

V. Imitate Their Faith

1. Imitation is not synonymous with worship.
 - “People should stop using my name, and instead of calling themselves Lutheran, they should be willing to be called Christian. What is Luther? The doctrine is not mine. And I have not been crucified for anybody...How would I, a bag full of maggots, come to the point that people, the children of Christ, call themselves after my unwholesome name?”¹
2. Justification by faith alone is as relevant today as it was in Luther’s day.
 - “Because if this article remains standing, the church remains standing, but if this article falls, the church also falls.”²

Next Class:

02/26 William Tyndale

Resources:



TolleLege.net



Slides and Handouts

Questions or Comments?

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Equipping Class:

Remembering the Faithful:

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Lesson 4: Martin Luther (1483-1546)

I. Introduction

II. The Righteousness of God by Faith Alone (Romans 1:16-17)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

¹ A Faithful Exhortation to All Christians to Guard against Turmoil and Anger (1522), in WA 8:684-85.

² Lectures on the Psalms (1532-1533), in WA 40.3:352; Disputations (1537), in WA 39.1:205.

III. Remember Your Leaders

- Martin Luther was the spark that helped ignite the Protestant Reformation in the late 1500s in Europe: Lightning, 95 Theses, and the Diet of Worms.
- “If, then, I am not convinced by testimonies of Scripture or by clear rational arguments—for I do not believe in the pope or in councils alone, since it has been established that they have often erred and contradicted each other—I am bound by the Bible texts that I have quoted. And as long as my conscience is captive to the Word of God, I cannot nor do I want to retract anything when things become doubtful. Salvation will be threatened if you go against your conscience. May God help me. Amen.”³ (Diet of Worms)
- Luther wrote hundreds of catechisms, sermons, lectures and books explaining foundational Christian doctrines such as justification by faith alone and the priesthood of all believers.
- He preached nearly 40 times a year in Wittenberg, and gave numerous lectures on the Bible to students, especially in the Psalms, Romans, and Galatians.
- He completed translating the Bible into the German language in 1534: a translation for the common people!

IV. Consider the Outcome of Their Way of Life

Martin Luther was born in 1483 in Eisleben, Germany. Although the family’s copper mining business was fairly successful, Martin’s father (Hans) had plans for his son to pursue a career in law. Thus, Luther enrolled at the University of Erfurt. After nearly being struck by lightning one evening, a terrified Luther became an Augustinian monk, having made a vow to do so. In the monastery, Luther passed the days in starvation, prayer, and confession. This led Luther to despair of his sin, while finding no hope in these religious acts. Determined to understand how a sinner could actually be made right before God, Luther began studying the Bible, where he eventually discovered the true source of righteousness (Rom. 1:17). In the process of his discovery of faith, Luther left the monastery and launched a decades-long campaign against the false gospel being taught by the Roman Catholic Church. (See Luther’s 95 Theses). Ultimately, Luther’s ministry resulted in the emergence of a new Protestant movement in Europe that eventually spread to other parts of the world. Martin Luther died in 1546 in his hometown of Eisleben.

³ Luther at the Diet of Worms (1521), in WA 7:838.