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of
Dr. Martin Luther
Timothy J. Simmons
Southern Christian University

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Dr. Martin Luther was a scholar and reformer in the late Middle Ages whose differences with the Roman Catholic Church's teachings and doctrine sent ripples throughout Europe and spawned the church's reformation. Martin Luther was born in a small town of Eisleben in the county of Mansfelder Land in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany in 1483. Martin grew up in an industrial area as one of 9 siblings of Hans Luder, a copper miner, and his wife Margarethe. Hans Luder worked his way up from being a miner to becoming a member of a cooperation that owned a number of small mines and was a leaseholder for 3 smelters in Mansfeld. Of all of Hans' children Martin would be the only one to succeed academically. Martin was to fulfill Hans' aspirations of having a son ascend to greatness and become something better than a copper miner. When he dreamed those big dreams for his son he couldn't have imagined the impact his son would one day have on the world.

Hans believed very strongly in Martin's intellect and at the age of 5 sent Martin to the Latin school in Mansfeld. The only subject taught at this school was Latin, therefore Latin was drilled into the children's minds so well that at the age of 14 (and for the remainder of his life) Martin was known as one who could express himself very well in finely handwritten Latin. After Martin finished his studies in Mansfeld, Martin's father, Hans, sent him to Magdeburg, where he attended a better and more reputable school administered by a religious community named the Brethren of the Common Life. It was at this school that Martin learned how to sing, and music became near and dear to Martin's heart. It would remain so for the rest of his life. Shortly after this learning experience, Martin visited a Franciscan convent at the foot of the Wartburg Castle. By this time he was a handsome 15 year old. This was Martin's most joyous time of all his pre-college school days. He joined a group of singers during his time there and his involvement with them helped him to develop his music skills. Sometime before his 18th birthday Martin was enrolled in the University of Erfurt under the name Martinus Ludher ex Mansfeldt. After his first year at this school he received a Bachelor's degree at 18 and after three more years a Master's degree at age 21.

Martin's destiny was forever changed when, on his way back to Erfurt from his parent's house, a thunderstorm threatened his life. Martin was so scared that he prayed to Saint Anne to save

his life, and he promised to become a monk in return for having his prayer answered. His life was spared so he kept his promise and left the law school and joined an Augustinian monastery in Erfurt. For whatever reason, Martin always wrestled with guilt and was very hard on himself while practicing penance. Martin's excessive rumination worried his superior, Johann von Staupitz so much that he ordered Martin to pursue an academic career. After a short trip to Rome on behalf of his convent, Martin continued his academics in the University of Wittenberg where he received his Doctoral degree in Theology and assumed duties as Theology professor. In addition, he served as preacher and confessor at the Wittenberg Castle Church, an organization of Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony. It was at this University that he received enlightenment through his study of Romans 1:17. This one verse in the Bible changed the way he understood the scripture, and the Church. He finally understood that the grace of God was a gift, and that there was nothing humanly possible that people themselves can do to receive it.

After Dr. Luther's trip to Rome he began to look at the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the practice of penance with more criticism. His new understanding of the scripture came to him before the pope began selling indulgences to pay for St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. His written works against this practice spawned a controversy and had huge consequences. He was eventually excommunicated and the church itself split into warring factions. Dr. Luther was given asylum by Elector Frederick in Wartburg Castle after being declared an outlaw by the German Emperor Charles V in his "Diet of Worms" in 1521. It was here that he translated the New Testament to his native German dialect. This translation was claimed to be the largest feat ever in German language history. In 1525, Dr. Luther got married to Katherine von Bora, a nun from a Nibschen Cistercian Convent in the town of Grimma, Saxony that had helped him during the dispute with the Roman Catholic Church.

Dr. Luther was a great scholar of his time, whose tireless devotion to the reformation of the Roman Catholic Church resulted in the formation of Lutheran, Reformed, and Anabaptist traditions within Christianity. Dr. Luther was emulated by many and idolized by some, and his achievements

of two bachelor's degrees, one master's degree, and a doctorate in Theology make him more than just a master student, he was a grand master student who ultimately changed the world.

References

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