

The Protestant Reformation

- The 16th century Protestant Reformation was a **religious, political, intellectual and cultural** movement that set the stage for the modern state of Europe.
- **The Reformation** represented the wish to rediscover a **simpler and more authentic version of Christian life.**



The (Protestant) Reformation

- In northern and central Europe, a large number of reformers like **John Hus, John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, John Calvin and Henry VIII** challenged papal authority and questioned the Catholic Church's ability to define Christian practice.
- The Protestant Reformation centered on **religious and political redistribution of power** into the hands of Bible- and pamphlet-reading pastors and princes.
- The disruption triggered **wars, persecutions** and the so-called **Counter-Reformation**, the Catholic Church's delayed but forceful response to the Protestants.

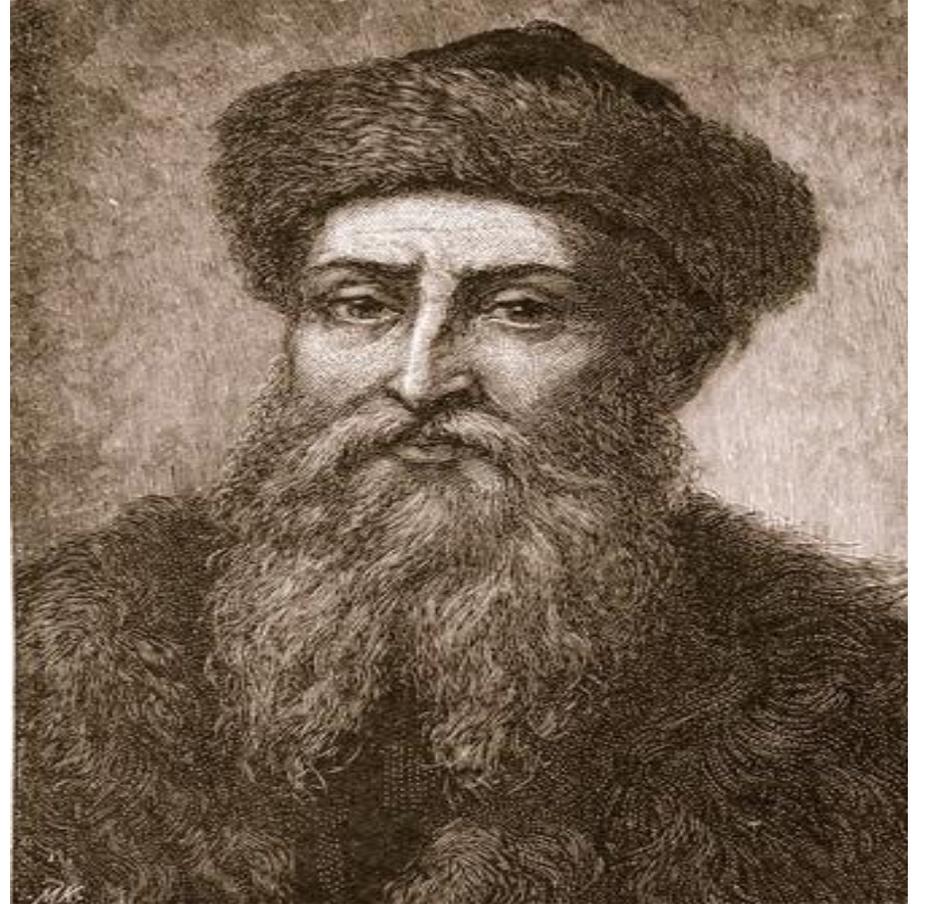
Martin Luther



Born in Germany in 1483, **Martin Luther** became one of the most influential figures in Christian history when he *accelerated the Protestant Reformation* in the 16th century with the help of **Johann Gutenberg's invention of the printing press**. He called into question some of the basic tenets of Roman Catholicism, and his followers soon split from the Roman Catholic Church to begin the Protestant tradition.

Johann Gutenberg

- Johannes Gensfleisch zur Laden zum Gutenberg was a German **blacksmith, goldsmith, printer, and publisher** who introduced printing to Europe.
- Gutenberg's printing press **revolutionized the creation of books** and helped make them affordable, ushering in a new era of **affordable books and literature**.



Johann Gutenberg

- The **most influential book** published by Gutenberg was the **Gutenberg Bible in 1455**.
- His printing presses were later used to **mass produce Bibles** – helping to spread the most influential book of the era.
- The **Catholic Gutenberg Bible** is acclaimed for its **high quality of design and quality**.



Johann Gutenberg

- **Church indulgences** were the first thing Gutenberg printed.
- The **printing press** was also used as a **powerful weapon** in the Reformation.
- Martin Luther had his **95 Theses** printed and circulated widely.





Martin Luther

- Martin Luther was **born 1483**, in Eisleben, Saxony, in modern **southeast Germany**.
- His parents, Hans and Margarete Luther, were of **peasant lineage**, his father was a miner and ore smelter.
- In 1501 he received a **Master of Arts** degree (in grammar, logic, rhetoric and metaphysics). He was on his way to becoming a lawyer. In 1505, Luther had a **life-changing experience** in a horrific thunderstorm where he feared for his life, Luther cried out to St. Anne, the patron saint of miners, ***“Save me, St. Anne, and I’ll become a monk!”*** The storm subsided and he was saved.

Sowing Seeds of Rebellion

- The decision to become a monk was difficult and greatly **disappointed his father**, but he felt he must keep a promise.
- Luther was also **driven by fears of hell and God's wrath**, and felt that life in a monastery would help him find salvation.
- He **did not find the religious enlightenment** he was seeking.
- At age 27, he was given the opportunity to be a delegate to a church conference in Rome. He came away more disillusioned, and very discouraged by the **immorality and corruption** he witnessed there **among the Catholic priests**.

Martin Luther the Reformer is born

- Upon his return to Germany, he enrolled in the University of Wittenberg in an attempt to suppress his spiritual turmoil. He excelled in his studies and received a **doctorate**, becoming a **professor of theology** at the university.
- Through his **own studies of scripture**, Martin Luther finally gained the **religious enlightenment** he sought.
- Luther came to the conclusion that, it was through **faith in Jesus Christ**, not works, that one is saved.
- He also **sought to separate *reason* from *revelation***.

The Pope's Sale of Indulgences

- In 1517, Pope Leo X announced a new round of indulgences to **help build St. Peter's Basilica**.
- On October 31, 1517, an **angry Martin Luther** nailed a sheet of paper with 95 theses on the university's chapel door.
- They laid out a devastating critique of the **indulgences as corrupting people's faith**.



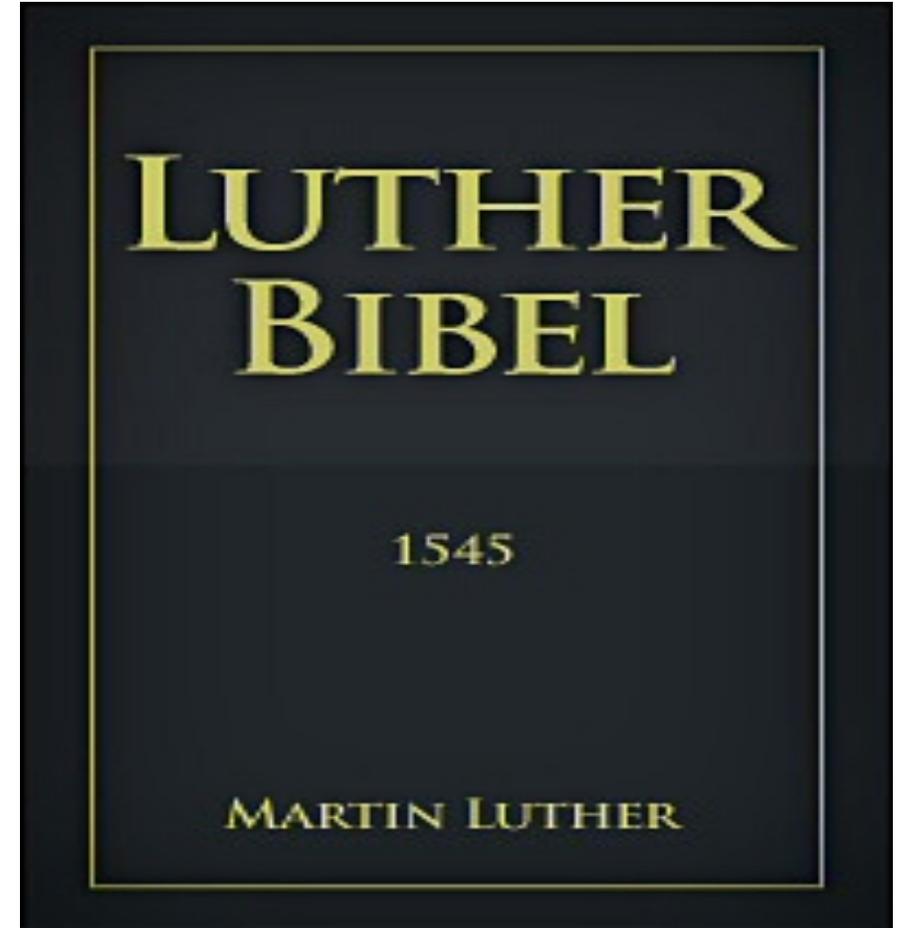
95 Theses nailed to the Church at Wittenberg

- Aided by the **printing press**, copies of the Ninety-Five Theses spread throughout Germany within **two weeks** and throughout Europe within **two months**.
- In January 1521, Martin Luther was officially **excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church**.
- On May 8, 1521, the council released the **Edict of Worms**, banning Luther's writings and declaring him a "**convicted heretic**."



Luther Translation of the Bible

- Friends helped him hide out at the **Wartburg Castle**.
- While in seclusion, he translated the **New Testament into the German language**, to give ordinary people the opportunity to read God's word.



Literacy and the Reformation

- The essence of the Protestant Reformation was that individuals **should read the Bible and study “the Word” for themselves.** Therefore, there was an enormous **emphasis on literacy.**
- By 1530, over **10,000 publications** are known, with a total of **ten million copies.** The Reformation was thus a **media revolution.**

