

# The Theology of Martin Luther

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## Programmed Syllabus

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INSTITUTE OF  
**THEOLOGICAL**  
STUDIES



**Updated 2006**



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## Course Description

“On this I take my stand. I can do no other. God help me.” Those words of Martin Luther reflect the unswerving commitment to Scripture that permeated his theology and sparked his Reformation. In this course, learners survey the background and setting of Luther’s thought, as well as his teaching on a range of topics that form Christian theology: his understanding of sin and grace, justification and faith, and law and gospel. The course also emphasizes his view of the workplace as an arena to serve God. The goal of the course is to appreciate Luther’s steadfast commitment to the cross of Christ and the authority of Scripture, and to apply such commitment to their own lives and ministry.

## Course Objectives

*Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:*

1. Understand the historical background of Luther's thought in his own career and in the intellectual context of late medieval theology.
2. Understand the chief points in Luther's theology on the critical topics discussed in his era and relevant to twentieth century Christian thought.
3. Understand and identify Luther's law/gospel hermeneutic at work within the entire structure of his exposition of the biblical message.
4. Interpret Luther's sixteenth century concerns within their own historical setting and in their significance for later periods of church history, including the turn of the twenty-first century.
5. Appreciate Luther's combination of faithfulness to the biblical text and his deep concern for the comfort of Christian consciences and the proper exercise of the Christian faith by all believers.

## Course Texts

### 1. Required Reading

Kolb, Robert. *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520-1620*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000.

Lull, Timothy F. *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*. Second edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.



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## 2. Recommended Reading

Althaus, Paul. *The Theology of Martin Luther*. translated by Robert C. Schultz  
Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Ethics of Martin Luther*. translated by Robert C. Schultz. Philadelphia: Fortress  
Press, 1979.

Ebeling, Gerhard. *Luther, an Introduction to his Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970.

Lull, Timothy F. *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*. First edition. Minneapolis: Fortress  
Press, 1989. (See Lectures 11 and 17)

## 3. Collateral Reading

**Note:** Students should read a minimum of **1,000 pages** from the following secondary texts  
or from primary sources.

### Primary Sources in English

*Luther's Works* (American Edition). 55 vols. St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and  
Fortress, 1957-1976.

*The Complete Sermons of Martin Luther*. eds. John Nicholas Lenker and Eugene F. A. Klug. 7  
vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.

### Bibliographies

Aland, Kurt. *Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium*. 3. ed. Bielefeld: Luther-Verlag, 1996.

Bigane, Jack, and Kenneth Hagen. *Annotated Bibliography of Luther Studies: 1967-1976*. St.  
Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1977.

### Biographies

Atkinson, James. *Martin Luther and the Birth of Protestantism*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982.

Bainton, Roland. *Here I Stand*. London: Penguin, 2002.

Boehmer, Heinrich. *Martin Luther: Road to Reformation*. New York: Meridian Books, 1963.

Bornkamm, Heinrich. *Martin Luther in Mid-Career*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.



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- Brendler, Gerhard. *Martin Luther: Theology and Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Brecht, Martin. *Martin Luther*. 3 vols. Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993ff.
- Dickens, A. G. *The German Nation and Martin Luther*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- Edwards, Mark U., Jr. *Luther and the False Brethren*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther's Last Battles*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Gritsch, Eric. *Martin--God's Court Jester*. Ramsey, NJ: Sigler Press, 1991.
- Haile, H. G. *Luther: An Experiment in Biography*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983.
- Kittelson, James M. *Luther the Reformer*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2003.
- Loewenich, Walther von. *Martin Luther: the Man and His Work*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986.
- Lohse, Bernard. *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.
- Manns, Peter. *Martin Luther: An Illustrated Biography*. 1982.
- Oberman, Heiko A. *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Schwiebert, E. G. *Luther and His Times*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1950.
- Smith, Preserved. *The Life and Letters of Martin Luther*. New York: 1911.
- Thiel, Rudolf. *Luther*. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1955.
- Todd, John M. *Martin Luther: A Biographical Study*. Westminster, MD: 1965.

## **Theology**

- Althaus, Paul. *The Ethics of Martin Luther*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Theology of Martin Luther*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976.



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- Aulen, Gustaf. *Christus Victor*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003.
- Bizer, Ernst. *Fides ex Auditu: Eine Untersuchung über die Entdeckung der Gerechtigkeit Gottes durch Martin Luther*. Neukirchen: Neukirchner Verlag, 1961.
- Bluhm, Heinz. *Martin Luther, Creative Translator*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1965.
- Bornkamm, Heinrich. *Luther and the Old Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther's World of Thought*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1965.
- Buszin, Walter E. *Luther on Music*. St. Paul: 1958.
- Cargill-Thompson, W. D. J. *The Political Thought of Martin Luther*. Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1984.
- Christiansen, Carl C. *Art and the Reformation in Germany*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1981.
- Cranz, Ferdinand Edward. *An Essay on the Development of Luther's Thought on Justice, Law and Society*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Ramsey, NJ: Sigler Press, 1998.
- Ebeling, Gerhard. *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.
- Elert, Werner. *The Structure of Lutheranism: The Theology and Philosophy of Life of Lutheranism, 16th and 17th Centuries*. Vol. I. St. Louis: Concordia, 2003.
- Forde, Gerhard O. *Where God Meets Man: Luther's Down-to-Earth Approach to the Gospel*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972.
- Forell, George W. *Faith Active in Love: An Investigation of Principles Underlying Luther's Social Ethics*. 2. ed. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1964.
- Gerrish, Brian. *Grace and Reason: A Study in the Theology of Martin Luther*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005.
- Green, Lowell C. *How Melancthon Helped Luther Discover the Gospel*. Fairbrook, CA: Verdict, 1980.
- Haendler, Gert. *Luther on Ministerial Office and Congregational Function*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.



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- Hagen, Kenneth. *A Theology of Testament in the Young Luther: The Lectures on Hebrews*. Leiden: Brill, 1974.
- Harran, Marilyn J. *Luther on Conversion: The Early Years*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther and Learning*. Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1985.
- Headley, John M. *Luther's View of Church History*. 1963
- Hendrix, Scott. *Ecclesia in Via: Ecclesiological Developments in the Medieval Psalms Exegesis and the Dictata super Psalterium (1513-1515) of Martin Luther*. Leiden: Brill, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther and the Papacy*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.
- Holl, Karl. *The Cultural Significance of the Reformation*. New York: World, 1959.
- Janz, Denis R. *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism*. Waterloo: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 1983.
- Kolb, Robert. *Teaching God's Children His Teaching*. Hutchinson, MN: Crown, 1992.
- Kooiman, Willem Jan. *Luther and the Bible*. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1961.
- Lazareth, William H. *Luther on the Christian Home: an Application of the Social Ethics of the Reformation*. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1960.
- Lehmann, Martin. *Luther and Prayer*. Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1985.
- Lienhard, Marc. *Luther: Witness to Jesus Christ: Stages and Themes of the Reformer's Christology*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982.
- Loewenich, Walther von. *Luther's Theology of the Cross*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976.
- McSorley. *Luther: Right or Wrong? An Ecumenical-Theological Study of Luther's Major Work, The Bondage of the Will*. New York: Newman, 1969.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper, 1951.
- Olivier, Daniel. *Luther's Faith: The Cause of the Gospel in the Church*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1982.



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- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Obedient Rebels: Catholic Substance and Protestant Principle in Luther's Reformation*. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.
- Pinomaa, Lennart. *Faith Victorious*. Lima, OH: Academic Renewal Press, 2001.
- Prenter, Regin. *Spiritus Creator*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001.
- Preus, James S. *From Shadow to Promise: Old Testament Interpretation from Augustine to the Young Luther*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Reu, John Michael. *Luther's German Bible*. Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1934.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther's Small Catechism*. Chicago: Wartburg, 1929.
- Rupp, E. Gordon. *The Righteousness of God: Luther Studies*. 3. ed. London: 1968.
- Saarnivara, Uuras. *Luther Discovers the Gospel: New Light on Luther's Way from Medieval Catholicism to Evangelical Faith*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1951.
- Sasse, Hermann. *This Is My Body: Luther's Contention for the Real Presence*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.
- Siirala, Aarne. *Divine Humanness, Towards an Empirical Theology in the Light of the Controversy between Luther and Erasmus*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970.
- Siggins, Ian. *Martin Luther's Doctrine of Christ*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.
- Steinmetz, David C. *Luther and Staupitz*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Luther in Context*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Vajta, Vilmos. *Luther on Worship*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004.
- Watson, Philip S. *Let God be God: An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970.
- Wicks, Jared. *Man Yearning for Grace. Luther's Early Spiritual Teaching*. Washington: Corpus, 1968.
- Wingren, Gustaf. *Luther on Vocation*. Philadelphia: Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004.
- Wisloff, Carl F. *The Gift of Communion, Luther's Controversy with Rome on Eucharistic Sacrifice*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1964.



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## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Whether you sit in a traditional classroom or study from a distance, you will benefit from interaction, collaboration, and spiritual formation (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 10.3.3.3; 10.3.4.3). In order to meet this need in distance theological education, ITS is developing structures and resources to encourage spiritual formation and community interaction in our courses. In this course, we have included three collaborative learning features:

1. ITS Online Interactivity Forum (see course requirements) – fosters peer-to-peer interaction in a global, threaded discussion (required for all students)
2. Spiritual Formation Project (see course requirements) – fosters mentor-to-learner interaction in a mentor-guided reflection, discussion and application (required for all students)
3. Learning Community Assignments (see end of syllabus) – fosters peer-to-peer collaboration in a group approach to assignments (optional but recommended where possible)

Go to [www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/](http://www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/) for the most up-to-date ITS resources.

## Course Requirements

### I. General Requirements

In order to receive three semester (or four quarter) hours of credit, the student must complete the course requirements within a one-year period unless the particular institution requires the completion of all the work within the framework of the semester or quarter. During this time, the student is expected to devote a minimum of 120 hours to the completion of the course including listening to the recorded lectures, doing the assigned readings, answering all questions in his Programmed Syllabus as well as those in the Study Guide, completing ITS Online Interactivity Forum, Spiritual Formation Project, research paper and examinations.

### II. Specific Requirements

- A. Lectures: The student must listen carefully to all of the twenty-four recorded lectures by Professor Robert Kolb.
- B. Required Reading: The student must complete all of the required readings.

Note: The student should complete the readings assigned in conjunction with a particular lecture before listening to that lecture.

- D. Collateral Reading: The student must complete at least **1000 pages** of reading outside of the required and recommended textbooks. These can be taken from the bibliography under Collateral Reading. The student must report on a separate sheet



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indicating the title of the book, author, publisher, date of publication, and the pages read.

- E. Study Questions: The student is required to make careful use of the Study Guide prepared by Professor Kolb and must turn in written answers to the study questions in both the Study Guide as well as this Programmed Syllabus (see 'Assignments', p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**). This should be done in typewritten form.
- F. Research Paper: The student must complete a written project. This paper may focus on a historical problem in Luther's theology or may apply his insights to the contemporary scene.
1. Examples of the former might include "Luther's Doctrine of Justification through Faith," "Luther's Debates over the Lord's Supper," "Luther's Critique of Medieval Piety and Religion," "The Relationship of Luther's Doctrine of Sin and of the Fallen Human Will to His Soteriology," etc.
  2. Examples of the latter might include, "A Critique of Contemporary North American Religious Life on the Basis of Luther's Theology of the Cross," "Two Kinds of Righteousness and Proclamation in the Contemporary North American Piety," "Luther vs. the Anabaptists: Resolving the Dispute in Twentieth Century Terms," "Luther's Model for Congregational Life and Personal Piety as a Model for Today."

All papers must be at least **twenty pages** in length, appropriately footnoted with proper bibliographical notations, and must be typed **double-spaced**. They must follow the form presented in the latest edition of K. L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Students should submit one copy to the instructor and keep one copy for personal reference.

G. ITS Online Interactivity Forum:

Participate with other students worldwide in an ongoing asynchronous threaded discussion of two major course topics. Go to [www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/](http://www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/) to register for and enter the ITS Online Interactivity Forum. In order to get the fullest benefit from the Forum, complete the assignment **after** you have listened to *all* the lectures. Be sure to return to the forum after finishing the course to see how others respond. Follow these steps to complete the assignment:

- ◆ Post an original answer to each question for your course (75 word min.).
- ◆ Post your response to any previous answer given to each question (75 word min.).
- ◆ Submit a document to your proctor that contains the original questions, your postings, and the postings to which you responded.



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**NOTE:** Please read the “Assignment Instructions” in the Forum for details.

Objective: to develop critical thinking skills through personal interaction with the content of the course and the responses of others within a diverse community of learners.

## H. Spiritual Formation Project:

**RATIONALE:** Ministry preparation and the Christian life require more than academic exercises. Learners also need personal, spiritual formation, which involves theological reflection and critical thinking on their current practices and assumptions. This process occurs as learners engage in self-reflection and interaction in a community of learning. **With this in mind,** ITS includes in all courses a capstone project addressing these issues and facilitating interaction beyond the formal learning environment (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 4.1.1; 10.3.3.3).

Write a **five-to-six page reflective essay** and **interview a mentor**, discussing the spiritual impact of this course on your life. *Identify your mentor early in the course*, and submit the essay to your grader when you take the final exam. This last project should not be a summary of course content, but an application of course principles. Complete the following:

1. **Personal Reflection and Evaluation: *Reflect on the course*** – To integrate your academic studies with your walk of faith, reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what you learned.
  - a. Follow these steps in your reflection:
    - Step 1: What **one** theme, principle, or concept in the course is the most significant to you personally? Why is it significant?
    - Step 2: What portion(s) of the course brought this theme/principle/concept to light?
    - Step 3: Think about your past. Why is it vital now for you to deal with and apply this theme/principle/concept?
    - Step 4: How should this affect your thoughts and actions, and what *specific steps* should you take to *concretely* apply what you have learned?
  - b. Write your answers to the above questions in full paragraph form. (Recommended length for this reflection: **approximately three pages**)
  - c. Give a copy of this reflection to your mentor (see #2).



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2. **Community Reflection and Interaction: *Interview a mentor*** – Since the Holy Spirit uses the input of others to guide and form His people, interview a mentor according to the following guidelines:

- a. Who should you interview? (1-3 are required; 4-6 are recommended)
  1. Someone with whom you have a reasonably close relationship.
  2. Someone who is a mature Christian ministry leader (i.e. a pastor).
  3. Someone who is **not** your grader or a family member.
  4. Someone who values the spiritual formation process.
  5. Someone who is familiar with and values the subject of the course.
  6. Someone who has experience using the content of the course in ministry.

NOTE: ***Identify your mentor early in the course***, and give him/her the page entitled “Guidelines for Mentors.”

- b. Focus of the interview – Your interview should focus on the issues and questions you raise in your essay. For example:
  - ◆ What feedback can your mentor give in response to your essay?
  - ◆ In light of the course content, are the conclusions you made appropriate? Why or why not?
  - ◆ What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications might he/she suggest from his/her own life and ministry?

NOTE: Conduct this interview either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do **not** use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc). Suggested length: 45 minutes.

3. **Synthesis and Application: *Draw your final conclusions*** – Having reflected on the course and the discussion with your mentor, synthesize what you have learned in these three sections:

- a. Section 1: Begin your essay with the personal reflection from #1 above. This should be exactly what you gave your mentor for the interview.
- b. Section 2: Comment on your interview, explaining what you discussed and the insights you gained from your mentor. Include the following:
  - ◆ What were the mentor’s comments regarding your essay?
  - ◆ What advice did he/she give?
  - ◆ How did his/her comments expand or correct your application of the course?



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- ◆ Include the person's name, occupation, and the length of the interview.
- c. Section 3: Conclude with a synthesis of what you have learned. Answer the following:
  - ◆ If your mentor corrected any thoughts in your "Personal Reflection and Evaluation", how do you feel about these corrections? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
  - ◆ Synthesizing your thoughts from section one and your mentor's insight in section two, what final conclusions have you reached? How is this different from section one?
  - ◆ In light of the interview and further reflection, what additional, *specific* changes need to occur in your life and what *concrete* steps will you take to implement them?

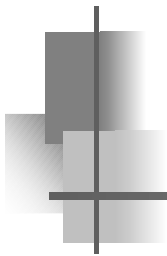
**NOTE TO STUDENTS:** Your effort in this assignment will determine its benefit. If by the end of this course you have not yet reflected critically on your life in light of what you have studied, allow this assignment to guide you in that process. The instructor for this course will not score your essay based on the amount of spiritual fruit you describe; so do not exaggerate (or trivialize) what you have learned. **The primary grading criteria is that you have thoughtfully considered the principles of the course and realistically sought to apply them to your life.** If you have done this and met the minimal requirements (as noted above), you will earn the full points for this assignment.

Note on confidentiality: Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you in some very personal areas of your life. Because of this, your grader will keep your essay entirely confidential and either return or discard it.

Objective: to stimulate reflection and interaction on course principles in order to enhance personal spiritual formation.

Revised 10/05

- I. Examinations: The student will take a one-hour Mid-Term examination and a two-hour Final examination.



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## Course Grading

The grade for the course shall be determined by the following:

Study Questions .....	15%
Mid-Term Examination .....	15%
Research Paper .....	25%
ITS Online Interactivity Forum .....	5%
Spiritual Formation Project .....	10%
Final Examination .....	30%

**Note to the Supervisor or Instructor:** Any professor who is supervising this course on *The Theology of Martin Luther* should be familiar with the material covered in the lectures and the programmed syllabus in order to grade the examinations.



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## Notes Regarding This Downloaded Syllabus

This downloadable syllabus is not exhaustive. It is designed to provide learners with a picture of the course, not a full outline of the course. Grader Guidelines, Appendixes, Bibliographies, Lecture Outlines, and Review Questions have been removed. The complete course syllabus is included with purchase of the course in either a digital or hard-copy format.

Likewise, individuals taking the class for credit are responsible for the syllabus requirements of the specific institution through which the course is offered. Each individual institution has reserved the right to alter or change the syllabus as deemed necessary.