

A Study of Denominations

4. The Lutheran Churches

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on indulgences to the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Germany. In them he called for Christians to live a life of sincere repentance and of faith in Christ. He urged reliance on the merits of Christ rather than on the indulgences issued by the church. He protested the idea that the indulgences released sinners from punishment after death. As Luther searched Scripture in the controversy raised by posting these theses, God led him to understand that we are justified through faith alone.

To stop Luther the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church first bribed him with the offer of a Cardinal's hat. He was then summoned to an Imperial meeting called the Diet of Worms. Without refutation or discussion he was called upon to recant or suffer death. Luther's famous response was: *Unless I am convicted] of error by the testimony of Scripture or (since I put no trust in the unsupported authority of Pope or councils, since it is plain that they have often erred and often contradicted themselves) by manifest reasoning, I stand convicted by the Scriptures to which I have appealed, and my conscience is taken captive by God's word, I cannot and will not recant anything, for to act against our conscience is neither safe for us, nor open to us. On this I take my stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.*



1. What were the first Lutheran's called? _____ What did Luther think of the term "Lutheran"?

I ask that my name be left silent and people not call themselves Lutheran, but rather Christians. Who is Luther? The doctrine is not mine. I have been crucified for no one. St. Paul in 1 Cor. 3:4-5 would not suffer that the Christians should call themselves of Paul or of Peter, but Christian. How should I, a poor stinking bag of worms, become so that the children of Christ are named with my unholy name? It should not be dear friends. Let us extinguish all factious names and be called Christians whose doctrine we have. The pope's men rightly have a factious name because they are not satisfied with the doctrine and name of Christ and want to be with the pope, who is their master. I have not been and will not be a master. Along with the church I have the one general teaching of Christ who alone is our master. Matt. 23:8. (*Against Insurrection*, 1522).

2. What did Luther typically call his opponents? _____ How does the Roman Catholic Church officially refer to Lutherans?
3. What kind of unifying efforts were attempted?
- A. Small and Large Catechisms _____
 - B. Augsburg Confessions (Augustana) _____ Apology _____
 - C. Smalcald Articles & Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope _____
 - D. Formula of Concord _____
4. Did the Lutherans go far enough?

5. What was distinctive about the Lutheran community / culture?
 - A. Emphasis on _____
 - B. All _____ honored
 - C. The Lutheran _____ (Katie Luther)
 - D. Missions extended to the _____

6. What two movements weakened the Lutheran Church? _____ and _____

7. What serious mistake did the early Lutheran leaders make and what were the ramifications?
 - A. The Lutheran Church, like the Catholic Church continued to be a _____ church.
 - B. The Lutheran Church eventually became a _____ of the state.

8. What happened to the Lutherans who migrated to America?
 - A. The earliest wave of migration occurred in the _____ era.
 - B. Later, the _____ Union drove many _____ Lutherans to America.

9. Lutherans were mostly from Northern Europe: Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, & Germany. But the _____ continued to be the most significant organizing pillar.
 - A. Some looked at the Lutheran Confessions as statements that were _____ conditioned.
 - B. Others saw the Confessions as a _____ and reliable summary of Christian doctrine.

10. What are the largest Lutheran groups in America today?
 - A. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America formed in 1988 and is headquartered in Chicago. It has _____ members.
 - B. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod formed in 1847 and is headquartered in St. Louis. It has _____ members.
 - C. The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod formed in 1850 and is headquartered in Milwaukee. It has _____ members.

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 - A. Small and Large Catechisms 1526
 - B. Augsburg Confessions (Augustana) 1530 Apology 1531
 - C. Smalcald Articles & Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope 1537
 - D. Formula of Concord 1580
4. Did the Lutherans go far enough?

5. What was distinctive about the Lutheran community / culture?
 - A. Emphasis on Education
 - B. All Vocations honored
 - C. The Lutheran Parsonage/Home (Katie Luther)
 - D. Missions extended to the North

6. What two movements weakened the Lutheran Church? Rationalism and Pietism

7. What serious mistake did the early Lutheran leaders make and what were the ramifications?
 - A. The Lutheran Church, like the Catholic Church continued to be a State church.
 - B. The Lutheran Church eventually became a Pawn of the state.

8. What happened to the Lutherans who migrated to America?
 - A. The earliest wave of migration occurred in the Colonial era.
 - B. Later, the Prussian Union drove many Confessional Lutherans to America.

9. Lutherans were mostly from Northern Europe: Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, & Germany. But the Lutheran Confessions continued to be the most significant organizing pillar.
 - A. Some looked at the Lutheran Confessions as statements that were Historically conditioned.
 - B. Others saw the Confessions as a Correct and reliable summary of Christian doctrine.

10. What are the largest Lutheran groups in America today?
 - A. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America formed in 1988 and is headquartered in Chicago. It has 4.8 million members.
 - B. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod formed in 1847 and is headquartered in St. Louis. It has 2.5 million members.
 - C. The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod formed in 1850 and is headquartered in Milwaukee. It has 410,000 members.