

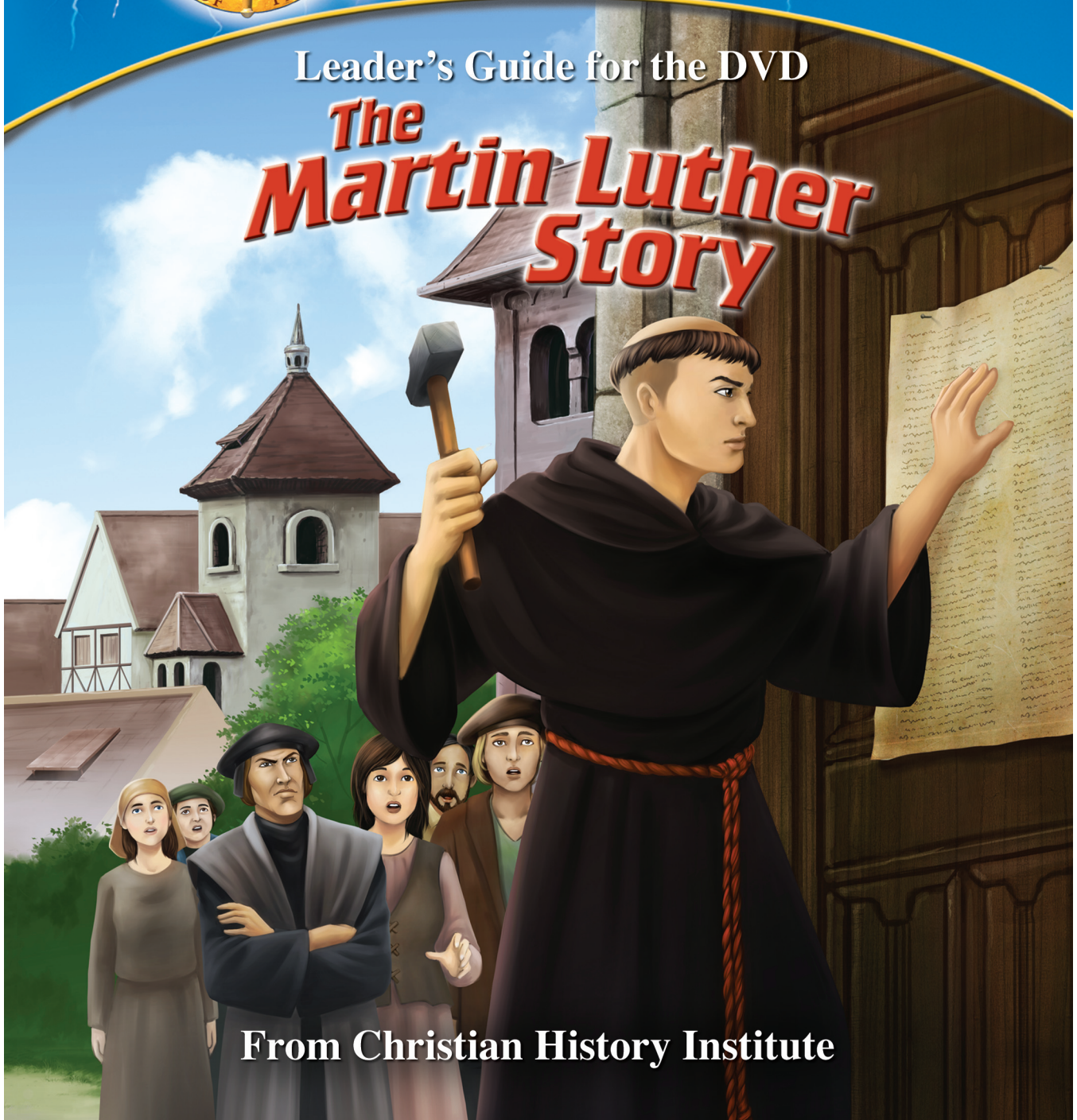


# THE TORCHLIGHTERS

HEROES OF THE FAITH

Leader's Guide for the DVD

## *The Martin Luther Story*



From Christian History Institute

L E A D E R



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# Introduction to the *Torchlighters* Series

**Torchlighter:** *One who commits to serving God  
and passing on the light of the Gospel,  
even if the going gets tough.*

Kids today have no shortage of heroes. From Hollywood celebrities to musical artists and sports figures, it would seem that there are plenty of heroes to go around. However, the heroes offered by popular culture are teaching children that physical perfection, financial success, and fame are the most important goals in life. The morals and values presented are often in direct opposition to the standards parents want to pass on to their children. So, while there is no shortage of heroes, there is a dreadful shortage of heroes worth emulating.

The *Torchlighters* video series offers children real heroes that they can depend on. These heroes have lived truly great lives marked by moral depth, strength of character, and an unwavering commitment to Christ. By sharing in their struggles and small steps of obedience, we are all challenged to live lives of faith. It is our sincere desire that as children get to know these “torchlighters,” they will be challenged to follow in the footsteps of the greatest torchlighter of them all, Jesus Christ. Learn more about the mission behind this series and find more free resources at

**[www.torchlighters.org](http://www.torchlighters.org)**





## Synopsis of *The Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*

Young Martin Luther has a promising future ahead of him. With his brilliant mind and natural talent for debate, it is clear Martin would make an excellent lawyer. However, when it comes to faith, Martin is still filled with doubt. Even though he is a good Catholic and obeys all the teachings of the church, Martin fears God's wrath and judgment more than anything.



Martin Luther prays at the Diet of Worms.

During a terrible storm that nearly claims his life, Martin confronts this insecurity and vows to become a monk. He joins an Augustinian cloister in Wittenberg, Germany, where he soon becomes a professor at the town's new university. But even surrender to life in a monastery cannot solve Martin's deepest struggle, and he wrestles with the nature of salvation.

Only after reading Paul's letter to the Romans for about the hundredth time does Martin finally understand: his salvation does not depend on his works, but on the work of the one who lived and died for him—Jesus! It is faith in Jesus that matters, not Martin's own good works.

Martin begins teaching his understanding to his students around the same time that the corrupt church in Rome steps up efforts to sell forgiveness through indulgences. Martin sees this practice as being in direct conflict with the teachings of Scripture. He writes his 95 Theses against indulgences and posts them for academic discussion on the door of Wittenberg Church.

As his arguments resonate with the people and turn the heads of the religious authorities, Martin unwittingly sparks a wider movement that becomes the Reformation. Martin becomes a marked man, and soon the church calls for his excommunication and more. Will he have the courage to stand strong, even if it means death?



## Teaching Plan for *The Martin Luther Story*

Get ready to dig into the story of Martin Luther, who stood for the word of God even as the Roman Catholic Church attempted to sell forgiveness through “indulgences.” Our story takes place in sixteenth-century Saxony (now Germany). As we learn Martin’s story, we will also be thinking of God’s power to affect change in our hearts and the world, which will carry throughout the four lessons with select verses. Follow these easy steps to get the most out of this episode of *The Torchlighters*!

**1. PREVIEW *The Martin Luther Story* before showing it to your students.** This will help you to recognize the major themes and teachable moments that occur throughout the video, while equipping you to answer student questions. Our theme for this series is *Change through Christ*. Four subthemes will be explored:

- **Lesson 1: A Changing World** — Even when everything changes, the Truth stays the same.
- **Lesson 2: A Change of Heart** — God’s Word takes away the burden of saving ourselves.
- **Lesson 3: A Change in Status** — We are made new when Jesus saves us.
- **Lesson 4: The Change in Us** — God’s grace affects the way we live.

**2. REVIEW the Supplementary Information.** Become more informed on this true story by reading through *Key People* on p. 16, *Medieval Monk: The World of Martin Luther* on p. 18, and the *Timeline* on p. 19. On your DVD you will also find *Luther: His Life, His Path, His Legacy*, an informative documentary giving important and interesting background information.

**3. SELECT and PREPARE Teaching Material.** Our four lesson plans are designed to lead children on a faith journey with Martin Luther. With a focus on God’s forgiveness and salvation, this study is intended to show your children and/or students they can have confidence in him, even in an ever-changing world. Feel free to mix and match to best suit your group and the time available. All materials are reproducible and designed to help children apply the teaching themes.

**NOTE:** Special supplies are needed for activities in each session. To help your group understand how the Reformation influenced and changed musical worship, we encourage you to invite a guest musician to present a brief history and play and sing some of Luther’s hymns in session 3. Use the interview questions on p. 9 of the Student Pages to prepare ahead of time.

**4. VISIT [www.torchlighters.org](http://www.torchlighters.org).** The materials in this guide and the Student Pages are just the beginning. Visit our website for other free resources, such as unique ministry ideas, publicity posters, interactive Kids Zone, and the “Carry the Torch” theme song, craft, and relay! If you are planning a teaching series based on *The Torchlighters*, consider using the theme song, craft, and relay as part of an introductory session focused on the question, “What is a Torchlighter?”

**Are you planning a *Torchlighters* showing or event? Publicity is easy when you download free posters at [www.torchlighters.org](http://www.torchlighters.org).**



## Session 1: A Changing World

**FOCUS:** Even when everything changes, God's Truth stays the same.

**THEME VERSE:** "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:13–14

- **PREPARE:** For **FAN THE FLAME BIBLE TIME**, you will need two glass bowls, paper, water, matches, and a matchbox. Print out or write the theme verse on a small piece of paper, wrap it around a match, and hide it in the matchbox. For **FIVE REASONS** project, make copies of p. 8 and cut pieces of ribbon to tie the scrolls.

- **FAIRY TALE FUN:** Divide students into small groups and have them list some of the things they find in fairy tales (castles, kings, ogres, etc.) or make one big list on the board.

*SAY: Many of these things are imaginary, but others are real things you would have seen if you lived in the Middle Ages or medieval times.*

*ASK: Would you like to have lived in the Middle Ages? Why or why not?*

- **MEDIEVAL CRISS-CROSS:** Direct students to complete p. 3 of the Student Pages on life in the medieval period.

*ASK: Now that you know a bit more about the Middle Ages, would you still like to have lived then? Why or why not?*

- **TEACH—MARTIN LUTHER'S WORLD:**

*SAY: When we talk about the Middle Ages, we often think of knights, kings, princesses, and dragons. But what about monks and nuns? Do you ever think about the church as being a defining part of that time? Let's explore that now.*

Explain the historical context using p. 18 of the Leader's Guide.

*SAY: This was what life was like 500 years ago, but everything was about to change—all because of a small-town German monk with big questions about sin and what it really means to be saved. His name is Martin Luther, and we'll learn about him in just a moment.*

- **FAN THE FLAME BIBLE TIME:** Position two glass bowls on a table where your whole group can see. Crumple up some paper and put some in each bowl. In one bowl, carefully pour water onto the paper to saturate it.

*ASK: What do you need to start a fire? (wood, paper, match, etc.) What do you think will happen if I place a lit match in each of these bowls?*



*SAY: If you don't have the proper materials and the right conditions, it can be quite difficult to get a fire going. (Demonstrate by lighting a match and placing it on the wet paper.) But, when the conditions are right, a fire will burn and spread quickly! (Demonstrate by lighting the dry paper.)*

*It is the same with our hearts. Let's find out with our theme verse today.*

Get out the matchbox, and ask one of your students to open it, take out the match with the verse, and read Colossians 1:13–14.

*ASK: What is the "domain of darkness?" (the world under Satan's power) Who delivered us? (God, specifically the Father)*

*DISCUSS: What does it mean when verse 14 says "we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" through Jesus? Why is that important?*

*SAY: Just like the match on the dry paper, when the Holy Spirit works in our hearts, amazing things happen! It is not, as 2 Timothy 1:9 says, "because of anything we have done, but because of his own purpose and grace." When the Bible talks about forgiveness of sins and redemption through Jesus, it is always about what JESUS did to gain that, not our own actions. All we can do is have faith—and trust that God is the one who accomplishes our salvation. In our next lessons, we will learn along with our faith hero just how important it is that GOD does all the work in saving us.*

- **PREVIEW THE MARTIN LUTHER STORY:** *SAY: Imagine a dark time in church history, when leaders in the church used their positions to gain more money and power for themselves. Something needed to be done—and next week, we will watch a 30-minute video about Martin Luther, the monk who was also the match God used to spark change. Let's watch a short clip together.*

Play the short preview clip at the beginning of the DVD.

- **PROJECT—FIVE REASONS:** Hand out copies of the sheet on p. 8. Ask each student to come up with five reasons to come see *The Martin Luther Story* and to write them on his/her invitation. Allow students to color and decorate the invitations as they please. When completed, roll the invitations into scrolls and tie off with ribbons. Direct students to use their invitations to convince a friend to come!
- **CLOSING PRAYER:** *Dear Jesus, thank you for what you did on the cross—for your sacrifice and love that made the only way for us to be with you in heaven. We pray for open ears and hearts to learn what your word will teach us these next few weeks. Amen.*

**NOTE:** Refer to the answer key on p. 21 for answers to selected Student Pages.

# *Your presence is kindly requested*

*to view The Martin Luther Story  
for the following reasons:*

**I.**

**II.**

**III.**

**IV.**

**V.**

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Time:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Place:* \_\_\_\_\_





## Session 2: A Change of Heart

**FOCUS:** View *The Martin Luther Story* and consider how relieving it is to know we don't have to save ourselves.

**THEME VERSE:** "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8–9

- **PREPARE:** Be sure to have all the equipment necessary to show *Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*. Print out this lesson's theme verse, place it in the matchbox, and hide it somewhere in your room for **FAN THE FLAME BIBLE TIME**. Keep a bag of candy or small, fun items on hand as prizes for the **HERE I STAND** game.

For **THREE THESES DEBATE**, have scotch tape available for students to "post" their theses. If you want to be more realistic, bring a wooden board, enough nails for your students, and a hammer!

- **REVIEW:** Re-introduce concepts about the Catholic Church and medieval Europe learned last session.
- **ACTIVITY—THREE THESES DEBATE:** Direct your group to the activity sheet found on p. 4 of the Student Pages. Offer a sample "thesis" to help get students thinking creatively ("I declare that no one in this class will ever speak unless they first raise their hand and hop on one foot for 30 seconds"). Once students have come up with a few serious and a few silly theses, give them time to challenge and defend their ideas. Offer counterpoints yourself if many of their rules are similar. Foster an atmosphere for debate, if possible!
- **INTRODUCE THE VIDEO:** SAY: *When our faith hero wrote his 95 Theses, he meant to generate debate, or conversation over the ideas presented, just like we did a few moments ago. What he didn't expect was that the words he wrote would cause a lot more than just conversation: they caused the beginning of what we now call the Reformation! As we watch the video today, think about the question, does where we stand matter?*
- **SHOW** the 30-minute program *The Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*.
- **STUDENT QUESTIONS:** Allow students time to process the video and ask questions about flow and content.
- **FURTHER DISCUSSION:** Lead discussion using appropriate questions from the "Dig into the Story" on p. 5 in the Student Pages. For further questions, direct your students to "Dig Deeper" on p. 6.
- **FAN THE FLAME BIBLE TIME:** Challenge your students to find the hidden matchbox. When they do, invite students into your Bible area and read Ephesians 2:8–9.



*ASK: How are we saved from our sins? Who has the authority to give us forgiveness and salvation? Why is this important for us?*

*SAY: The apostle Paul wrote these verses in a letter to the Ephesian church to explain just how far from God we are when we don't know him. Since we are "dead in our transgressions" (2:5) we have nothing to offer God that would make us worthy of being saved. In fact, the Bible says our good works, without him, are as "dirty rags" (Isaiah 64:6). Even so, because of his great love, he saves us and makes us "alive with Christ," redeeming us and all we do. This is the greatest change of heart anyone could have!*

*ASK: What change of heart did Martin Luther have? Can you remember a day when you prayed for Jesus to forgive you and save you from your sins? Did you experience a change of heart then? If you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sins, today would be a great day to do that!*

- **GAME—HERE I STAND:** *SAY: There are times in our lives when we all seem to get pushed around, just like Martin. So how do we stand when those challenges come? Will we be able to hold our ground like Martin did? Let's play a game to see if you can stand firm!*

Set a timer for 15 seconds and ask your group to pair up and stand opposite of each other. Ask one partner to stand on one foot. When everyone is ready, signal him/her to attempt to knock the other partner off balance **without pushing the partner over. Teacher's supervision is recommended for this game!** If the one pushing wins, he/she shouts "Victory!" If the other partner wins, he/she shouts, "Here I stand!" (The one standing on two feet should win easily.) When 15 seconds have passed, each winner receives a prize. Reset the timer and ask your group to switch roles. You can easily increase the length of the game by switching feet, stances, and positions of the partners.

- **ACTIVITY—REFORMATION RHETORIC WORKSHEET** found on p. 7 of the Student Pages.
- **PARENT LETTER:** Distribute this letter to help parents understand the lessons you are sharing in class (p. 15 in Leader's Guide).
- **CLOSING PRAYER:** *Dear Jesus, thank you for changing our hearts by your great grace and love. We thank you for offering forgiveness as a gift, since we could never earn it. Please give us the courage to share the good news of your free gift of salvation to those who do not yet know you. Amen.*
- **PLANNING AHEAD:** Be prepared to host your guest for next session's interview, and assemble materials for the **"A MIGHTY FORTRESS" PROJECT**, found on pp. 10–12 of the Student Pages.

**NOTE:** Refer to the answer key on p. 21 for answers to selected Student Pages.



## Session 3: A Change in Status

**FOCUS:** We are made new when Jesus saves us.

**THEME VERSE:** “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.... For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” Romans 1:16–17

- **PREPARE:** Gather the supplies for the “**A MIGHTY FORTRESS**” **PROJECT** as noted on pp. 10–12 of the Student Pages. Prepare the Scripture verse and hide it in the matchbox somewhere in your room.
- **REVIEW:** Use p. 8 in the Student Pages (**STORY MIX-UP**) to review the story of Martin Luther. Encourage the class to share the important details of the story, focusing on what they know about Martin’s life and legacy. Encourage your guest to question the students as they review the story.

*SAY: Martin Luther is known as the father of the Reformation, which is the focus of our study. But besides being a great scholar and theologian, Martin was also a musician. He played the lute in his early years and later changed how music was used in worship. Martin wanted to get the whole congregation involved in singing, not just a few people.*

- **INTERVIEW:** Introduce your guest and invite him or her to share about the role of music in worship. Allow plenty of time for discussion, and encourage your students to use the interview on p. 9 for some helpful prompts and questions.
- **FAN THE FLAME BIBLE TIME:** Invite the class into the Bible center for Bible time. Ask them to review what you discussed in the last two sessions.

**READ:** Romans 1:16–17.

*ASK: Who has the power to bring salvation? How? What role does faith play in salvation?*

*SAY: The book of Romans, written by Paul the apostle and inspired by the Holy Spirit, is an argument about how it is faith—not the things you do, or who your family is, or where you come from—that ultimately makes you right before God. But what is it faith in?*

(If time and your age group allows, read Romans 5:1–10.)

*According to Romans 5, it is not faith in OUR works, but faith in THE work of Jesus Christ. Because our sins against God demand his justice and deserve his anger and separation from him forever, God provided his very own Son to be the one to take the punishment that we should have—by dying on the cross. That’s why the Bible says this in 2 Corinthians 5:21: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*



*When we trust in the sacrifice of Jesus, our status as sinners and as criminals before God is changed to righteous and innocent. God substitutes Jesus' perfect life, death, and Resurrection for our own imperfection. This is called justification, and it means we never have to worry about our standing before God, just as it says in Romans 5:1: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**DISCUSS:** *Does it make you feel better or worse that faith in Jesus justifies us and not our own works? Why?*

- **KEEPSAKE CRAFT—"A MIGHTY FORTRESS" PROJECT:** Refer students to pp. 10–12 in the Student Pages for instructions and templates.
- **CLOSING PRAYER:** *Dear Jesus, what a relief it is to know that you have done everything needed to save us from separation from you. Thank you for taking the punishment of our sin and clothing us in your righteousness. Amen.*
- **PLANNING AHEAD:** For next week's activity, **POST IT!**, your group will roam your building. Review the activity, and ensure you have the permission and ability to carry it out. Also come prepared with some encouraging Bible verses and a large board to display them.

**NOTE:** Refer to the answer key on p. 21 for answers to selected Student Pages.





## Session 4: The Change in Us

**FOCUS:** God's grace affects the way we live.

**THEME VERSE:** "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

- **PREPARE:** Come prepared with plenty of sticky notes for **POST IT!**
- **THE FIVE SOLAS**—Direct your group to the matching activity, discussion questions, and illustration found on pp. 13–15 of the Student Pages.
- **FAN THE FLAME BIBLE TIME:** Invite your group into your Bible area.

READ: 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

DISCUSS: *What does the author of this letter hope for people who follow Jesus? What does it mean to be sanctified? to be kept blameless?*

SAY: *Let's look at verses 12 and beyond to help us answer some of these questions. (Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12–22.) The commands given here are instructions for how Christians ought to live when Jesus enters their hearts. It specifically teaches us how to interact with all kinds of believers in their struggles and weaknesses. So, being sanctified means growing more like Jesus. One of the ways we do that is living and interacting with our church family in the way this passage describes. What we do must build others up and help THEM grow just as you are growing. Our attitudes also reflect hearts that are becoming more like Christ, as seen in verses 16 through 18. Even when life is tough, we are to rejoice and give thanks in that time.*

DISCUSS: *How does praying continually help us to rejoice always and give thanks in all circumstances? Will prayer also help us to interact with our Christian brothers and sisters in a way that pleases God? How?*

SAY: *There are a lot of commands in this passage, and sometimes when we look at the Bible and all of the things it tells us we should and should not do, we can get overwhelmed. We might wonder how we could possibly please God when there are so many things we can easily mess up! But verse 24 makes a wonderful promise. It says: "The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it."*

*This is more good news for us: not only does Jesus' sacrifice on the cross save us from the punishment of our sins, but once we know him as our savior, he also is faithful to change us. He promises to make all his people become more like him—even when we struggle or fail.*

ASK: *Does this promise encourage you? Why or why not? Can you think of any times that you've seen God keeping this promise in your life by changing your attitude or actions?*



- **ACTIVITY—POST IT!:** Hand out 5 to 10 sticky notes to each student. Ask them to read the verses on the board and as a group think of some short, encouraging ways to share those truths with another person. For instance, if you use Psalm 139:13–14, you might write: “God made you wonderfully and fearfully.” Instruct them to write one of the encouraging phrases or a short verse on each note. When everyone is finished, ask them to “sneak” around the building and leave the notes in visible locations.
- **CRACK THE CODE! WORKSHEET:** Refer students to p. 16 of the Student Pages.
- **PRAYER:** *Heavenly Father, thank you for your faithfulness to us and your wonderful promise to sanctify us. Help us to grow and to walk in your truth, so that every day we become more like Jesus. In your holy name, Amen.*

**NOTE:** Refer to the answer key on p. 21 for answers to selected Student Pages.

Dear Parents,

Today in Sunday school your child viewed a *Torchlighters* DVD depicting the life of Martin Luther, the German monk and theology professor who sparked the Reformation. Martin was on his way to a promising career as a lawyer when a life-threatening storm forced him to evaluate his standing before God. He promised to serve God and soon joined an Augustinian monastery.

Meanwhile, as the riches of the church in Rome quickly dwindled, the sales of indulgences, or special dispensations to spring souls from purgatory, increased. For Martin, however, neither money nor good works gave salvation—only faith in Christ alone.

But when Martin wrote against the practice of indulgences and posted his 95 Theses, he never could have anticipated his actions would change the world forever.

In our class time, we will focus on God's power to affect change and explore the truths of the Gospel. We hope this experience is meaningful for your child. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



## Key People in the Life of Martin Luther

**MARTIN LUTHER (1483–1546)** A German theology professor, composer, priest, and former monk, Luther was a seminal figure in the Reformation. A near-death experience caused him to abandon his law school studies and become an Augustinian monk. His new understanding of salvation through faith and not works, theological conflict with the use of indulgences, and a conviction that Scripture, not the church, is the ultimate authority, led him to post his 95 Theses, which catalyzed the Reformation. During his life-time Luther wrote prolifically, translated the Bible into German, and married former nun Katharina von Bora, signifying once and for all his break with Rome. Luther spent much of his later life attempting to direct the Reformation, failing in some instances but succeeding in others. He died at age 62 in Eisleben, the city of his birth, of heart failure.

**HANS LUTHER (c.1459–1530)** Martin's father was a copper miner. The son of a farmer, Hans sought social mobility and had high expectations of his son, pushing him to become a lawyer.

**PHILIPP MELANCTHON (1497–1560)** Born Philipp Schwartzert, this fellow German reformer and collaborator with Martin Luther was the first systematic theologian of the Reformation. As was the custom among humanists at the time, he took the new name Melancthon (a Greek translation of Schwartzert, meaning "black earth"). Melancthon is best known for his work on the Augsburg Confession, considered the most significant document of the Reformation.

**FRIAR JOHANN TETZEL (1465–1519)** This Roman Catholic German, Dominican friar, and preacher was the grand commissioner for indulgences in Germany. As such he granted indulgences in exchange for money—a practice Luther preached against openly, which eventually inspired him to write his 95 Theses. In his last year, Tetzal was accused of fraud (though was later pardoned). He withdrew to a monastery in Leipzig in shame and died there.

**DUKE FREDERICK THE WISE (1463–1525)** Elector (sovereign) of Saxony, this diplomat and collector of Catholic relics maintained peace in his territory during his reign. He also founded the University of Wittenberg. Though he had very little personal contact with Luther and remained Catholic, he protected Luther from the pope and emperor and was sympathetic to Reformation ideals.

**JOHANN VON STAUPITZ (1460–1524)** This theologian, university preacher, and vicar general of the Augustinian friars supervised Luther during his most spiritually formative period. Staupitz died as a Benedictine monk and disavowed the Reformation, telling Luther in his last letter that he was bitter about its direction and its destruction of church unity.

**GEORGE SPALATIN (1484–1545)** Georg Burkhardt took on the name Spalatin, a latinized version of his birth town, Spalt. A successful humanist and scholar, Spalatin attracted the attention of Frederick the Wise, who initially employed him to tutor his nephew. At the turn of the Reformation, Spalatin acted as Frederick's advisor, as well as messenger and mediator between Frederick and Luther. Though uninterested in theology himself, Spalatin helped catalyze the Reformation and supported Luther.





**POPE LEO X (1475–1521)** Born Giovanni de Medici, Pope Leo X was part of a wealthy and important family in the cultural center of Italy. An extravagant pope and lover of the arts, Leo initiated massive building projects in the Vatican, and his controversial funding of them through the sale of indulgences indirectly caused the Reformation.

**CARDINAL GIROLAMO ALEANDRO (1480–1542)** An Italian cardinal and among the most powerful men in the church, Girolamo Aleandro acted as an envoy for Pope Leo X. He adamantly opposed the reformers, occasionally to their deaths. Present at the Diet of Worms, Aleandro advocated for the most extreme measures against Luther and his teachings, but ultimately failed to halt the Reformation's progress.

**JOHANN MAIER VON ECK (1486–1543)** Known as Johann Eck, this German Scholastic theologian was a prominent defender of Catholicism during the Reformation. Though son of a peasant, Eck received an impressive education as overseen by his uncle, a priest. He became a professor, a priest, and a brilliant orator, using his abilities to defend the papacy. Eck became Luther's most prominent opponent after the debates at Leipzig and spent much of his life attacking Luther and his Reformation-minded contemporaries.

**CHARLES V(1500–1558)** By age 19, Charles V, son of Philip I, had inherited rule over most of Europe, effectively making him the richest and most powerful person of his time. He was elected holy Roman emperor in 1519. Though a devout Catholic opposed to Luther's teachings, Charles V allowed the Reformation to take root to destabilize Rome and unite the empire under his rule.



# Medieval Monk: The World of Martin Luther

Martin Luther and those who lived during his time witnessed one of the greatest turning points in Western civilization. While in large part due to Luther's own influence, these changes were a long time coming. Urbanization, new technologies, destabilization of Rome as a political power, interest in art and classical works in the renaissances of Europe, and unrest among the peasant classes would culminate in the age of exploration, revolution, and secularism.

Luther, however, never fully embraced the change. A medieval man at heart, Luther would carry the very real superstition, piety, learning, and general worldview of the age with him throughout his life. Below are a few defining characteristics of the period.

## GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

The political landscape of the late medieval world was complex. Europe was divided into many states, each with its own system of government. They were mostly city-states and sovereign territories, ruled by princes, dukes, or electors. While the prevailing system of the early Middle Ages was feudalism, in which kings, lords, and upper nobility controlled all the land and people within their territories, this system waned with the rise of the merchant class and peasant revolts.

Rome also played a major part in the rule of the world as each territory was subject to the authority of the pope in many ways. Civil wars, conflicts, and tensions among the states were common, but Europe's greatest perceived threat was the rising Ottoman Empire which, by Luther's lifetime, had effectively ended the Byzantine Empire and controlled much of the Middle East.

## RELIGION

For a millennium Roman Catholicism was the predominant religion of the West as pagan religions were steadily eradicated in practice. All European countries, including Luther's Germany, deferred to the church. Monastic communities and orders for both men and women existed all over Europe and were the best chance for many to receive both a decent education and life. Jewish minorities existed in Europe, but their Christian neighbors often persecuted and exiled them, and treated them violently.

## CULTURE

The late Middle Ages saw the rise of the various renaissances, humanism, imperialism, colonization, and exploration. People within peasant classes, like Martin Luther's own father, could begin to enjoy some social mobility. Education was becoming more accessible, and, with the invention of the printing press, the need and desire for the printed word would grow and change the cultural landscape. (The printing press is credited with helping the cause of the Reformation.) Urbanization also helped to spur social mobility. Women at this time began to experience more freedom and power, with opportunities in commerce, learning, and religion.

Engrained superstitions infused with a Christian mysticism were quite prevalent among commoners. Supernatural beliefs about witches, curses, and direct attacks by the devil and his demons explained the hardships of daily life. Nobility, knights, and landowners retained definite advantage and power.

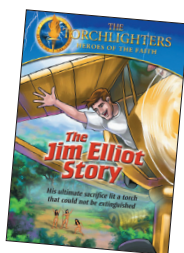


## Martin Luther Timeline

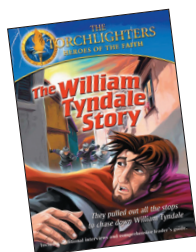
- 1483** Martin Luther is born at Eisleben, Saxony. Family moves to Mansfield a year later.
- 1505** Luther vows to become a monk and enters the Order of Augustinian hermits.
- 1507** Luther is ordained and celebrates his first mass.
- 1512** Luther earns his doctorate and leaves the monastery to teach at Wittenberg.
- 1515** Luther lectures on Romans; is appointed district vicar over 10 monasteries.
- 1517, Oct. 31** Luther distributes 95 Theses on indulgences.
- 1518** Luther appears before Cardinal Cajetan at Augsburg but refuses to recant; Frederick the Wise protects Luther from being handed over to Rome.
- 1519, July** Luther debates Johann Eck at Leipzig and denies the supreme authority of popes and councils.
- 1520** Luther writes *To the Christian Nobility, On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and *On the Freedom of a Christian*; burns papal bull and canon law.
- 1521** Luther is excommunicated. He refuses to recant writings at Diet of Worms and is condemned as a heretic and an outlaw. He is “kidnapped” and hidden at Wartburg Castle, where he begins translating the New Testament into German.
- 1522** Luther comes out of hiding and returns to Wittenberg.
- 1525** Luther writes *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes*, marries former nun Katharina von Bora, writes *Bondage of the Will* against Erasmus, a fellow reformer.
- 1527** Luther writes “A Mighty Fortress”; argues with Zwingli about the Lord’s Supper.
- 1529** Luther and Zwingli reach no agreement on the Lord’s Supper at Marburg Colloquy.
- 1532** Luther is given Augustinian cloister in Wittenberg for his home.
- 1536** Luther agrees to Wittenberg Concord on the Lord’s Supper, but Zwinglians do not accept it.
- 1537** Luther draws up *Schmalkaldic Articles* as his “theological last will and testament.”
- 1546** Martin Luther dies of heart failure at the place of his birth.



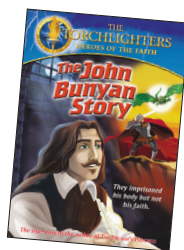
# *The Torchlighters: Heroes of the Faith Series*



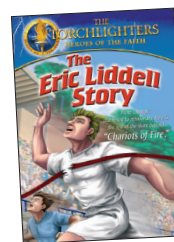
**JIM ELLIOT**  
Missionary  
to Ecuador



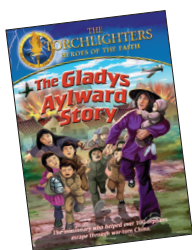
**WILLIAM  
TYNDALE**  
Bible Translator



**JOHN BUNYAN**  
Author of *The  
Pilgrim's Progress*



**ERIC LIDDELL**  
Olympian  
and Missionary



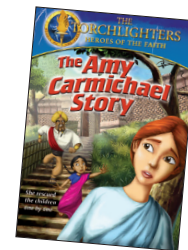
**GLADYS AYLWARD**  
Missionary  
to China



**RICHARD  
WURMBRAND**  
Founder of The  
Voice of the Martyrs



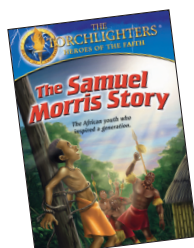
**PERPETUA**  
Early Church  
Martyr



**AMY CARMICHAEL**  
Missionary to India



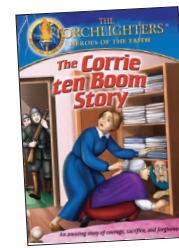
**WILLIAM BOOTH**  
Founder of  
The Salvation Army



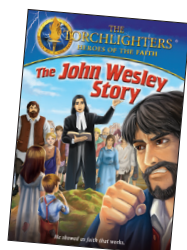
**SAMUEL MORRIS**  
Prince Turned  
Missionary



**AUGUSTINE**  
Early Church  
Theologian



**CORRIE TEN BOOM**  
Rescuer During  
World War II



**JOHN WESLEY**  
Founder of the  
Methodist Movement



**ROBERT JERMAIN THOMAS**  
Bible Smuggler  
to India



**MARTIN LUTHER**  
German Monk Who  
Sparked the Reformation

Coming next: *The Adoniram Judson Story!* Visit [www.torchlighters.org](http://www.torchlighters.org) for more information and resources.





# Answer Key for Select Student Pages

## Medieval Criss-Cross, p. 3

Student Handouts for the DVD *The Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*

### Medieval Criss-Cross

The medieval age, or Middle Ages, is the period of time between AD 500 and AD 1500 in Europe. See if you can fill in this crossword puzzle using the definitions below. A few of the letters have been provided for you.

**ACROSS**

- The code by which knights pledged to live. It involved honor, courage, and protection of the weak.
- A deadly disease that killed one-third of all people in Europe during the Middle Ages (three words).
- A peasant who worked the land for the local lord.
- A ruler below the king in the feudal system who pledged his loyalty to the king in return for land.
- A defensive fortification where a lord or king lived. The local people fled here if they were attacked.

**DOWN**

- A religious area or group of buildings where monks lived in isolation. Also called an abbey.
- A man of high rank and nobility.
- Land given to a lord or baron by a king to rule.
- A knight used by knights on their shields, banners, and armor (three words).
- A top church leader in a kingdom, ranked under the pope.

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## Reformation Rhetoric, p. 7

Student Handouts for the DVD *The Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*

### Reformation Rhetoric

Match each quotation to its author by drawing lines from the quotations below to their correct speech bubbles.

Quotations:

- "The world hates the truth. By such hate Christ was crucified."
- "Whether the devil is in a box or only under [Luther's] gown, I do not know; but undoubtedly it is one or the other."
- "Name me an emperor who was ever struck by a cannonball."
- "Here I stand, I can do no other."
- "We must seek the truth, love it, defend it, and hate it down uncompromised."
- "As soon as a coin in the coffee ring, the soul from purgatory springs."
- "Name me an emperor who was ever struck by a cannonball."
- "The world hates the truth. By such hate Christ was crucified."
- "Since God has given us the papacy, let us enjoy it."
- "We must seek the truth, love it, defend it, and hate it down uncompromised."
- "As soon as a coin in the coffee ring, the soul from purgatory springs."
- "Whether the devil is in a box or only under [Luther's] gown, I do not know; but undoubtedly it is one or the other."
- "Name me an emperor who was ever struck by a cannonball."
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- "As soon as a coin in the coffee ring, the soul from purgatory springs."

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## Story Mix-Up, p. 8

Student Handouts for the DVD *The Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*

### Story Mix-Up

These pictures of Martin Luther's story are all mixed up. Number the pictures in the correct order.

- Martin teaches at the University of Wittenberg.
- Martin keeps writing in the safety of Wartburg Castle.
- Martin goes on trial for opposing the church's teaching.
- Martin understands his salvation comes through God's grace.
- Martin, a worried man, is "hidagenet."
- The church sells indulgences for the forgiveness of sins.
- Martin nails his 95 Theses to the Wittenberg Church door.
- Martin fears for his life in a storm.

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## Five Solas, p. 13

Student Handouts for the DVD *The Torchlighters: The Martin Luther Story*

### Five Solas

Sola means "alone" in Latin. Can you draw lines from the five Latin phrases on the left to their English definitions on the right?

Latin Phrases:

- Sola Scriptura
- Sola Fide
- Solus Christus
- Sola Gratia
- Soli Deo Gloria

English Definitions:

- God saves us based entirely upon his grace, not because of anything we did, are doing, or will do in the future. (Grace Alone)
- We trust Jesus only to save us; salvation doesn't come through good works. (Christ Alone)
- Our ultimate authority is God's Word—Scripture. (Scripture Alone)
- We were made to glorify God. (The Glory of God Alone)
- We do nothing to be saved, except to have faith in Jesus. (Faith Alone)

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## Crack the Code, p. 16

"To go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I can do no other."