THEOLOGICAL IDEAS

Students Name

Instititional Affiliation

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Martin Luther’s objection to the industry of indulgences was not what would fuel the Reformation in Germany. Rather, it was his theological ideas regarding grace and faith which cut to the heart of late medieval Catholicism, challenging whole areas of popular practice and belief. By the end of the 15th century, much of the post-Reformation Church would be based upon Luther’s theological ideas of justification by faith alone.

By the 1530s, however, Martin Luther had become part of a wider trend in Europe which was rapidly changing the Catholic world. Protestantism had spread over Germany, Scandinavia and the British Isles. In Italy, Protestantism was too encumbered by the Pope.

In addition to the Lutherans, there were several other small churches spreading their message of salvation and salvation through faith. As the Church struggled to consolidate power and manage the threat of Protestantism, Latin Christians, who had always been loyal to the Pope, began to give way. The Pope had already lost control over many traditional Catholic strongholds including Rome itself. Reforms had been implemented in the Church and the Pope had become much more focused on finances than ancient doctrine.

Those still loyal to the Pope began to think more about the historical meaning and influence of Martin Luther. As time went on, the Church struggled to get on top of the growing wave of Protestantism, which meant that more and more attention had to be paid to find out which of the new Protestant beliefs and practices made more sense and which of them were dangerous.

It was this environment of change that Martin Luther observed in Germany. He had always been interested in the subject of salvation, asking questions of the Lord whenever he had a chance. Luther knew particular areas of devotion and law which would not be challenged by the Reformation — such as the seven sacraments and the 14 Articles of the Church, the latter the official summary of Catholic theology. So it was he who had joined the movement for reform in 1517.

Some of Luther’s ideas about the scriptures had led him to challenge the established hierarchy of the Catholic Church and to suggest another way of blessing the faithful. This, in turn, led to his famous papers and books which attacked the Pope and the entire hierarchy. In his last years, Luther had become more and more fixated on other concepts as if he had lost his bearings and could sense that he was running out of time.

Luther’s experience had made him decide that sin was less about God and more about ourselves. In this, he was quite wrong. It was God who judged our sins. Luther had not found out about the Trinity as well as some of the other things he had thought he had. His ideas about the Bible, in particular his odd ideas concerning how the Old Testament should influence the New Testament, were also a little off the mark. He tended to see God as the bad guy rather than Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit or even the Holy Trinity. His beliefs about the relationship between man and God were also a little far-fetched.

On the other hand, Martin Luther had many enemies. They did not like his ideas or what they represented. What they called his errors, Luther called his revelations and had been since long before his youthful days at the Wartburg Castle. He had thought about the problem of sin for many years. He had seen clearly that the Church had not dealt with the issue of sin adequately. So he had written on the subject and inserted a few of his own thoughts into the discussion.

The people accepted what he said since they believed he had a higher authority above him which had baptised him and revealed the true word. Luther was also in favour of the common man, which was why everyone allowed his odd theories about God. It was all very odd but they let him get on with it.

Luther preached anti-Papist sermons, which were readily accepted. It may have been for this reason, these sermons were well attended. Luther was a preacher and he had most of Germany sitting at his feet listening to what he had to say. It also helped his renown that he had exposed the Pope as the Illuminati’s source of power in the world, as well as being a fraud to the Catholic Church. Luther had even made a bad error at one point, when he had somehow got access to documents which seemed to indicate the Pope was involved in the sale of indulgences. He had tried to claim the Pope had not been the author of even these. He then claimed the whole con trick had been a hoax. In fact, it had been the Pope who had been exposed as the man behind the sale of indulgences, which he had done to provide income for his often corrupt officials. They benefited from the income without having to do any work. At the time it seemed a scandalous and important discovery, but it was really only of local importance, to the people it affected and the people around them.

Besides,there had been rumblings of discontent regarding Papal influence in the Church before Luther started his vendetta, so when he had arrived on the scene, it was like the arrival of a comic book hero. He had given the people what they wanted. He had given them an enemy. He could not postulate equality with God, but he had elevated the Devil to cult status. These were things the German people wanted. They had been told by their clergy that the Pope was an evil man who was only interested in their souls because he wanted the wealth they had accumulated in their lives.

Lurther and his followers had staged a huge protest by acting out in the streets of the town of Wittenberg the scene in which Christ and a Roman centurion argued over the price of salvation. The resulting disruption had been so violent that the Pope’s army had come to Wittenberg to restore order. This had been the first and only incident of the kind for many years. However, Luther had caused other trouble. It had been said that he’d known he would cause trouble one day. In fact, he had known for a long time about what lay ahead of him.

On the other hand, Martin Luther had been called to a more important task, when he was asked to reaffirm the Articles of the Church by writing a new Confession of Faith for the people of Germany. Luther had accepted this commission because he believed a Confession of Faith should be agreed by all Christians, according to their beliefs, as every Christian would be answerable for his actions on judgement day.

The significance of a Confession of Faith could not be underestimated in its importance to the people. It was the standard against which certain acts would be judged unfit for a Christian, given that no wish was to be seen to be wise above what was written in the Articles. It was a measure of a certain level of righteousness; it was a guiding light for people and a standard to hold themselves to.

In conclusion, despite Luther being odd, he had been a popular man with the people. He had been able to give bad advice to his congregation members and get away with it. Some of the people had even thanked him for his actions, against the Church hierarchy, for Luther had given them what they were looking for — an enemy. It was no wonder that in those early days he had been the chieftain of the people.

Martin Luther had been a repeat offender for some time. He had been in trouble with the authorities several times. He had been in prison, accused of heresy. He had made threats against Rome. He had rallied people in the streets against the Pope. He had even filed with the Emperor a charge of heresy against the Pope. He had made the charge on the grounds that the Pope was either a heretic or the Antichrist himself.

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