

32. Luther and the Bible.

To the Law and to the Testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, there is no light in them. *Is. 8,20.*

Luther's greatest work, undoubtedly, was that he opened the long-closed Bible. One day the twenty-year-old student at the university at Erfurt was searching the library shelves for new books, when he came upon an old Latin volume hidden away in a dark corner. He eagerly read the title-page, "The Holy Bible." He had never seen the book before. He was surprised at its voluminous size. Was it an accident that Luther found that Book? No, it was God, who led him to the greatest discovery since the days of the apostles.

It was through this Bible that rays of divine light shone into Luther's agonized soul. It was from the Bible that he learned the one and only way of salvation — through faith in the crucified Savior. It was the Bible that Luther quoted in all his controversies to show that he was spreading God's truth among men. In his own heart he had experienced the divine power of the Bible. After he had learned to understand the words, "The just shall live by faith," Rom. 1, 17, he found that peace of heart and mind which he had sought so long in vain. He was so fully convinced of the truth of Scripture that he was ready to rest his case upon the verdict of the Bible. He was willing to retract everything he had written and be the first to burn his books if it could be proved by Holy Writ that what he had written was wrong.

And because Luther was convinced that the Bible is the divine truth, he translated it into the language of the common people. If Luther had done nothing more than to make the Bible known and to bring that book into the hands of the people, that alone would make him the greatest benefactor of his age and of all subsequent ages; for the Bible is the only source from which we derive true religious information. Luther told those who would not abide by Scripture that they had a different spirit from his. And the stamp of the true followers of Luther has always been their abiding by Scripture, believing what the Bible teaches.

Prayer.

We thank Thee, Lord God, heavenly Father, with all' our hearts for Thy saving Gospel, which Thou hast given us that we may see in it Thy fatherly heart. We beseech Thee for the sake of Thy boundless mercy graciously to preserve unto us this blessed light of Thy Word and so to lead and guide our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit that we may nevermore depart from it, but firmly cling to it and at last be saved by it; through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, our Lord. Amen.

So Luther on his knees	To have, and call their own,
Thanked God from depth of heart	The Bible pure and whole.
And prayed Him that He might	For in it there abounds
To all this gift impart,	Full comfort for the soul.

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