



Martin Luther (1483 - 1546, 63 years)

It would be a good thing if young people were wise and old people were strong, but God has arranged things better. MARTIN LUTHER

I never work better than when I am inspired by anger; for when I am angry, I can write, pray, and preach well, for then my whole temperament is quickened, my understanding sharpened, and all mundane vexations and temptations depart. Martin Luther (1483-1546), Table-Talk, 319

I have a better Caretaker than you and all the angels. He it is who lies in a manger ... but at the same time sits at the right hand of God, the almighty Father. Therefore be at rest. -- Martin Luther , letter to his wife Kate: 1546, eleven days before his death.

Pray, and let God worry. -- Martin Luther

Unless I am convicted by scripture and plain reason -- I do not accept the authority of the popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other -- my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen . Martin Luther, at the Imperial Diet at Worms, 18 April 1521.

The anabaptists pretend that children, not as yet having reason, ought not to receive baptism. I answer: That reason in no way contributes to faith. Nay, in that children are destitute of reason, they are all the more fit and proper recipients of baptism. For reason is the greatest enemy that faith has: it never comes to the aid of spiritual things, but - more frequently than not - struggles against the Divine Word, treating with contempt all that emanates from God. If God can communicate the Holy Ghost to grown persons, he can, a fortiori, communicate it to young children. Faith comes of the Word of God, when this is heard; little children hear that Word when they receive baptism, and therewith they receive also faith. Martin Luther (1483-1546), Table Talk CCCLIII [1569] .

Some one sent to know whether it was permissible to use warm water in baptism? The Doctor replied: "Tell the blockhead that water, warm or cold, is water. Martin Luther (1483-1546), Table Talk CCCLIV[1569].

There is not a word in the Bible which is extra cruem, which can be understood without reference to the cross.

MARTIN LUTHER

The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid. Martin Luther

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. --Martin Luther

Anything that one imagines of God apart from Christ is only useless thinking and vain idolatry. --Martin Luther

It is the duty of every Christian to be Christ to his neighbour. MARTIN LUTHER

Ah, we poor people, to be so cold and sluggish in the face of the great joy that has clearly been prepared for us! This great benefaction exceeds by far all the other works of creation; and yet our faith in it is found to be so weak, although it is preached and sung to us by angels, who are heavenly theologians and who were so glad for our sake! Their song is very, very beautiful and describes the entire Christian religion. For giving glory to God in the highest heaven is the supreme worship. This they wish and bring to us in the Christ ..

Martin Luther quoted in E. M. Plass, WHAT LUTHER SAYS, p.154

Let him who wants a true church cling to the Word by which everything is upheld. --Martin Luther

Next to faith this is the highest art -- to be content with the calling in which God has placed you. I have not learned it yet. -- Martin Luther

Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection not in words alone, but in every leaf in springtime. --Martin Luther

Dear Kate, we arrived in Halle today at eight, but did not continue on to Eisleben because a big Anabaptist met us with waves and hunks of ice. She flooded the land and threatened to rebaptize us ... We take refreshment and comfort in good Torgau beer and Rhenish wine, waiting to see whether the Saale (river) will come down ... The devil resents us, and he is in the water - so better safe than sorry. Martin Luther to his wife:, in Theology of the Reformers, Timothy George.

I am afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, and engraving them on the hearts of youth. I would advise no one to send his child where the Holy Scriptures are not supreme. Every institution in which men and women are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must be corrupt.--Martin Luther

The whole being of any Christian is Faith and Love... Faith brings the man to God, love brings him to men .

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

If any man doth ascribe aught of salvation, even the very least, to the free-will of man, he knoweth nothing of grace, and he hath not learnt Jesus Christ aright. Martin Luther

It is the most ungodly and dangerous business to abandon the certain and revealed will of God in order to search into the hidden mysteries of God. MARTIN LUTHER

Grace is given to heal the spiritually sick, not to decorate spiritual heroes. Martin Luther

If any man ascribes anything of salvation, even the very least thing, to the free will of man, he knows nothing of grace, and he has not learned Jesus Christ rightly. Martin Luther

Do not suppose that abuses are eliminated by destroying the object which is abused. Men can go wrong with wine and women. Shall we prohibit and abolish women? The sun, moon, and stars have been worshipped. Shall we pluck them out of the sky. Luther

Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness, I am your sin. You have taken upon yourself what is mine and given me what is yours. You have become what you were not so that I might become what I was not.
MARTIN LUTHER

In Romans 7, St. Paul says, "The law is spiritual." What does that mean? If the law were physical, then it could be satisfied by works, but since it is spiritual, no one can satisfy it unless everything he does springs from the depths of the heart. But no one can give such a heart except the Spirit of God, who makes the person be like the law, so that he actually conceives a heartfelt longing for the law and henceforward does everything, not through fear or coercion, but from a free heart.-- Martin Luther (1483-1546), "Preface to the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans"

There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage. -- Martin Luther

The state of matrimony is the chief in the world after religion; but people shun it because of its inconveniences, like one who, running out of the rain, falls into the river. Martin Luther, Table Talk

A marriage without children is the world without the sun. Augustine quoted in Martin Luther, Table Talk

Music makes people kinder, gentler, more staid and reasonable. The devil flees before the sound of music almost as much as before the word of God.
Martin Luther

Nothing on earth is so well-suited to make the sad merry, the merry sad, to give courage to the despairing, to make the proud humble, to lessen envy and hate, as music. Martin Luther

Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. MARTIN LUTHER

It is the most ungodly and dangerous business to abandon the certain and revealed will of God in order to search in to the hidden mysteries of God. -- Martin Luther

Original sin is in us, like the beard. We are shaved today and look clean, and have a smooth chin; tomorrow our beard has grown again, nor does it cease growing while we remain on earth. --MARTIN LUTHER

Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him. In Hebrew, "Be silent in God, and let Him mould thee." Keep still, and He will mould thee to the right shape.
Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Whenever I happen to be prevented by the press of duties from observing my hour of prayer, the entire day is bad for me. MARTIN LUTHER

All who call on God in true faith, earnestly from the heart, will certainly be heard, and will receive what they have asked and desired, although not in the hour or in the measure, or the very thing which they ask; yet they will obtain something greater and more glorious than they had dared to ask. Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Grant that I may not pray alone with the mouth; help me that I may pray from the depths of my heart.
Martin Luther

God has placed two ways before us in His Word: salvation by faith, damnation by unbelief (Mark 16:16). He does not mention purgatory at all. Nor is purgatory to be admitted, for it obscures the benefits and grace of Christ.

Martin Luther Table Talk

Dr. Henning asked: "Is reason to hold no authority at all with Christians, since it is to be set aside in matters of faith?" The Doctor replied: Before faith and the knowledge of God, reason is mere darkness; but in the hands of those who believe, 'tis an excellent instrument. All faculties and gifts are pernicious, exercised by the impious; but most salutary when possessed by godly persons." Martin Luther (1483-1546), Table Talk, LXXVI. [1569]

Reason is the greatest enemy that faith has; it never comes to the aid of spiritual things, but--more frequently than not--struggles against the divine Word, treating with contempt all that emanates from God. Martin Luther (1483-1546), Table Talk [1569]

When God works in us, the will, being changed and sweetly breathed upon by the Spirit of God, desire and acts, not from compulsion, but responsively.

MARTIN LUTHER

When God wants to speak and deal with us, he does not avail himself of an angel but of parents, or the pastor, or of our neighbour. Martin Luther

God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees, and flowers, and clouds, and stars. Martin Luther

It is just like someone who is sick, and who believes the doctor who promises his full recovery. In the meantime, he obeys the doctor's orders in the hope of the promised recovery, and abstains from those things which he was told to lay off, so that he may in no way hinder the promised return to health...Now is this sick man well? He is sick in reality - but he is well on account of a sure promise of the doctor, whom he trusts, and who reckons him as already being cured...So he is at one and the same time both a sinner and righteous. He is a sinner in reality, but righteous by the sure imputation and promise of God that he will continue to deliver him from sin until he has completely cured him. So he is entirely healthy in hope, but a sinner in reality. MARTIN LUTHER, commenting on Romans

This life therefore is not righteousness but growth in righteousness; not health but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not what we shall be but we are growing toward it; the process is not yet finished but it is going on; this is not the end but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified. -- MARTIN LUTHER

I am much afraid that schools will prove to be the great gates of Hell unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them in the hearts of youth. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not increasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt. Martin Luther

I more fear what is within me than what comes from without. --MARTIN LUTHER

The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of Scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn. Martin Luther

In the worst temptations nothing can help us but faith that God's Son has put on flesh, is bone, sits at the right hand of the Father, and prays for us. There is no mightier comfort.--Martin Luther

In this sort of temptation and struggle, contempt is the best and easiest method of winning over the devil. Laugh your adversary to scorn and ask who it is with whom you are talking. But by all means flee solitude, for the devil watches and lies in wait for you most of all when you are alone. This devil is conquered by mocking and despising him, not by resisting and arguing with him. Therefore, Jerome, joke and play games with your wife and others. In this way you will drive out your diabolical thoughts and take courage

Be of good courage, therefore, and cast these dreadful thoughts out of your mind. Whenever the devil pesters you with these thoughts, at once seek out the company of men, drink more, joke and jest, or engage in some other form of merriment. Sometimes it is necessary to drink a little more, play, jest, or even commit some infraction in defiance and contempt of the devil in order not to give him an opportunity to make us scrupulous about trifles. We shall be overcome if we worry too much about falling into some sin.

Accordingly if the devil should say, "Do not drink," you should reply to him, "On this very account, because you forbid it, I shall drink, and what is more, I shall drink a generous amount." Thus one must always do the opposite of that which Satan prohibits. What do you think is my reason for drinking wine undiluted, talking freely, and eating more often, if it is not to torment and vex the devil who made up his mind to torment and vex me. --Luther

If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point. --Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Peace if possible, truth at all costs. Martin Luther

The will is a beast of burden.
If God mounts it, it wishes and goes as God wills;
if Satan mounts it, it wishes and goes as Satan wills;
Nor can it choose its rider...
The riders contend for its possession.
Martin Luther (1483-1546)

The wisdom of the Greeks, when compared to that of the Jews, is absolutely bestial; for apart from God there can be no wisdom, not any understanding and insight. Martin Luther

No good ever came out of female domination. God created Adam master and lord of all living creatures, but Eve spoiled all. --Martin Luther, "Table Talk"(1532)

Who loves not woman, wine and song
Remains a fool his whole life long.
Martin Luther

If you are not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don't want to go there. --Martin Luther (1483-1546)

It is pleasing to God whenever thou rejoicest or laughest from the bottom of thy heart. --Martin Luther (1483-1546)

"It's true that a good diet is the best medicine when it suits the individual, but to live medically is to live wretchedly." Then he related some examples of deceased persons who starved themselves to death on the advice of their physicians. "I eat what I like and will die when God wills it."

Luther's Tabletalk from No.3801

He had a rose in his hand and marveled at it. "A glorious work of art by God," he said. "If a man had the capacity to make just one rose he would be given an empire! But the countless gifts of God are esteemed as nothing because they're always present. We see that God gives children to all men, the fruit of their bodies resembling the parents. A peasant is said to have three and four sons who look so much like him that they're easily mistaken for one another. All of these gifts are despised because they're always present. Luther's Tabletalk from No.4593

"When Luther's puppy [n. 116, Luther's dog Tölpel is mentioned again and again in the Table Talk.] happened to be at the table, looked for a morsel from his master, and watched with open mouth and motionless eyes, he [Martin Luther] said, "Oh, if I could only pray the way this dog watches the meat! All his thoughts are concentrated on the piece of meat. Otherwise he has no thought, wish, or hope. Luther's Works, Volume 54, Table Talk (Philadelphia: 1967), pp. 37, 38. May 18, 1532

For some years now I have read through the Bible twice every year. If you picture the Bible to be a mighty tree and every word a little branch, I have shaken every one of these branches because I wanted to know what it was and what it meant. --Luther's Tabletalk No.1877

No good work is undertaken or done with wise reflection. It must all happen in a half-sleep. This is how I was forced to take up the office of teaching. If I had known what I know now, ten horses wouldn't have driven me to it. Moses and Jeremiah also complained that they were deceived. Nor would any man take a wife if he first gave real thought [to what might happen in marriage and the household]. Here Philip said that he had diligently observed that in history great deeds had never been done by old men. "This was so," said Luther, "when Alexander and Augustus were young; afterward men become too wise. They didn't do great things by deliberate choice but by a sort of impulse. If you young fellows were wise, the devil couldn't do anything to you, but since you aren't wise, you need us who are old. Our Lord God doesn't do great things except by violence, as they say." -- Luther's Tabletalk No. 406

Faith and the Spirit go together, but the Spirit is not always revealed. So Cornelius had the Holy Spirit before Peter came to him, although he didn't know it. Those in the book of Acts who said, "We don't know the Holy Spirit," also had the Spirit, just as the patriarchs in the Old Testament had Christ, although they didn't know him. They clung to the word, and through it they received the Holy Spirit. Later in the book of Acts he was manifested to them outwardly. It's to be understood thus: The Word comes first, and with the Word the Spirit breathes upon my heart so that I believe. Then I feel that I have become a different person and I recognize that the Holy Spirit is there. Accordingly these are two things: to have the Holy Spirit and to know that you have him. When somebody speaks in your ear, you hardly hear his words before you feel his breath, so strong is the breath. Even so, when the Word is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit accompanies it and breathes upon your heart. -- Luther's Tabletalk No. 402

One ought to love one's neighbour with a love as chaste as that of a bridegroom for his bride. In this case all faults are concealed and covered over and only the virtues are seen. -- Luther's Tabletalk No. 217

Serve the Lord with fear, and exult with trembling" (Psa 2:11). Let somebody bring this into harmony for me: exult and fear! My son Hans can do it in relation to me, but I can't do it in relation to God. When I'm writing or doing something else, my Hans sings a little tune for me. If he becomes too noisy and I rebuke him a little for it, he continues to sing but does it more privately and with a certain awe and uneasiness. This is what God wishes: that we be always cheerful, but with reverence.-- Luther's Tabletalk (from No. 148)

Ever since the fall of Adam the world knows neither God nor his creation. It lives altogether outside of the glory of God. Oh, what thoughts man might have had about the fact that God is in all creatures, and so might have reflected on the power and the wisdom of God in even the smallest flowers! Of a truth, who can imagine how God creates, out of the parched soil, such a variety of flowers, such pretty colours, such sweet vernal grass, beyond anything that a painter or apothecary could make! Yet God can bring out of the ground such colours as green, yellow, red, blue, brown. Adam and those around him would have been elevated by all this to the praise of God, and they would have made use of all created things with thanksgiving. Now we enjoy all this to overflowing, yet without understanding, like cattle or other beasts trampling the most beautiful blossoms and lilies underfoot. -- Luther's Tabletalk from No.4201

That the Creator himself comes to us and becomes our ransom - this is the reason for our rejoicing.-- Martin Luther 25 March 1533 "Table Talks"

Let us act with humility, cast ourselves at one another's feet, join hands with each other, and help one another. For here we battle not against pope or emperor, but against the devil, and do you imagine that he is asleep?--Martin Luther

Junker Henry means to be God and do as he pleases.-Martin Luther on Henry VIII, as the King marries Catherine Parr on 12 July 1543.

All who call on God in true faith, earnestly from the heart, will certainly be heard, and will receive what they have asked and desired, although not in the hour or in the measure, or the very thing which they ask; yet they will obtain something greater and more glorious than they had dared to ask.... Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Pray, and let God worry. -Martin Luther [b. 11/10/1483], in the last letter written to his wife Katy, before his death on 2/18/1546]

If God promises something, then faith must fight a long and bitter fight, for reason or the flesh judges that God's promises are impossible. Therefore faith must battle against reason and its doubts..... Faith is something that is busy, powerful and creative, though properly speaking, it is essentially an enduring than a doing. It changes the mind and heart. While reason holds to what is present, faith apprehends the things that are not seen. Contrary to reason, faith regards the invisible things as already materialized. This explains why faith, unlike hearing is not found in many, for only few believe, while the great majority cling to the things that are present and can be felt and handled rather than to the Word. ~ Martin Luther, The Promises

If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake -- if anyone set up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall remove this encroachment on Christian liberty.- Luther

Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us. --Martin Luther (1483-1546)

A good preacher should have these qualities and virtues: first, to teach systematically; second, he should have a ready wit; third, he should be eloquent; fourth, he should have a good voice; fifth, a good memory; sixth, he should know when to make an end; seventh, he should be sure of his doctrine; eighth, he should venture and engage body and blood, wealth and honour, in the world; ninth, he should suffer himself to be mocked and jeered of everyone.... Martin Luther (1483-1546), Table-Talk