Reformation History Session 1: Martin Luther

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Date: 31 May 2026

Preacher: Edward Kang

[0:00] So why study church history? First reason to fight against chronological snobbery. Has anybody heard of that phrase before? Yeah, do you know what that means? Kind of thinking that current, we're the smartest word of our band, I guess. Yes, exactly. Yeah. C.S. Lewis, I think he's like the one who popularized this term in an essay, which he basically says it's snobbery on our part to think that our new ideas are automatically better than the old ones.

Just again, because we're modern and we're new, we're fresh. But he argues persuasively that really every age has its own blind spots. Right. So we're no different. Every age, every generation has their particular strengths, particular weaknesses.

And so how do we cover our own blind spots? How do we cover our own weaknesses is to read dead people. Right. Read old stuff because they're going to see things from a different perspective than we are. Right. Some of it's good and some of it's bad.

And we're going to see that very clearly in the lives of these men. Some of what they taught is very, very good. And we're going to hold on to those truths. There are some things that they taught are very, very bad, too. Right. Some handouts right there.

But again, the main thing is that it's different. So because it's different, it helps. It challenges us to see things from a fresh perspective. So if you're not reading dead people right now and you're just reading alive people, I encourage you to to change up your diet of what you're reading.

[1:33] Read some old people, old stuff. It's going to help you. Secondly, is to benefit from the wisdom of those who came before us. There's hardly anything new under the sun. Right.

There are some handouts. I think you guys might have missed that. There's hardly anything new. Right. If there seems to be a new theological problem or issue at the hand, I can almost guarantee you that there has been someone who's already talked about this, addressed this.

A brilliant mind that God has used in the course of church history to address this issue already. So church history, studying it helps us to avoid reinventing the wheel. Right. So there's a rich resource in tapping into all these old people and what they've taught.

So let's study that. I already talked about this with a few of you guys before. But number three, theological development doesn't happen in a vacuum. I think reading doctrine or studying theology without studying church history is kind of like reading, you know, a summary, the conclusion of a major debate.

You just read what they concluded without actually like listening to the debate itself. You don't really get to understand the context, why they debate what they're doing. Right. So we're going to see many doctrines.

[2:51] They're clarified in response to specific challenges, controversies, cultural pressures and pastoral concerns. It's very contextual. So we have to understand why they came to the doctrine that they did.

Number four, it's your history, too. We're naturally really interested in hearing about the lives of our parents, our grandparents, great grandparents. We want to hear about their lives, what they did, how they lived.

Particularly, again, if you are a Protestant, right, this is your history. The Reformation is your history. This is your heritage. Right. So whether you know it or not, you stand on the shoulders of these men.

And number five, honestly, I think church history is really interesting. And I think it's really encouraging, too. The stories that you get to read in church history, they're not only engaging, but they remind you that God really is sovereign over all and every single age.

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Hebrews 12, 2 says, consider that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses. I think that's probably mostly pertaining to the Old Testament saints. But I think we can apply that, too, to see the lives of great men and women throughout every single age of church history.
[4:05] To see their faithfulness and to model our lives after the way that they lived, too. So those are five different reasons I just want to briefly cover. I think we don't usually talk about church history, especially at Trinity.

But I think it's something that we should all be eager to study. Let's talk about Martin Luther then today. So Luther, he was born to an upper middle class in Eisenberg in Germany in 1483 to a Hans and Margaret Luther.
Fun fact, his name is actually not Martin Luther, but Martin Luder. But around in 1517, he changed his name to Martin Luther, adopting the Latinized form because that's what they did in the academic setting.
Same with John Calvin, actually. His name is actually John Coven originally, but he changed it to John Calvin. Martin's dad, Hans, he was a very hardworking copper miner.
And he worked his way up into owning several mines. And he basically became semi-wealthy. Handouts for you guys.
[5:16] And he really was one of the few people that worked by his sheer grit to come out of peasantry. And he therefore had a lot of aspirations, big aspirations for young Martin.

So Martin was sent to good schools with the money that he made. And Martin actually ended up getting his bachelor's degree in one year. And I think, of course, the school system was different back then.
But I think it goes to show how brilliant they knew how brilliant Martin Luther was at a young age. And Hans, he desired Luther to study law, become a lawyer, so that he can come back and help with the family business.
And as a doodleful son, Martin completely was on board with that. He wanted to go and study law. But then comes a critical moment, a transformative moment in his life. In 1505, Martin was walking back from school, as he always did.
But then he got caught in a major thunderstorm. That thunderstorm was so bad that he was terrified he was going to die. He was going to get struck by lightning or something. And so in the midst of the storm, he prays to Saint Anne.
[6:29] I think she's like the saint of the peasants or miners or something like that. He prays to Saint Anne, reminding us he's still a very good Catholic. He's still part of the Catholic Church at this point.

And he makes this vow to her. If you help me survive this storm, I will become a monk. I'll become a monk. And, of course, we know Luther survives.
And as one who has a very tender conscience, he feels the obligation to then go and obey. So he gives up his career law and goes and becomes a monk.
And this is very, very disappointing to Hans, right? His father, he expected big things out of him to come and help with the family business. And he actually thought that Martin was being very, very selfish in doing all this, to abandon the family and go and be a monk.
But nonetheless, Martin goes and he becomes particularly an Augustinian monk, which was the toughest and most extreme kind of monks out there.
[7:33] It was the toughest and strictest monasteries, right? But even though it was very, very strict, Martin himself, he takes it to the next level. So he goes above and beyond what all the other monks are doing in his monastery.

They didn't ask him to sleep on a stone ground, but that's what he did. They didn't ask him to pray all night, but he did that often. They didn't ask him to beat his own body, but he'd do that.
He'd do this because he was very, very concerned about his own sin, right? He felt guilty before God essentially all the time. He had a very, very tender conscience.
I mentioned in a sermon in the past that he basically drove his confessor near insane, right? In the Roman Catholic Church, you'd have one assigned father monk to whom you would have to confess all of your sins.
And his confessor, Martin Luther's confessor, was a man called Johann von Staupitz. To Staupitz, Luther would visit and confess his sins up to five or six hours a day.

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[8:42] Five to six hours a day. The most minute, minuscule sins that you could possibly think of, he would come up and then he'd confess it. Then he'd finish and then he would be on his way back to his dorm and then suddenly think, oh shoot, I forgot about, I got mad at this guy for using my spoon and, you know, I have to confess this thing.

So he goes and then confesses more. Can you imagine that for more than half of your workday, you have to listen to this guy just go on and on and on about all the sins that he can come up with, right?
God bless the patience of that man. That's why Staupitz, he actually had enough and said, brother Martin, why don't you go to town and really commit a sin, some deep sin, and then come back and confess that, right?
Which is understandable, but terrible pastoral counsel. But he later gave great counsel, so great that Luther said that without von Staupitz, there would be no reformation.
And that simple counsel was to stop looking at yourself. Stop looking at yourself and look to Christ.
Why was Luther so intense about his faith?
[9:53] Well, back then, the late medieval theology of the time was called nominalism or via Moderna. We think of nominalism today as someone who's really like chill about their faith, doesn't really try that hard.

But it had a different meaning back then, right? In simple terms, to be saved, to receive the grace of God, all you had to do was do your best. Just do your best and God will show you grace.
But it's actually a really tough question. What is my best then? If my salvation is dependent on doing my best, then couldn't you have prayed a little bit longer?
Couldn't you have read your Bible a little longer, a little bit more? Couldn't you have fasted a little bit more, right? That line is so nebulous. What is your best, really? And Luther was so intense about his faith because he's actually really the only one that brought nominalism to its logical conclusion, I think, right?
He saw that I really have to do my best. And so he would comment on his life later. If anyone could be saved by his monkery, that's me.
[11:05] I was that monk. That's how hard he tried to kill his sin, to beat his body into submission so that he could live a righteous life and do his best before God. So how did he break out of that?

I think simply put, it was studying scripture. Reading scripture alone is what transforms Luther.
While he's a professor at Wittenberg, he studies Romans 1, particularly verses 16 and 17, which we heard about, heard a sermon by Paul Buckley not too long ago.
And Luther, again, would comment that studying these two verses, just these two verses, would transform his life, his perspective completely. If you have your Bibles, you could open up, open up on your phones.
I'll just read it for us, Romans 1, 16, 17. 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.
For in it, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith. As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. The Roman Catholic reading of that time of these verses is that the righteousness of God was a retributive righteousness.
[12:23] It was that it's, that this righteousness was a perfect standard that no sinner could ever achieve possibly on their own. So essentially, it's a, it's a punishing, punitive righteousness.

When you read that and see the righteousness of God, you should feel, man, I fall so short. There are some handouts right there for you guys. I fall so short of the righteousness of God. But if you read it closely, it really doesn't fit the context very well.
Because verse 16, he's talking about it's the power of God to save. It's the power of God to save everyone who believes, right? So Luther, he agonizes over these verses.
He reads them over and over and over again until he finally understands momentously that this is not just the perfect standard, the perfect righteousness of God, but this is an alien righteousness.
This is the righteousness that's then imputed to us by Christ if we have faith, if we live by faith, right? We receive that righteousness if we, we live by faith. So this is the moment that I think really sparks.
[13:32] It's, it catalyzes the rest of Luther's story. And I'm going to talk more about justification by faith alone a little bit later. In the meantime, another theological idea is brewing elsewhere that I think would be, again, the powder keg that sparks the Reformation.

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A man named Albert of Brandenburg, he wants to become the Archbishop of Mainz, which is the highest position in the Catholic Church in the nation of Germany.
But Albert, he was, number one, too young. And number two, he actually already held a bishopric. He was already bishop of another place. So you're not allowed to have two bishops back then, according to their, their policy.
So the only path to get to this coveted position of Archbishop of Mainz was to bribe. He was to bribe the Pope with a lot of money.
So Albert goes, he actually borrows a ton of money from a rich family he has connections with, but that's not enough. And so the Pope, who's all too willing to receive this money, right, he says to Albert, okay, for the rest of this money, you can sell indulgences.
[14:48] Does, do you guys know what indulgences were back then, right? What are indulgences? Can anyone answer that? Yeah. Yeah. It's like, if there, if you have, um, some members that have got in there for Purgatory, you can pay money to get them out of Purgatory.

Yeah. Exactly. Yeah. Um, yeah. Essentially, it's a get out of Purgatory free card. Um. Well, not only for you to pay for it. By the way. Corrected.
I stand corrected. Um, Purgatory, right. Do you guys know what Purgatory is? Anyone know what Purgatory is? Yeah, Dan. It's a fiery you pass through and plunging you pass through upon death for a certain amount of time.
Yeah. Yeah. And that time could be a long, long time. It could be hundreds of thousands of years, right? And so they, they believe there was this place of suffering, of purification.
And that all people who go to Purgatory, they eventually will go to heaven, but it's really this limbo state that you have to, to wait there and suffer, be purified for, for a long, long, long time.
[15:49] And so the papacy, they propose this idea that, and it's tied to this idea that the church, they had a treasury of merit. They had like a vault of merit, a rich accumulation of good works that all the saints have done in the past.

That's kind of their bank, quote unquote. And that you could take what's in that bank if you give, if you give me money, right? I can give you what's in my bank, a rich vault of good works, good deeds that other saints have done that I have in the church and I could give it to you.
And you could use it for yourself or you could use it for a deceased loved one. Do you guys kind of understand that, that logic? And so there was a famous motto, as soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs.
The results of indulgences was that people started to sin wildly without any fear, without any remorse, right? And as a pastor, he was a pastor at this time, Luther.
He had some church members that came to him who said, yeah, you know, I can get drunk. I could sleep around. I could do whatever I want because look, I got this indulgence.
[17:02] I paid a pretty penny for this. And now I can live my life as I wish. That was the actual effect indulgences had. So as a concerned pastor over his flock, Luther then famously writes his 95 theses, all right?

95 theses and nails them on the church door in Wittenberg on October 31st, 1517, the day that we now call Reformation Day, which is unfortunately also Halloween.
In the 95 theses, you can, you know, you can read this very easily online if you just type it up, look it up online. He breaks down logically all that is wrong with the practice of indulgences.
For example, he sees how people were led astray to put their trust in this piece of paper and indulgences rather than trusting in Christ alone for the forgiveness of their sins.
It's a terrible, terrible practice, right? He argues in theses 41 to 47 that the purchase of these indulgences, it discourages, it distracts people from doing actually the work that they're supposed to do and being a blessing to this, to the people in this world, right?
[18:17] They're supposed to give generously to the poor, but because they don't have any money because they spend all this money on indulgences, they neglect the poor now. So he sees that.

He also gets witty in Thesis 82. He argues that if the Catholic Church had such a rich vault, a treasury of merit, that they can reduce the time of purgatory for millions and millions of souls, if they have this awesome power, then why don't they just do it for free, right?
Why in the world do they have to reserve this amazing privilege just to the wealthy, just for the people who have money, right? If the church is supposed to be this loving force upon the world, right, why don't they just give it out?

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It doesn't make sense. So he really argues that the papacy is exploiting the poor, right? Because they're spending the money that they desperately need today.
They need that money today because there are most of them peasants were just eating hand to mouth, right? Living hand to mouth. But now they spend this money to live on for these fake indulgences while rich Rome is just getting richer and richer off of these peasants.
[19:24] All in all, he completely denounces the practice of indulgences. I think it's an important note to share that sometimes this act is framed as like this revolutionary, extraordinarily bold thing to do.

But in fact, back then, it was actually quite common to do so. If you had any desire to debate something, you would post your thesis on the church door and then maybe someone will take up you on that and then you'd have like this public debate between you two.
And honestly, most likely there probably were other theses on that door already when he posted his 95 theses. And I think another truth, Luther didn't post the 95 theses with the desire to schism and to break off from the Catholic church initially, right?
He's still a good Catholic in his mind, right? He thought that he would reform the church and that he'd steer it back on track. He actually thought that he'd be praised by the Pope. He thought that, you know, I have no desire to leave.
The Pope must be, you know, not seeing, he's like missing it. He's not seeing exactly what I'm seeing as a pastor. He's up there, so he's not seeing the effect that this could have. He thought he was going to be praised for this.
[20:42] But even when Luther didn't desire to bring attention to himself, these 95 theses, they quickly go viral for that term, right? Back then. It's translated into German.

I think it was written in Latin first to German. And then it's transmitted all throughout Europe. It catches like wildfire. And this is the thing that puts the obscure German pastor on the radar of the papacy.
So now they know who Martin Luther is. At this point, Luther hasn't fully formed his thinking about key reformational ideas. But over the next three years, he refines his thinking and he develops these ideas that then soon embody the Protestant Reformation.
In 1519, he ends up having a public debate with a Roman theologian called Johann Eck. And it's all about this question of spiritual authority.
So who has the authority to make theological conclusions, theological determinations, and the ability to declare spiritual dogma? Who has that ability?
[21:53] So Eck is a very skilled debater. He's throwing at Luther all these Catholic teachings, all these quotes from Catholic catechisms, Catholic theologians, quotes from then, canon law, church history, all these things.

Luther sees that, and Luther's a great debater, right? He sees that he's not going to win this debate if he stays in the realm of talking about all this Catholic stuff. So then he actually pivots and then starts pointing to scripture because he knew that he knew scripture better than Eck.
So he quotes scripture a lot, right? And because Luther is speaking about scripture so much in that debate, Eck then accuses him of being a Hussite.
Now, what is a Hussite? Jan Huss was a theologian who came about like 115 or 150 years before, from 1372 to 1415.
He argued, Huss argued, that scripture alone, not the papacy, not the Catholic church, but scripture alone is the ultimate spiritual authority.
[23:03] And I think this is, again, another reminder that the Reformation ideas didn't start with Luther and didn't start with Zwingli or Calvin. There are a couple of faithful men who read their Bibles.

They just simply read their Bibles and they came up with these same ideas. And so he's accused of being a Hussite in that debate. And Luther, again, he's a Catholic.
He hasn't broken off yet. He's actually initially offended by that categorization. He's offended by being labeled a Hussite. But then he goes home and then he studies Huss, studies, reads all that he has to say.
And then he comes back the next day in the public debate and he says, actually, yeah, I'm a Hussite. I totally agree with that. And he agrees on the doctrine of sola scriptura.

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Do you guys know what that means? Sola scriptura? What does that mean? Can I just say? Yeah. Yeah, for sure. Yeah. And it's the same doctrine that we believe.
[24:05] We stand, again, on the shoulders of these Reformation ideas. No pastor, no pope can override or stand equal to the authority of scripture.

So, again, a variety of medieval theologians, they believed that the church leadership, they were the true interpreters of scripture. They could not be questioned when they made a theological conclusion.
But for us at Trinity Cambridge Church, we believe that our elders, they only have spiritual authority insofar that they teach and preach the true word of God.
Right? So, Sean and I and the rest of the pastoral team, right, we're held accountable to scripture. Right? And in effect, to God himself.
I think it's important to correct a common misconception, though. Right? Sometimes then you hear people who say, oh, you know, I don't need to go to church.
[25:03] I don't really need to listen to sermons. I don't need creeds from history. I just need the Bible. So, sola scriptura is different from solo scriptura, which, again, is this idea that there is no other spiritual authority out there.

I think you have to understand, right, like solo scriptura, thinking that you are the final determinant of spiritual truth, it's the same error that the Catholic Church made.
Right? It ascribes all the spiritual authority to one person. So, the Roman Catholic Church says that that spiritual authority belongs only to the Pope. And then those who believe, hey, I just need the Bible.
I don't need church. I don't need pastors. I don't need anything like that. Then you essentially make yourself the Pope. Right? You endow yourself with all that spiritual power to then make spiritual conclusions yourself.
And nobody else can correct that. Right? But there is genuine spiritual authority that I think God imparts to churches, to pastors. We're called to submit to them.
[26:09] It's only that they are not the ultimate authority. Scripture alone is the ultimate authority. I have a question. Yes? I think the same thing, is it just like a Latin solo or solo?

I actually don't. Do you know what it is in Latin? Because I'm thinking like Spanish. It's just like a, you know. I don't even know if solo is. Solo scriptura is not proper Latin. Yeah, yeah. I think it's just like a.
Like solo, like English, like go solo. Like kind of the way we use it is kind of a mockery. Yeah. I think it's like a teaching tool. Just, just to differentiate what is truly solo, solo scriptura.
Okay. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Um, yeah. But this is a revolutionary idea, right? That Luther, that he comes up with the sermons, creeds, Christian books.
They're all helpful. And it's pastors. Again, they have spiritual authority over their flock. But at the end of the day, they're all fallible. Only scripture is uniquely the infallible word of God.
[27:06] Um, and it's really in this debate too, when he realizes that the bishops, the Pope, the magisterium, um, he starts to question them more and more.

They could actually be in error because they were wrong to put Jan Hus to death. So they actually killed him 150 years earlier at the council of Constance for his ideas.
Um, and so his confidence at this point in the Pope, in the Catholic church, it's starting to waver. Then in 1520, Luther is thinking he's writing like crazy.
And we see the development of his thoughts as we begin, as he begins to see more and more problems with the Catholic church. And so we're going to do a cursory overview of three famous treaties, three of his famous treaties at the time.
Um, the first is called an address to the Christian nobility of the German nation. Quite a catchy title. It's not written actually to the leaders of the Roman Catholic church, but Luther directly appealed to the German political rulers to then reform the church because he believed that the Roman church hierarchy, it become corrupt and it's resistant to biblical correction.
[28:23] And he's finally coming to that point. And in this, he, he clearly develops this doctrine called the priesthood of all believers, right? The priesthood of all believers is a key reformational doctrine.

And he gets this from passages like first Peter's two, nine to nine to 10, which reads, but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a royal priesthood, a holy nation of people for his own possession

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that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous life.
Once you were not a people, but now you are his people. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. So against the teaching of the Catholic church, Luther proposes that all Christians, right?
From the laity to the clergy, from lay people to the pastors or the priests, they all share the same spiritual standing before God. There's no two tiered system in Christianity, right?
The Catholic church, they believe that there's like this special cast of people who are the priests who were closer to God. They were more blessed by God. But we know in Hebrews four, this is from God's word again, since we have a great high priest who passed through the heavens, Jesus, the son of God, that is hold fast our confession.
[29:41] For we do not have a high priest is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin. This is the key verse. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help, to help in time of need.

We all, every Christian who puts their faith in Jesus Christ has full access to the throne of God. We can approach God. We don't have to go through an intermediary like the priests or through the saints.
We all can go before him directly, right? And that means every Christian, all of you guys today, if you have faith in Jesus Christ, that means that you are someone else's priests and that we're all priests to one another.
And again, just to qualify that, it doesn't mean that pastors or elders, that they're not a thing, it doesn't mean that. Scripture plainly speaks that the office of elders and deacons are a gift, it's a thing to the church.
Hebrews 13, 17 commands us to obey our leaders and to submit to them, right? As I said, again, there's a spiritual authority endowed to church leadership. But Luther argues that every Christian, regardless of age, background, education, occupation, whatever it is, we have full access to God, right?
[31:01] So again, in contradistinction, the Roman Catholic Church, they believed that the priests, they were mediators of grace. You needed to have the priests to be able to approach God and receive grace from him.

So because of the priesthood of all believers, Luther then, he appeals to the German nobility to call a church council to reform the church, right?
In this work, he basically calls out the Roman Catholic Church for its ostentatious lifestyle. It's incredibly worldly. He knows that there, basically, peasants are being used at that time.
So he writes to the German nobility, essentially, you know that we're not stupid, right? You know that Germans, we're not stupid. You know that we're being used for our money. So you need to step in and help your people.
So he appeals to them. It's a bold treatise that further upsets the papacy. The second one is the Babylonian captivity of the church.
[32:03] In this important treatise, he argues that the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church, which include baptism, marriage, confirmation, communion, penance, anointing of the sick, and ordination, that's all, they have seven different sacraments, right?

They're all corrupted. That's what he argues. For one, Luther, he argues that there are actually only two sacraments. Actually, in the beginning of this treatise, he actually thinks that there are three. He thinks that penance could be one, right? Penance being the confession of sin to a priest to be absolved. But then as he writes it, he then convinces himself that there are actually only two.
It's only just two. And he realizes that because a sacrament is to be paired with a visible and physical sign, right? And so what are the two that we believe?
Do you guys know? Two sacraments. Is this a hard question? Yes. Baptism is one. And communion.
[33:11] Yes, exactly. Do you guys know what is the physical, visible sign of baptism? This is not a hard question. Water. Exactly. Yeah. And then for the Lord's Supper?

Bread and youth. Exactly. Or wife. Sure. But penance, right, doesn't have a paired visible sign. So then he eventually convinces himself that that's not a sacrament.

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But reminder, right, this is a different time. Yeah. I don't know if you're going to get into this. Yeah, yeah. But did Luther believe what Catholics believe about? The Lord's Supper?
Yeah. Yeah. I'm going to talk about it much more next week when we talk about Zwingli and how Zwingli debated Luther very vehemently about these issues.
But I don't think that we also agree with Luther fully on his stance on the Lord's Supper. And I'm hopefully going to talk about that more when we're going next week.
[34:11] I have a question. Yes? What do you mean by sacrament? Is there a difference between the meaning of sacrament back then and now?

Yeah. Yeah. It depends on how we... I mean, yeah. So the Protestant church, they do have different understandings of sacrament.
Some people don't feel comfortable using that word sacrament. But I think the idea that we believe in, that we do kind of agree with in the Roman Catholic Church essentially, is that sacraments are a visible sign and seal of God's grace.
So baptism and the Lord's Supper. So the sign, of course, we talked about, it's a visible sign that, you know, you get dunked in the water, you eat the bread and the juice or the wine.
But it's a seal, meaning that it's an actual impartation of grace. It actually matters. It's not just a spiritual thing. Again, I'm going to talk a little bit more about this next week.
[35:18] But Zwingli, his view of the Lord's Supper, it was simply spiritual only. I think it might be fair to say that if you were to just not even eat of the bread and eat of the juice, but just treated it spiritually, not physically, but just, it's just a spiritual act, spiritual act of remembering, that would be enough for Zwingli.

But the way that scripture talks about the Lord's Supper in particular, I think there's an actual impartation of grace that happens when we eat of the bread and drink of the juice. So it actually matters.
Maybe this is kind of like a tangent, but last week we forgot to bring out the gluten-free crackers. And Bailey, a dear sister, she can't eat gluten.
So then it was not there. And so she came up and just got the wine because she can't eat the bread. And maybe that would have been enough for some people because, you know, it's just a spiritual act.
But I think it actually matters that you do partake of the bread and the juice. Like it actually does matter. So I asked Sean to get the crackers and then pass it on to Bailey so that she could partake and receive the full grace of God.
[36:36] So I think that that's kind of a brief snippet of what I'll talk about next week. Feel free to chime in too. We'll definitely talk more about Lord's Supper next week more.

Transubstantiation, consubstantiation, all those weird terms we're going to talk about more. And I'm also going to talk more about baptism next week because Zwingli also talks a lot about baptism. So if you're interested about those two things, definitely come next week.
Where are we? Last one. Freedom of a Christian. This is a smaller one, but it's probably one of the most significant works of Luther's.
And it's essentially his last appeal to the Pope because he sends it to the Pope himself, Pope Leo. He sends it to read it and he opens with these famous lines.
A Christian is perfectly free, Lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to everyone. Luther, if you ever read him, he loves paradoxes.
[37:40] He uses them often in his theological treaties. And this is where Luther lays out the all-important doctrine of justification by faith alone, which we talked about already a little bit.

Justification, as it's used in Romans and Galatians by Paul, it's a forensic term. Forensic meaning that it's a legal courtroom term.
So when you hear the word justification, it should invoke the image of a criminal standing in court before the judge on trial, awaiting the decree of the judge.
And for all of us, this is the story of all of us, although the list of our offenses are long and embarrassing, by faith, by faith alone, this is his argument that we're not only going to be acquitted, considered acquitted of all of our crimes, but now we'd be considered righteous.
How does that happen? Right? It's the great exchange. It's that our sins are imputed onto Christ and that his righteousness is imputed onto us. So that's how we are justified.

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[38:44] It's a single moment. It's a one-time event. And that's opposed to the Roman Catholic view at the time, right, which is infused righteousness. That's how some people call it.

So you have the imputed righteousness of Christ versus the infused righteousness. So infused in their view, righteousness is just understood as something that's initially given, but then it's effectively maintained by your obedience, by, again, obeying the sacraments, doing penance, confessing your sins, being a good Christian, quote unquote.
And I think it effectively transforms justification to sanctification, if you guys know what sanctification is. Justification being the one-time declaration of being right before God, being justified before God. Not sanctification being the ongoing transformation, the ongoing work that the Holy Spirit does in us to make us more like Christ. So they effuse those two ideas in justification.
And they essentially, again, make justification a process instead of a once-for-all moment. And it creates this kind of credit and debt framework where a believer, he could gain grace, but then lose it in sin.
[40:04] And then gain again if he obeys all the sacraments and confesses the sins to his priest. And so throughout a day, you could go from saved to not saved, to saved, to not saved, to saved, to not saved.

Like you can live with that kind of whiplash. And as a result, the assurance of salvation, it essentially becomes unstable. It's effectively lost.
And their believers then are pushed through this infused righteousness idea to maintain by their obedience their standing before God, their righteous standing before God.
And I think this doctrine is sometimes defended as, you know, a well-intentioned doctrine to protect against nominalism, against, you know, a lackadaisical nominal faith.
But I don't think that this is the true biblical way to motivate obedience. So you read that first line, a Christian is perfectly free, Lord of all, subject to none. But you read that second line too.
[41:05] This is equally true of us. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to everyone. We're dutiful servants, right? This freedom that we have, this justification that we have, it doesn't and should not lead to selfishness, lawlessness.

But it should lead to obedience out of gratitude of God's grace. That's the way that we should be transformed, right? We should willingly serve our neighbors out of love and good works.
We should care for one another in abundant generosity. You know, these good works, they don't earn salvation, but they naturally flow. That's kind of the idea, right? And so I want us to get to, oh, it's two o'clock.
We'll do this exercise, I think it's important. We're going to have a discussion, right? I'm going to pair you guys up. So sola fide, again, which is faith alone, justification by faith alone, one of the most important doctrines of the Reformation.
But it seems like Luther's rejection of the Roman Catholic teaching actually made him question the epistle, the book of James. Luther goes as far as to call James an epistle of straw.
[42:18] He really does not like James, right? He questions if it should even be part of canon scripture. He does eventually believe it. But it seems like he consigns James to kind of like a lower tier of scripture.

Because he has a hard time wrestling with how Paul and James come together, right? Let me read some passages. And you guys can read them when you guys pair up.
But James 2 says, What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is clothily poured and lacking in daily food and one of you says to them, Go in peace, be warmed and filled without giving him the things needed for the body, what good is that?
So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, You have works, or you have faith and I have works. Show me your faith apart from your works and I will show you my faith by my works.
I'm going to skip the rest of the passage for the time's sake. But you guys can read it in your groups. And then here, Paul in Romans 3, What then becomes of our boasting?
[43:26] It is excluded. By what kind of law? By law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. So, are they contradicting themselves?

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Is the Bible confused? I want you guys to pair up to groups of three or four and basically talk about this. How can we reconcile Paul and James here?
And we'll talk. Is Luther right to consign James as, you know, a less than epistle? Or is he just missing something? So, let's get together in groups. You guys can just huddle in with the people that are around you.
For the sake of time, I'm going to keep pressing on. Then, we come to the Diet of Worms. With the invention of the printing press at this time, again, these treaties are just flying off the shelf.
It's going viral. People are reading. Everyone's talking about Luther. And so, to quell this fervor, the papacy finally calls Luther down in a bowl called the Diet of Worms.
[44:39] And again, this is not, diet is not what you're eating or anything like that. It comes from the Latin word dieta, which is just a formal assembly. And Worms is just the name of the German city.

Worms. Worms. Yeah, Worms. They essentially warn him, this is your last chance. This is your last chance to repent and to recant all of your heretical ideas.
You're going to be banned from the Lord's Supper. You're going to get kicked out of the church. You're going to be excommunicated. And if you die in this unrepentant state, you are going to hell. That's essentially what they're saying. Some of Luther's friends, they're begging him not to go because, as I said before, not too long ago, Jan Hus, he was called down for a similar meeting. And he was promised a safe trial, right? A safe passage to and fro. But then he was burned at the stake unfairly, without a fair trial. So Luther, he knows all the risks, but he still boldly decides to go. So they bring Luther in. And before they do, the leaders, they kind of have a huddle. And they say, you know, don't give Luther a chance to speak. He's a really good speaker.
[45:51] He's a really good debater. So just only ask him yes or no questions. So they bring him in, and they ask him to recant of all these ideas.

And he starts to explain, you know, all this, this is what I believe. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Yes or no, only. And so he says, okay, you know, I'll think about it.
Give me the night to think about it, and I'll come back. I'm going to pray to the Lord and come back to you. When he comes back, he comes back the next day. He divides all of his writings that they have for him.
Into three piles. The first pile is full of teachings that are just scriptural, that they actually would agree upon. Things about the Trinity or, you know, things like that. So no problem there.
Second pile, Luther's very humble, right? He admits, yeah, you know, I agree with what I said, but I think I wrote it too harshly. I was a little bit too mean there, so I apologize for that.
[46:49] I repent of that. But then the third pile contains all the ideas of key Reformation ideas. Knowing very much that this could cost them his life, he says, unless you can prove to me by Scripture that these are wrong, then I will not recant.

And then he says the famous line, here I stand, I can do no other. God help me. Amen. So he stands by what he teaches. But amazingly, by God's grace, the Pope decides to be a man of his word, and he doesn't execute Luther then, but he was fully excommunicated from the Catholic Church.
And so the 95 Theses, they're kind of seen as the start of the Reformation, but really the Diet of Worms, it marks the official schism. The official schism and the break from the Protestants from the Catholic Church.
That's the moment it happens. And while Luther survives Worms, there's still a great concern for his safety. So a powerful friend of his, Frederick the Wise, it's kind of an odd story.
He decides to actually kidnap Luther without telling him. And as he's being kidnapped, Luther is freaking out. I mean, naturally so, right? He's freaking out. He thinks that this is the end of his life.
[48:05] He thinks that the Roman Catholic Church finally got him. But Frederick decides to kidnap him by sending men. And he's a rich man.

He owns a lot of real estate. So he tells them to put Luther in one of his castles, but don't tell me which one. And the whole idea is so that when people knew that Frederick and Luther were buddies, when the Catholic Church would question Frederick, as they did, where is he?
Where is Luther? He would be able to honestly say, I don't know. I don't know where Luther is. Again, it's just a weird thing. But it's true. It's only half truth. It's there in captivity that Luther then translates the Bible from Latin to the ordinary common German.

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And back then, it was the best translation at the time. And it's really so that the common people can understand and study scripture for themselves.
He, again, believes so much in the priesthood of all believers in sola scriptura that he wants to get the Bible in the hands of every common man, peasants alike, right? Or whatever they are.
[49:15] Again, back then, they only read from Jerome's Vulgate, which was a Latin translation. And common people didn't speak Latin. And so they only really had to trust the priests when they gave their homilies.

When they, whatever they would say, I don't speak Latin, so I guess I have to believe you. You have more education than me. You know what this is saying. So sure, I'll follow whatever you say. That's how they had to live their lives.
But with this new translation, he returns scripture into the hands of the everyday man. And so he makes it possible that the priesthood of all believers, that key doctrine, it plays out as it should.
And I think it should really make us appreciate that we have the holy scriptures in our own language that we can read. We should not take this for granted, right? We should cherish it and love it and thank God for it every single day of our lives.
The temperature for Luther's head, it gradually simmers down. And so it allows Luther to leave the castle and he starts pastoring. And throughout these years, he leads his Protestant church, the first Protestant church, pastoring, teaching, writing, defending his thoughts.
[50:23] And just a couple of key moments were coming up on time. For one, the Peasants' War. I don't know if you've ever heard of this. This is maybe, it depends on your view of it, but it is a little bit of a smudge on Luther's legacy.

So at this point, reformational ideas like, again, priesthood of all believers, they're spreading, they're stirring up actually political revolution. And especially among the poor peasants.
And so these peasants were heavily taxed by their rulers and they're increasingly restricted from their rights. So they catch on these reformational ideas about Christian freedom and they then translate it to then social and political reform and freedom.
And so initially, Luther, he has sympathy for the peasants' plight and he calls for peace, right? Criticizing both the oppressive princes and the rebellious peasants.
But it actually happens that the peasants end up killing a ruler, killing a count and his escort. Then Luther dramatically switches sides. He distances himself very, very far from the peasants, from the insurgents.
[51:32] He actually calls on princes and nobilities to suppress the rebellion with brutal force. And he does this in a pamphlet called Against the Murderous Thieving Hordes of Peasants.

He's a very honest writer. And in the end, the revolt ended in really catastrophe, bloody catastrophe, with as many as 100,000 peasants being killed.
The obvious result of this is that Luther loses a lot of sway with the working class, but then he gains a lot of influence, a lot of favor from the aristocracy, right?
Luther, he ultimately ends up doing this because he wanted to be careful for tying reformation, spiritual reformation ideas to social and political transformation, right?
So he sharply distinguishes church and state in that, right? The church proclaims the gospel while the state maintains public order. And he strongly believed that believers should not use the gospel, should not use scriptural teaching as a warrant for violent political rebellion.
[52:46] And so that's one key moment after the Diet of Worms. Another lighthearted one is that he gets married. He gets married at the age of 41 to Catherine von Bora.

Luther actually never saw himself getting married. He thought that, you know, the marriage didn't fit his lifestyle. He never really wanted it. He thought he'd also died at any point because he was branded as a heretic.
But Catherine, she's a former nun who then escaped her convent because of the Reformation. She became convinced of reformational ideas. She escapes and she meets Luther and she knows she wants to marry him.
So she pursues Luther, actually. She really does a lot to cozy up to him and convinces him to get married. And so they do. And it's significant that he gets married, right?
If you remember the context is in the Catholic Church, priests must be celibate. They cannot get married, right? They are not allowed. This is, again, another place where we have to follow scripture over tradition.

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[53:48] I don't think that there's any place. Thank God for me, right? Like there's no place that scripture requires pastors, elders to remain celibate. And I honestly don't understand this. Like Peter, who is their first pope, he was married, right?

But with von Bora, he had six kids. They had a rich, happy family life together. And they had an affectionate marriage. That's what people commented on. And some people think that Luther and these other reformers, they were, you know, rigid and obtuse, just boring maybe.
But that simply wasn't true about Luther. He regularly had people over his house. His house was lively and full. He had people like seminary students, disciples, visiting preachers.
He had them over for dinner where he would regularly crack jokes and share stories, drink beer.
And we were talking about this with Aubrey before, but sometimes he shares very crass and crude analogies to make his point stick, right?
And some of his students record these conversations in what is called table talk, which you could look up now. And then finally, the Augsburg Confession. In 1530, after several years of growing religious division, the Roman emperor, the Holy Roman emperor, Charles V, he calls another gathering to store unity in his empire.
[55:07] During that gathering, all the Protestant princes and cities were asked to explain their beliefs. Because Luther is excommunicated, he's not allowed to go.

But Philip Melanchthon, who is basically the successor of the Lutheran Church, he goes and he writes the Augsburg Confession, which is essentially the thing that defines and establishes Lutheranism.
And it's significant because it systematizes Lutheran belief in concrete, clear documents. So if you kind of were to try to understand what we believe as Trinity Cambridge, if we didn't have a statement of faith and all you had was our sermons, it's kind of hard, right?
You just have to listen to a bunch of different sermons over a different period of time and be like, okay, so this is what they believe about this thing. And then you have to wait for half a year to hear about this doctrine.
It's not clear. It's not it's it's hard to exactly find out what they believe. Right. This fixes that issue because he essentially systematizes rights, essentially what is a statement of faith for the Lutheran Church.
[56:13] And he establishes what that church believes. Right. And so this is a defining moment in the formal separation. Coming up to the end. In the final years of his life, he started to struggle with a lot of health issues, kidney stones, vertigo, dizziness, arthritis, eye problems, exhaustion.

And he he went through depressive episodes frequently. And his writing at the end of his life, it starts to become really quite miserable and increasingly irritable.
I think we could show Luther some benefit of the doubt, some compassion, just because, you know, when you're struggling physically, you know, if you if you're battling the flu, it's not like you're necessarily at a spiritual high.
Like those things are really hard. We're both body and soul. Right. But unfortunately, at this time, Luther starts to write some very, very frustrated, angry things about the Jews.
It's honestly can be labeled as anti-Semitic. It was anti-Semitic. And later, later, it's known that Hitler and the Third Reich, 500 years later, they actually use some of Luther's writings to justify their heinous acts during the Holocaust.
[57:27] And it's a reminder, again, there is no perfect man out there, even the spiritual giants in church history. Every man falls short.

Every man commits great sins. Every man has blind spots. No one but Jesus alone can be the savior of the world. But God can use fallible men, weak men like Luther to accomplish good.
And I think he has done that. And traveling with his sons to settle a dispute, he falls ill. And he dies at the age of 62. He's laying in his bed, surrounded by loved ones.
And he's repeating out loud again and again, Psalm 31 5. Into thy hand I commit my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth. Someone asks him, Father, will you die steadfast in Christ and in the doctrine that you preached?
And loud enough for everyone to hear, he says, yes. In the words of historian Timothy George, Luther's legacy does not lie in the saintliness of his life.
[58:31] His warts were many. His vices, sometimes more visible than his virtues. Nor does his legacy ultimately depend on his vast accomplishments as a reformer or theologian.

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Luther's true legacy is his spiritual insight into the gracious character of God in Jesus Christ. The God who loves us and sustains us onto death and again, onto life.
So that's Luther. Do you guys have any questions? Any questions at all? I might not be able to answer everything.
I'm definitely not a church historian. But any questions? Yeah. I was a little bit curious about Solus.
Yeah. So it seems like throughout Luther's life there was kind of a dating.
Yeah. It's like the church historian. Yeah. Yeah.

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