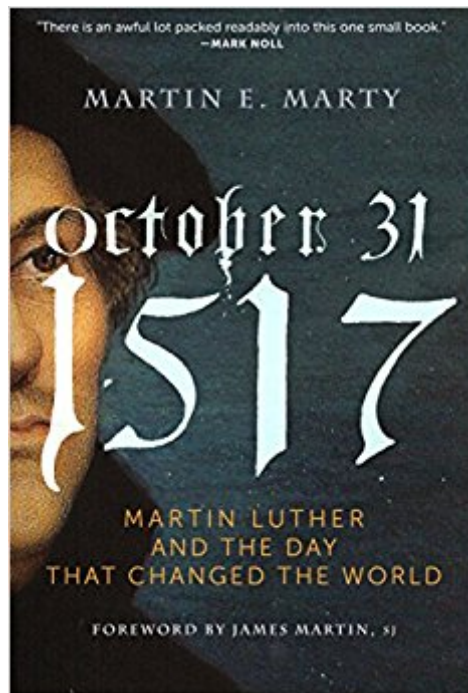


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# October 31, 1517: Martin Luther And The Day That Changed The World



## Synopsis

“This volume is small but weighty and a solid addition for all modern Christianity collections.” • Ray Olson, Booklist With foreword by James Martin, this book by Martin Marty answers the question: Why is the Reformation relevant today? Most importantly, this book is about how the Reformation impacts us devotionally as Christians of any denomination. As we move toward the commemoration on October 31, 2017, this is the book you need. Accessible for church groups or personal reading, this is not a historical narrative of Reformation events, but an explanation of the issues that led to Luther’s posting of the 95 Theses and their implications for the Church and the world. As one of the world’s preeminent Luther scholars, Martin Marty also explores the concept of repentance as a central theme of the Theses. In a foreword, James Martin, SJ, offers context and a shared vision. This year began with the joint ecumenical commemoration in Lund, Sweden, on October 31, 2016, attended by Pope Francis and members of the Lutheran World Federation and other Christian churches. Martin Marty explains how this event, and indeed all ecumenical dialogue that has happened over the past few hundred years and will happen in this coming year, represents a change of heart. “Valuable insight.” • Kathleen Norris

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book has a lot packed in it for such a short volume (90 pages and then an appendix of Luther’s 95 Thesis), and I found it very informative and thought provoking, especially

Marty's beautiful examination of what repentance really means. Rather than being for or against Luther, as the Reformation debate often dwells upon, Martin Marty traces Luther's influence on the church, as well as history at large, and shows where Catholics and Lutherans have sought unity in more recent times. He closes with thoughts on how this unity can be developed further. Both Catholics, Lutherans, and all the denominations in between will learn something from this little book and be convicted towards the kind of whole-life-encompassing, inside-out repentance that Luther advocated as it relates to being one bride of Christ. Well-researched and graceful, Marty has a great perspective on a potentially explosive topic.

—Amanda Rogozinski

This book is a little book with a big message: a message of repentance as change of heart, the message of 1517 that Marty is able to show has manifold implications for church and world. It is worthy of careful attention in the commemorations to come. Because of its size and accessibility to a broad readership, this book is an excellent resource for use in congregations as well as classrooms.

—James M. Childs, Jr. is Joseph A. Sittler Professor Emeritus of Theology and Ethics at Trinity Lutheran Seminary and Book Review Editor of the Journal of Lutheran Ethics.

Ordained Lutheran minister and historian Martin E. Marty presents October 31, 1517: Martin Luther and the Day that Changed the World, a book released especially to commemorate the fateful day when Martin Luther rebelled against the excesses of the Catholic church, proposed ninety-five theses to bring humans closer to God, and initiated the Protestant Reformation, which would create a new branch of Christianity. Martin Luther's 95 Theses are included in this erudite and thoughtful look back at a turbulent time, when Martin Luther's words about the need for "repentance" were a clarion call. Thoroughly accessible to readers of all backgrounds, October 31, 1517 is a welcome addition to church library collections.

—Andrea Kay, Midwest Book Review

His [Martin E. Marty's] central point is that Luther's bold act of protest was a call for repentance or a change of heart within the Catholic Church, which at the time was overrun with corruption due to the selling of indulgences. Instead, Luther emphasized justification by faith and an acceptance of the grace of God. Other interesting topics covered in the book are the present day existence of some 40,000 Christian denominations (part of Luther's legacy), the continuing dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics, and their sincere efforts to come together in common prayer and joint action.

—Living Lutheran, June 2016

"Martin Marty is the most widely respected historian of Christianity in the United States today. In this little book he with clarity, compassion, and a good dose of common sense shows how

Luther's story is meaningful today." — Rev. John O'Malley, S.J., University Professor, Georgetown University "Martin Marty's attention to October 31, 1517, the day that Martin Luther promulgated his 95 Theses, provides valuable insights for the past, the present, and the future--why Luther's articulation of "repentance" meant so much then, why his commitment to "justification" has now built a bridge for Catholics and Lutherans to work with each other, and why this great event of 500 years ago might herald a hopeful future for Christian believers and all others. — There is an awful lot packed readably into this one small book." — Mark Noll, Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History, University of Notre Dame "I would not dream of preparing my mind and heart for the celebration of Luther's role in the Reformation without finding out what Martin Marty has to say on the subject. And he says it here — in this wonderful little book. The gifted historian that he is, Marty gives us much solid information. But he also writes eloquently about how best to prepare our souls for the kind of commemoration that also includes some prayers of repentance." — Richard Mouw "This pithy book offers valuable insight on how Luther's 95 theses have had a profound influence on the ecumenical movement, and can help Christians today understand what it means to be a member of a truly catholic church." — Kathleen Norris

Purchased this item as a gift but I'm sure he was very pleased with it.

Does Martin Marty want to talk about "justification by grace through faith" or repentance or Lutheran-Catholic dialogue or the 95 Theses or the historical meaning of October 31, 1517? It is unclear to me. It seems a bit like a "stream of consciousness" sermon. There are good sections and sections that seem off-topic, at best.

Helps one more thoroughly understand the significance of October 31st as "Reformation Sunday" and why it's still so hard for the Roman Catholic Church to acknowledge they were so long so in the wrong and continue to call this day what they do, with few priests acknowledging that it is a memorial day for Protestantism.

Encouraging that the possible coming together of two great Christian faiths is centered on the "healing of souls".

I agree with many of the other reviewers of this book — ironically, the many-star

reviews and a bit of the few-star reviews. As a lifelong journalist, I understand why the book's "headline," its title, is misleading and I'm adding my own 5-star review here to help clarify. Clearly, the cover image, title and subtitle were chosen to sell more copies of this book at the 500th anniversary of the date Luther supposedly nailed up his complaints about the Catholic church. When I first saw the cover, I expected a book all about that day and that era. Instead, this is indeed a very important small volume written by Marty and also by the best-selling Catholic author James Martin, who wrote the Foreword to this book examining the issues that sprang from that date and cascade down to us, half a millennium later. To be fair to the low-star reviews here, they're right: If you're buying this book expecting a gripping historical narrative about 1517, then you'll be mistaken. What has happened in the decades leading up to this anniversary is many, many dialogues and studies involving Lutheran and Catholic leaders. No, not all Lutheran groups participated. But there was historic involvement by a number of Lutheran leaders, especially in Europe and that led to the amazing start to this "anniversary year" in late October 2015 including Pope Francis in Sweden in joint worship with Lutherans. This is the first centennial of the key date in Luther's career that is being jointly commemorated by Catholic and Lutheran leaders together in Europe. This volume, both Marty's short text and James Martin's Foreword, seek to clarify issues surrounding this history and to point toward areas of emerging convergence. Obviously, many Christians still object and disagree on these issues. But, if you do buy and read this volume, you'll understand a whole lot more about how the events Luther set off in 1517 have an important legacy in our contemporary world.

Illuminating writing for a troubled but significant period.

Thorough and readable. Used as reference for class on Romans.

What is it that Martin Marty has written that is not good!? Unusual and informative.

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