

The 'Accidental' Movement 500 Years Ago That Changed the World Forever

On Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther had no idea that he was about to become a world-changer. He wrote his 95 Theses simply to spark an intellectual debate among church scholars.

What he did was ignite a movement, after which the church and the entire world would never be the same. It is this crucial moment in history we celebrate today—the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

It is also the subject of a new book by prolific author Dr. R.T. Kendall titled *Whatever Happened to the Gospel?*, due out in February and published by Charisma House. You can preorder it [here](#). Dr. Kendall and I discussed Luther's life and how he fathered this movement during a recent podcast, which you can listen to [here](#).

On what was more than likely an ordinary day 500 years ago, Luther nailed his 95 Theses, written in Latin, to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. He intended them to be read only by church theologians.

Without Luther's permission, someone took the 95 Theses, translated them into German and printed them. To borrow a modern phrase, Luther's ideas went viral, spreading like wildfire throughout the whole of Germany and causing a tremendous stir within the church and with the common people.

"Ordinary people didn't know their Bible because they didn't have Bibles," says Dr. Kendall, an admirer of Luther's and a student of Luther's life and ministry. "The Roman Catholic Church did not want you to have Bibles. They just told you what the Bible said. Your faith [was] whatever the church

believed. For Luther, it was deeper than that.”

In 1520, Luther stood trial before the German emperor, Frederick the Wise, and Cardinal Catejan, and was asked to recant his words. He didn’t, and while awaiting a possible execution, Luther was “kidnapped” by a group of friends, who took him to Wartburg, where he spent 10 months translating the Bible into the common German language.

“Martin Luther began to teach the Bible, and it really began to turn things upside down,” Dr. Kendall says. “People had never heard the Bible explained to them the way he did. They came in droves to hear him preach. And now, 500 years later, people have Bibles, but they don’t read them.”

Martin Luther changed things. He changed the world. The Protestant Reformation has affected an infinite number of lives, including those of modern-day believers.

I hope you will listen to the podcast with Dr. Kendall and get a sense of the historical and spiritual repercussions of the Protestant Reformation. Check out Monday’s Strang Report to get an even deeper understanding of this event.

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