battle is against overlords, bishops, knights, and princes.

This movement is affected by the Reformation. Peasants feel drawn to Luther. Catholic princes claim Luther is responsible for the uprising. Luther writes a verdict on the demands of the peasants, The Twelve Articles. Luther states that the gospel is not the reason for the rebellion and disturbance. He believes the congregation should have the right to appoint and remove the minister. Ministers should be supported on a modest scale by their congregations. Farmers should be free to hunt, fish, and protect their lands against game. The articles call for serfdom to be abolished. Land should be on a lease with the conditions stipulated. Any demand that is contrary to the Word of God, should be null.

The Peasant War has no detailed purpose and lacks cohesive leadership. There are supporters of all of the following: a peasant dictatorship, a classless society, a return to feudalism, and the removal of all rulers but the emperor and the pope. All of the various camps do not coordinate with one another. When the war ends, seventy cloisters have been demolished in Thuringia and in Franconia there are two-hundred seventy castles and fifty-two cloisters destroyed. The author asks the reader if there is any person who can come up with and carry out a constructive plan for changing the peasant to the new political and economic order. The author argues that only one man, known and trusted throughout Germany, can do it and that is Martin Luther and he refuses.

Frederick the Wise states that because the poor folk have been wronged by the rulers in many ways, now God is visiting his wrath upon us. Luther is not about to sit still and leave the outcome to the Lord as Frederick the Wise plans. Luther believes that if a peasant is openly rebellious, then he is outside the law of God.

The Princes clean up the countryside. There are five thousand slaughtered. Muntzer escapes but is later caught, tortured, and beheaded. The peasants are killed and outnumbered in different places. Their hope for a fair political life in Germany comes to an end. The peasants look upon Luther as a traitor to the cause while the Catholic

princes hold him responsible for the whole war. Luther is afraid of the mess that now exists.





# The School for Character

## The School for Character Summary and Analysis

As the Reformation continues, monks and nuns leave the cloisters. Luther feels responsible to find the nuns homes, husbands, and positions. It is suggested to Luther than he should marry one. He initially declines because he expects daily to die as a heretic. In May of 1525 he agrees to marry Katherine von Bora. Luther has three main reasons he wants to marry her: to please his father, to spite the pope and the Devil, and to seal his witness before martyrdom. On June 13, 1525 he is publicly betrothed to Katherine. It is not long before Luther realizes that he has to consider his wife's wishes in matters.

Marriage brings new financial responsibilities. Katherine's mother dies when she is a baby. Katherine's father consigns her to a convent and marries again. He does nothing for her again. Luther has only his books and clothes. Luther is devoted to spend all of his time serving God and trusted God to provide. The elector over the Augustinian cloister decides to double his salary. Katie works very hard to keep house and care for her husband. He takes care of the garden while she looks after an orchard. She has a fish pond and also looks after the barnyard. Luther is sick often, at one time or another having gout, insomnia, hemorrhoids, constipation, kidney stones, dizziness, and ringing in his ears.

Katie gives birth to six children from 1526 to 1534. Their names are Hans, Elizabeth, Magdalena, Martin, Paul, and Margareta. In addition, the Luther family brings up four orphaned children from among relatives. They also take on boarders for money. There are as many as twenty-five people in the household at one time. Katie has to watch over everything. She does not mind that she is overshadowed by her famous husband. She reportedly always calls him Doctor.

The author argues that Luther does more than any other person to determine the tone of German domestic relations for the next four centuries. Luther believes the man is head of the wife because he is created first. She is to give him love, honor, and obedience. He is to rule her with gentleness. She is to concern herself with the children, church, and kitchen. Luther states that women are made with large hips because they should stay at home and sit on them. Children are subject to their parents, especially their father. According to the author, Luther begins to portray marriage as a school for character.

Marriage is a way to fulfill sexual desires without sinning. The rhythm of work and rest is not the same for Luther and his wife. After caring for children, animals, and servants, she wants to talk with an equal. However, after preaching, lecturing, and conversing with students, he just wants to read. Luther does believe in loving neighbors as yourself and that the wife is the nearest neighbor. His daughter Magdalena dies at fourteen years old and on her deathbed she says, "as God wills."

# The Church Territorial

## The Church Territorial Summary and Analysis

Unrelenting missionary activity results in winning most of Northern Germany within a decade for the Reformation. There are a large number of pamphlets and cartoons. Many of them contrast Christ with the pope. There is a cartoon of Luther shaking hands with Lucifer. Luther does continue to receive death threats.

By 1527, the whole electoral of Saxony is now evangelical as opposed to Catholic. The change produces confusion and each town has its own way of conducting church. Luther wants Saxony investigated. Visitors are elected to visit parishes and inquire into finances, behavior, forms of worship, and the faith. The visitors discover that there is great confusion and neglect in finances and many of the parsonages are in reprehensible condition. The visitors decide to hold the parishioners responsible for the repairs. Luther does not try to subordinate the Church to the State. The edict of the worms is that each region should have its own religion.

Most of Northern Germany is now Lutheran. In the south, the cities of Strassburg, Augsburg, Ulm, and Nurnberg also are Lutheran. The second diet of Speyer divides Germany into two groups. In Lutheran lands, the principle of religious liberty is held. In Catholic lands, liberty is not extended to Lutherans. This is an unequal arrangement since the Catholics can practice their religion everywhere and the Lutherans are limited to Lutheran lands. Luther does not want bloodshed over this. Philip of Hesse believes that people can come together to defend the right of each person to believe what he wants even if they differ in their beliefs. In 1530 Emperor Charles comes to Germany. The Augsburg Confession helps set Protestants over against Catholicism.

# The Church Tutorial

## The Church Tutorial Summary and Analysis

Luther translates the Bible, catechism, and liturgy as well as a hymn book. In three months time, he produces a complete New Testament. The German Bible is said to be Luther's finest achievement. The New Testament is first published in 1522, but Luther keeps revising it until his death. The complete translation of the entire Bible does not happen until 1534. Luther's Bibles are richly illustrated.

Luther does have a hard time reconciling the writings of James with the writings of Paul. "We are not saved by works; but if there be no works, there must be something amiss with faith."

Luther believes that children should be taught at church, school, and home. Pastors, teachers, and parents should receive training prior to educating children. Luther believes that if children will not learn, then they should not eat either.

Luther claims the emphasis of the early church was on the Lord's Supper as an act of thanksgiving to God and fellowship. In 1526, Luther comes out with a German mass which is more scriptural and educational in tone. Luther has a passion for music. He changes the chants of the priest. He writes the hymns sung by the congregation. The author even goes so far as to say Luther may be considered the father of congregational song. In 1524, Luther brings out a hymnbook with twenty-three hymns of which he is author and possibly even part composer.

# The Church Ministerial

## The Church Ministerial Summary and Analysis

Luther excels equally at preaching sermons, translating the Bible, lecturing in class hall, and praying in the upper room. Luther believes salvation is through the Word. He holds three public services on Sunday, one on the Pauline epistles, one on the gospels, and the other on a particular theme. Mondays and Tuesdays are sermons on the catechism. Wednesdays the focus is on the gospel of Matthew. Thursday and Friday he examines apostolic letters. Saturday covers John's gospel. Including family devotions, Luther speaks four times on Sundays. He is earnest about his preaching. Even though Luther preaches on the same great passages and the same events, he always keeps his messages fresh and highlights a new aspect. Luther is always teaching and preaching. Above all, Luther is a man of prayer.

# The Struggle for Faith

## The Struggle for Faith Summary and Analysis

Luther, known for lifting up the faith of others, sometimes struggles with his own faith. At different times in his life, Luther experiences depression. Luther realizes that spiritual problems are necessary in order to come up with spiritual solutions. Luther finds objective solace in Scripture, the written record of God in Christ. The Bible is of overwhelming importance to Martin Luther. Luther's family also gives him comfort and a distraction from worries. Luther also writes song lyrics as a way to praise God and find relief from pain. Luther still rejects the authority of popes and councils.

# The Measure of the Man

## The Measure of the Man Summary and Analysis

The author argues that in the last quarter of Luther's life he does not have any crucial achievements. Luther does have contempt for the bigamy of the landgrave, Philip of Hesse. Luther signs the memorandum recommending death even for peaceful Anabaptists. Luther proposes that Jews should live off the land, their synagogues burned, and their books taken away. Luther is still bitter toward the papists and continues to rail against the pope.

The author, reflecting upon Luther's life, states that to the end he is preaching, lecturing, counseling, and writing. Moreover he does lot to mold the character of the German people. The author gives strong credit to Luther for shaping the German language when he writes, "their language was so far fashioned by his hand that the extent of their indebtedness is difficult to recognize." The author feels that Luther's biggest influence is on the home and family. The author boldly claims that the home is profoundly affected by the Reformation. The author claims that the biggest impact of Luther on his people is their religion. Luther's sermons are read to congregations, his liturgy sung, the catechism is rehearsed by fathers in households, and the Bible cheers the fainthearted and weak.

It is obvious Luther's influence is international in scope. Lutheranism takes hold throughout Scandanavia. He has an extensive following in the United States. He is the one who gives the impetus which helps other Protestant denominations become established. His German Bible translation also affects the English version.

The author closes by giving us Luther's words when he faces opposition and accusations of being a heretic, "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen."



# Characters

## Martin Luther

Martin Luther is the subject of this book. He starts living his adult life as a simple monk, fulfilling all his duties, earning more education, and gaining more positions of authority. His duties sometimes require him to be up at all hours of the night, praying, fasting, chanting, preaching, and teaching. He struggles with earning salvation and feels he is never good enough. Later in life he realizes that Christ paid for his sin and that good works do not earn anything, they are just an outward act of obedience to God. He struggles with some of the teachings of the Catholic Church. He does not believe in granting indulgences (less time in purgatory to those who paid) to church members. He is known for the ninety-five theses he nails to the door of the Church. He faces great opposition from the Catholic Church and never recants his position. Luther serves God all of his life, enduring the possibility of martyrdom at any time. He is the catalyst for the Reformation and formation of the Protestant church. He translates the Bible into German and produces many books, tracts, and sermons. His influence forever impacts history.

## Hans Luther

He is Martin Luther's father. He works in the mines and owns six foundries. Hans raises Martin in a strict, God-fearing environment which likely helps mold Martin into the man he becomes. Hans initially disapproves of Martin entering the monastery. He feels that Martin should stay near his family and help support them. Martin grieves over not receiving his father's support. Later, however, his father comes to the monastery to see Martin do his first official mass. It is a momentous occasion and he is thankful to share it with his father. It seems that time has softened Hans' heart. Martin takes the opportunity to tell Hans he entered the monastery because he thinks he can do more for his parents through prayer than he ever could by staying in the world. When Hans dies, Martin is not able to do anything but grieve for several days. Although Martin's choice to enter the monastery strains the relationship with Hans, it is still clear that the two have a close father-son bond.

## Margaretta Luther

Margaretta is Martin's mother. She is known for being strict, conservative, and diligent in prayer. Her strong leadership helps form Martin Luther into a strong leader himself.

## Virgin Mary

Mary is the mother of Jesus. The Catholic Church gives Mary a special place of honor and many people chant her praises.



## **God**

God is the only one Luther serves. Luther believes the Bible to be God's Word.

## **Jesus**

Jesus is God's Son. Luther comes to believe that Jesus' death on the cross pays for his sins.

## **Pope**

The Pope is given the highest position of authority within the Catholic Church. The decisions of the Pope are looked upon as infallible. Luther, however, warns the Church that because the Pope is a man, he is capable of error. Luther does not want his fellow Catholics to regard the words of the Pope as the Word of God.

## **Emperor**

Emperor Charles V is also the Catholic King of Spain. He is put in the position of helping to determine when, how, and by whom Martin Luther's case should be handled.

## **Philip of Hesse**

Philip believes the people can unite to defend the right of each to believe what he will, even if they are not of the same belief.

## **Frederick the Wise**

Frederick the Wise is an ally of Martin Luther. He is the one who decides to hide Martin at Wartburg Castle. He is known for defending Luther and trying to get him a fair trial.

## **Cardinal Cajetan**

A papal legate and scholar. The Cardinal stands against Luther's beliefs. Cajetan believes the Pope is above everything in the Church and is the sole interpreter of the Bible.





## **John Eck**

John Eck debates Martin Luther for a week in Leipzig over the depravity of man. Eck believes the pope is divinely instituted. Eck questions how Luther can be the only one not in error and how the whole Catholic Church can be wrong.

## **Erasmus**

Erasmus thinks Luther does much good and does not regard him as a heretic. Erasmus does disagree with Luther's doctrine of man.

## **Melanchthon**

Melanchthon is a devoted colleague of Martin Luther. Melanchthon, a Humanist, is convinced that Luther correctly interprets the apostle Paul. Melanchthon, after Luther's death, translates the Augsburg Confession into Greek and changes Luther's teaching of justification by faith into the Greek concept of the deification of man through union with Christ.

## **Aleander**

Aleander prepares the final draft of the Edict of the Worms.

## **Duke George**

Duke George asks Luther to recant his position and offers to try to obtain a pardon from the emperor if Luther will do so.

## **Carlstadt**

Carlstadt is a more conservative religious leader than Martin Luther. Carlstadt attacks images and church music. Luther thinks him legalistic.

## **Muntzer**

Muntzer rejects all baptism. He believes the Bible is inadequate without a divinely inspired interpreter. He uses the gift of the Spirit as a basis for the formation of a church. In 1523, he is elected Minister in the Saxton town of Alstedt.



## **Zwingli**

A rival of Martin Luther, Zwingli has Humanist training and is a Catholic priest.

## **Katherine von Bora**

Katherine von Bora marries Martin Luther in May of 1525. She bears him six children and also helps raise their four adopted children. She does not mind being in the shadow of her famous husband. She is content doing the responsibilities her husband assigns her, such as gardening, cooking, and caring for the children.

## **Hans Luther, his son**

Hans Luther, Martin Luther's son, is born on June 7, 1526. He is the oldest of three sons born to Martin and Katherine.

## **Elizabeth Luther**

Elizabeth is Martin and Katherine's oldest daughter, born on December 10, 1527.

## **Magdalena Luther**

Magdalena, Martin and Katherine's middle daughter is born on December 17, 1529. Magdalena dies at 14 years old. On her deathbed she says she wants what God wills.

## **Martin Luther, Jr.**

Martin Luther, Jr. is born November 9, 1531.

## **Paul Luther**

Paul Luther, most likely named for the apostle Paul, is born on January 28, 1533.

## **Margaretta Luther, his daughter**

Margaretta Luther, likely named after Martin's mother, is born on December 17, 1534.



## Objects/Places

### Rome

The home of the Vatican and a place with catacombs, basilicas, shrines, and holy relics.

### Erfurt

The location of Luther's first monastery.

### Wittenberg

After Luther leaves Erfurt, he is transferred here to his next monastery.

### Germany

The country in which Luther lives his whole life.

### Leipzig

The location of Luther's eighteen day debate with John Eck.

### Spain

Home of Charles, the Holy Roman Emperor and Catholic King.

### Wartburg Castle

The place where Frederick the Wise decides to hide Luther after he is officially declared a heretic.

### Nurnberg

The place for the German diet meeting. This city ends up becoming largely Lutheran.

### Saxony

The place where Muntzer is elected minister in 1523.



## **Thuringia**

During the Peasant War, seventy cloisters are demolished here.

## **Franconia**

During the Peasant War, two-hundred seventy castles and fifty-two cloisters are destroyed here.

## **Northern Germany**

After a decade of feverish missionary activity, most of this region is Lutheran.

## **Strassburg**

This city becomes Lutheran.

## **Augsburg**

This city becomes Lutheran.

## **Ulm**

This city becomes Lutheran.

## **Scandinavia**

Lutheranism takes hold here by the end of Luther's life.

## **United States**

To this day, Luther has a massive number of followers in Lutheran churches in this country.

## **University of Erfurt**

This is the university Luther first attends and graduates from.



## **Calvary**

This is where Jesus Christ dies on the cross.

## **Vatican**

This is where the pope lives.



# Themes

## Priesthood of All Believers

The Catholic Church teaches at this time that the members of the clergy have the ability to do things the parishioners cannot do. In communion, only the clergy drink the wine for fear that a lay person might be careless and spill what they consider to be the blood of Christ. The clergy listen to parishioners confess their sins and then pray on their behalf. The parishioners do not directly confess their sins to God. It is the Pope and Catholic priests who can interpret Scripture. Most Catholics do not read their Bibles because they rely on the clergy to tell them about the Bible. It is Martin Luther who first challenges the power given to clergy. As a devout student of God's Word, Luther examines the Scriptures and declares that the Bible grants priesthood to all believers. This means that anyone who believes in Christ can take part in all of Communion, pray directly to God, and interpret Scripture for themselves. Luther sees reason why any believer cannot do anything a member of the clergy can do. This, of course, enrages the Catholic Church, especially those in positions of great power including the Pope. There has been a long tradition of hundreds of years in which the clergy have the power to do things that the laity cannot do. The clergy enjoy the respect that comes with their position. Luther is a threat to the Catholic Church because he argues that all believers in Christ can do these spiritual activities.

## The Pope and Councils Are Fallible

To the Catholic Church, the Pope is the most respected person on Earth. Any decision made by the Pope and the Councils is to be regarded as sacred as the Word of God. Parishioners are supposed to obey them without question. Martin Luther, a Catholic monk, challenges this foundational belief of the Catholic Church. Luther argues that since the Pope and members of the Councils are human, they are capable of making mistakes. To suggest that the Pope and Councils can err is an outrage to the Catholic Church. Luther is not trying to show disrespect. Rather, Luther does not want anyone to make the mistake of regarding the Pope as having as much authority as the Word of God. Luther believes that Scripture is divinely inspired by God. Luther argues that the actions of the Pope and Council cannot be considered completely inspired by God. In fact, Luther seems to think that the Pope and Councils contradict each other at times. For Catholics who elevate the Pope to almost God-like status, Luther's statements are unthinkable.

## Stand Up For What You Believe

For Martin Luther to come forward and challenge hundreds of years of Catholic tradition is extremely brave. He knows that he can be martyred at anytime. John Eck asks him, "Are you the only one who knows anything? Except for you is all the Church in error?"



(p.91) The emperor declares, "A single friar who goes counter to all Christianity for one-thousand years must be wrong. I will proceed against him as a notorious heretic,"

(p.145) He is repeatedly asked to recant his position and is excommunicated from the Church. Yet Luther never considers changing his position. He is willing to stand up for what he believes, even if he is the only person who believes it. Luther believes he has the Word of God on his side. Luther says, "I teach nothing save what is in Scripture."

(p.74) Although he faces opposition for the rest of his life, Luther never wavers in his interpretation of the Bible.

## Never Quit Working

To say that Luther is a hard-worker is a gross understatement. Throughout this biography we read of his devotion to praying, fasting, reading, studying, writing, preaching, teaching, and counseling. Luther never stops using his mouth or his pen. His entire life is a commitment to help others see the truths of the Bible. Luther works even harder when he has a family to provide for and to instruct in God's Word. Luther has six children of his own, four adopted children, and many, many students to mentor. Luther continues to write books even when he knows people are burning them. He translates the Bible into his native German language. That alone is an extremely noteworthy accomplishment. Luther does all of these things not to impress people, but to serve His God. He helps shape the future of what becomes the Protestant Church.

## One Cannot Earn Salvation

Luther spends the first part of his life trying to earn his salvation. He thinks that if he becomes a monk and does all of the duties of a monk that he can go to heaven when he dies. When recalling the first few years as a monk, Luther says, "if I had kept on any longer, I should have killed myself with vigils, prayers, reading, and other work," (p.34) Yet he never feels like he does enough to make up for his sins. The author writes that, "Luther was too obsessed with the picture of Christ the avenger to be consoled with the thought of Christ the redeemer," (p.45) Luther keeps searching the Bible for answers to his sin problem. He finally comes to the realization that Christ pays the price once and for all on the cross for all who believe. Luther says, "This is wonderful news to believe that salvation lies outside ourselves," (p.178). Luther believes that doing good does not make us good, but we do them because we are good. It is Christ who forgives us and enables us to live lives pleasing to God.



# Style

## Perspective

The book does not tell us much about the author, Roland H. Bainton. We know that he was a minister, theologian, and Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Yale Divinity School. He writes the book so that people can have a greater understanding and appreciation for the life of Martin Luther, a man who changes the course of Christian history. This book is intended for anyone wanting to study an important religious leader, the Reformation, and the beginning of the Protestant Church. The desired impact is for people to gain insight into Luther's background, work, family, spiritual life, struggles, achievements, and impact upon society. This book was first written in 1950 and revised several times, likely for the purpose of making it more readable. Time Magazine is quoted on the front cover as saying, "The most readable Luther biography in English."

## Tone

This is a scholarly book written to shed light upon Luther's influences, motivations, reasoning, battles, triumphs, and perseverance. The author writes to show why Luther did what he did throughout his life. The book does contrast Luther's beliefs and actions with those of his opposition. The author portrays the struggle of the Catholic Church against what they perceive as the heresy of Martin Luther. The book highlights Luther's accomplishments in the midst of such fierce adversity. Luther appears to be the victor in the long battle with the Catholic Church. He is not martyred and he continues working for the cause of Christ right up until his death. The book does quote Martin Luther and the writings of several men in Luther's day, both supporters and adversaries. These quotes convey the passion that all of these men felt about their beliefs. The book also includes illustrations, some of which convey the humor people of the day had with regard to the Pope, Luther, and religious issues.

## Structure

After the Table of Contents, the reader gets a list of all of the illustrations and their page numbers throughout the book. Next, a chronological timeline of the important dates, people, and events in Luther's life are listed. The structure of the book is a chronological ordering of Luther's life, beginning with his vow to become a monk. We read about Luther's family and hurt over his dad's initial disapproval of his joining the monastery. We learn of Luther's great devotion to all of his duties as a monk, his continuing education and taking on of positions of leadership within the Catholic Church. The book shows us Luther's first doubts with the practices of the Catholic Church on the issue of granting indulgences. Luther nails to the door his infamous ninety-five theses. We witness how Luther is treated and viewed by the Catholic Church. We then learn of the





key people who oppose him. Luther then receives the bull and proclaims that he will stand up for his beliefs. We read of the heartbreak he endures while in hiding and later his bravery in coming back into the public eye. The book tells us about the religious and social unrest going on at the time. We then come to see Luther in a new light as he marries and has a family. Luther continues to minister to those around him. The book ends by telling us about Luther's views towards other groups of people and his commitment to serving God throughout his life.



## Quotes

"Luther was above all else a man of religion," (p. 16).

"St. Anne help me! I will become a monk," (p. 25).

"If I had kept on any longer, I should have killed myself with vigils, prayers, reading, and other work," (p. 34).

"Anyone who seeks to discover the secret of Christianity is inevitably driven to the Bible," (p. 45).

"The penalties of purgatory the pope cannot reduce because these have been imposed by God," (p. 62).

"With the emperor, the pope, and the cardinal against him Luther had but slender hope of escaping the stake," (p. 70).

"I feel that I have not had justice because I teach nothing save what is in Scripture," (p.74).

"To prove that Luther's views were subversive was not to prove that they were false," (p. 88).

"Are you the only one that knows anything? Except for you is all the church in error?" (p. 91).

"If they burn my books, I will repeat what I have said. In this I am so bold that for it I will suffer death," (p. 111).

"If he persists in his madness, take him captive," (p. 115).

"Whatever may happen, I am not moved, because nothing can happen save in accord with the will of him who sits upon the heaven directing all," (p. 116).

"This bull condemns me from its own word without any proof from Scripture, whereas I back up all my assertions from the Bible," (p. 125).

"It is better that I should die a thousand times than that I should retract one syllable of the condemned articles," (p. 126).

"Since they have burned my books, I burn theirs," (p. 128).

"The pope is the adversary of Christ and the apostle of the Devil," (p. 139).

"A single friar who goes counter to all Christianity for one thousand years must be wrong. I will proceed against him as a notorious heretic," (p. 145).



"Luther is to be regarded as a convicted heretic...his followers also are to be condemned, his books are to be eradicated from the memory of man," (p. 147).

"The Christian man lives not to himself but to Christ and his neighbor through love," (p. 179).

"When Luther returned to Wittenberg, he was under the ban of both the church and the empire," (p. 191).

"Separate yourself from Martin Luther and put a muzzle on his blasphemous tongue," (p. 194).

"[Luther] began to portray marriage as a school for character," (p. 234).

"We are not saved by works; but if there be no works, there must be something amiss with faith," (p. 259).

"To the end he was preaching, lecturing, counseling, writing," (p. 300).

"Their language was so far fashioned by his hand that the extent of their indebtedness is difficult to recognize," (p. 301).

"The most profound impact of Luther on his people was their religion," (p. 301).

"Luther's influence extends so far beyond his own land," (p. 301).

"Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God helps me. Amen," (p. 302).



## Topics for Discussion

What early influences help shape Luther into the man he becomes?

What is life like in the monastery during this time?

Why are spiritual indulgences condemned by Luther?

How does Luther view the pope and the councils?

What impact does Luther's ninety-five theses have upon the world?

Why is Luther's life spared from martyrdom?

What does Luther mean by the "priesthood of all believers"?

Does Luther ever consider recanting his position? Why or why not?

How does Luther change after marrying and having a large family?

What activities are part of Luther's ministry?

What impact does Luther have upon religion?

What impact does Luther have upon society?