GERM 03100 Assignment 2

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From Luther’s 95 Theses, select the 5 of Luther’s 95 Theses that you consider the most compelling arguments against the abuses of the Catholic Church.

**Thesis 27: There is no divine authority for preaching that so soon as the penny jingles into the money-box, the soul flies out [of purgatory].**

The focal concept of thesis 27 is that Martin Luther believes that there is nothing about Christianity that allows for the repentance of sins via monetary sacrifice alone.

**Thesis 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.**

Theses five through seven work together to give the following message: While the pope can pardon criminals of his own law, he has no power over the forgiveness of sins; only God has such a power. It is the role of the pope, as well as all bishops and priests, especially when it comes to repentance, to be a representative of God, not to play God.

**Thesis 16: There seems to be the same difference between hell, purgatory, and heaven as there are between despair, almost-despair, and the assurance of safety.**

Martin Luther is stating through thesis 16 that the idea that a soul can be held in purgatory is essentially the abandonment of the soul at the gates of hell.

**Thesis 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.**

It should not be the responsibility of those on Earth to “bail out” those in purgatory, especially since those on Earth do not know the wills of those in purgatory.

**Thesis 44: Because love grows by works of love, and a man becomes a better man; but by pardons he does not grow better, only escapes penalty.**

Giving money to the Church on behalf of the guilt of the poor does not do anything to benefit the poor’s condition. Instead, performing charitable acts unto the poor is the only way to really benefit their state while at the same time enhancing the soul of the man who gives.