

Student's Name

Professor's Name

Course Name and Number

Assignment Due Date

Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a fiery German theologian who sparked the Protestant Reformation of state, church, and society. The Catholic Church was the only denomination present at the time, and everyone had to fit into its doctrine. Many people were content with the Pope and how he ran the church. The church controlled societal mannerisms, and behaviors across all social elements were a testament to this attribute. However, Luther felt that the Catholic Church and its canon law system were not consistent with what the Bible required. He burned the medieval canon law books in 1520 and gave a long and bitter broadside on what he termed as *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, where the Pope ruled tyrannically. Luther termed him as the Anti-Christ. At this point, his fiery rebuke of the church led to the eventual breaking into Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, and Anglican forms. Luther's role in the Protestant Reformation provides information on the impact the breaking of the Catholic Church had on Christianity.

Luther's actions between 1517 and 1521 were consequential in defining the church at the time, threatening to shatter the foundations of the medieval concept of Christendom. Tarr and Randell argue that this was not a result of planned events. Instead, it was a rupture of different issues and events until there was no option of going back (1). The only way forward was a schism or the abject division of the church into several other churches. One of the initial concerns that triggered Luther's protest was Johann Tetzel, a Dominican friar authorized by the

Pope to sell indulgences (paper certificates aimed at absolving sins). Initially, the church was clear on these paper certificates, noting that they were only useful if the user was remorseful for their sins. However, the church was now selling them as an assurance of the forgiveness of sins for the purchaser or even a dead relative in purgatory (Tarr and Randell 2). Essentially, it was easier for the rich and those with the means to buy forgiveness even if they did not mean it. People went on to invest their savings to make these purchases. Luther wrote the *Ninety-Five Theses*, intending to elicit conversations around what the church was doing. He also touched on various outstanding issues, such as the sale of indulgences.

Luther would later explore the role of sin in humanity and discovered something that went against the church's teachings. Whereas the church taught that being sin-free at the time of death was the best way of going to heaven, Luther found by reading the Bible that his belief rather than action would give him a ticket to heaven. Therefore, God was not an evil judge but a God of love who offered salvation freely (Tarr and Randell 4). Luther advocated for vernacular Bibles. This would enable believers to read the word of God themselves. They would not rely on the church as the only authority that interpreted the Bible. An example was also on marriage. Witte wrote about Luther's attack of celibacy, arguing that requiring celibacy of the clerics and monks was beyond the church's authority (199). Society changed because of the new intent to criticize the church to ensure accountability and transparency.

The outcomes of the reformation went beyond the church into economic and political development. For instance, Becker et al. noted that the cities that adopted protestant teachings had higher literacy levels for both men and women compared to areas where Catholicism was dominant. Economic development improved because of the accumulation of human capital in the cities that chose Protestantism since it advocated for more literacy (13). The presentation of

Bibles in vernacular languages formed different interpretations on primary issues. For instance, Tarr and Randell note that Lutherans decentralized priesthood rather than considering it a ruling class (18). The church grew during this period and expanded into different dimensions.

In conclusion, Luther provided a platform to evaluate a different outcome keen on shaping the church's role in the community. Instead of a group of people deciding what was right, he advocated for the Bible's translation into vernacular languages so that people could improve their beliefs. He fought for the decentralization of the church so that society would benefit from it. Luther started a reformation process that aided millions of people. These people learned to engage with the church personally rather than from the dictates of a supreme leader.

Works Cited

Becker, Sascha O., et al. "Causes and Consequences of the Protestant Reformation."

Explorations in Economic History, vol. 62, 2016, pp. 1–25.,

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2016.07.007>.

Tarr, Russel and Keith Randell. *Luther and the Reformation in Europe 1500–64*. Hodder Education, 2016.

Witte, John, et al. "Martin Luther." *Christianity and Family Law: An Introduction*, edited by Gary Hauk, Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 195–210.

WritingElites.net

The Custom Writing Experts

Have a Paper That You Need Edited and Proofread Like This One?

[Order Now](#)
