

## **Martin Luther**<sup>1</sup> (1483 – 1546 AD)

### **I. Introduction**

Martin Luther (November 10, 1483 - February 18, 1546) was a Christian theologian and Augustinian monk whose teachings inspired the Protestant Reformation and deeply influenced the doctrines of Protestant and other Christian traditions. Martin Luther was born to Hans and Margaretha Luder on 10 November 1483 in Eisleben, Germany and was baptised the next day on the feast of St. Martin of Tours, after whom he was named. Luther's call to the Church to return to the teachings of the Bible resulted in the formation of new traditions within Christianity and the Counter-Reformation in the Roman Catholic Church, culminating at the Council of Trent. His translation of the Bible also helped to develop a standard version of the German language and added several principles to the art of translation. Luther's hymns sparked the development of congregational singing in Christianity. His marriage, on June 13, 1525, to Katharina von Bora, a former nun, began the tradition of clerical marriage within several Christian traditions.



### **II. Martin Luther's Early Life**

Martin Luther's father owned a copper mine in nearby Mansfeld. Having risen from the peasantry, his father was determined to see his son ascend to civil service and bring further honor to the family. To that end, Hans sent young Martin to schools in Mansfeld, Magdeburg and Eisenach. At the age of seventeen in 1501 he entered the University of Erfurt. The young student received his Bachelor's degree after just one year in 1502! Three years later, in 1505, he received a Master's degree. According to his father's wishes, Martin enrolled in the law school of that university. All that changed during a thunderstorm in the summer of 1505. A lightning bolt struck near to him as he was returning to school. Terrified, he cried out, "Help, St. Anne! I'll become a monk!" Spared of his life, but regretting his words, Luther kept his bargain, dropped out of law school and entered the monastery there.

### **III. Luther's Struggle to Find Peace with God**

Young Brother Martin fully dedicated himself to monastic life, the effort to do good works to please God and to serve others through prayer for their souls. Yet peace with God escaped him. He devoted himself to fasts, flagellations, long hours in prayer and pilgrimages, and constant confession. The more he tried to do for God, it seemed, the more aware he became of his sinfulness.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of this content is from: <http://greatsite.com/timeline-english-bible-history/martin-luther.html>

Johann von Staupitz, Luther's superior, concluded the young man needed more work to distract him from pondering himself. He ordered the monk to pursue an academic career. In 1507 Luther was ordained to the priesthood. In 1508 he began teaching theology at the University of Wittenberg. Luther earned his Bachelor's degree in Biblical Studies on 9 March 1508 and a Bachelor's degree in the Sentences by Peter Lombard, (the main textbook of theology in the Middle Ages) in 1509. On 19 October 1512, the University of Wittenberg conferred upon Martin Luther the degree of Doctor of Theology.

#### **IV. Martin Luther's Evangelical Discovery**

The demands of study for academic degrees and preparation for delivering lectures drove Martin Luther to study the Scriptures in depth. Luther immersed himself in the teachings of the Scripture and the early church. Slowly, terms like penance and righteousness took on new meaning. The controversy that broke loose with the publication of his 95 Theses placed even more pressure on the reformer to study the Bible. This study convinced him that the Church had lost sight of several central truths. To Luther, the most important of these was the doctrine that brought him peace with God. Here's how he describes it in his *Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Writings* in 1545:

**I had indeed been captivated with an extraordinary ardor for understanding Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. But up till then it was ... a single word in Chapter 1 [:17], 'In it the righteousness of God is revealed,' that had stood in my way. For I hated that word 'righteousness of God,' which according to the use and custom of all the teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically regarding the formal or active righteousness, as they called it, with which God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner.**

**Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, "As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue, without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteous wrath!" Thus I raged with a fierce and trouble conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted.**

**At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, "In it righteousness of**

**God is revealed, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." There I began to understand [that] the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which [the] merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates. Here a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scriptures from memory ...**

**And I extolled my sweetest word with a love as great as the hatred with which I had before hated the word 'righteousness of God.' Thus that place in Paul was for me truth the gate to paradise.**

With joy, Luther now believed and taught that salvation is a gift of God's grace, received by faith and trust in God's promise to forgive sins for the sake of Christ's death on the cross. This, he believed was God's work from beginning to end.

#### **V. Luther's 95 Theses**

On Halloween of 1517, Luther changed the course of human history when he nailed his 95 Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, accusing the Roman Catholic church of heresy upon heresy. Many people cite this act as the primary starting point of the Protestant Reformation... though to be sure, John Wycliffe, John Hus, and others had already put the life's work and even their lives on the line for same cause of truth, constructing the foundation of Reform upon which Luther now built. Luther's action was in great part a response to the selling of indulgences by Johann Tetzel, a Dominican priest. Luther's charges also directly challenged the position of the clergy in regard to individual salvation. Before long, Luther's 95 Theses of Contention had been copied and published all over Europe.

#### **VI. Here I Stand**

Luther's Protestant views were condemned as heretical by Pope Leo X in the bull Exsurge Domine in 1520. Consequently Luther was summoned to either renounce or reaffirm them at the Diet of Worms on 17 April 1521. When he appeared before the assembly, Johann von Eck, by then assistant to the Archbishop of Trier, acted as spokesman for Emperor Charles the Fifth. He presented Luther with a table filled with copies of his writings. Eck asked Luther if he still believed what these works taught. He requested time to think about his answer. Granted an extension, Luther prayed, consulted with friends and mediators and presented himself before the Diet the next day.

When the counselor put the same question to Luther the next day, the reformer apologized for the harsh tone of many of his writings, but said that he could not reject the majority of them or the teachings in them. Luther respectfully but boldly stated, "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."

On May 25, the Emperor issued his Edict of Worms, declaring Martin Luther an outlaw.

## VII. Luther in Exile at the Wartburg Castle

Luther had powerful friends among the princes of Germany, one of whom was his own prince, Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony. The prince arranged for Luther to be seized on his way from the Diet by a company of masked horsemen, who carried him to the castle of the Wartburg, where he was kept about a year. He grew a wide flaring beard; took on the garb of a knight and assumed the pseudonym Jörg. During this period of forced sojourn in the world, Luther was still hard at work upon his celebrated translation of the Bible, though he couldn't rely on the isolation of a monastery. During his translation, Luther would make forays into the nearby towns and markets to listen to people speak, so that he could put his translation of the Bible into the language of the people.

Although his stay at the Wartburg kept Luther hidden from public view, Luther often received letters from his friends and allies, asking for his views and advice. For example, Luther's closest friend, Philipp Melanchthon, wrote to him and asked how to answer the charge that the reformers neglected pilgrimages, fasts and other traditional forms of piety. Luther's replied: "If you are a preacher of mercy, do not preach an imaginary but the true mercy. If the mercy is true, you must therefore bear the true, not an imaginary sin. God does not save those who are only imaginary sinners. Be a sinner, and let your sins be strong, but let your trust in Christ be stronger, and rejoice in Christ who is the victor over sin, death, and the world. We will commit sins while we are here, for this life is not a place where justice resides. We, however, says Peter (2. Peter 3:13) are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth where justice will reign." [Letter 99.13, To Philipp Melanchthon, 1 August 1521.]

## VIII. Luther's German Bible

Martin Luther was the first person to translate and publish the Bible in the commonly-spoken dialect of the German people. He used the recent 1516 critical Greek edition of Erasmus, a text which was later called *Textus Receptus*. The Luther German New Testament translation was first published in September of 1522. The translation of the Old Testament followed, yielding an entire German language Bible in 1534.



Luther is also known to have befriended William Tyndale, and given him safe haven and assistance in using the same 1516 Erasmus Greek-Latin Parallel New Testament that had been the source text for his German New Testament of 1522, as the trustworthy source text for Tyndale's English New Testament of 1525-26.

## **IX. Luther's Writings**

The number of books attributed to Martin Luther is quite impressive. However, some Luther scholars contend that many of the works were at least drafted by some of his good friends like Philipp Melancthon. Luther's books explain the settings of the epistles and show the conformity of the books of the Bible to each other. Of special note would be his writings about the Epistle to the Galatians in which he compares himself to the Apostle Paul in his defense of the Gospel. Luther also wrote about church administration and wrote much about the Christian home.

Luther's work contains a number of statements that modern readers would consider rather crude. For example, Luther was known to advise people that they should literally "Tell the Devil he may kiss my ass." It should be remembered that Luther received many communications from throughout Europe from people who could write anonymously, that is, without the specter of mass media making their communications known. No public figure today could write in the manner of the correspondences Luther received or in the way Luther responded to them. Luther was certainly a theologian of the middle-ages. He was an earthy man who enjoyed his beer, and was bold and often totally without tact in the blunt truth he vehemently preached. While this offended many, it endeared him all the more to others.

He was open with his frustrations and emotions, as well. Once, when asked if he truly loved God, Luther replied "Love God? Sometimes I hate Him!" Luther was also frustrated by the works-emphasis of the book of James, calling it "the Epistle of Straw, and questioning its canonicity. Also irritated with the complex symbolism of the Book of Revelation, he once said that it too, was not canon, and that it should be thrown into the river! He later retracted these statements, of course. Luther was a man who was easily misquoted or taken out of context. While a brilliant theologian, and a bold reformer, he would not have made a good politician. But then, he never aspired to any career in politics.

## **X. Bondage of the Will**

Luther came to understand justification as entirely the work of God. This teaching by Luther was clearly expressed in his 1525 publication *On the Bondage of the Will*, which was written in response to *On Free Will* by Desiderius Erasmus (1524). Luther based his position of Predestination on St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians 2:8-10. Against the teaching of his day that the righteous acts of believers are performed in *cooperation* with God, Luther wrote that Christians receive such righteousness entirely from outside themselves; that righteousness not only comes from Christ but actually *is* the righteousness of Christ, imputed to Christians (rather than infused into them) through faith. "That is why faith alone makes someone just and fulfills the law," he wrote. "Faith

is that which brings the Holy Spirit through the merits of Christ." Faith, for Luther, was a gift from God. He explained his concept of "justification" in the *Smalcald Articles*:

**The first and chief article is this: Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification (Romans 3:24-25). He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29), and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). All have sinned and are justified freely, without their own works and merits, by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood (Romans 3:23-25). This is necessary to believe. This cannot be otherwise acquired or grasped by any work, law or merit. Therefore, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us ... Nothing of this article can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and everything else falls (Mark 13:31).**

## XI. Luther's Death

Martin Luther escaped martyrdom, and died of natural causes. His last written words were, "Know that no one can have indulged in the Holy Writers sufficiently, unless he has governed churches for a hundred years with the prophets, such as Elijah and Elisha, John the Baptist, Christ and the apostles... We are beggars: this is true."

## XII. Sources

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Oberman, Heiko A. *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil*. Translated by Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart. New York: Doubleday, 1982

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## XIII. Timeline

- 1450 Gutenberg invents movable type
- 1483 Luther born in Eisleben (November 10)
- 1484 Luther family moves to Mansfeld
- 1497 Luther attends school in Magdeberg
- 1498 Luther attends parish school in Eisenach, staying with relatives
- 1501 Luther begins study at University of Erfurt
- 1502 Receives Baccalaureate in the Liberal Arts
- 1505 Receives Master of Arts; plans for law school
- 1505 Caught in a thunderstorm, pledges to become a monk (July 2)
- 1505 Enters Augustinian monastery at Erfurt
- 1506 Takes monastic vows
- 1507 Ordained priest

- 1507 Begins study of theology at University of Erfurt
- 1512 Luther receives doctorate in Theology
- 1512 Begins work as Professor of Theology at U of Wittenburg
- 1514 Becomes priest of Wittenberg's City Church
- 1514-15 Lectures on the Psalms
- 1515-16 Lectures on Romans
- 1516-17 Lectures on Galatians
- 1517 October 31- Posts 95 Theses on the castle church door
- 1517-18 Lectures on Hebrews
- 1518 Inquisition on Luther begins in Rome
- 1519 Death of Emperor Maximilian - Rome distracted from Luther
- 1520-21 Freedom of a Christian, Babylonian Captivity, Address to German Nation
- 1520 Inquisition on Luther taken up again
- 1520 Papal bull Exsurge Domine issued (June 15)
- 1520 Luther burns bull and canon law with students (December 10)
- 1521 Excommunicated in Rome (January 3)
- 1521 Arrives at Diet of Worms (April 16)
- 1521 Departs Worms (April 25)
- 1521 Kidnapped by Frederick, taken to Wartburg Castle (May 4)
- 1523 On Secular Authority
- 1525 Bondage of the Will and Against the Murderous, Thieving Hordes of Peasants
- 1530 Edict of Worms
- 1531 Smalkaldian Alliance formed
- 1543 On the Jews and Their Lies
- 1546 Death of Luther in Eisleben on February 18
- 1892 Luther's grave is opened - his remains remained! (February 14)



## **Disputation of Doctor Martin Luther on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences**

by Dr. Martin Luther (1517)

Out of love for the truth and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at Wittenberg, under the presidency of the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and of Sacred Theology, and Lecturer in Ordinary on the same at that place. Wherefore he requests that those who are unable to be present and debate orally with us, may do so by letter.

In the Name our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

1. Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, when He said Poenitentiam agite, willed that the whole life of believers should be repentance.
2. This word cannot be understood to mean sacramental penance, i.e., confession and satisfaction, which is administered by the priests.
3. Yet it means not inward repentance only; nay, there is no inward repentance which does not outwardly work divers mortifications of the flesh.
4. The penalty [of sin], therefore, continues so long as hatred of self continues; for this is the true inward repentance, and continues until our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.
5. The pope does not intend to remit, and cannot remit any penalties other than those which he has imposed either by his own authority or by that of the Canons.
6. The pope cannot remit any guilt, except by declaring that it has been remitted by God and by assenting to God's remission; though, to be sure, he may grant remission in cases reserved to his judgment. If his right to grant remission in such cases were despised, the guilt would remain entirely unforgiven.
7. God remits guilt to no one whom He does not, at the same time, humble in all things and bring into subjection to His vicar, the priest.
8. The penitential canons are imposed only on the living, and, according to them, nothing should be imposed on the dying.
9. Therefore the Holy Spirit in the pope is kind to us, because in his decrees he always makes exception of the article of death and of necessity.
10. Ignorant and wicked are the doings of those priests who, in the case of the dying, reserve canonical penances for purgatory.
11. This changing of the canonical penalty to the penalty of purgatory is quite evidently one of the tares that were sown while the bishops slept.
12. In former times the canonical penalties were imposed not after, but before absolution, as tests of true contrition.
13. The dying are freed by death from all penalties; they are already dead to canonical rules, and have a right to be released from them.

14. The imperfect health [of soul], that is to say, the imperfect love, of the dying brings with it, of necessity, great fear; and the smaller the love, the greater is the fear.
15. This fear and horror is sufficient of itself alone (to say nothing of other things) to constitute the penalty of purgatory, since it is very near to the horror of despair.
16. Hell, purgatory, and heaven seem to differ as do despair, almost-despair, and the assurance of safety.
17. With souls in purgatory it seems necessary that horror should grow less and love increase.
18. It seems unproved, either by reason or Scripture, that they are outside the state of merit, that is to say, of increasing love.
19. Again, it seems unproved that they, or at least that all of them, are certain or assured of their own blessedness, though we may be quite certain of it.
20. Therefore by "full remission of all penalties" the pope means not actually "of all," but only of those imposed by himself.
21. Therefore those preachers of indulgences are in error, who say that by the pope's indulgences a man is freed from every penalty, and saved;
22. Whereas he remits to souls in purgatory no penalty which, according to the canons, they would have had to pay in this life.
23. If it is at all possible to grant to any one the remission of all penalties whatsoever, it is certain that this remission can be granted only to the most perfect, that is, to the very fewest.
24. It must needs be, therefore, that the greater part of the people are deceived by that indiscriminate and high-sounding promise of release from penalty.
25. The power which the pope has, in a general way, over purgatory, is just like the power which any bishop or curate has, in a special way, within his own diocese or parish.
26. The pope does well when he grants remission to souls [in purgatory], not by the power of the keys (which he does not possess), but by way of intercession.
27. They preach man who say that so soon as the penny jingles into the money-box, the soul flies out [of purgatory].
28. It is certain that when the penny jingles into the money-box, gain and avarice can be increased, but the result of the intercession of the Church is in the power of God alone.
29. Who knows whether all the souls in purgatory wish to be bought out of it, as in the legend of Sts. Severinus and Paschal.
30. No one is sure that his own contrition is sincere; much less that he has attained full remission.
31. Rare as is the man that is truly penitent, so rare is also the man who truly buys indulgences, i.e., such men are most rare.
32. They will be condemned eternally, together with their teachers, who believe themselves sure of their salvation because they have letters of pardon.

33. Men must be on their guard against those who say that the pope's pardons are that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to Him;
34. For these "graces of pardon" concern only the penalties of sacramental satisfaction, and these are appointed by man.
35. They preach no Christian doctrine who teach that contrition is not necessary in those who intend to buy souls out of purgatory or to buy confessionalia.
36. Every truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without letters of pardon.
37. Every true Christian, whether living or dead, has part in all the blessings of Christ and the Church; and this is granted him by God, even without letters of pardon.
38. Nevertheless, the remission and participation [in the blessings of the Church] which are granted by the pope are in no way to be despised, for they are, as I have said, the declaration of divine remission.
39. It is most difficult, even for the very keenest theologians, at one and the same time to commend to the people the abundance of pardons and [the need of] true contrition.
40. True contrition seeks and loves penalties, but liberal pardons only relax penalties and cause them to be hated, or at least, furnish an occasion [for hating them].
41. Apostolic pardons are to be preached with caution, lest the people may falsely think them preferable to other good works of love.
42. Christians are to be taught that the pope does not intend the buying of pardons to be compared in any way to works of mercy.
43. Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does a better work than buying pardons;
44. Because love grows by works of love, and man becomes better; but by pardons man does not grow better, only more free from penalty.
45. 45. Christians are to be taught that he who sees a man in need, and passes him by, and gives [his money] for pardons, purchases not the indulgences of the pope, but the indignation of God.
46. Christians are to be taught that unless they have more than they need, they are bound to keep back what is necessary for their own families, and by no means to squander it on pardons.
47. Christians are to be taught that the buying of pardons is a matter of free will, and not of commandment.
48. Christians are to be taught that the pope, in granting pardons, needs, and therefore desires, their devout prayer for him more than the money they bring.
49. Christians are to be taught that the pope's pardons are useful, if they do not put their trust in them; but altogether harmful, if through them they lose their fear of God.

50. Christians are to be taught that if the pope knew the exactions of the pardon-preachers, he would rather that St. Peter's church should go to ashes, than that it should be built up with the skin, flesh and bones of his sheep.
51. Christians are to be taught that it would be the pope's wish, as it is his duty, to give of his own money to very many of those from whom certain hawkers of pardons cajole money, even though the church of St. Peter might have to be sold.
52. The assurance of salvation by letters of pardon is vain, even though the commissary, nay, even though the pope himself, were to stake his soul upon it.
53. They are enemies of Christ and of the pope, who bid the Word of God be altogether silent in some Churches, in order that pardons may be preached in others.
54. Injury is done the Word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or a longer time is spent on pardons than on this Word.
55. It must be the intention of the pope that if pardons, which are a very small thing, are celebrated with one bell, with single processions and ceremonies, then the Gospel, which is the very greatest thing, should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, a hundred ceremonies.
56. The "treasures of the Church," out of which the pope. grants indulgences, are not sufficiently named or known among the people of Christ.
57. That they are not temporal treasures is certainly evident, for many of the vendors do not pour out such treasures so easily, but only gather them.
58. Nor are they the merits of Christ and the Saints, for even without the pope, these always work grace for the inner man, and the cross, death, and hell for the outward man.
59. St. Lawrence said that the treasures of the Church were the Church's poor, but he spoke according to the usage of the word in his own time.
60. Without rashness we say that the keys of the Church, given by Christ's merit, are that treasure;
61. For it is clear that for the remission of penalties and of reserved cases, the power of the pope is of itself sufficient.
62. The true treasure of the Church is the Most Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God.
63. But this treasure is naturally most odious, for it makes the first to be last.
64. On the other hand, the treasure of indulgences is naturally most acceptable, for it makes the last to be first.
65. Therefore the treasures of the Gospel are nets with which they formerly were wont to fish for men of riches.
66. The treasures of the indulgences are nets with which they now fish for the riches of men.
67. The indulgences which the preachers cry as the "greatest graces" are known to be truly such, in so far as they promote gain.

68. Yet they are in truth the very smallest graces compared with the grace of God and the piety of the Cross.
69. Bishops and curates are bound to admit the commissaries of apostolic pardons, with all reverence.
70. But still more are they bound to strain all their eyes and attend with all their ears, lest these men preach their own dreams instead of the commission of the pope.
71. He who speaks against the truth of apostolic pardons, let him be anathema and accursed!
72. But he who guards against the lust and license of the pardon-preachers, let him be blessed!
73. The pope justly thunders against those who, by any art, contrive the injury of the traffic in pardons.
74. But much more does he intend to thunder against those who use the pretext of pardons to contrive the injury of holy love and truth.
75. To think the papal pardons so great that they could absolve a man even if he had committed an impossible sin and violated the Mother of God -- this is madness.
76. We say, on the contrary, that the papal pardons are not able to remove the very least of venial sins, so far as its guilt is concerned.
77. It is said that even St. Peter, if he were now Pope, could not bestow greater graces; this is blasphemy against St. Peter and against the pope.
78. We say, on the contrary, that even the present pope, and any pope at all, has greater graces at his disposal; to wit, the Gospel, powers, gifts of healing, etc., as it is written in I. Corinthians xii.
79. To say that the cross, emblazoned with the papal arms, which is set up [by the preachers of indulgences], is of equal worth with the Cross of Christ, is blasphemy.
80. The bishops, curates and theologians who allow such talk to be spread among the people, will have an account to render.
81. This unbridled preaching of pardons makes it no easy matter, even for learned men, to rescue the reverence due to the pope from slander, or even from the shrewd questionings of the laity.
82. To wit: -- "Why does not the pope empty purgatory, for the sake of holy love and of the dire need of the souls that are there, if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of miserable money with which to build a Church? The former reasons would be most just; the latter is most trivial."
83. Again: -- "Why are mortuary and anniversary masses for the dead continued, and why does he not return or permit the withdrawal of the endowments founded on their behalf, since it is wrong to pray for the redeemed?"
84. Again: -- "What is this new piety of God and the pope, that for money they allow a man who is impious and their enemy to buy out of purgatory the pious soul of a friend of God, and do not rather, because of that pious and beloved soul's own need, free it for pure love's sake?"
85. Again: -- "Why are the penitential canons long since in actual fact and through disuse abrogated and dead, now satisfied by the granting of indulgences, as though they were still alive and in force?"

86. Again: -- "Why does not the pope, whose wealth is to-day greater than the riches of the richest, build just this one church of St. Peter with his own money, rather than with the money of poor believers?"

87. Again: -- "What is it that the pope remits, and what participation does he grant to those who, by perfect contrition, have a right to full remission and participation?"

88. Again: -- "What greater blessing could come to the Church than if the pope were to do a hundred times a day what he now does once, and bestow on every believer these remissions and participations?"

89. "Since the pope, by his pardons, seeks the salvation of souls rather than money, why does he suspend the indulgences and pardons granted heretofore, since these have equal efficacy?"

90. To repress these arguments and scruples of the laity by force alone, and not to resolve them by giving reasons, is to expose the Church and the pope to the ridicule of their enemies, and to make Christians unhappy.

91. If, therefore, pardons were preached according to the spirit and mind of the pope, all these doubts would be readily resolved; nay, they would not exist.

92. Away, then, with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," and there is no peace!

93. Blessed be all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Cross, cross," and there is no cross!

94. Christians are to be exhorted that they be diligent in following Christ, their Head, through penalties, deaths, and hell;

95. And thus be confident of entering into heaven rather through many tribulations, than through the assurance of peace.

## Quotes from Luther's Preface to his Commentary on Galatians

The greatest knowledge and the highest wisdom of Christians is not to know the law and to be ignorant of works, and of the whole **active** righteousness, especially when the conscience is wrestling with God. Contrary, among those who are not of God's people, the greatest wisdom is to know and to urge the law and the **active** righteousness. But it is a strange thing and unknown to the world to teach Christians to be ignorant of the law and to live before God as if there were no law; notwithstanding, except you be ignorant of the law and be **assuredly persuaded** in his heart there is now no law, nor wrath of God, but only grace and mercy for Christ's sake, you cannot be saved; for by the law comes the knowledge of sin. Conversely, works and the keeping of the law is strictly required in the world, as if there were no promise, or grace. A wise and faithful disposer of the Word of God must so moderate the law that it may be kept within its bounds. He that teaches that men are justified before God by the observation of the law, passes the bounds of the law, and confounds these two kind of righteousness, **active** and **passive**. Conversely, he sets forth the law and works to the old man, and the promise and forgiveness of sins and God's mercy to the new man, divides the Word well. For the flesh or the old man must be coupled with the law and works; the spirit or the new man must be joined with the promise of God and His mercy.

When I see a man oppressed with the law, terrified with sin, and thirsting for comfort, it is time that I remove out of his sight the law and **active** righteousness, and set before him the gospel, the Christian or **passive** righteousness, which offers the promise made in Christ, who came for afflicted and sinners.

We teach the difference between these two kinds of righteousness, **active** and **passive**, to the end that manners and faith, works and grace, political and religious, should not be confounded, or taken the one for the other. Both are necessary; but each must be kept within its bounds: Christian righteousness pertains to the new man, and the righteousness of the law pertains to the old man, which is born of flesh and blood. Upon this old man, as upon a donkey, there must be laid a burden that may press him down, and he must not enjoy the freedom of the spirit of grace, except he first put upon him the new man, by faith in Christ. Then may he enjoy the kingdom and inestimable gift of grace. This I say, so that no man should think we reject or forbid good works.

We imagine two worlds, the one heavenly, the other earthly. In these we place these two kinds of righteousness, the one far separate from the other. The righteousness of the law is earthly and deals with earthly things. But Christian righteousness is heavenly, which we have not of ourselves, but receive from heaven; we work not for it, but by grace it is worked in us, and is realized by faith.

**Do we then do nothing? Do we do nothing at all for the obtaining of this righteousness? I answer, Nothing at all!** For this is perfect righteousness, to do nothing, to hear nothing, to know nothing of the law, or of works, but to know and believe this only, that Christ is gone to the Father, and is not now seen; that He sits in heaven at the right hand of His Father, not as judge, but made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, holiness and redemption -- briefly, that He is our high priest entreating for us, and reigning over us, and in us, by grace. In this heavenly righteousness sin can have no place, for there is no law; and where there is no law, there can be no transgression (Romans 4:15). Seeing then that sin has here no place, there can be no anguish of conscience, no fear, no heaviness. Therefore John says (1 John 5:18): "He that is born of God cannot sin."