

Key Stage 2

Dissent, Diversity and Danger in the Christian Church

LESSONS 1-2: WHAT CHANGED CHRISTIANITY?

In these first two lessons for KS2, the main ideas that form the basis for the Reformation will be introduced. The Reformation led to a new church, the Protestant Church (after Luther's original 'protest'), which meant the dominant European church became known as the Catholic or Roman Catholic Church in comparison. However, as Luther began his protest there was only 'the Church' in Europe. The small Protestant communities grew up over time in many different places, spreading eventually to North America and around the world. These lessons go back to the early days to help pupils understand why Luther and other Protestants protested in the first place against the established Church.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

LESSON 1: A MAN CALLED LUTHER

In this lesson pupils will find out about Martin Luther and his initial protest against the practice of selling 'indulgences'. These were tokens sold by priests to ordinary people. The Church received the money and people believed in return their souls would spend less time waiting in 'purgatory' to enter heaven.

By the end of these lessons pupils will:

- **know** that the Church in Luther's time sold indulgences to spend less time in purgatory
- **understand** Luther's argument that indulgences were unfair
- **reflect on** how it feels to stand up and argue that a powerful organisation is being unfair

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1: WHO WAS MARTIN LUTHER?

LESSON CONTENT

- Show pupils the Playmobil Luther on screen. Ask pupils if they can tell you anything about this person based on his appearance. What is he holding? What does this suggest? What might this figure tell us about him as a person? Why might he be represented in this way as a toy?
- Hand out the Martin Luther Factfile (p. 7), one per group. Ask groups to copy the Playmobil toy's clothes onto their outline of Luther. Budding artists might like to try Luther's face from paintings of him online.
- Invite pupils to read the Factfile on p. 7 and EITHER design three symbols to show what matters most to Luther, OR choose three words OR do both, depending on the ability of your class. Write or draw them around the outline of Luther.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Playmobil have produced a Martin Luther figure. (Search Google Images for 'Playmobil Luther'). The figure is holding a Bible and a quill pen. Bible = he is a Christian, pen = his writing is important. Some might identify the date (1517) and the name Luther.
- You will return to the Factfile several times as pupils' knowledge and understanding grows.
- They will have opportunities to adapt their notes as learning progresses

2: WHY DID MARTIN LUTHER ARGUE WITH LEADERS OF THE CHURCH?

LESSON CONTENT

- Invite pupils to put their heads down and listen to your words. Read the guided story on p. 8, to set the scene for Luther's struggle. Once they have listened, ask pupils what they think Luther was becoming angry and worried about and encourage them to talk in pairs about what they think he might do next. To help the class understand what Luther said that was so important, talk about what everyone believed.
- Hold up a £5 note. Tell the class that anyone who gives you £5 will have a good school report and good grades (or other merits and rewards your pupils earn). Ask for reasons why this could be seen as unfair.

Teach about the practice of selling indulgences in the Church. Explain it was believed that indulgences meant someone's soul spent less time in 'purgatory' – a state of waiting to enter heaven. It was believed purgatory could last thousands of years.

- As a class gather suggestions as to why the practice of buying indulgences could be seen as unfair. Jot these on the board.
- As a class gather suggestions as to why indulgences could be seen as a good idea. Jot these on the board.
- Collect all the words the children use about why this practice could be seen as wrong, such as 'unfair', and write them on a piece of paper. Pin the paper to a noticeboard in class.
- Explain that the Pope, the head of the Church, sent Luther a letter telling him they had thrown him out. He was no longer a monk or allowed to teach. Luther publically burnt the letter! Discuss what message Luther sent to the Church by burning the letter. At this point turn to the boxes on the Luther Factfile (p. 7). Ask groups to design an emoji to sit on the first FOUR boxes, showing how Luther might have felt.

Extension: also draw speech bubbles, each one starting, 'I am feeling ... [emotion words] because ...' Complete the sentences.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Luther posted a notice on a church door. This has become an extremely famous action, although Luther could not have known it at the time. He was reflecting the centrality of God, and of heaven and hell.
- Priests were selling tokens called 'indulgences', which they believed helped people spend less time waiting in 'purgatory' to get into heaven after they died.
- E.g. rich people do not have to wait very long, even if they have been wicked.
- E.g. the money supports the Church's work with the poor and needy.
- This is what Luther did. He wrote down why tokens were unfair for everyone to see.
- This is called 'excommunication'. Ask children what they think happened? The Church did not like it.

NB: only fill in the first four boxes on the Luther Factfile.

- g. Share the emojis around the room. Teach that many people in Germany and the rest of Europe thought Luther was actually a hero and his ideas spread all over Europe. Discuss how he might have felt as he became popular. Finish the fourth box with emojis/speech bubbles.
- h. Show a map of **Protestant** churches in the world, that is, churches that were originally inspired by Luther's 'protest'. Confirm that Luther's ideas spread all over the planet. Discuss what emotions Luther might feel if he could know this today. Invite pupils to talk about why the Church thought him dangerous. Encourage them to think about how they would like to be remembered.
- g. After the Church rejected his argument about indulgences, many ordinary people found his ideas persuasive.
- Finish the lesson with the final emoji/speech bubble in the fifth box.
- h. E.g. this Wikipedia map of numbers of Protestant communities: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_the_largest_Protestant_denominations#/media/File:Protestants_by_country.png (key at the bottom).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

LESSON 2: WHAT WAS LUTHER'S GIFT TO THE PEOPLE?

In this lesson we continue to explore the idea of indulgences. As we shall see, it was not just that they seemed unfair to Luther; they were not in the Bible. This led Luther to translate the Bible into the local language, German, so ordinary people could read or hear Christian teachings for themselves.

By the end of these lessons pupils will:

- **know** that Luther translated the Bible into German
- **understand** why ordinary people could not question what they were taught
- **reflect on** how understanding words can empower people

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1: IS IT IN THE BIBLE?

LESSON CONTENT

- Recap Luther's objection to indulgences by returning to the worksheet from last lesson (Luther Factfile p. 7). You can remind pupils by showing them the words you wrote on a piece of paper and pinned to the board (lesson 1, activity 2e). Share the learning objectives.
- Display a sign with the words '*cave canem*' on it. Invite pupils to guess what it means or to say what language it is. Ask the class to talk about the shortcomings of this sign and therefore why it would be helpful to be able to understand it. Ask what difference the translation makes.
- Teach that Luther objected to indulgences because they were unfair, but also because they are not in the Bible. However, people did not know this fact. Ask the class why ordinary people did not know that indulgences were not in the Bible.

Invite pupils to talk about what they think Luther did in response. Explain that he translated the New Testament from its original Greek into German so everyone could read it for themselves. Ask pupils to talk about how this empowered people. Why could this be called a 'gift'?
- Find images online of the 'Luther Bible'. Explain that it is still a very important thing today. Show pupils the Playmobil figurine of Luther and invite them to explain why he is shown with a Bible and quill pen.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Indulgences were seen as unfair. In this lesson we are going to learn more about Luther's objections.
- The phrase is Latin, meaning 'beware of the dog'.
- The Bible was translated into Latin, and very few ordinary people could understand Latin. The original New Testament was written in Greek, and had been translated into Latin.
- Luther would walk through the market to get a sense of how people spoke, in order that his Bible reflected 'real' spoken German.

2: LUTHER'S GERMAN BIBLE

LESSON CONTENT

- a. This activity utilises the character cards on pp. 9–10. Either give each child in a group of four one card each, or give a group of three pupils one character between them. Each pupil or group should read their card.
- b. Set up a washing line in the classroom. Write 'Luther's new church' on a piece of paper and attach to one end of the line, and 'traditional Church' at the other. Ask pupils to discuss in groups how far each character supports Luther and how far they support the traditional Church. They hang their character cards on the washing line depending on where they think they go, and explain their answers.

- c. Conduct a 'hotseat' activity, where individuals sit in front of the class and answer questions as their character.

Tell the class you want to find out why these characters are either interested in Luther's Bible or wish to stay with the traditional Church.

Invite pupils to think of questions which reveal the characters' reasons, such as what they gain or how they are empowered.

- d. Invite pupils to share words that empower them.

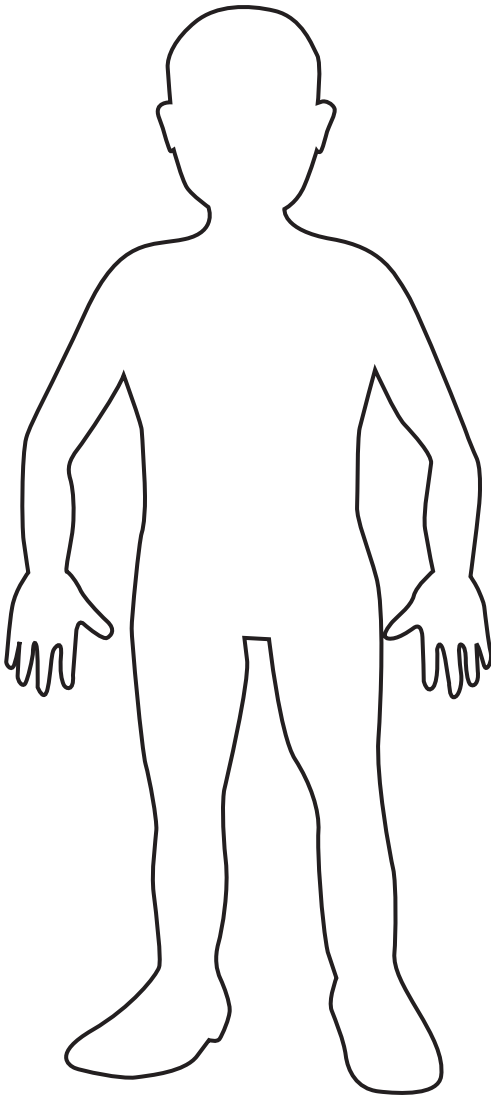
Summarise this lesson by asking groups to state how the traditional Church empowered ordinary people, and how Luther's new church empowered people.

Finally, ask groups to state why Luther's German translation of the Bible could be seen as a gift to the people.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- a. If you are able, find images online of medieval people: a priest, a villager, a rich man, a lawyer, a homemaker, etc., to give pupils a sense of what these people might look like.
- b. For example, the baker is firmly in support of the traditional Church whereas the lawyer is quite interested in Luther while loyal to the Church.
- c. If necessary suggest questions:
Why does hearing the Bible in German empower you?
What does the traditional Church offer you?
- d. Ask about words which affirm pupils' worth or equality found in stories or poetry, or spoken by their friends and family.

Martin Luther Factfile



Born: 1483
Died: 1546
Country: Wittenberg, Germany

What does he do? He is a monk. He teaches students at a university to understand Christianity and questions about God and Jesus.

He translated the Bible into German so German people could read it in their own language. This got him in trouble because the Bible was always read in Latin.

What is he like? He is very religious, determined and thoughtful. However, even though he wants to devote his life to God, he can see so many problems with the Church and this bothers him.

<p>Being a monk and teaching about God and the bible</p>	<p>Finding out about indulgences</p>	<p>Posting a notice that he disagreed with the Church</p>	<p>Being thrown out of the Church</p>	<p>People agreeing with him and taking on his ideas</p>
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Martin Luther Guided Story

KS2: Luther was a Christian, as was practically everyone in Europe 500 years ago.

Luther believed in God totally. He gave his life to God. He knew that God created everything and gave him life, and he also knew that when he died, that would not be the end of him.

Although his body might be dead, his soul would leave his body and would live forever.

What do you imagine when you think about the idea of 'forever'? <<pause>>

Luther thought the life of his soul that would go on forever was the most important thing. He hoped he could be with God in heaven forever.

What do you imagine when you think about the idea of 'heaven'? <<pause>>

UKS2: However amazing the idea of heaven is, people believed there was also a terrible place called hell, where souls went who were not good enough to be with God went. Luther was scared of this place.

Why do you think Luther was scared of this place? <<pause>>

Some souls would be good enough for God one day, but were not quite good enough yet. They would need to wait in a place until they were good enough. This place was called purgatory. It might last for a thousand years. No one could know when they would finally be released from purgatory to be with God.

What do you imagine when you think about the idea of waiting for your soul to be good enough? <<pause>>

KS2: Heaven was as real to Luther as his hands and feet. Living a good life on Earth, in the eyes of God, and the hope of finally being with God one day, were the most important things to Luther. But something was happening that was making Luther very angry and worried indeed. It was to do with heaven. And Luther knew he had to stand up and say something ...

Character Cards

Character Card 1

**Father Albert – priest
Rejects Luther’s new ideas**

It is about mystery. It is about connecting the people with God. It’s not a recipe book or a map, we’re not meant to understand every word.

It is about entering into the sacred space, made holy for God, joining in the ancient ritual to seek a connection with God.

The Church knows best, the Church should be trusted.

The pope is the representative of St Peter on Earth. Who are we to reject anything that comes from God?

People need the guidance and nurture of the Church – that is what we are here for.

Character Card 2

**Herr Bertolf – the town baker
Staying with the old ways**

I can’t read. I don’t need to and I don’t want to. Leave that to the priests and scholars. I sustain the neighbourhood with my bread. I am the person they all come to every day to keep body and soul together.

Just as they all come to the priest every Sunday to pay attention to their souls, they come to me every morning to satisfy their hunger for bread.

I provide my nourishment and the Church provides my soul’s nourishment. I trust the Church. She has baptised all my children and buried my poor wife and parents. The Church knows what she is doing. I would never rock the boat. I would never gamble with my soul.

Character Cards

Character Card 3

**Herr Kristoff – a court lawyer
Has bought the Bible in German**

I haven't told my colleagues in the courts but a secret package arrived for me last night. It is the Gospels in ordinary German. Although I am trained in Latin, and as a court lawyer I read and write a tolerable Latin and have always read my Bible in Latin, I was curious.

I am not sure this is the right thing to do – to go against centuries of tradition and guidance feels a bit risky. This is why I am keeping it quiet.

I hope Luther knows what he is doing. Interesting times.

Apparently I can read this book without a priest, and understand it for myself.

I can also see what the Church does that is in the Bible and what isn't.

I am not sure if I trust myself to make these judgements, but I am interested all the same.

As a lawyer I manage the law for my clients, I don't give them the books and let them get on with it. Maybe I shouldn't be stepping onto the Church's territory and expertise like this, however, I am just interested ...

Character Card 4

**Frau Johannes – homemaker
She and her husband have heard
some of the German Bible**

I only attended school for four years before my father took me out to work around the house. Now I am married with children I will never learn to read any better. Our neighbour showed us his New Testament in German. My husband was in ecstasy. He regrets never standing up to his father and continuing his studies. He would have loved to study theology and philosophy. When he heard the first German words he shouted aloud in wonder. To be honest I was trembling as well. To understand! To not need a priest to stand between me and the words of God.

My husband wants us to order a copy of our own!

To be able to access that holy text ourselves, to think and discuss around our own table. Not to have it controlled and parcelled out by the priests but to be in the presence of the Lord ourselves. To read to our own children the words of our own Bible. It is truly a miracle.