

# National Intercessory Prayer

## *Rising Above the Daily Grind*



NIP-10



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### **RISING ABOVE YOURSELF**

I have been a pastor for some 56 years and experience has taught me that few Christians have the capacity to think beyond their own personal life. This does not mean that they are self-centered or evil; it's just that they have not been inspired to think big, to make an impact in the world, or to enlarge the Kingdom of God.

All of us face the same daily grind. It doesn't matter whether you are a working father or a mother taking care of children and household chores. Single people should have more time to think beyond the daily grind, but there are so many extracurricular activities calling for our attention like television, video games, sports, etc. It is very easy to be carried away with the daily grind and forget what is most important.

### **MARTIN LUTHER**

Martin Luther was born in Germany in 1483. He was the eldest of nine siblings. His father, Hans, leased copper mines and smelters, which was a demanding job. His mother, Margarethe, was a homemaker. Both parents were staunch Roman Catholics. Hans wanted Martin to become a lawyer, and at the age of 14, sent him to boarding school. The subjects of study were grammar,

rhetoric (speaking and writing) and logic. There are no records about how the teenage boy felt about life and himself during these years, but his description of the school afterwards likened it to purgatory and hell.

Martin enrolled at the University of Erfurt in 1501 at the age of 17 and four years later he graduated with a master's degree. He described the university as a beerhouse and brothel. To fulfil his father's wishes, he enrolled in law school but dropped out after one year after being drawn to theology and philosophy. He was returning to the university riding a horse when a lightning bolt struck close to him. It scared him badly and he cried out to Saint Anna for help. This event moved him emotionally and he made a decision to become a monk. He entered St. Augustine's Monastery on July 17, 1505 and felt even more lost.

*I lost touch with Christ the Savior and Comforter, and made of him the jailer and hangman of my poor soul.”<sup>1</sup>*

The head of the monastery saw that Martin was consumed with soul searching and ordered him to pursue an academic career. He was ordained as a

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin\\_Luther](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther)

priest in 1507, and the next year he received a bachelor's degree in Biblical studies. He graduated with doctorate of theology in 1512. Martin was unhappy and devoted himself to fasting, prayer, constant confessions, and pilgrimages to various holy sites in Germany. He was promoted to be the provincial vicar (deputy) of Saxony and Thuringia in 1515 to oversee eleven monasteries.

### **BEING BORN AGAIN**

Martin never recorded the day he was born again. He struggled with salvation from 1515 to 1518, not being satisfied with the official Roman Catholic teaching that good works lead to salvation. He was doing a study of Paul's letter to the Romans when the Holy Spirit opened his eyes to comprehend that salvation comes by faith in Jesus Christ. Justification is entirely the work of God and he understood that no human could ever become righteous. Every sinner who comes to Christ and repents is born again and receives the righteousness of Christ.

Martin later wrote that he experienced an illumination that he described as conversion. He stated that it was as if the very gates of heaven had been opened. This conversion was clearly a supernatural event since no Roman Catholic since 325 A.D. had received any teaching on salvation through faith. In some other writings about Martin, it is stated that he was also baptized in the Holy Spirit.

### **RISING ABOVE THE DAILY GRIND**

In examining Luther's life, it is obvious that he was chosen before the foundation of the world to start the Reformation that broke the monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church. Luther rose above the daily grind and began to think about the experience, what it had meant to him, and that it was something he should share with the world.

1. Keep in mind that Martin Luther was raised as a staunch Roman Catholic; he was an

overseer of eleven monasteries, and earned a doctorate degree in this tainted theology.

2. Thinking outside the box, he felt that his life as a monk and supervisor was inferior to the experience of being born again. Sharing the good news of salvation became more important to him than caring about where he was going to eat and sleep.
3. The Godhead had been waiting for an educated Roman Catholic with a great intellect to become an uncompromising defender of the faith.

### **THE REFORMATION**

The Roman Catholic Church pushed back in 1516 when Dominican monk Johann Tetzel was sent to Germany by Pope Leo X, also known as Leo Decimus. The pope wanted to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and needed funds for the project. He and his council came up with the brilliant idea of having people pay for their sins to be forgiven. This practice became known as "selling indulgences" and Tetzel's underlings fanned out all over Germany offering forgiveness in exchange for money. This racket became a huge success since the German people trusted implicitly in Romanism and its holy representative (pope) for Jesus on the earth.

This upset Luther greatly and in 1517 he wrote a letter to his bishop protesting the practice of indulgences. People were going to hell while raising money for the pope's building program. Luther posted a letter known as the 95 theses (points) on the church door of All Saints' Church in Wittenberg. Friends of Luther translated the 95 theses from Latin into German in 1518 and the text spread quickly throughout Germany. A year later it had been translated into French, English and Italian.

### **THE DEVIL RESPONDS**

Dominican theologian Sylvester Mazzolini drew up a heresy document against Luther and sent it

to Rome. Pope Leo summoned the German monk to stand trial in Rome. Germany consisted of different states and Luther lived in Saxony. Each state was ruled by a prince that also held the title of Elector. When a pope died, the electors from the different states and nations would travel to Rome and elect a new pope. When Frederick III of Saxony discovered Luther had been summoned to Rome, he used his office to persuade to have Luther questioned in Augsburg, Germany.

The hearings lasted for three days and the pope was represented by Cardinal Cajetan. Luther asserted the pope had no right to issue indulgencies. The pope was abusing the Bible and that he certainly was not above the Scriptures. The pope had issued an arrest warrant for Luther prior to the hearing if he did not recant but Cajetan refused to arrest him. On the third day of the hearing, Luther escaped in the night with the help of a friend.

On June 15, 1520 Pope Leo issued a papal bull (public decree) in which he warned Luther that he risked excommunication if he did not recant 41 sentences from his writings, including the 95 Theses. Luther was given 60 days to respond. When Luther got a copy of the papal bull, he burned it in a public setting. On January 3, 1521 Luther was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church.

## **THE DIET OF WORMS**

Diet is the name of the imperial assembly of the Holy Roman Empire and it was conducted in the city of Worms, located along the river Rhine. Emperor Charles V presided over the hearing, as Pope Leo had requested that the secular authorities in Germany dealt with Luther. Prince Frederick III had obtained a safe conduct for Luther, so he could come and then leave on his own accord.

Prosecutor Johann Eck had spread out on a table the books and pamphlets that Luther had written and asked Luther if these were his writings. Eck then asked Luther if he stood by what he had written. Luther said that these were his writings, but he wanted time to respond to the last question. The meeting was adjourned and Luther used that evening to pray and he also consulted with his friends. The next day he came back to the hearing and gave the following answer:

*“Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted, and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen.”<sup>2</sup>*

Five days later on May 25, 1521, Emperor Charles V declared Martin Luther to be an outlaw. Anyone was permitted to kill him with no legal consequence. All of Luther’s literature was banned and anyone sheltering him would be charged as a criminal.

## **LIVING IN EXILE**

Prince Frederick III was determined to protect Luther, and on his way from Worms to Wittenberg, masked horsemen acting like highway robbers, removed Luther from his carriage and took him through the forest to the Wartburg Castle at the city of Eisenach in the German state of Thuringia. Frederick III, living in Saxony, used

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<sup>2</sup> ibid

his secret agents to “kidnap” Luther and the news was spread that highway robbers had taken Luther and no one knew his location. He was given nice quarters in the castle and served three meals per day. Luther referred to his stay at the castle as his Patmos, a reference to where the apostle John was imprisoned.

He was to stay at this castle until 1522 and immediately set about translating the New Testament into German. There was no German version of the Bible at this time and the common person had no inkling as to what the Bible said. He wrote scathing messages to German Roman Catholic leaders and “The Judgment of Martin Luther on Monastic Vows” in which he assured monks and nuns that they could break their vows without sinning. He justified this course of action by stating the unbiblical vows assured monks and nuns of salvation.

### **RETURN TO WITTENBERG**

Martin Luther left Wartburg Castle in March of 1522 and secretly returned to Wittenberg to his old church. He wrote Frederick III that he was compelled to return in order to quell the uprising that had taken advantage of his rebellion against Romanism. For eight days he preached to people that packed the church building and spoke on basic Christian values like love, patience, charity, and freedom. He advocated letting the Word of God change the hearts of people instead of violence. The public officials forgot that the pope wanted Luther arrested and worked with him to calm the situation.

### **THE START OF THE REFORMATION**

With the backing of the German authorities, the reformation movement began to grow and spread outside Germany. The Scandinavian countries rejected Roman Catholicism and became Protestant. The reformation also moved to France and led to huge Huguenot churches.

Luther started a movement to rescue women who had become nuns, and in 1523, he helped twelve nuns escape in large barrels. One of the nuns was 26-year-old Katharina von Bora. They were married in 1525 when Luther was 41 years old. One of the political rulers in Saxony gave them a former monastery as a home and they had six children together.

By 1526 Luther started to organize the churches that had left Roman Catholicism. He wanted membership in the churches to be limited to those who had been born again. To a degree, he kept the same liturgy he learned as a monk, including the sprinkling of babies. Luther recognized that statues of so-called saints were removed and had no place in the life of Christians.

Luther published his German translation of the New Testament in 1522, and working with other translators, the Old Testament translation was finished in 1534. Luther was also a prolific hymn writer; the most well-known song is “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”

Martin Luther suffered ill health from 1531 until his death in 1546 at the age of 62. Katharina died in 1552 at the age of 53.

## **LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY!**

“AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT, AS HE WAS PRAYING IN A CERTAIN PLACE, WHEN HE CEASED, ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES SAID UNTO HIM, LORD, **TEACH US TO PRAY**, AS JOHN ALSO TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES.” LUKE 11:1

### **SUMMARY**

As a young boy, Martin Luther had no inkling that he was going to be used by God to break the monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church that had ruled Europe for some 1,100 years. Beginning as a teenager, and then as a monk, prayer was a huge

part of his life. This is what led to his salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Luther was dependent on God as he more or less singlehandedly spearheaded the reformation through his sermons, Bible translations, and hymns.

The reformation would have never taken place without a deep prayer life. Luther did not let the daily grind rule his life. He had a vision which he bathed in prayer and success came through faith in God.

**Are you bogged down by the cares of life or have you received a vision from Jesus to rise above the daily grind?**

## **PRAYER TARGET**

Let's pray that Joe Biden will repent and turn from his wickedness as the leader of the Biden crime family. If he refuses to change and won't be a righteous president, let God remove him from the earth.

Kamala Harris is a licentious woman who has used her sexuality to rise to a position of power. If she won't repent and become a virtuous woman of God, let her be removed from the earth.

Jeffrey Zients is the de facto president while serving as the White House chief of staff. He puts forth policies which benefit his spiritual master, Lucifer, and not the American people. If he won't repent and become a man that serves the Lord, let God remove him from the earth.

The wicked homosexual and transgender lifestyles are to be soundly condemned; as is their agenda of targeting children with the intention of perverting their young minds. Pray that God will open their eyes to the moral perversion they have embraced and that they will repent. Anyone who stubbornly resists the agenda of righteousness and delights in debauchery will have their life shortened and be removed from the earth.