



MARTIN LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION



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A Brief Photo Essay of Martin Luther's Life

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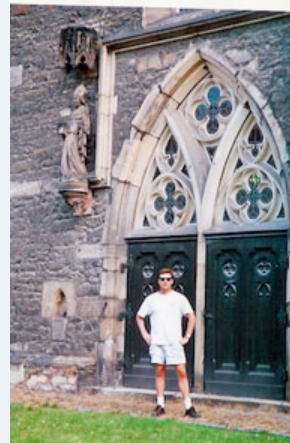
Bryan sitting in front of the Martin Luther statue in Eisenach, Germany

Luther is one of the most important figures of all history and the Christian faith. His impact in returning people to the Word and an understanding of Christ's finished work on the cross, salvation by grace through faith alone, and the Scriptures as the sole and only true authority in the Body of Christ, cannot be understated. In fact, more has been written about Luther than any other person in history, except Jesus Christ.

For its Millenium Issue in the Fall of 1997, *Life Magazine* named Martin Luther as the 3rd Most Important Person of the Millenium. *Time Magazine's* Richard N. Ostling calls Luther "the last medieval man and the first moderno one."

Luther's Augustinian Monastery, Erfurt, Germany. Bryan stands in front of the doors Luther himself walked through as he entered a path that would make him the "accidental revolutionary."

Luther entered the monastery seeking peace with God, but instead found dead religious rituals such as lengthy periods of fasting and praying, often for days or weeks on end, with long periods of penance. Confession of sins was a required part of penance, he thus confessed his sins so much that the vicar told him: "Why don't you go out and commit some real sins, and come back when you have something to confess." Luther says: "If ever a monk were to get to heaven by this monkery it would be I... I should have killed myself with vigils, prayers, recitings, and other work." Yet the peace with God he sought still eluded him.





Bryan in front of Luther statue in Wittenberg, Germany.

Wittenberg, 1516: Luther's born-again experience took place in the study of the Augustinian tower as he grappled with Paul's teaching in Romans and Galatians. Luther's own words tell it best where he described that, though he was an impeccable monk, he still wrestled with the fact that he stood as a sinner before God with no confidence that his own merit would assuage Him.

Luther says: "Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement the just shall live by faith. Then I grasped that the justice of God is his very own righteousness (imputed to us) where through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us by faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be REBORN and to have gone through open doors into paradise.

The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning whereas the justice of God had filled me with hate now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This word of Paul became to me a gate to heaven."

"If you have a true faith in Christ as Savior then you should understand you have a gracious God for faith leads you in and opens up God's heart that you should see pure grace and overflowing love. This it is to look upon his fatherly friendly heart in which there is no anger nor ungraciousness. He who sees God as angry does not see him rightly but only looks upon a curtain, as if a dark cloud has been drawn upon his face."

Standing in front of the famous Wittenberg Door.

This spot marks the very flash point of the Reformation. It was here that on October 31, All Hallow's Eve, in the year 1517 that Luther would nail his Ninety-five Theses attacking church abuses such as the sale of indulgences (forgiveness for payment rendered), that set off the spark that exploded into the Reformation, which would shake the institutionalized Catholic Church, the Holy Roman Empire (it was neither Roman nor Holy), the nations, and the history of the world from that day forward.



At the Reformation Park in Worms, Germany, Bryan stands in front of the Luther Monument between Wycliffe, Savonarola and Luther.

It was here in Worms in the year 1521, where the Emperor called forth a Diet (a judicial council). Luther is called to this Diet, but instead of being given a chance to debate his works as he was told he would be, he is told he must recant or face the consequences, which of course would mean being condemned and burned at the stake.

Luther rises to the occasion by refusing to recant and literally takes his stand. His very words were: "My conscience is captive to the word of God, to go against Scripture and conscience is neither right nor safe, I cannot and will not recant. Here I stand, so help me God." **As one person, Luther dared to stand up to all the powers and authorities of Church and State for his firm belief in the immutable authority and truth of God's Word.**

The Wartburg Castle, outside Eisenach, Germany. Bryan takes in the view of the historic sight.

After the Diet of Worms, Luther would have been arrested, but instead he is kidnapped by the Elector Frederick the Wise before he can get to Wittenberg where the authorities are waiting for him. He is hidden in the Wartburg Castle for over a year to preserve his life.

While captive, he begins his translation of the Bible into the



common German language. This would revolutionize the atmosphere as heretofore the Catholic church had forbidden the Scriptures to be published in anything but Latin, and had forbidden them to even be read or possessed by anyone other than priests or bishops as stated in the Synod of Toulouse since 1229. Luther's Version becomes a literary classic and recharged the population with a renewed faith in Christ. It had the added side effect of greatly advancing literacy and education among the common people.

The Reformation spreads throughout Europe as many other prominent leaders take up and continue its cause for generations to come.

The cry still holds true today with all the abuses still going on in the Body of Christ in the name of religion: "Let The Reformation Continue."



Bryan in front of statue of Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich, Switzerland.

With our son Patrick in front of a statue of John Knox at St. Giles Church in Edinburgh, Scotland.



We encourage you to [watch the video](#) to get a more in-depth look at Martin Luther.

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