MARTIN LUTHER

1483-1501

Childhood and youth

1483-84 Eisleben

1484–97 Mansfeld → growing into late medieval church and piety. Latin School (1490–97).

1497/98 cathedral school in Magdeburg, lodging in the dormitory of the Brothers of the Common Life (contact with Modern Devotion)

1498–1501 St. George's parish school in Eisenach.

1501-05 University

1501–05 artes liberales at Erfurt University (via moderna); contact

(via moderna); contact with humanism; graduation as Baccalaureus and Magister artium

1505 study of law

1505–11 Erfurt friary

July 17, 1505 Luther enters the friary of the Augustinian Hermits in Erfurt

1505–07 novitiate (1505/06), profession (1506), ordination and first mass (1507); contact to monastic piety and theology

1507–11 study of theology (Gabriel Biel: late Franciscan school of theology) and lecturing on behalf of the order in Erfurt (1507/08 and 1509–11, graduation as Bacc. sententiarius and formatus, lecture on the Sentences of Peter Lombard) and in Wittenberg (1508/09, lecture on Aristotelian moral philosophy, graduation as Bacc. biblicus [cursor])

Late Medieval piety and theology

piety:

- → basic structures: grace, good works, divine judgment
- \rightarrow piety practice: worship, preaching, sacraments, domestic piety, Marian devotion, veneration of saints, pilgrimages

theology:

- → monastic theology (Bernard of Clairvaux)
- → scholastic theology: combination of theology and Aristotelian philosophy; via antiqua (Dominicans, Thomas Aquinas); via moderna (Franciscans, William of Ockham, late Franciscan school of theology); Augustinianism
- → devotional theology (John of Paltz, John Geiler of Kaysersberg, John Staupitz)

1511-18

On the way to Reformation theology

1511 transfer to the Wittenberg friary

1511/12 trip to Rome on behalf of Staupitz

1512 graduation as Doctor of Theology in Wittenberg and assumption of a theological professorship at the university

since 1512 subprior of the Wittenberg friary and preacher at the monastery church; later also director of the religious studies house of the Wittenberg friary

1513 or 1514 preacher at the Wittenberg Parish Church

1515-18 district vicar of the Order

1513-21 early lectures and disputations

→ early lectures: Psalms (1513–15), Romans (1515/16), Galatians (1516/17), Hebrews (1517/18), Psalms (1519–21)

→ early disputations: Quaestio de viribus et voluntate hominis sine gratia (1516), Disputatio contra scholasticam theologiam (1517), Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum (1517), Heidelberg Disputation (1518)

1518 beginning of university reform → concentration on biblical exegesis (promotion of knowledge of biblical languages, use of humanistic tools and techniques), pushback on Aristotle and scholastic studies, appointment of Philip Melanchthon as Greek professor

1517-21

Formation of the evangelical movement

1517/18 literary disputes about indulgences

1518–21 heresy trial at the Roman Curia against Luther; interrogation before Caietan during the Diet of Augsburg (1518); efforts to reach an understanding (1518–20); bull of banishment (1520); bull of excommunication (1521); imperial trial against Luther: Luther at the Diet of Worms, Edict of Worms (1521)

1518–20 formation of an evangelical movement (sympathies among humanists, dissemination of Luther's writings in Latin and German)

1519 Leipzig disputation

1520 four main Reformation writings

- → spring: "On Good Works" (ethics)
- ightarrow summer: "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" (church reform)
- \rightarrow summer: "On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church" (sacraments)
- → autumn: "On Christian freedom" (justification and Christian life)

Dec. 10, 1520 burning of the bull of banishment in Wittenberg

1521-25

Beginnings of the Reformation

1521/22 Wartburg → Luther's writings on the reorganization of church life; "De votis monasticis" → critical examination of monasticism; NT translation and postils → foundations for Reformation preaching and personal piety

1522–24 Luther intervenes in the incipient urban Reformation (Wittenberg movement) and develops basic lines of worship reform (liturgical orders, hymns) and the reorganization of the church community (election of pastors, common chest, school)

1523 "On Secular Authority" → redefinition of the relationship between faith in justification and world responsibility (distinction between God's two regiments, basic lines of political ethics)

1522–25 conflict with Karlstadt and Müntzer

1524/25 conflict with Erasmus of Rotterdam.

1525 writings on the Peasants' war; marriage to Catherine of Bora

1525-46 Luther and Protestant church

1524/26–29 first controversy on the Lord's Supper (exchange of polemical writings with Zwingli, 1529 Marburg colloguy)

1526–29 consolidating and shaping the Reformation church through visitations, worship reform, and catechism

1528–37 doctrinal summaries (1528 Luther's personal confession, 1529 Marburg Articles, 1529/30 Schwabach and Torgau Articles, 1530 Augsburg Confession, 1537 Schmalkaldic Articles)

1529 writings on the Turks

1530 Luther at Coburg castle (diet of Augsburg)

1525–46 advisor for the reorganisation of the Saxon church (visitations, superintendents, consistory, ordination, dealing with religious deviance in Reformation territories → supporters of the papal church, anabaptism, mystical spiritualism)

1530–46 advisor for the political safeguarding of the Reformation (Schmalkaldic League, discussion about the right of resistance)

1531–46 elaboration and defense of Reformation theology in lectures (1531 Galatians, 1532–35 Psalms, 1535–45 Genesis) and disputations (on the doctrine of justification, the doctrine of God, Christology, ecclesiology, ethics, and the relation of law and gospel)

1536 Wittenberg Concord

1537-40 Antinomian controversy

1533-45 polemics against the papal church in the context of the plans for a reform council

1538-46 late writings and sermons on the Jews

Luther's Reformation theology

- \rightarrow new way of dealing with the Bible: existential appropriation, hermeneutic concentration on the literal understanding, Christological interweaving of the Bible and reader
- → doctrine of justification: development from theology of humility (1513–15) through the reception of Paul and Augustine and the critical engagement with late Franciscan school theology (1515–17) to categorical distinction between God's an human agency (1518)
- \rightarrow distinction between Luther's gradual theological development (Reformation turn) and the sudden insight (Reformation breakthrough) within this development that took place either in 1514 (early dating) or 1518 (late dating)