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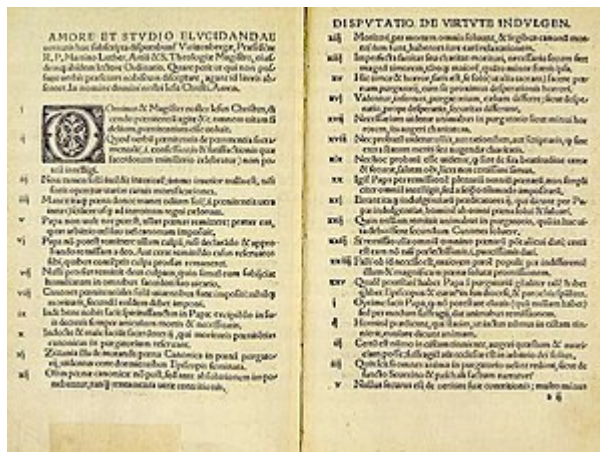
Martin Luther's 95 Theses

Dr. Martin Luther's Disputation on the Power and Effect of Proclamation (The Ninety-Five Theses) (1517)

Martinus Luther Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum

This was printed in early 1518, consisting of 95 articles based on Martin Luther's statement of views on indulgences that he enclosed in a letter to bishops on October 31, 1517, regarding the abuse of indulgences by believers in the Roman Catholic Church. It became the starting point of the indulgence debate and the religious reformation.

95 개조 반박문 The Ninety-Five Theses



Dr. Martin Luther's argument on the power and effect of the proclamation of the Eucharist

October 31, 1517

1. From the time our Lord and Teacher, Jesus Christ, called us to repent, believers must repent throughout our lives.
2. This cannot be understood as referring to confession and atonement recognized by the clergy, such as in the sacrament of penance.
3. It does not yet mean inner repentance, nor can it be inner repentance, since it does not bring out the pain of the body.
4. Therefore, as long as self-loathing continues, punishment also continues, and since this is true repentance, it will continue until we enter heaven.



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- 5. The Pope cannot intend remission, nor can he remit any penalty, even under his own authority or canon law.**
- 6. The Pope cannot remit any guilt except that which God has already forgiven or has approved of being forgiven. Certainly, the Pope can grant remission for matters he himself has judged. If his power of remission in such cases is ridiculed, the guilt remains entirely unforgiven.**
- 7. God does not forgive the sins of those who are not humble in all things and who submit only to the clergy, who are merely His representatives.**
- 8. Canonical penalties apply and are imposed only on the living, not on the dead.**
- 9. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, who comes to us through the pope, always makes exceptions in his proclamations for the dead and for necessity.**
- 10. It is ignorant and foolish for a clergyman to impose the penalty of purgatory on a dying person.**
- 11. The change of canonical penalties to purgatory is one proof that chaff was sown while the bishops slept.**
- 12. Previously, canonical penances were not given after absolution, but before, as a test of true repentance.**
- 13. By death, the dead are freed from all penances. They have already died to the precepts of the canon and have the rights connected with them.**
- 14. In the dying, imperfect love, which is called imperfect spiritual health, gives rise to fear. The less love, the greater the fear.**
- 15. Fear and terror, needless to say, are comparable to the perpetuation of the punishment of purgatory, which is very close to the horror of despair itself.**
- 16. The distinction between hell, purgatory, and heaven seems to be a distinction between despair, near despair, and the assurance of safety.**
- 17. It seems that the souls imprisoned in purgatory need to reduce despair and increase charity.**
- 18. It seems inexplicable, neither by reason nor by Scripture, whether they are, so to speak, outside the advantage of increasing charity.**



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19. Moreover, even if we were certain of this, it seems impossible to prove that they, or at least all of them, are assured of the blessings that are destined for them.

20. Therefore, the “full remission of all penalties” proclaimed by the Pope does not really mean “all,” but only what he himself has judged.

21. Therefore, the indulgences issued by preachers, claiming that the Pope’s indulgences can remit penalties and save everyone, are erroneous.

22. Even if he were to remit to souls in purgatory according to canon law, he could not inflict upon them the punishments they deserve in this life.

23. Even if it were possible to grant to some all penances, this remission would be available to very few.

24. Consequently, the majority of people receive only indiscriminate and vociferous promises of punishment.

25. The power of the Pope in general over purgatory is the same as that of a bishop or deacon in particular over his own diocese.

26. The absolution granted by the Pope to the souls in purgatory is not, at best, by the power of the keys, which he does not possess, but merely by intercession (the act of indirectly conveying one's wishes to God through the Virgin Mary or a saint).

27. Preachers say that the souls in purgatory soar as soon as a coin jingles into the money box.

28. Certainly, as soon as a coin jingles into the money box, gain and greed increase, but the Church's response to the intercession is solely by the power of God.

29. Who knows whether all the souls in purgatory desire salvation, as the legends of Saint Severinus and Pascal show?

30. No one can know whether their contrition is sincere, or whether they have obtained plenary remission.

31. Those who are truly penitent are rare, and those who truly receive indulgences are rare. Such people are extremely rare.

32. If anyone believes that he is truly saved because he has a confessional, he will be condemned forever, along with his teacher.



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33. People should be wary of the claim that the pope's indulgences are an inestimable grace that reconciles man to God.
34. This "grace of indulgences" is solely due to the penalties of sacramental satisfaction and is determined by man.
35. Those preachers who teach that the presence of a confessional dispensation eliminates the need for repentance have deviated from Christian doctrine.
36. Every truly repentant Christian has the right to full remission of sins and penalties, even without a letter of indulgence.
37. A true Christian, whether living or dead, receives the blessings of Christ and the Church, which God gives him, even without letters of indulgence.
38. Nevertheless, the indulgences granted by the Pope and the liturgy (with the blessing of the Church) cannot be disregarded, for, as mentioned above, they are the proclamation of the given forgiveness.
39. It is extremely difficult, even for the most astute theologians, to persuade people of both the quantity of forgiveness and true repentance.
40. True repentance seeks and loves punishments, but generous pardons weaken them and make people hate them, or at least give them the opportunity to hate them.
41. The pope's indulgences must be preached with care, lest the people be misled into believing that they are more valuable than other good works of charity.
42. Christians must be taught that the purchase of papal indulgences is no substitute for any act of mercy.
43. Christians should be taught that helping the poor and sharing with those in need is better than buying indulgences.
44. For charity grows by loving and a person is improved through it, but a confessional does not improve a person but only avoids punishment.
45. Christians should be taught that if they see someone in need and pass him by and buy a confessional, they are not buying absolution from the Pope, but wrath from God.
46. Christians should be taught that if they have more than they need, they should keep it for the needs of their families, not waste it on buying indulgences.



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47. Christians should be taught that buying indulgences is a matter of free will, not a commandment.

48. Christians should be taught that their devout prayers are more necessary and should be sought for than their money in order to obtain the Papal Indulgence.

49. Christians should learn that the Pope's nuncios are useful when they do not put their faith in them, and harmful when they lose the fear of God because of them.

50. Christians should learn that if the Pope knew what the nuncios preachers were forcing upon him, he would rather reduce to ashes the Basilica of St. Peter, which he builds with the flesh, bones, and skin of his sheep.

51. Christians should learn that the Pope would sell St. Peter's Basilica to pay out of his own pocket the many who have been extorted by the peddlers who, with their sweet words, sell the indulgences of confessors, in order to fulfill his duty.

52. The assurance of salvation written in the indulgences is vain, even if the Pope or his representatives stake their souls on them.

53. Those who preach the indulgences in some churches and remain silent about the spread of the Word of God are enemies of Christ and enemies of the Pope.

54. The Word of God is mutilated by preaching the indulgences of confessors for the same or even longer time in the same sermon.

55. The Pope should show that it is his will that for every word, phrase, or chapter that the paltry indulgences of confessors are praised, the great Gospel should be preached a hundred times over in words, phrases, and chapters.

56. The "treasures of the Church," the indulgences granted by the Pope, are not sufficiently mentioned or known among the people of Christ.

57. The fact that so many peddlers do not readily part with these treasures but gather them up is a clear proof that they are not worldly treasures.

58. None of these are the merits of Christ and the saints, for even without the Pope, they always give grace and the cross to those who belong to them, and death and hell to those who do not belong.



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59. St. Lawrence said that the treasures of the Church are the poor of the Church, but he was quoting the language of his own time.

60. We say with caution that the keys of the Church, given by the merits of Christ, are the very treasure.

61. It is clear that the power of the Pope is sufficient for the remission of penalties and reserved matters.

62. The true treasure of the Church is the most holy Gospel, given by the glory and grace of God.

63. However, this treasure is naturally the most detestable, because it makes the first last.

64. On the other hand, the treasure of indulgences is truly acceptable, because it makes the last first.

65. Therefore, the treasure of the Gospel is a net with which the rich have long been sought.

66. The treasure of the indulgences is now a net for fishing for the wealth of men.

67. The indulgences that preachers cry out as the "greatest grace" have thus become for their own benefit only.

68. The only truth that remains is a grace that is insignificant compared to the grace of God and the devotion to the Cross.

69. Bishops and deacons are given full respect and the authority to represent the Pope's indulgences.

70. However, they must be vigilant, keeping their eyes and ears alert, lest these preachers preach their own dreams instead of the authority they have received from the Pope.

71. Let him who preaches against the truth of the Pope's indulgences be anathema and cursed!

72. But let him who guards against the lust and license of the indulgence preacher be blessed!

73. The Pope can only rebuke those who in any way seek to undermine the indulgences.

74. But even more so, let him rebuke those who, under the pretext of the indulgences, seek to undermine holy love and truth.



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75. To think that the Papal indulgences are so great that they can be forgiven even for the unforgivable sin or for violating the Virgin Mary—this is madness.

76. Instead, we say that the Papal indulgences cannot remove even the smallest sin; one is still guilty.

77. We can even say that even if St. Peter were Pope today, he could not grant greater graces. This is not to insult St. Peter or the Pope.

78. Instead, we say that the present Pope, or any Pope, has greater graces at his disposal: wisdom, the gospel, power, the grace of healing, and so on... This is recorded in First Corinthians, chapter 12.

79. It is blasphemous for (the evangelical preachers) to say that the cross adorned with the Pope's arms and that which they themselves have erected are of equal value with the cross of Christ.

80. The bishops, deacons, and theologians who spread such rumors among the people will have to answer for the following:

81. Unbridled preachers, even learned ones, make it difficult to save the Pope's authority not only from slander but also from the shrewd questions of the laity.

82. As wisdom: -- "Why does the Pope not empty purgatory for the sake of holy love and the desperate needs of the souls there? Why does he leave an infinite number of souls there for the sake of the paltry sum of money to build a church? The former reason is more urgent, the latter is trivial."

83. Also: -- "Why are requiem masses for the dead continued? And why aren't their offerings returned or rejected? Since they claim they've already been restored, isn't this a false prayer?"

84. Also: -- "What is the new faith of God and the Pope? If the impious are freed from purgatory by money and become pious friends of God, while the pious and faithful souls who need it remain, what good will it do to pure love?"

85. Also: -- "Why is it that the canonical penitential articles, long since abolished and dead, are now used as a basis for granting indulgences, as if they were still alive and effective?"

86. Also: -- "Why does the Pope, who is richer than any of the richest men today, want to build churches with the money of the poor faithful rather than with his own?"



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87. Also: -- "What kind of participation and remission does the Pope grant to those who, through perfect repentance, have the right to full indulgence and participation?"

88. Also: "If the Pope were to grant indulgences and pardons to all the faithful a hundred times a day, as he now does once a day, what greater blessing would come to the Church?"

89. "Since the Pope sought the salvation of souls rather than money through indulgences, why did he stop granting indulgences? Are they of equal efficacy?"

90. By suppressing this debate, by oppressing only the consciences of the laity, and by failing to justify them with rational arguments, the Church and the Pope become the butt of their enemies and bring about the misfortune of Christians.

91. If, therefore, the indulgences of confessors were preached according to the spirit and mind of the Pope, then all these doubts would already be resolved. Indeed, they would not even exist.

92. Therefore, depart from all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," for there is no peace there.

93. In the blessings of all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Cross, cross," there is no cross there.

94. Christians should be admonished to diligently follow Christ through punishment, death, and hell.

95. And they must be sure that they will enter heaven through much suffering rather than through guaranteed peace.