



Quotes by Martin Luther and Others

By Alvin Erickson
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From Martin Luther's Preface to the Large Catechism:

If this were not enough to admonish us to read the Catechism daily, there is God's command. That alone should be incentive enough. Deuteronomy 6:7,8 solemnly enjoins that we should always meditate upon his precepts whether sitting, walking, standing, lying down, or rising, and keep them before our eyes and in our hands as a constant token and sign. Certainly, God did not require and command this so solemnly without reason. He knows our danger and need. He knows the constant and furious attacks and assaults of the devil. So, he wishes to warn, equip, and protect us against them with good "armor" against their "flaming darts," and with a good antidote against their evil infection and poison. O what mad, senseless fools we are! We must ever live and dwell in the midst of such mighty enemies as the devils, and yet we despise our weapons and armor, too lazy to give them a thought!

From Martin Luther Sermon, 25th Sunday after Trinity, Matthew 24: 15-28

But how can we keep from being deceived, since some of the deceptions which come our way are very compelling. How can we keep from being misled? To learn such mastery or art requires that we truly be Christians. First of all, we must recognize that the devil is a very crafty and powerful lord-that's why he is called lord and ruler of the world! -and that if our dear Lord and God does not counter and thwart his craftiness, -cleverness, and power, there would be no one on earth wise, strong, and holy enough to withstand and survive against him. That is to say, with his knowledge, smartness, and power the devil far exceeds all human understanding and mental power. If God, therefore, were to withdraw his hand, the



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devil would quickly contrive an apparition before our eyes and take us in before we know it. From sermon, 25th Sunday after Trinity

A Simple Way to Pray

Martin Luther fully recognized what we are addressing. When he wrote A Simple Way to Pray for Master Peter, the Barber, he was fervent in identifying the meaning of the Third Petition of the Lord's Prayer. Listen to how Martin Luther saw the power of evil in the world. "Then say: O dear Lord, God and Father, thou knowest that the world, when it cannot frustrate thy name and wholly root out thy kingdom, employs tricks and frauds, carries on its many intrigues and strange plots, takes counsel, whispers, bolsters and fortifies itself, threatens and blusters, and proceeds with all evil will against thy name, thy Word, thy kingdom, and thy children to destroy them.

Therefore, dear Lord, God and Father, convert and restrain. Convert those who should still acknowledge thy good will, that they with us and we with them may be obedient to thy will, ready in this obedience to suffer willingly, patiently, and gladly all evil, cross, and tribulation, learning therein to know, and test, and experience thy good, gracious, and perfect will. But do thou restrain those who will not cease their raging, raving, hating, threatening, and wicked intent to do harm, and set to naught and shame their counsels, evil plots, and stratagems, that these may return upon their own heads, as Psalm 7 says. Amen."

The Estate of Marriage, volume 45 of Luther's Works:

Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops and priests to their children, if they make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children, for this authority is both spiritual and temporal.

See Smalcald articles where Luther talks about the "mutual conversation and consolation" of the saints as a way the Gospel extends "God's guidance and help" into people's lives.

From sermon on Matthew 6:25-7:11 "As St. Paul say about spiritual offices in Christendom (Rom. 12:8) 'he who rules, let him be careful.'" In this sense the head of a household has to be concerned about whether his children are being brought up properly...if he neglects this, he does wrong."



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A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God, A sword and shield victorious; He breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious. The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dreadful might He arms himself to fight on earth he has no equal.

No strength of our can match his might! We would be lost, rejected. But now a champion comes to fight, Whom God himself elected. You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Jesus, mighty Lord, God's only Son, adored. He holds the field victorious.

Though hordes of devils fill the land. All threatening to devour us, we tremble not, unmoved we stand; They cannot overpower us. Let this world's tyrant rage; In battle we'll engage! His might is doomed to fail; God's judgment must prevail! One little word subdues him.

God's Word forever shall abide, No thanks to foes, who fear it; For God himself fights by our side With weapons of the Spirit. Were they to take our house, Goods, honor, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched away. They cannot win the day. The Kingdom's ours forever!

For more info:

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Quotes by Others

Matthew 10:16 Jesus said, "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise (prudent, shrewd, discerning) as serpents and innocent as doves."

Edmund Burke "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."



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“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way it treats its children”. Nelson Mandela

“I’m a success today because I had a friend who believed in me and I didn't have the heart to let him down.”

— Abraham Lincoln

“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.” Frederick Douglas

“The ultimate question for a responsible man to ask is not how he is to extricate himself from the affair, but how the coming generation shall continue to live.”

Bonhoeffer, After Ten Years, Dec. 1942“

Abraham Lincoln “If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I’d spend the first hour sharpening the ax.”

Longer quote from Luther’s Works 45:46

But the greatest good in married life, that which makes all suffering and labor worthwhile, is that God grants offspring and commands that they be brought up to worship and serve him. In all the world this is the noblest and most precious work, because to God they can be nothing dearer than the salvation of souls. Now since we are all duty bound to suffer death, if need be, that we might bring a single soul to God, you can see how rich the estate of marriage is in good works. God has entrusted to its bosom souls begotten of its own body, on whom it can lavish all manner of Christian works. Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops, and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children, for this authority is both spiritual and temporal.

From sermon on Matthew 24:15-28, the Twenty Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Paragraph 20 But how can we keep from being deceived, since some of the deceptions which come our way are very compelling? How can we keep from being misled? To learn such mastery or art requires that we truly be Christians. First of all, we must recognize that the devil is a very crafty and powerful lord—that’s why he is called lord and ruler of the world!—and that if our dear Lord and God does not counter and thwart his craftiness, cleverness, and power, there would be no one on earth wise, strong and holy enough to withstand and survive against him. That is to say, with his knowledge, smartness, and power the devil far exceeds all human understanding and mental power.



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"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."

"Every man must do two things alone; he must do his own believing and his own dying."

"The fewer the words, the better the prayer."

"Reason is the enemy of faith."

Here is a quote about Martin Luther written by R.C. Sproul, a popular theologian of the Reformed church in his commentary on Ephesians. (He died in 2017 but still there are presentations of his in video on the web). Here is his quote on pg. 108 in talking about modern theology. "Certainly, there will be new insights, new understandings, and applications of the word of God. But I get far more out of reading Martin Luther's understanding of the New Testament, than I do from contemporary scholars, who are so caught up in the latest fad in theology.

The question for us modern Lutherans is are we still listening to Luther? I personally don't see it or hear it. We are not a praying church and Luther was a man of prayer. We have very little emphasis on parenting and grandparenting. Luther saw parents as bishops, apostles, and priests in their own home. Anyone heard that brought out clearly in their congregation?

Luther speaking to parents, "If God has given you a child who has the ability and the talents for this office, i.e. Pastor, and you do not train him for it, but look only to the belly and to temporal livelihood, see what a pious prig and small potato you are." See Luther's Works, volume 44, pg. 130.