



THE REFORMATION: After Darkness Light

Lesson 4: The German Reformation after Worms

Introduction

Luther kidnapped and taken to Walberg (April 1521)

- During his captivity Luther translated the Bible into German which was an astounding feat! This Bible would be the English equivalent to the King James Bible.

Luther's internal struggles

- Luther would say, "My temptation is this, that I think I don't have a gracious God."
- The only way Luther had victory over his "demons" was to place his hope outside of himself, and onto the promises of God found in His Word

Roman Catholic doctrine of justification

- Sacrament of Baptism
 - The sacrament of baptism places the penitent into a state of grace conditionally
 - This state of grace was undermined by both venial and mortal sin
- Sacrament of penance
 - The sacrament of penance was a means to bring the penitent back to the state of grace they received from their initial baptism

Current Catechism of the Catholic Church

The sacrament of penance and reconciliation

1446 Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance for all sinful members of his Church: above all for those who, since Baptism, have fallen into grave sin, and have thus lost their baptismal grace and wounded ecclesial communion. It is to them that the sacrament of Penance offers a new possibility to convert and to recover the grace of justification. The Fathers of the Church present this sacrament as “the second plank [of salvation] after the shipwreck which is the loss of grace.”

1447 Over the centuries the concrete form in which the Church has exercised this power received from the Lord has varied considerably. During the first centuries the reconciliation of Christians who had committed particularly grave sins after their Baptism (for example, idolatry, murder, or adultery) was tied to a very rigorous discipline, according to which penitents had to do public penance for their sins, often for years, before receiving reconciliation. To this "order of penitents" (which concerned only certain grave sins), one was only rarely admitted and in certain regions only once in a lifetime. During the seventh century Irish missionaries, inspired by the Eastern monastic tradition, took to continental Europe the "private" practice of penance, which does not require public and prolonged completion of penitential works before reconciliation with the Church. From that time on, the sacrament has been performed in secret between penitent and priest. This new practice envisioned the possibility of repetition and so opened the way to a regular frequenting of this

sacrament. It allowed the forgiveness of grave sins and venial sins to be integrated into one sacramental celebration. In its main lines this is the form of penance that the Church has practiced down to our day.

1448 Beneath the changes in discipline and celebration that this sacrament has undergone over the centuries, the same *fundamental structure* is to be discerned. It comprises two equally essential elements: on the one hand, the acts of the man who undergoes conversion through the action of the Holy Spirit: namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction; on the other, God's action through the intervention of the Church. The Church, who through the bishop and his priests forgives sins in the name of Jesus Christ and determines the manner of satisfaction, also prays for the sinner and does penance with him. Thus the sinner is healed and re-established in ecclesial communion.

1459 Many sins wrong our neighbor. One must do what is possible in order to repair the harm (e.g., return stolen goods, restore the reputation of someone slandered, pay compensation for injuries). Simple justice requires as much. But sin also injures and weakens the sinner himself, as well as his relationships with God and neighbor. Absolution takes away sin, but it does not remedy all the disorders sin has caused.⁶² Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must "make satisfaction for" or "expiate" his sins. This satisfaction is also called "penance."

1460 The *penance* the confessor imposes must take into account the penitent's personal situation and must seek his spiritual good. It must correspond as far as possible with the gravity and nature of the sins committed. It can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all the patient acceptance of the cross we must bear. Such penances help configure us to Christ, who alone expiated our sins once for all. They allow us to become co-heirs with the risen Christ, "provided we suffer with him."⁶³

Reformation doctrine of justification

- Roman Catholic: Faith + Works = Justification
- Antinomianism: Faith = Justification – Works
- Reformed view: Faith = Justification + Works (Rom 3:19-26)

Luther returns to Wittenberg (March 1522)

- While Luther was held up in Walberg both Andreas Karlstadt and Philipp Melanchthon went about aggressively reforming the church
- Luther believed that by these two men's exuberance they were replacing the legalism of the Roman Catholic Church with a new legalism that required Christians to do and perform certain things for their faith to be legitimate
- Luther returned to Wittenberg and began the slow and steady process of reform by bringing people back to the authority of scripture
- Luther did this by:
 - Ensuring the church liturgy was Word-centered
 - Composing and introducing hymn singing
 - Catechizing church members toward personal growth and obedience

Luther marries and is married (June 1525)

- Luther begins marrying off all the nuns who had fled the convent, except one, whom he married to "spite the Pope"

Luther and the freedom of the will

- Semi-Pelagianism says the sinner has the ability to initiate belief in God
- Semi Pelagianism says God's grace is a response to man's initial effort
- Semi-Pelagianism denies predestination
- Semi-Pelagianism was condemned by the Council of Orange in 529