

A STUDY OF THE

Protestant Reformation

1517 - 2017

The 500th Anniversary





Introduction: Part 9

During the Disputation in Heidelberg on April 26, 1518, for which Luther had prepared his *Heidelberg Theses*, he expressed his concern about the meaning of sin, free will, and grace, and defended his views before the Augustinian chapter. It had given him the opportunity “to make a spirited defense of his new theology, to attack the doctrine of the freedom of the will and Aristotle’s reign in theology, and to express a defiant refusal to recant his views.” After it was over, the Nuremberg delegation invited Luther to ride with them in a wagon until their ways parted. At Nuremberg, he he left his brothers and continued by wagon until he returned home to Wittenberg.



Luther's Summons to Rome

- On August 7, 1518, Luther received a summons from Pope Leo X demanding his appearance in Rome within sixty days as a subject of heresy. A copy of *A Dialogue Against the Presumptuous Conclusions of Martin Luther*, written by Sylvester Prierias (Dominican priest and Master of the Sacred Palace in Rome) arrived with the summons.
- Prierias had made his position clear: “Whoever says that the Church of Rome may not do what it is actually doing in the matter of indulgences is a heretic.”
- The next day, August 8, Luther requested assistance from Elector Frederick the Wise, asking that he not be sent to Rome.



Luther's Summons to Rome

- Luther took Prierias' *Dialogue*, as soon as it arrived in Wittenberg, and wrote a reply – and had it printed! The publisher issued both the *Dialogue* and Luther's response in Leipzig.
- In his rebuttal, Luther had strongly written, "It is thus my right, that means my Christian freedom, to reject and dismiss you and your *Dialogue*."
- Historian Heiko Oberman notes the outcome of this conflict: "Before the grace period had expired, the decision was made in Rome to take Luther into custody....Two days later, on August 25, the Saxon provincial was ordered to have Luther seized and imprisoned, 'bound hand and foot.'"



“Truth at last had raised her head in the midst of Christendom. Victorious over the inferior ministers of the papacy, she was now to enter upon a struggle with its chief in person. We are about to contemplate Luther contending with Rome” (J.H. Merle D’Aubigne).



Pope Leo X's Commission to Cajetan

“We charge you to summon personally before you, to prosecute and constrain without any delay, and as soon as you shall have received this paper from us, the said Luther, who has already been declared a heretic by our dear brother Jerome, bishop of Ascoli. Invoke for this purpose the arm and the aid of our very dear son in Christ, Maximilian, and of the other princes of Germany, and of all the communities, universities, and potentates, ecclesiastic or secular. And, if you get possession of his person, keep him in safe custody, that he may be brought before us. If he return to his duty, and beg forgiveness for so great a misdeed, of his own accord and without solicitation, we give you power to receive him into the unity of our holy mother the Church.



Pope Leo X's Commission to Cajetan

If he persists in his obstinacy, and you cannot secure his person, we authorize you to proscribe him in every part of Germany; to banish, curse, and excommunicate all those who are attached to him; and to order all Christians to flee from their presence. And in order that this contagious disease may be the more effectually eradicated, you will excommunicate all prelates, religious orders, universities, counts, dukes, and potentates (the Emperor Maximilian always excepted), who shall not aid in seizing the aforesaid Martin Luther and his adherents, and send them to you under good and safe guard. And if, which God forbid, the said princes, communities, universities, and potentates, or any belonging to them, shall in any manner offer an asylum to the said



Pope Leo X's Commission to Cajetan

Martin and his adherents, give him privately or publicly, by themselves or by others, succor and counsel, we lay under interdict all these princes, communities, universities, and potentates, with their cities, towns, countries and villages, as well as the cities, towns, countries, and villages in which the said Martin may take refuge, so long as he shall remain there, and three days after he shall have quitted them. As for the laymen, if they do not immediately obey your orders without delay or opposition, we declare them infamous, incapable of performing any lawful act, deprived of christian burial, and stripped of all the fiefs they may hold either from the apostolic see, or from any lord whatsoever.”



Luther's Summons to Rome

- If the plan had worked, Luther would have been in custody of the Church of Rome on the first anniversary of his posting the *Ninety-Five Theses*.
- However, Frederick the Wise was successful in having the venue of Luther's interrogation moved to Germany – to Augsburg. This was arranged through the court chaplain, George Spalatin.
- Cardinal Cajetan was empowered by the pope to decide Luther's guilt or innocence after talking with him. A disputation was to be avoided at all costs.
- With Emperor Maximilian, the pope, and Cajetan against Luther, he "had but slender hope of escaping the stake."

What Luther Saw Ahead



“Now I must die. What a disgrace
I shall be to my parents!”

Leo X's Letter to Frederick: Vatican Archives

“Beloved son, the apostolic benediction be upon you. We recall that the chief ornament of your most noble family has been devotion to the faith of God and to the honor and dignity of the Holy See. Now we hear that a son of iniquity, Brother Martin Luther of the Augustinian eremites, hurling himself upon the Church of God, has your support. Even though we know it to be false, we must urge you to clear the reputation of your noble family from such calumny (slander). Having



Pope Leo X
1475-1521



Leo X's Letter to Frederick (cont.)

been advised by the Master of the Sacred Palace (Prierias) that Luther's teaching contains heresy, we have cited him to appear before Cardinal Cajetan. We call upon you to see that Luther is placed in the hands and under the jurisdiction of this Holy See lest future generations reproach you with having fostered the rise of a most pernicious heresy against the Church of God."

Cardinal Tommaso De Vio Cajetan



Cajetan's Interview with Martin Luther

Ferdinand Pauwels
Oil on canvas, 1872

- Born in Gaeta, Italy on Feb. 20, 1469
- Entered the Dominican order in 1484
- Studied philosophy in Naples and Doctor of Theology at Bologna
- Lectured on Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* from 1497 to 1499 at Pavia
- Moved to Rome and lectured at Sapienza University, largest European University (112,000+)



Cardinal Tommaso De Vio Cajetan

- Liaison between the Dominican Order and the Roman curia (administrative unit of the Roman Catholic Church)
- Completed his massive commentary on Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, which was published between 1507 and 1520
- Pope Leo X named him cardinal and archbishop of Palermo
- Papal legate to Germany to rouse support for a crusade against the Turks, which brought him to Augsburg for the diet of 1518
- Debates with Protestants dominated Cajetan's tenure as cardinal
- Died on August 9, 1534, age 65

Luther's Trip to Augsburg

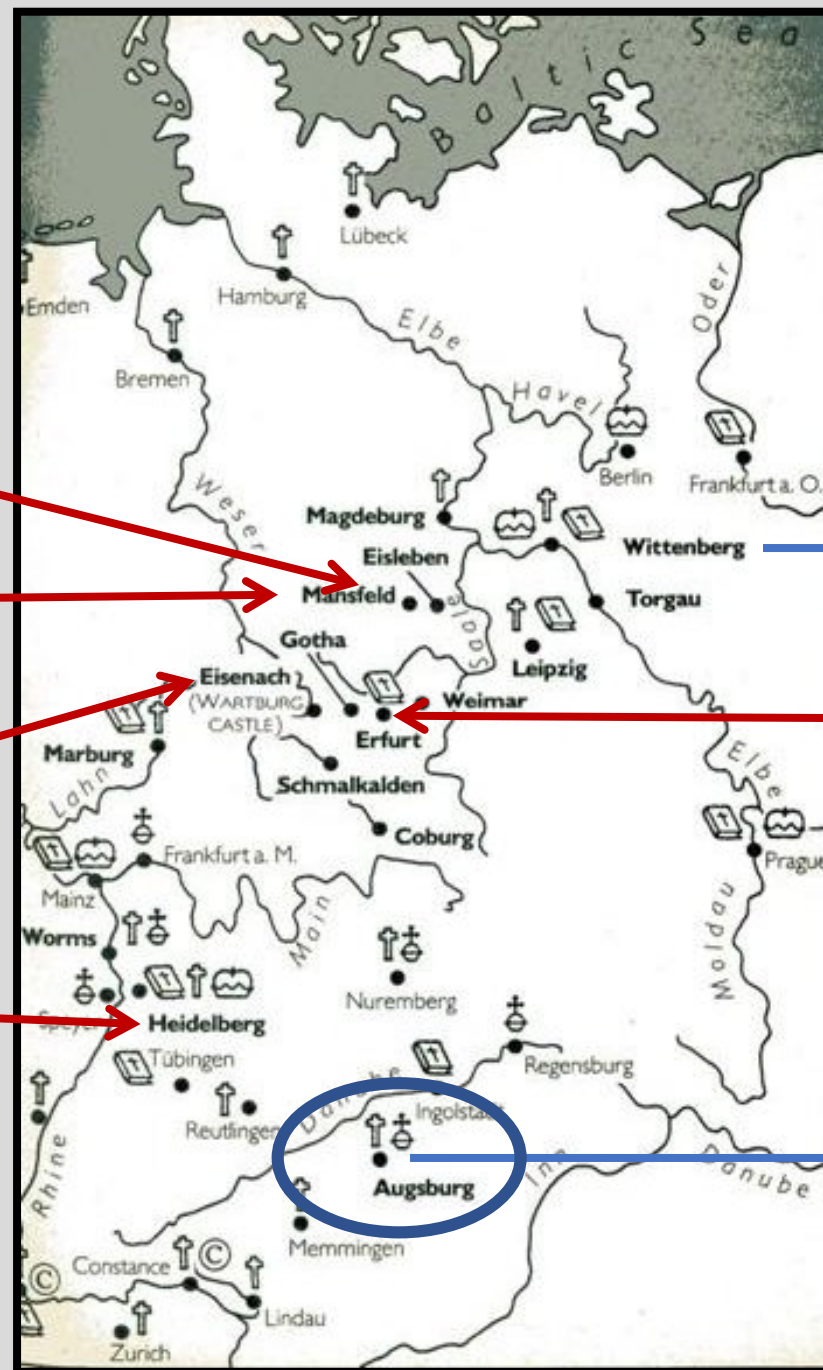
- Luther's trip was carefully organized by the electoral court.
- He was given sufficient travel expenses, lodgings were arranged, and he was furnished with legal counseling - but no safe conduct.
- He stopped at the Augustinian monastery in Nuremburg, and was warned that his life was in danger.
- The Roman order to take Luther into custody was leaked, and his friends feared that the interrogation would be followed by his arrest.
- He arrived in Augsburg on October 7.
- Luther was looked upon as a hero by many prominent people there.

Magdeburg

Mansfeld
(Moved here in 1484)

Eisenach

Heidelberg



Erfurt

**Distance between Wittenberg
and Augsburg: 296 miles**

Albrecht Dürer

On his way to Augsburg, Luther stopped in Nuremberg to see some of his friends. One of them was the illustrious painter, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), whose pen-and-ink drawing, *Praying Hands*, was composed around 1508. In 1520, he wrote in his diary: “And God help me that I may go to Dr. Martin Luther; thus I intend to make a portrait of him with great care and engrave him on a copper plate to create a lasting memorial of the Christian man who helped me overcome so many difficulties.”



Luther's Letter to Philip Melanchthon

“Show yourself a man as you do at all times. Teach our beloved youths what is upright and acceptable to God. As for me, I am going to be sacrificed for you and for them, if such is the Lord's will. I would rather die, and even (which would be my greatest misfortune) be forever deprived of your sweet society, than retract what I felt it my duty to teach, and thus ruin perhaps by my own fault the excellent studies to which we are now devoting ourselves. Italy, like Egypt in times of old, is plunged in darkness so thick that it may be felt.



Philip Melanchthon

1497-1560

Luther's Letter to Philip Melanchthon

No one in that country knows anything of Christ, or of what belongs to him; and yet they are our lords and our masters in faith and in morals. Thus the wrath of God is fulfilled among us, as the prophet saith: 'I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them [Is. 3:4].' Do your duty to God, my dear Philip, and avert his anger by pure and fervent prayer."



Cardinal Cajetan in Augsburg: A Summary

“It fell to the Roman legate, Cardinal Cajetan, to find a solution to the Luther problem that would safeguard the ecclesiastical supremacy of Rome without provoking the Saxon elector (Frederick the Wise). And so between October 12 and 15, 1518 – after the diet (congress, convention) had ended – Martin Luther underwent the first and only interrogation to which he was ever subjected. Cajetan had promised the elector to proceed as a ‘father’ and not like a ‘judge,’ but all his efforts were in vain: reasoning with Luther was as ineffective as harsh commands. In the end the legate could only conclude that the monk must be regarded as a heretic unwilling to recant and bow to the Church.”



The Augsburg Interrogation: First Day

- After the Diet of Augsburg, which closed on September 23, 1518, Cardinal Cajetan conducted three interviews with Luther on Tuesday through Thursday, October 12-14.
- The interrogations took place in the Fugger house.
- On the first day, Luther humbled himself and prostrated himself, as he had been directed, before Cardinal Cajetan (who hated Luther).
- Cajetan raised him up and told him he must recant.
- Luther countered by telling him that he had not made the journey to Augsburg to do what he could have done in Wittenberg.



The Augsburg Interrogation: First Day

- Cajetan: “Here are three articles which by the command of our holy Father, Pope Leo X, I have to set before you. First, you must bethink yourself, own your faults, and retract your errors, propositions, and sermons; secondly, you must promise to abstain in future from propagating your opinions; and, thirdly, bind yourself to behave with greater moderation, and avoid everything that may grieve or disturb the Church.”
- Cajetan told him that his chief error was the denial of the Church’s treasury of merit as clearly enunciated in the bull *Unigenitus* of Pope Clement VI in the year 1343.



The Augsburg Interrogation: First Day

- Cajetan: “Here you have a statement by the pope that the merits of Christ are a treasure of indulgences.”
- Luther: “I cannot receive such constitution as sufficient proofs on matters so important. For they pervert the Holy Scriptures, and never quote them to the purpose.”
- Cajetan: “The pope has power and authority over all things.”
- Luther: “Except Scripture!”
- Cajetan: “I did not come here to dispute with you. Retract, or prepare to suffer the penalty you have deserved.”



The Augsburg Interrogation: First Day

- Cajetan: “Do you wish me to give you a safe-conduct to go to Rome?” (this was proposed several times during Day 1).
- Luther refused and was dismissed by Cajetan.
- Luther returned to the Carmelite convent where he was staying.
- Meanwhile, when the emperor’s counselors informed Cajetan that Luther had been given a safe-conduct, he lost his temper and said, “It is well; but I will execute the pope’s orders.”

The Augsburg Interrogation: Second Day

- On Day 2, it soon became clear that Cajetan would not allow Martin Luther to say anything. He alone was permitted to speak. Luther tried to speak ten times, but the legate interrupted him every time.
- It became evident that Cajetan would hear no other words than “I retract.”
- In the end, Luther begged that he might at least be permitted to offer a written reply to Cajetan, and he finally consented.
- The meeting was adjourned.





The Augsburg Interrogation: Third Day

- Luther: “The saints are not saved by their merits, but solely by God’s mercy, as I have declared. I maintain this, and in it I stand fast. The words of Holy Scripture, which declare that the saints have not merit enough, must be set above the words of men, which affirm that they have an excess. For the pope is not above the Word of God, but below it.”
- Cajetan took Luther’s written response and, after glancing over it, said, “You have indulged in useless verbiage: you have penned many idle words; you have replied in a foolish manner to the two articles, and have blackened your paper with a great number of passages from Scripture that have no connection with the subject.”



The Augsburg Interrogation: Third Day

- Luther had been silenced the second day, but not on this occasion. His indignation finally erupted, especially at those who already believed that Cajetan had already conquered him.
- “Retract, retract!” repeated Cajetan.
- Luther boldly spoke: “Most worthy father, pray, meditate and weigh these words carefully: He has *acquired*. Christ has acquired a treasure by his merits; the merits, therefore, are not the treasure; for, to speak philosophically, the cause and effect are very different matters. The merits of Jesus Christ have acquired for the pope the power of giving certain indulgences to the people; but it is not the very merits of our Lord that the hand of the pontiff distributes. This, then, my



The Augsburg Interrogation: Third Day

- conclusion, which you invoke with so much noise, testifies with me to the truth I proclaim.”
- Cajetan could make no reply. He was caught in the very snare he had laid for Luther, “and Luther held him there with a strong hand, to the inexpressible astonishment of the Italian courtiers around him.”
- “Cajetan had long abandoned the testimony of Scripture and of the Fathers; he had taken refuge in this Extravagance of Clement VI, and lo! he was caught” (D’Aubigne).
- Luther and Cajetan never met again. As Cajetan continued to read Luther’s writings after Augsburg, he changed his views and retracted his own errors.

Courage



Sir Winston Churchill

1874-1965

“Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities...because it is the quality which guarantees all others.”



God's Word

“Forward brethren. God the Holy Spirit helping you, resolve in your hearts this day that all the boasted discoveries of science you will doubt, all the affirmations of the wise you will doubt, all the speculations of great thinkers you will doubt, all your own feelings and all the conclusions drawn from outward circumstances you will doubt, yea, and everything that seems to be demonstrable to a certainty you will doubt, but never, never, never, while eternity shall last, will you suffer the thought to pass your mind that God can ever in the least degree run back from anything that he has spoken, or change the word that hath gone forth of his lips” (Charles H. Spurgeon).



Conclusion

“Without Frederick and his councilors, Cardinal Cajetan’s interrogation of Luther would have taken place in Rome and not on German soil. Without the Elector’s perseverance, the evangelical movement would have come to an end in 1518, to remain at best a dimly remembered chapter in church history. Luther the reformer and charismatic genius would never have existed, only Luther the heretic, who for a time enjoyed a certain degree of notoriety when, like the Bohemian Jan Hus and the Florentine Girolamo Savonarola, he protested against the secularization of the Church. Luther would ultimately have become so inconsequential as to allow an unperturbed Roman curia to magnanimously reconsider his case today” (Heiko Oberman).