

One day Staupitz said to him, Martin I want you to preach in the town church Sunday. Martin said, Preach, I can't preach. Well he said, I want you to preach. But Luther said, I couldn't preach, I'd die if I tried to preach." Staupitz said, "Diethen, but I want you to preach." So Luther went and preached and he was able to draw from his peasant background from his experience illustrations of different facts of Scripture. He was able to present the matter of salvation through faith in such a way that just electrified the congregation. So time after time after that Staupitz had him preach.

One day Staupitz said, I want you to go back to the U. of Erfurt and work for the doctor's degree in theology. So he went back and he took the course and got the degree of doctor of theology. Then he came back and became Professor of Scripture at the University and there he lectured on the books of the NT, and brought out the great truths of salvation by faith.

One day Luther began to notice how in the monastery, in the churches in general, salvation by faith in Christ was not being really presented. People were putting their faith in forms and ceremonies. They were putting their faith in observing observances instead of in Christ alone. Meanwhile in the monastery, Luther had come across a copy of the Latin Bible and had been studying it. He was now lecturing and in his lectures he presented salvation by faith as the great central important thing. Luther said, The reason people aren't stressing this is because they have been affected by Aristotle's philosophy. He now said, I'm going to write a book of thesis and point out the errors of Aristotle's philosophy and the importance of the Scriptural philosophy. He wrote these theses and in the spring of 1517 he sent copies of these theses to all the leading professors in Germany. He said, They will read these theses, study them, think of them, we will dispute over them, and a real reformation will be started. And the professors received these theses and looked over them and said, That's interesting; I'm going to look into that thoroughly when I get some time, and put it in the drawer and forgot it. And Luther's attempt to start a Reformation fizzled. Luther did not start the reformation. God started the reformation, and He started it in ways that Luther never dreamed of.

Utterly unknown to Luther, A German Duke had desired that his younger brother have several high positions in the church which would bring him a large income. He went to the Pope and asked him to appoint him to these positions. The Pope said, If I do you'll have to pay me a large sum. He said, Where will I get all that money? The Pope said I will give you a Letter of Indulgence. I'll give you such an Indulgence such as never been used before, an indulgence which will give a man freedom from every sin he ever committed or ever will commit. He said, Buy one of these papers, and go sell them all through Germany and he said, You will get the money and half of the money you give to me for giving you the indulgences, and I will use it to build St. Peter's church. And the other half, he said, you pay to me for having appointed your brother to this high position in the church in which he gets the high income. Well, Luther knew nothing about this.