

A LOOK AT LUTHER'S 95 THESES

A SUMMARY IN CONTEXT

"Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

~ Titus 1:11

1. Introduction

- a. We are not Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, but they are major players in doctrinal history
- b. Why look at the 95 theses (1517)?
 - i. Seen as the spark that ignited the Protestant Reformation – religious freedom
 - ii. The same excesses are seen today – (televangelists, legalists, Protestant popes)
 - iii. The same doctrinal debates are still being had –(repentance, tithing, forgiveness)

2. The Man

- a. Martin Luther was a Catholic monk, priest, doctor of theology ← renaissance man
- b. He entered the cloister to be saved by works, scared by the judgment of God in a storm
- c. He could not find relief in confession, because he could not confess all sins ← saved?
- d. Was teaching through Romans and Galatians when he was exposed to naked religion
- e. Later resisted the sacraments, Tradition, and papal authority of the Catholics (kinda***)
- f. Did not have the understanding you do now a day in his life ← did not rightly divide

3. The Theses

- a. The subject: indulgences (removing punishment by doing something for the church)
 - i. Related to sacrament of repentance, purgatory, relics, and money.
 - ii. John (Johann) Tetzel – friar (salesman of indulgences) – "As soon as a coin in the coffer rings / the soul from purgatory springs."
- b. 1) True repentance and receiving forgiveness – Acts 20:21, 26:20,
 - i. A translation debate in the 1500s with Matthew 4:17 – "do penance" vs. "repent"
 - ii. Repentance is a change of mind, not a work we perform, or price we pay
 - iii. Theses – 1, 2, 3, 42, 43, 45
- c. 2) The means of blessing / forgiveness – pope, priest, indulgences or Christ, cross, faith
 - i. The revelation of the mystery not considered - Col 2:13, Eph 1:7
 - ii. Theses – 6, 21, 32, 33, 37, 52, 62, 75, 76,
- d. 3) Financial spoiling of the church / poor (filthy lucre?) – Titus 1:11, 1Ti 6:3-6
 - i. Theses – 27, 28, 46, 48, 50, 51, 52, 54, 67, 68, 81-89

4. The Result

- a. The doctrinal landscape of the West today set in motion by these events
- b. The doctrinal rights of the poor man to the things of God – Col 3:11, 1 Cor 1:26-28
- c. Recourse for the shameful abuse of the gospel for financial gain – 1 Tim 6:5
- d. The necessary warning/separation from those teaching errors to simple - Ro 16:18
- e. Eventually, the preaching of Christian liberty from religious bondage – Gal 5:1