



# YOUNG BULWARK



## MARTIN LUTHER

Martin Luther was born in Germany more than 500 years ago. It was a time when the Roman Catholic Church was very powerful. The leaders of that Church showed by their lives that their hearts had not been changed. The leaders seemed to be most interested in getting more power and money.

Ordinary people were not allowed to read the Bible. Church services were in Latin, a language they couldn't understand. The people were not told that salvation is through trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. They were told that they could get to heaven by doing good works and what the Church told them. This also meant they had to give lots of money to the Church so that the leaders could be rich.

When Martin Luther was a young man he had an experience that would change his life. While traveling through a terrible thunderstorm, a lightning bolt narrowly missed him. Martin cried out very afraid, he promised that if he lived he would become a monk. And he had to keep that promise. Monks gave up everything they had so they could pray all the time in a monastery. They thought that if they lived a life of hardship it would make them more holy.

Martin was afraid of God punishing his sin in hell. He was told that if he did enough good works, confessed his sin and punished himself through penance, he would have salvation. But Martin never felt that he had confessed all of his sin and no matter what he did it never seemed to be good enough. He almost killed himself by treating his body very harshly indeed.

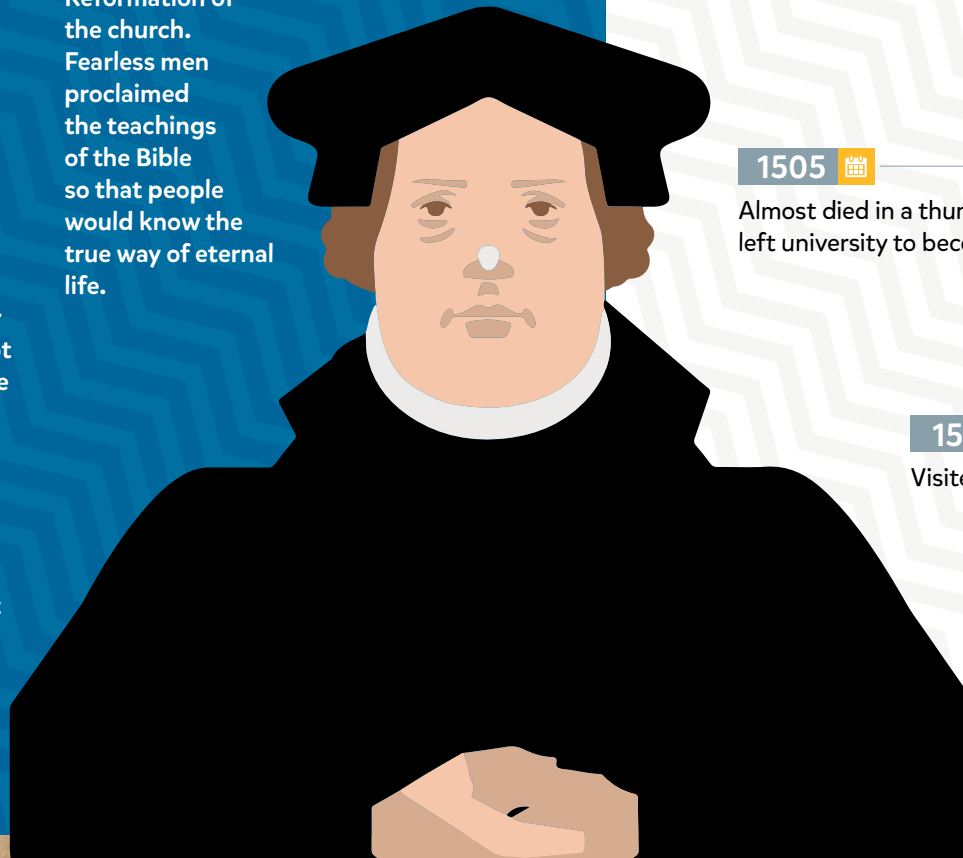
When he visited Rome, he was shocked to find that what he thought must be the holiest place on earth was full of terrible sin. He began to study more of the Bible and to give lectures on it. As he studied the Scriptures he came to see that salvation couldn't be earned or bought. He saw how greedy and corrupt the Roman Catholic Church had become and how far away from the teaching of the Bible it had gone.

When the Church leaders wanted more money they decided to sell as many indulgences as possible. An indulgence came from the Pope, it was a document that said that the person who bought it could have their sins forgiven. Martin Luther knew this was wrong and he must speak against it. This was when he went to the

Castle Church in Wittenberg and nailed a document to the door. The document gave 95 reasons why selling indulgences was against the Bible. It was called the 95 Theses. The date was 31 October 1517. 500 years ago this year!

Everyone was amazed that one man would stand up to the Church leaders and especially the Pope to tell them that they were wrong. Luther's document was copied and read all over Germany. The Roman Catholic leaders were angry that they were being defied and because they would lose their money if people believed Luther. This was the beginning of what we call the Reformation.

All across Europe, God was going to stir up many to seek the Reformation of the church. Fearless men proclaimed the teachings of the Bible so that people would know the true way of eternal life.



# KEY DATES



1483

Born in Eisleben, Germany



1490

Began school at age 7



1497

Went to school in Magdeburg



1498

Went to another school in Eisenach



1501

Began law studies at the University of Erfurt



1505

Almost died in a thunderstorm; left university to become a monk



1508

Went to Wittenberg to teach. While there, began to question Church's practice of selling indulgences



1510

Visited Rome



1516

Johann Tetzel came to Germany, preaching Pope Leo X's indulgence



1517

Posted 95 Theses to protest abuses within the Church

# WORD SEARCH



ROME  
MONK  
LUTHER  
WITTENBERG  
THESES  
BIBLE

GRACE  
GERMANY  
LATIN  
FAITH  
LECTURES  
POPE

A T E T A E E E E M O R B E  
W L P F F S G P T R R U A E  
N I A G H A B K S H E I G G  
B C T S E R I E S N S L M R  
B I T T T H S T N L U M A S  
S R B S E E E T H T A E M E  
S C A L H N K R H E M I T R  
T P O T E N B E H B T T M U  
S Y G R O R R E P L K I K T  
I M A M T T R P R R A U P C  
L N E L T E E P O G E T U E  
U E C A R G R E E P A N I L  
E C E A T G G L R A E I S N  
T I E T B R L Y N A M R E G

