Foundations
History: Heroes of the Faith

Martin Luther

Timeline of Martin Luther's Life

1483	Born November 10 in Eisleben, Germany
1501	Studies Law at University of Erfurt
1505	Abandons Pursuit of Law Career After Surviving Storm on July 2 Joins Augustinian Cloister at Erfurt on July 17
1507	Leads First Catholic Mass on May 2
1512	Earns Doctorate of Theology from Wittenberg on October 19
1517	Nails 95 Theses to Doors of Castle Church in Wittenberg on October 31
1518	Conversion Defends Himself in Augsburg Against Charges of Heresy
1520	Burns Papal Bull in Wittenberg
1521	Excommunicated at Diet of Worms "Kidnapped" to Wartburg Castle Translates New Testament into German from Greek in 10 Weeks
1522	Begins Reforms in Wittenberg
1525	Marries Katharina von Bora First Protestant Service Held December 25
1527	Plague comes to Wittenberg Writes, "A Mighty Fortress is our God"
1529	Large and Small Catechisms written
1530	Writes The Augsburg Confession with Philipp Melanchthon
1546	Dies February 18 in Eisleben at age 62 Buried at Castle Church in Wittenberg



Lessons from Martin Luther's Life

1. **The Importance of Scripture:** Martin Luther and the Power of the Word
    - *"I simply taught, preached, and wrote God's Word; otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept … the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such losses upon it. I did nothing; the Word did everything."*

    - *"The Bible is a remarkable fountain: The more one draws and drinks of it, the more it stimulates thirst."*

    - *"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me."*

2. **The Importance of Grace**: Martin Luther and His Sin
    - *"So when the devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this: "I admit that I deserve death and hell, what of it? For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God, and where He is there I shall be also!"*

- *“Either sin is with you, lying on your shoulders, or it is lying on Christ, the Lamb of God. Now if it is lying on your back, you are lost; but if it is resting on Christ, you are free, and you will be saved. Now choose what you want.”*

- *“Not that the righteous person does nothing, but that his works do not make him righteous, rather that his righteousness creates works.”*

3. **The Importance of Dependence:** Martin Luther and Prayer
    - *"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."*

    - *“I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer.”*

- *“As is the business of tailors to make clothes and cobblers to make shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.”*

- *“The less I pray, the harder it gets; the more I pray, the better it goes.”*

4. **The Importance of Courage**: Martin Luther and His Convictions
    - *"Out of love for the truth and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at Wittenberg…"*

    - *“Unless I am convicted by Scripture . . .I cannot and will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand. May God help me.”*

5. **The Importance of Worship:** Martin Luther and the Local Church
    - *"After theology, I accord music the highest place and the greatest honor."*
    - *"God's Word needs to be preached and sung, for the word is intellect, but the song is feeling."*
    - *"The purpose of this New House may be such that nothing else may happen in it except that our Lord himself may speak to us through his Holy Word and we respond to him through prayer and praise."*
    - *One biographer wrote, "Luther so developed this element that he may be considered the father of congregational song."*

6. **The Importance of Discipleship**: Martin Luther and Family Worship
    - *"We cannot perpetuate the Christian doctrine unless we train the people who come after us and succeed us in our office and work, so that they in turn may bring up their children successfully. Thus the Word of God and the Christian church will be preserved. Therefore let every head of a household remember that it is his duty, by God's injunction and command, to teach or have taught to his children the things they ought to know."*

    - Table Talk